

EAA691

October 2026

ISSUE 2610

CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

KLAM Open House

Los Alamos, New Mexico

photo credit: Andrew DeVecchio

www.eaachapter691.org

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WHO WE ARE

President:	Will Fox
Vice President:	John George
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Newsletter Editor:	Andrew DeVecchio
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Young Eagles Coordinator:	Gary Goddard
Young Eagles Workshops:	Walt Atchison
Member Count:	56

Upcoming Events

Saturday October 10th

Española Young Eagles Rally

Time: 8:30 - 11:30 AM

Place: Ohkay Owingeh Airport (E14)

Questions: gary.goddard@losalamosnm.gov



YOUNG EAGLES
EAA EVENT
OHKAY OWINGEH AIRPORT (E14)
ESPAÑOLA, NEW MEXICO

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10
8:30 AM – 11:30 AM
OHKAY OWINGEH AIRPORT (E14) | ESPAÑOLA, NM

FREE AIRPLANE RIDES FOR YOUTH AGES 8-17
EVERYONE IS WELCOME!
*Come see airplanes, meet local pilots,
and learn about aviation.*
Register online in advance!



SCAN TO REGISTER

EAA
CHAPTER 691
LOS ALAMOS, SANTA FE, ESPAÑOLA
EXPERIENCE • DISCOVER • BELONG

Upcoming Events

Saturday November 21st

Taming the Taildragger

Presenter: John Lorenz

Time: 9:30 AM Donuts and Coffee, 10:00 Chapter meeting,
10:30 Presentation
Place: Terminal Building, Los Alamos Airport
1040 Airport Rd, Los Alamos, NM 87544
Questions: helloeditor691@gmail.com
Notes: Annual Business Meeting to be held as well

Date TBA, December

Christmas Party

Time: TBA
Place: TBA (...but chances are likely at David and America's)
Questions: helloeditor691@gmail.com
Notes: Potluck and White Elephant gift exchange, ~\$15

President's



Report

by Will Fox

2026 E14 Young Eagles Rally

Hi Folks,

This coming Saturday, October 10th, 2026 we will hold a Young Eagles Rally at the Ohkay Owingeh (Española) Airport in lieu of our normal Chapter meeting. Please feel free to drop on by anyway to see the action and grab some coffee and donuts. We plan to have 7 planes flying so there will be plenty of takeoffs and landings going on. The whole "shebang" kicks off at 8:30 AM.

Last month the Chapter hosted an open house in the EAA hangar as part of the Los Alamos Airport Open House. We had a hangar full of activities, including flight simulators, STEM demonstrations, an EAA information desk, a hands-on

opportunity to do some riveting, and helium balloons for the kids. We also had several of our member's homebuilt and certified aircraft on display that included a SCH-2 ultralight coaxial helicopter, a turbocharged Kitfox, a Taylorcraft, an Eagle XL ultralight, a Pegazair, a GlaStar, a Cardinal, a Cherokee Six, a Mooney, a turbocharged Bonanza, and a Questair Venture. I estimate that over 200 people dropped by the hangar to see what the Chapter is up to. We had a dozen members participating in the event which made it all the better. Thanks guys for all your efforts and know that you are very much appreciated! Gary Goddard, chapter member and airport manager did a great job of organizing the whole event that included much much more that is also covered in this month's newsletter.

On November 21st, 2026 we will have our annual meeting, so please attend if you can. I will talk about this past year's activities and accomplishments as well as some leadership changes and John will talk about the Chapter's new Business Plan. That will be followed by a presentation on "Taming the Taildragger" by John Lorenz. It should be an interesting and enjoyable meeting.

Check out our Chapter YouTube channel for the latest videos at
<https://www.youtube.com/@eaachapter691>

For a schedule of upcoming events, go to the Chapter website at
<https://www.eaachapter691.org/upcoming-events/>

President's

Report



The EAA Hangar Open House had some great activities and aircraft on display

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Flyers Almanac

October into November: Winter Influence

by ChatGPT / Andrew DeVecchio

By early October, northern New Mexico has largely moved out of the summer monsoon pattern. Afternoon thunderstorms become uncommon, the air dries considerably, and the long summer days give way to cooler mornings and shorter afternoons.

The transition into fall is usually one of the most enjoyable times to fly here. Visibility is often excellent, temperatures are comfortable, and the density-altitude concerns of summer have largely faded. But the weather is becoming increasingly influenced by larger-scale systems moving across the Southwest.

Fall Systems and Mountain Effects

As October progresses, stronger Pacific systems begin to make their way into the region.

- Westerly flow becomes more common
- Passing fronts can produce sudden wind shifts
- Mountain wave and lee-side turbulence become more frequent concerns

The Sangre de Cristo, Jemez, and surrounding ranges continue to shape the local flying environment. Strong winds aloft crossing the terrain can produce turbulence, mountain wave, and localized sink on the lee side of the mountains.

At the surface, a calm morning can still become a breezy afternoon as daytime heating mixes stronger winds down from above. Passing systems can also bring a noticeable change in conditions over a relatively short period.

Transition Toward November

By November, fall has largely settled in and winter begins to make its presence known.

Rain at lower elevations can increasingly mean snow in the mountains. A storm passing north of Santa Fe may leave the local airport perfectly flyable while producing very different conditions over the higher terrain. Mountain obscuration and rapidly changing conditions become more important considerations for cross-country flights.

Daylight also disappears quickly this time of year. An afternoon flight that feels comfortably within the daylight window can become a much tighter schedule by the time the return leg begins.

The good news is that the clear, dry days of fall can be spectacular. Cool temperatures, good visibility, and generally stable conditions can make October and early November some of the best flying of the year.

Pilot Takeaway

October into November is a beautiful time to fly in northern New Mexico.

The summer heat is gone.

The thunderstorms have mostly faded.

The air is cool and clear.

But the season is turning.

Cold mornings become normal, stronger weather systems return, and snow begins to appear on the mountains. A calm blue-sky morning does not necessarily tell you what the afternoon or the return trip will look like.

It's a good time to fly. Just remember that fall can change quickly, and winter is waiting just over the horizon.

The blue sky is still here. The season underneath it is changing.

Expect:

Temp 65-25°F

Precipitation: generally low, with increasing chances of rain and snow from passing systems

Sunshine 8-9 hrs/day

Wind W-SW 7-12 kt avg, gustier with passing systems



Tech Corner : New Venture ERA

by Will Fox



[The Questair Venture can cruise at 275 mph and has a range of over 1000 miles](#)

Back in the mid-1980s, there was a race to build the fastest amateur-built aircraft available. The unofficial goal was an airplane that could reach 250 mph on 250 horsepower and something a homebuilder could assemble into a personal speed demon. Two companies initially led the race: Questair and Swearingen. Later, in the early 2000s, Lancair joined the fray. All three ultimately exceeded the speed goal, achieving cruise speeds of 276 mph at altitudes between 8,000 and 12,000 feet MSL. The Questair Venture did it with a 280 hp Continental IO-550-G,

the Swearingen SX300 with a 300 hp Lycoming IO-540, and the Lancair Legacy with a 310 hp Continental IO-550-N. These aircraft had phenomenally slick airframes, capable of screaming along at roughly 275 mph—about 4.5 miles per minute—while delivering impressive range.

All three had remarkable climb rates. At sea level, they could climb at well over 2200 fpm. They were very efficient as well. The most efficient of the bunch was the Venture at 21 mpg, followed by

the Legacy at around 19.5 mpg and the SX300 at 14.5 mpg. The Venture has a reported service ceiling of 29,000 feet MSL with a normally aspirated engine. Each aircraft carried enough fuel for a range of more than 1,000 miles while cruising at 250 mph.

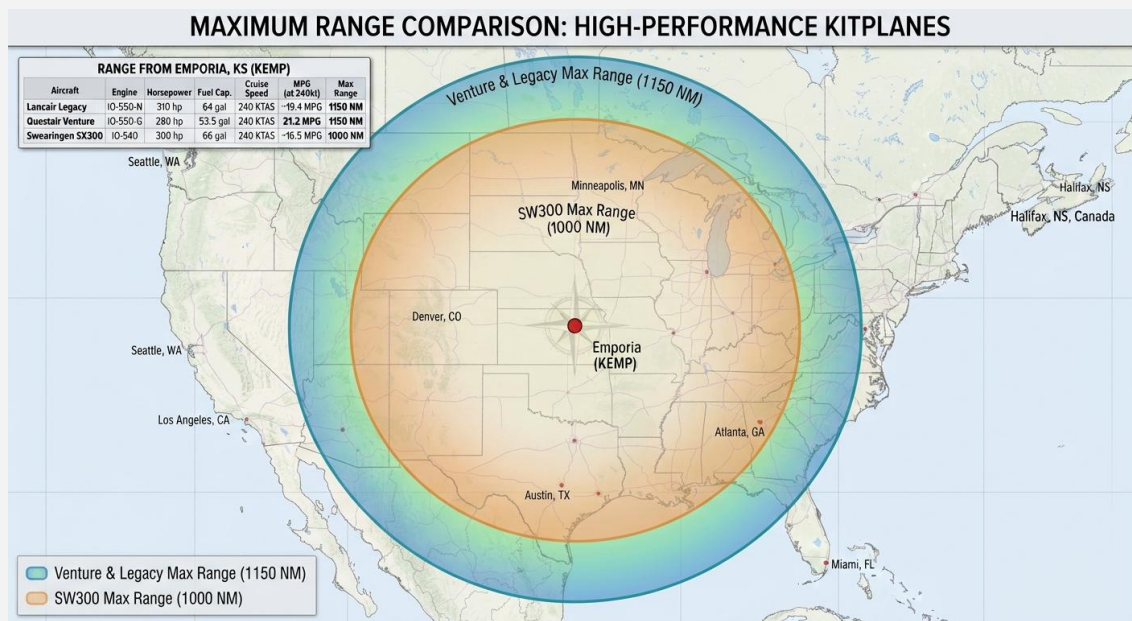
These airplanes were remarkable aeronautical achievements. They could carry two people and their luggage with tremendous speed and range, and they were sold as kits that amateur builders could assemble themselves. At least, that was the idea.

In practice, builders were spending 4,000 to 6,000 hours completing these complex, high-performance aircraft. Often, an airplane would wear out its first builder and be sold to another, only to wear out that builder as well. Sometimes a project passed through

several owners before someone finally finished it.

The retractable landing gear added considerable complexity, as did the fixtures and tooling needed to assemble the airframe accurately. Each design squeezed a large, heat-producing engine into a tight cowling to minimize drag. Engine baffling had to be just right to maximize cooling, and once all the accessories were installed, there wasn't much room left to work.

The time commitment and complexity caused many builders to give up, leaving numerous kits unfinished. Swearingen and Questair sold about 100 kits each, while Lancair sold around 250. On average, only about half were completed, and today, only around 200 of these aircraft are flying.



Range circles with VFR reserves for the Venture, SX300, and Legacy aircraft cruising at 250 mph

Once they were built and flying, it became clear that these airplanes weren't for the average pilot. With approach speeds comparable to those of light twin-engine jets, combined with high wing loadings and high stall speeds, they could be very unforgiving. The Venture suffered a number of loss-of-control accidents during landing, while the SX300 and Legacy experienced an inordinate number of stall/spin accidents. It became hard to find insurance for them.

Ultimately, all three original manufacturers either went out of business or stopped producing these kits. They simply weren't selling enough kits, at high enough prices, to keep going. Initially the darlings of the homebuilt aircraft market, these airplanes seemed to represent the pinnacle of homebuilt design. Their record-breaking performance and their designers' reputations generated tremendous excitement. In the end,

however, they proved difficult to build, had handling issues on the ground and high stall speeds that contributed to poor safety records. They also demanded considerable pilot experience to fly safely.

That might sound like the end of the story. But what if we asked a different question: Could a new generation of these aircraft be designed and built under the MOSAIC rules—and could it succeed? We already know the answer is yes. In fact, European manufacturers are doing it now with aircraft such as the JMB VL3, Blackwing BW650, Tarragon, Blackshape Prime Veloce, and Shark Aero. More than 1,000 of these aircraft have already been sold in Europe, and the United States represents a considerably larger potential market under the MOSAIC rules.

These European aircraft don't quite match the blistering cruise speeds of the Venture, SX300, and Legacy, but they still boast maximum cruise speeds of 200 to



The JMB VL3 is a European high performance light aircraft that is now being imported to the US

235 mph. Their stall speeds of 50 to 55 mph are much lower than the 65 to 85 mph of the Legacy, Venture, and SX300, making them more forgiving to fly and land.

But wouldn't it be a shame to let Europe dominate a market the United States essentially invented?

Consider this: What if a Venture—which has a lower drag coefficient than either the SX300 or the Legacy—were built using modern carbon composites, saving 150 pounds? What if it also used a much lighter turbocharged engine, such as the Rotax 916iS, saving another 150 pounds? A back-of-the-envelope calculation suggests that such a Venture could achieve a maximum cruise speed of 250 mph at 12,000 feet MSL and, with slotted flaps, a stall speed of 55 mph. With a service ceiling of 23,000 feet MSL, it could cruise at 270 mph.

Take that, Europe!



The Questair Venture ERA is a concept aircraft design that would use advanced carbon composite materials and a modern Rotax 916iS turbocharged engine in a very light weight, low drag airframe. It would incorporate safety features that would include a ballistic parachute recovery system and a high strength crash resistant monocoque airframe.

Will Fox is a flight instructor and homebuilder. He also serves as a Technical Counselor and Flight Advisor for the EAA. In his spare time he enjoys working on and flying his two homebuilt aircraft, a Pegazair P-180 and a Questair Venture. He is also fascinated with solar power and electric vehicles, so his next airplane will be electric. Please feel free to contact him at tailspinfox@gmail.com if you have questions or comments.

Catching Up

by ChatGPT / Andrew DeVecchio

When Is “Good Enough” Good Enough?

One of the things that comes with spending more time around airplanes is becoming better at noticing things. A little oil where there wasn't oil before. A tire that looks more worn than it did last month. A vibration you don't remember feeling yesterday. A weather forecast that isn't quite as favorable as you had hoped.

That awareness is a good thing. In aviation, noticing something unusual and taking it seriously is an important part of being a good pilot.

But there is another side to that skill that can be harder to develop: knowing when something is **actually a problem**, and when you've simply found something to think about.

We sometimes talk about the decision to fly as if the choices are simple. The airplane is airworthy, the weather is good, and we go. Or something is wrong, the weather is bad, and we stay home.

Real life is rarely that tidy.

Maybe the weather is technically VFR, but the forecast has enough uncertainty to make you uncomfortable. Maybe you notice a small amount of oil residue on the engine. Maybe the airplane feels a little different, but you can't quite put your finger on why. These are all reasonable things to stop and consider.

The important question is what comes next.

Is there actually a problem?

There is a big difference between observing something and deciding that something is wrong. If you find something unusual, investigate it. Look closer. Ask another pilot or mechanic. Check the appropriate documentation. Sometimes that process will uncover a genuine reason not to fly.

And sometimes you'll discover that the thing you noticed is normal.

That's where judgment becomes important. Not every imperfection is a grounding issue. Some things need to be fixed immediately. Some need to be monitored. Some are simply part of operating an airplane that is mechanical, individual, and never quite as perfect as the picture in our heads.

The opposite problem can happen, too.

We can become so accustomed to being cautious that we start looking for reasons not to fly. A forecast gets examined from every possible angle. A minor imperfection suddenly feels significant. We convince ourselves that we're being responsible when, in reality, we may simply be uncomfortable making a decision.

There's nothing wrong with deciding not to fly. In fact, sometimes that's exactly the right decision. But it is worth asking yourself whether you're responding to an actual risk or simply to uncertainty.

One question I find useful is:

Would I be concerned about this if I weren't planning to fly today?

If the answer is yes, it's probably worth taking seriously.

If the answer is no, it might be worth stepping back and looking at the situation again.

Good judgment isn't always about being more conservative. Sometimes it's about being able to recognize that you've done your homework, the airplane is ready, the conditions are acceptable, and you can stop worrying about it.

The goal isn't to become the pilot who always goes. It's not to become the pilot who always stays home, either.

It's to become the pilot who can tell the difference.

EAA Chapter 691

Membership Application/ Renewal Form

Please consider making a donation to our 501(c)(3) non-profit by mailing this form along with \$35 to our Chapter Treasurer. Checks can be made out to EAA Chapter 691:

David Young
819 Gonzales Rd
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Name: _____
Spouse/partner's Name: _____
EAA #: _____ Expiration Date (MM/YY) ____ / ____
Address: _____ City: _____
State: ____ ZIP: _____
E-mail: _____
Home phone: _____
Work phone: _____
Cell phone: _____
Please list your currently flying A/C and any finished or in-progress projects:



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