EAA691

November 2026

ISSUE 2611

CHAPTER NEWSLETTER



Española Young Eagles Rally

Española, New Mexico

photo credit: Andrew DeVecchio

www.eaachapter691.org

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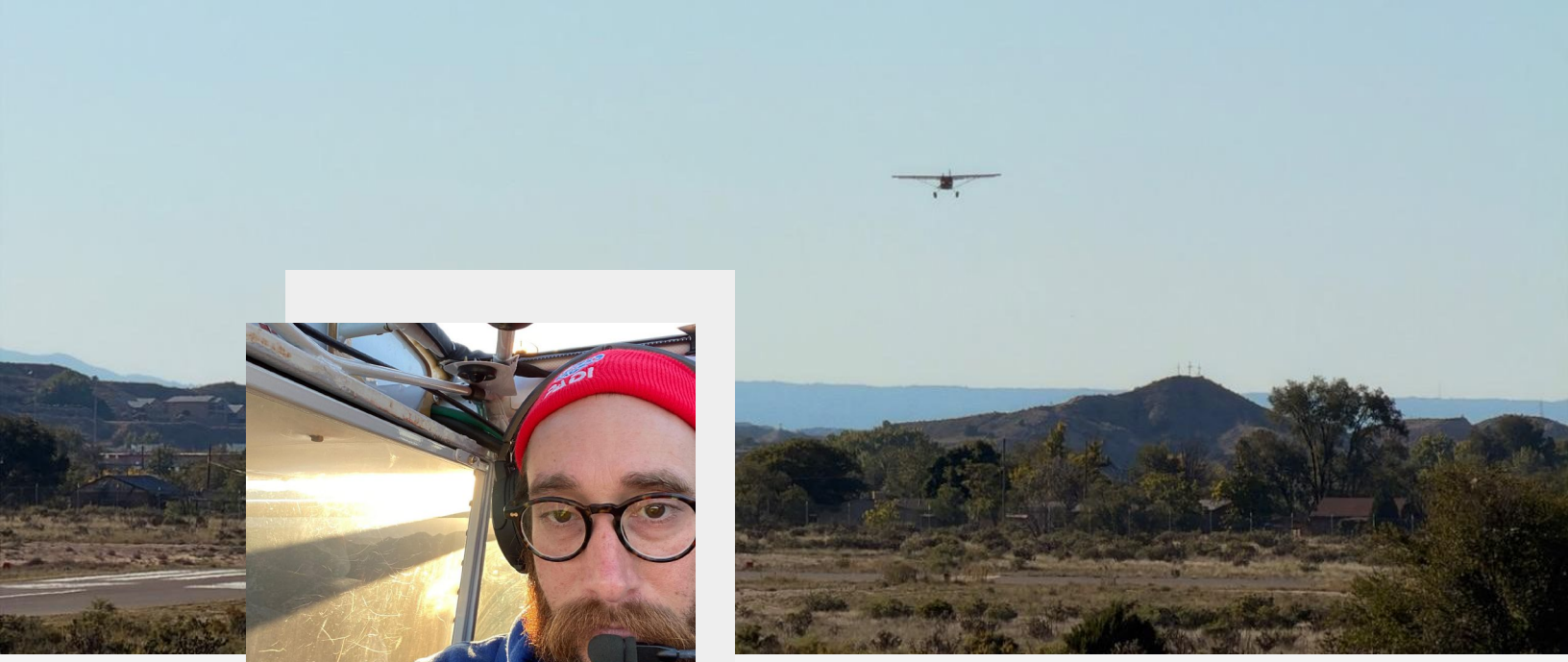
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WHO WE ARE

President:	Will Fox
Vice President:	John George
Secretary:	Pierre Levy
Treasurer:	David Young
Board Members:	Andrew DeVecchio
	Keith Tschohl
Web Editor:	Marilyn Phillips
Newsletter Editor:	Andrew DeVecchio
Technical Director:	Skip Egdorf
Young Eagles Coordinator:	Gary Goddard
Young Eagles Workshops:	Amy Ross
Member Count:	56



Letter from the Editor

by Andrew DeVecchio

October was one for the books! Another successful Young Eagles Rally and lots of happy faces. I'm always reminded of just how special these flights our chapter puts on are whenever I mention them to friends outside the flying community. They're in awe that we donate our time and planes, and that we've even had Young Eagles go on to careers in the aviation industry. I think that's something we can all give ourselves a pat on the back for. Another huge thanks to Gary Goddard for all the hard work organizing it as well.

Also, if you haven't heard already, our dear leader Will Fox will be stepping down from his role as President of EAA 691. Don't worry, I think he'll be around the hangars at KLAM a lot more now that he'll have some free time to work on his own planes as well as the Electric Dragonfly project. Don't tell Barb, but I think this might be a net negative in available Will time.

Come by the chapter event this weekend for our annual business meeting and the announcement of our President for 2027.

The talk by John Lorenz should also be an interesting one for anyone who's flown tailwheel or plan to. We've all heard the horror stories but it can't be that bad, right? Right?

Got something to share with the chapter? Send it to: **helloeditor691@gmail.com**

– Andrew

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:	johnlorenz@geoflight.net
Notes:	Annual Business Meeting to be held as well

Flying Tailwheels, What's the Big Deal?

Flying a tailwheel airplane does not require a super pilot, but it does require training, learning new skills, and a refinement of normal flight skills. We will examine those skills as well as some exercises for developing them, and discuss common mistakes. The tricycle-gear pilot relaxes at touchdown, whereas touchdown starts the high-workload phase of a tailwheel landing. Tailwheel flying is seat-of-the-pants flying that demands significant muscle memory rather than book knowledge. Per the FAA, a tailwheel endorsement involves proficiency with three-point and wheel takeoffs and landings, with crosswinds, and with go-arounds. In practical terms, a student needs to learn how to taxi and how to recover from bounced landings, and has earned the endorsement when the instructor is no longer scared during landings.



Upcoming Events

Saturday December 5th

Christmas Party

Time:	11 AM
Place:	David and America's 819 Gonzales Rd, Santa Fe
Questions:	chatayoung@gmail.com / helloeditor691@gmail.com
Notes:	Potluck and White Elephant gift exchange, ~$15 gift



President's Report



by Will Fox

Annual Meeting and Taildraggers

Hi Folks,

This coming Saturday, November 21, 2026 we will hold our annual Chapter meeting at the Los Alamos terminal building. We will announce the next Chapter President and also give a Chapter update. Following the meeting John Lorenz will be our guest speaker and give a presentation titled: "Taming the Taildragger". The social starts at 9:30am with coffee and donuts, followed by the business meeting at 10:00 and the presentation at 10:30.

Last month we had a Young Eagle rally at the Española airport where we gave free airplane rides to twenty-two kids. Gary Goddard organized the rally and our pilots were giving rides in 6 different airplanes and a helicopter. We had 6 volunteers for the ground crew as well, and they did an excellent job making sure the event ran like clockwork. The Española crew also hosted lunch for all our volunteers. The wind came up towards the end of the event and three of us in taildraggers headed back to Los Alamos lickity-split before the crosswinds got too high. We all made excellent landings in the gusty crosswind. Excellent being defined as "The airplanes were usable again"☺

I am always amazed at how successful these rallies are. In this case, we had around 60 aircraft operations in the space of about four hours, which amounts to a takeoff or landing every 4 minutes, all coordinated by the pilots themselves at an uncontrolled airport in a very safe manner. In parallel you have the ground crew handling registrations, escorting kids and parents to and from the aircraft, making sure that we give every kid that shows up a ride if at all possible, plus getting waivers signed, certificates filled out, and log books filled in and signed. I know we are all volunteers but there is a whole lot of professionalism on display at these rallies and that makes me feel very proud.



"Son, this is how you fly an airplane": "Thanks for the pointer, but what's that picture on your shirt"☺

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











Española Young Eagles Rally

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Flyers Almanac

November into December: Winter Days

by ChatGPT / Andrew DeVecchio

By November, northern New Mexico has largely settled into its winter pattern. Temperatures continue to fall, daylight becomes noticeably shorter, and the first meaningful winter weather systems begin moving through the region.

The transition is not always consistent. Warm, sunny afternoons can still occur, but overnight temperatures regularly drop below freezing. Passing winter systems can bring snow, colder air, and significant changes in conditions, sometimes with very little warning.

Winter Systems and Mountain Effects

As December approaches, winter weather becomes a more regular influence on the region.

- Pacific systems can bring snow and colder temperatures
- Strong westerly flow can produce mountain wave and significant turbulence
- Cold fronts can bring sharp temperature drops and changing surface winds

The Sangre de Cristo, Jemez, and surrounding ranges become increasingly important considerations. Snowfall and cloud cover can obscure mountain passes, while stronger winds aloft can create challenging conditions on the lee side of the terrain.

Even when conditions at Santa Fe or Los Alamos appear favorable, the higher elevations may be experiencing entirely different weather. Mountain obscuration, changing freezing levels, and localized icing conditions deserve particular attention during this time of year.

Temperatures and Surface Conditions

Cold becomes the defining feature of the season.

- Highs 40-55°F
- Lows 15-30°F
- Frequent overnight freezing and occasional much colder mornings

December brings some of the coldest temperatures of the year. Frost becomes routine, and snow and ice can linger on shaded surfaces and airport pavement.

For pilots, cold-weather operations become increasingly important. Frost must be completely removed before flight, cold starts can require additional consideration, and carburetor icing remains a concern even on otherwise clear days. The colder air improves aircraft performance, but it doesn't eliminate the need to evaluate actual conditions along the route.

Transition Toward December

By December, winter has firmly arrived in northern New Mexico.

Snow becomes more common at higher elevations, and winter storms can affect the region even when precipitation at the lower airports is limited. Conditions can vary considerably between departure and destination, particularly when crossing the mountains.

Shorter days add another consideration. With sunset arriving early, there is less room for delays, changing weather, or an extended return flight. Cold temperatures also mean that an unexpected stop or diversion can become more uncomfortable and demanding.

There are still plenty of excellent flying days. Clear winter skies can offer remarkable visibility, smooth morning conditions, and some spectacular views of snow-covered mountains. But winter flying requires a little more attention to what is happening beyond the airport.

Pilot Takeaway

November into December is when northern New Mexico starts to feel like winter.

The mornings get colder.
The days get shorter.
The mountains begin to hold snow.

Clear skies and good visibility can make for beautiful flying, but winter weather is becoming a more regular part of the picture. Pay attention to freezing levels, mountain conditions, and the weather along the entire route, not just at the departure airport.

It's still a good time to fly. Just remember that winter leaves less room for improvisation. Plan for the cold, leave yourself daylight, and be willing to wait for another day.

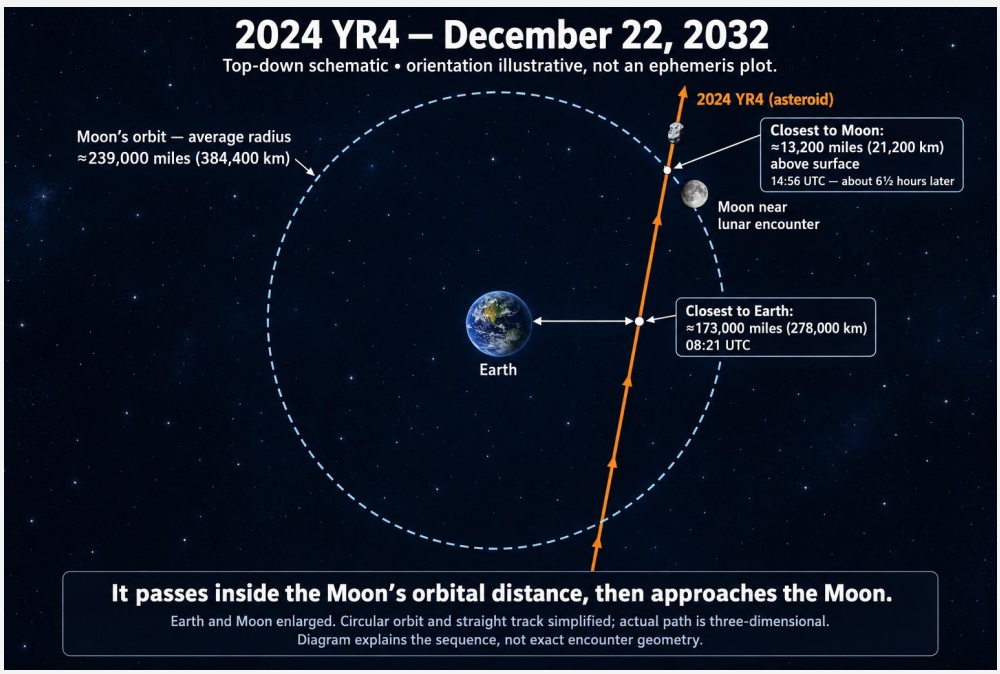
Winter doesn't ground you. It just asks a little more of you.

Expect:
Temp 50-15°F
Precipitation: generally low, with occasional rain and increasing chances of snow
Sunshine 7-8 hrs/day
Wind W-SW 7-12 kt avg, gustier with passing winter systems



Tech Corner :
Asteroids and Aircraft

by Will Fox



Asteroid 2024 YR4 will fly between the Earth and the Moon in 2032

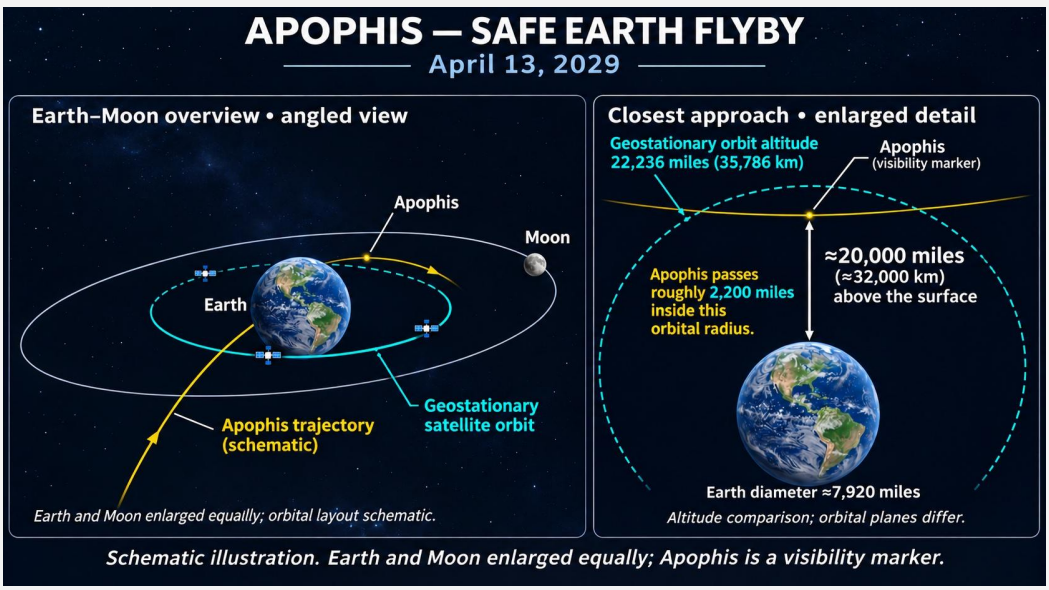
I was recently reading about a near miss that occurred a couple of years ago, when an asteroid labeled 2024 YR4 slipped by Earth at 10 miles per second and wasn't detected until two days later. Geez, I thought NASA had a handle on all these rocks flying by Earth that could hit us someday. It turns out that they do, and they don't. They have gotten good at tracking the larger ones, but they have a hard time detecting and tracking those that approach from the direction of the Sun. The Sun's glare blinds telescopes that operate in the visible spectrum. It's like an enemy aircraft coming at you out of the sun: they're all but impossible to see. NASA is in the process of building and launching space telescopes that will operate at infrared wavelengths, and that will make these sneaky asteroids visible in the future.

All this got me thinking about how often an unseen asteroid actually hits Earth, and what kind of damage they can really do. On Christmas Day 2024, YR4, a 200-foot-wide asteroid weighing 500,000,000 pounds, passed within 500,000 miles of Earth without being

detected. Had it hit Earth, the energy released would have been equivalent to 10 megatons of TNT.

A miss by 500,000 miles seems like it wasn't very close, but in astronomical terms, that is amazingly close. It will get a lot closer when it returns for a flyby on December 22, 2032, passing between Earth and the Moon, a mere 13,000 miles inside the Moon's orbit. To put that in terms pilots can relate to, the Moon's diameter is around 2,200 miles, and the asteroid will miss it by six times that diameter. The analogy would be an aircraft in the pattern on a downwind and another aircraft flying thru the pattern and approaching it from behind at a high rate of speed and missing it by only six wingspans. That might get your attention!

There is an even closer call in store for us in 2029. On Friday, April 13, 2029 — yes, Friday the thirteenth — an asteroid named Apophis will pass about 20,000 miles above Earth's surface, inside the orbit of our geostationary communication satellites. Apophis is much larger than YR4, with a diameter of roughly 1,200 feet. It is packing a lot more energy as well: 1,200 megatons of TNT. If it were to hit Earth, its impact energy would be 120 times that of YR4. Apophis will be visible at night to the naked eye from parts of the Eastern Hemisphere. Applying the aircraft analogy again and using Earth's diameter of around 8,000 miles for reference, the flyby would be like a near collision with one aircraft in the pattern and another aircraft flying through the pattern and over taking it from behind at a 35 degree angle. In this case the two aircraft would only miss each other by two and a half wingspans! That would definitely get your attention. Fortunately, astronomers have ruled out an Earth impact by Apophis for at least the next century.



The Apophis asteroid will do a very close flyby of the Earth in April 2029, passing within 20,000 miles of the Earth's surface. It's path take it inside the orbit of our Geostationary communication satellites.

So, how often does one of these asteroids actually hit Earth? Let me give you a few examples. The 1908 Tunguska asteroid, estimated to be about 200 feet in diameter and traveling about 10 miles per second, entered Earth's atmosphere and exploded before reaching the ground. The energy from that explosion was estimated at around 15 megatons, creating a blast wave that flattened trees across roughly 800 square miles of Siberian forest. In another instance, on February 15, 2013, a 60-foot-diameter asteroid known as Chelyabinsk exploded in the atmosphere over Russia's southern Ural region with an energy of about 500 kilotons. The resulting shock wave shattered windows across six cities, damaged more than 3,000 buildings, and injured more than 1,200 people. Fortunately, no one was killed. Once again, the asteroid came out of the Sun's glare, and there was no advance warning.

Asteroids the size of Chelyabinsk usually break up in the upper atmosphere rather than hitting the ground intact. The shock wave they produce is therefore spread over a larger area and weakens as it approaches the ground. They can damage a city but aren't going to flatten it. They impact Earth every 50–100 years. Scientists estimate that asteroids the size of YR4 and Tunguska are capable of a city-scale disaster and impact Earth about every 1,000–2,000 years. Impacts from asteroids the size of Apophis are rarer still but are capable of a regional disaster that can have worldwide climate effects. It is estimated that they impact the Earth every 100,000 to 200,000 years. Scientists discovered a large basin in South Korea, called the Hapcheon crater, that they believe was caused by an asteroid impact. They estimated that the Hapcheon asteroid had kinetic energy on the scale of Apophis and struck Earth 42,000–50,000 years ago.

Large asteroids do fly by Earth fairly regularly. JPL estimates that Chelyabinsk-sized asteroids or larger pass within a million miles of Earth a couple of times a week! During a human lifetime, it is probable that one or two of those asteroids will hit Earth. Most impacts will likely involve a Chelyabinsk-sized asteroid rather than one the size of Apophis. An impact is also much more likely to occur in an ocean or an uninhabited area.

So, how does owning an airplane fit into this picture? For one thing, it gives you a way to rapidly get out of the asteroids path, because you really don't want to be anywhere near the impact. This is especially true if an unknown asteroid appears from the direction of the Sun close to Earth, leaving little time for warning. The nice thing about the kinds of airplanes most of us fly, and the airports we can use, is that we are not likely to get trapped in a traffic jam. We can also travel 400–600 miles in a straight line on one

load of fuel, which will most likely get us beyond the immediate effects of the impact. Light aircraft, especially backcountry aircraft, can use fields and roads for takeoff and landing if necessary. Many of our aircraft can also use mogas in a pinch if avgas is unavailable. After an impact, aircraft like ours can support recovery efforts by providing aid and assistance to first responders and survivors in the disaster area.

What would be the best type of light aircraft to have in a situation like this? Any airplane would be better than none.

However among single-engine piston aircraft, I think a good candidate would be a utilitarian airplane with reasonable speed and payload, simple maintenance and repair requirements, and no need for 5,000 feet of pavement to land and take off. Airplanes like the Cessna 185, 182, 180, and 206, come to mind, along with the PA-28-235, and PA-32. Rugged STOL aircraft like the Super Cub, Husky, Helio Courier, Beaver, and some of the homebuilt STOL aircraft would also fit the bill.

What kind of aircraft would you pick?



What would a large asteroid impact look like if it hit New Mexico? Next month I will explore a plausible scenario and how pilots could prepare for it.

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.

Clickbait!

This clickbait is a little different. I was forwarded a link to some lodging up in Alaska. Why would a BnB listing be of interest to us? Well, because this one comes with direct access to a runway which allows you taxi right up to your hotel room. Oh, and that hotel room happens to be a DC-9, DC-6, 727, or the control tower. Sounds pretty good to me. I actually did some tailwheel/off airport training back in 2021 with Jon Kotwicki, the host and mastermind behind the project. He's a CFI and still does training, presumably all from his own airport. If flying in Alaska wasn't on your bucket list yet, it should be.

https://fly8ma.com/pilot-lodge/
https://www.fly-inn.com/stays/322



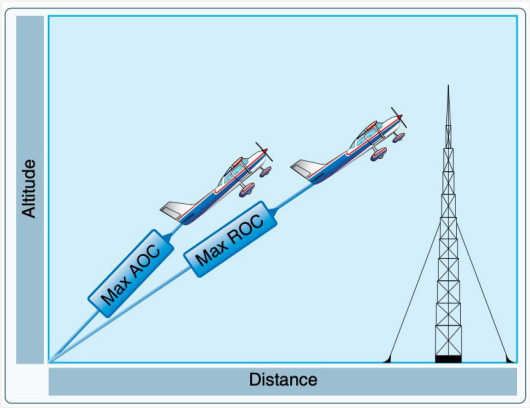
Catching Up

by ChatGPT / Andrew DeVecchio

Airspeed

Airspeed is one of the first things we learn to pay attention to as pilots. We watch it during takeoff, climb, cruise, and landing, and we know that flying too slowly can get us into trouble. But not all airspeeds serve the same purpose. In fact, there are several important speeds that tell us how to get the most out of our airplane, depending on what we're trying to accomplish.

Two of the most commonly discussed are Vx and Vy. They're easy to confuse, but the distinction is important.



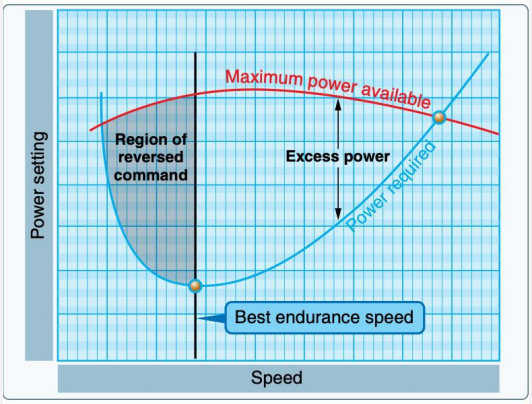
Maximum angle of climb (AOC) versus maximum rate of climb (ROC)
faa.gov

Vx is best Angle of Climb (AOC). It's the airspeed that allows an airplane to gain the most altitude over the shortest horizontal distance. Think of it as the steepest climb possible. This is particularly useful when departing from a runway with obstacles or terrain ahead. Flying at Vx allows the airplane to clear the greatest height before traveling too far forward.

Vy is best Rate of Climb (ROC). Rather than gaining the most altitude over a given distance, Vy gives us the greatest altitude gain in the shortest amount of time. This is generally the speed we want for a normal climb once obstacles are no longer a concern. The airplane will climb faster vertically, although the climb angle will be somewhat shallower than at Vx.

An easy way to remember the difference: Vx gets you up over something, while Vy gets you up as quickly as possible.

There's another concept worth understanding when discussing climb performance: the power curve. Without getting too deep into aerodynamics, an airplane requires different amounts of power at different airspeeds. At higher speeds, parasitic drag increases as the airplane pushes through the air. At lower speeds, induced drag increases as the wings work harder to produce lift. Somewhere between these two ends is a point where the airplane requires the least amount of power to maintain level flight.



Power required curve
faa.gov

Below that point, we're entering what's known as the *region of reversed command*, more commonly called being "behind the power curve." Here, slowing down actually requires more power to maintain altitude. If airspeed continues to decrease, adding power alone may not be enough. The pilot must also manage pitch and angle of attack to regain airspeed. It's one reason why maintaining appropriate airspeed, particularly during slow flight and the approach to landing, is so important.

There's one more speed worth revisiting: **best glide**.

Best glide is the airspeed that gives us the greatest horizontal distance for a given loss of altitude in still air. It's the speed we'd want to establish following an engine failure, giving us the best opportunity to reach a suitable landing area. Flying faster or slower than best glide increases drag and reduces the distance we can cover.

Unlike Vx and Vy, best glide isn't about engine performance. It's about getting the most distance out of the lift our wings are producing. The speed corresponds to the airplane's best lift-to-drag ratio, and it's specific to the aircraft.

If you need more time in the air, minimum sink speed is what you're after. This speed is rarely found in a POH, however it's something to be aware of.

So why bother remembering all these different speeds? Because each one serves a different purpose. Vx helps us clear obstacles, Vy helps us climb efficiently, and best

glide helps us cover the greatest distance when the engine isn't producing power. Understanding the power curve helps tie these ideas together by showing us how airspeed affects the airplane's performance.

It's worth taking a few minutes to revisit the performance section of your aircraft's POH or operating handbook. Find these speeds, understand what they mean, and know when to use them. They aren't universal numbers, and they can vary between aircraft and operating conditions.

We spend a lot of time watching the airspeed indicator. It's worth remembering that the number we're looking for depends on what we're asking the airplane to do.

For more detailed reading:

https://www.faa.gov/sites/faa.gov/files/13_phak_ch11.pdf

https://www.faa.gov/sites/faa.gov/files/2022-01/Best%20Glide%20Speed%20and%20Distance.pdf

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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