



EAA 485

February 2026 — Panhandle Pelicans



The Spring Young Eagles Rally is right around the corner on March 28th. Looking forward to another amazing group of volunteers help bring the love of aviation to the next generation!

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

Last summer we discussed the origin of “dog days of summer”. Now here we are in the “dead of winter”. So of course I had to research the origin of that term. Google AI tells me it dates from the early 1600s, referring to the “deep, frozen core of winter, showing the least signs of life or activity.” Well, I beg to differ! All those of us smart enough to live in Florida know this is a great time of year to fly. And judging from recent clubhouse volunteer work, scholarship workup, and Young Eagle planning— Chapter 485 is rocking and rolling here in Pensacola. And the support we get from our host airport management is unbelievable. Thank you!

At our January meeting, Sean Londrigan Sr. gave a wonderful presentation covering V-22 flight characteristics. You’d think he was a retired military test pilot and current college professor...wait— he is! Thanks, Sean. We are really blessed with the talent level in this chapter. At the February meeting, member and insurance agent Larry Mattiello will speak on aviation insurance issues.

Clubhouse renovation: As I write these notes Jan. 26th, it is well under way. I asked Mark Rogers to head up the effort, and he took the ball and ran. I’m including a couple photos in this newsletter. Look for a section of photos on the eaa485.org website EVENT ARCHIVES soon. Mark will give us an update at the Feb. 14th meeting.

I am well aware that most of our 100+ members are unable to attend our Saturday monthly meetings. We appreciate your financial and moral support, and we work hard to keep you informed through this newsletter and the eaa485.org website.

Hope to see you Feb. 14th!

Ralph

for the love of aviation



DRANO'S ZENITH 750 UPDATE

I mentioned last month that my building efforts slowed down somewhat in December due to the time competition of the holidays. I expected things to pick up during January, and they did.....somewhat. Turns out when it comes to working in a cold hangar on a cold day with cold hands I don't get a lot done.

I did string the cables for control of the rudder and the elevator. They are all attached with turnbuckles in place but they are not yet tightened to spec or safety wired. I also fitted and hung the full span flaperons but am still in the process of trying to rig them to the specified amount of control surface authority at both zero and full flap settings. It seems that moving something into adjustment at one end brings it out of adjustment at the other. It's the paradox of plans vs. perfection!

On a positive note, more and more, I find myself working on finishing details till I run into the inevitable SSG (small solvable glitch). The glitch creates an all-stop on a particular effort until I can get a longer AN 5 bolt, or fabricate a spacer, or find a longer shackle that I do not have on hand and must to order. But, most of what I am doing can be loosely described as finishing things up.

Riveting on the rudder stop which has been cleco'd in place for eight months!

When I overcome all the little SSGs, I'm going to do a lot of safety wiring, lubricate anything that moves, and button the interior panels up. After that it is getting the paperwork ready for inspection which is no small feat by itself. Sure hope it warms up in February but in any case, I'll keep you informed.

Drano



Rudder fairing riveted on. Looks like it will add 10 mph!

RAY AVIATION SCHOLARSHIP

Lily Bannon is steadily continuing her training. Her only flight requirements left is .5 hours of solo time. Other than that she is preparing for her check ride. She changed instructors so she has to demonstrate to the new instructor she is ready.

2026 Ray Scholarship Program

We are were formally be awarded 2 scholarships at any time. The application window is open through March 8, 2026. Dr. Keel has again offered to give our applicants medical exams. On February 28th. Tentatively interviews will be March 21 and 22 with the selected candidates announced at the April meeting. This timeline should allow the selected candidates start their covered training by mid-April.

—Scott Swanson

2026 Chapter Dues:

Now is the best time to pay your chapter dues for 2026! If you are unsure if you have any, please check with [Kaydee](#) and she will let you know.

—Kaydee

Secretary's Notes: Jan 10, 2025

VMC: departure in the dark

IMC: late night pickup

10:00 meeting

Officer Reports

Work on the roof has begun

Courtney Wielander is the 2025 MVP

Young Eagles Rally on March 28

Guest Speaker

Sean Londrigan Sr., Lt. Col. USAF (RET) —

USAF V-22 Osprey Development

—Jacob

TRAINING AND SAFETY TIP: WHERE THE 'VICINITY' ENDS

Where does the FAA draw that line?

March 21, 2023

By William E. Dubois

FAR 91.103(a)—the first flight rule—mentions that as part of your preflight planning for any flight not in the vicinity of an airport, you must obtain weather reports and forecasts, calculate fuel requirements, determine alternates, and be alert to traffic delays.



So, all of that seems pretty clear. Until you think about it.

How does the FAA define “vicinity?” Is it just the traffic pattern? Or is it a number of miles—like the 25-nautical-mile radius to which students are limited with a basic solo endorsement? And, hey, what about the practice area? Is that in the vicinity of the airport? If it isn’t, the regulations require you to get a weather briefing and all the rest before you go out to work on your turns around a point.

The word “vicinity” isn’t defined in FAR Part 91. No advisory circular addresses it. Now what?

Well, sometimes you have to ask for help, so the AOPA Air Safety Institute reached out to AOPA’s Pilot Protection Services (PPS) legal eagles, who did a deep dive to analyze what “in the vicinity of an airport” practically means.

The AOPA PPS attorneys found a 1992 letter of interpretation in which the FAA responded to the question about the meaning of the phrase “in the vicinity of an airport,” as it is used in FAR 91.103. The FAA’s answer?: “We have no specific, fixed definition of ‘vicinity’ but instead, interpret its meaning on a case-by-case basis.” Good to know, but not very helpful.

There are, however, a few NTSB administrative law judge decisions that shed some light on how judges have viewed the subject. Several cases dealt with flights from one airport to another close-by airport, making it clear that once you land somewhere other than where you took off—regardless of distance traveled—you’ve left the vicinity.

Next, AOPA PPS attorneys found one case—although it didn’t set a precedent that can be relied upon by other pilots—where a judge said, “‘In the vicinity of the airport’ refers to someone taking off and staying in the traffic pattern, or staying within that general area, returning to that same airport.” Great! Now we are making progress. All we need now is a working definition of “that general area.”

Guess what? Yeah. There’s nothing to be found on that anywhere.

In the end, it appears that if you are staying in the pattern of an airport, you are solidly “in the vicinity.” But beyond that, it’s a gray area. So, what to do? AOPA PPS attorneys say to play it safe, just comply with the regulation anytime you leave the pattern.

And that is how you should fly through the regs, anyway. On the safe side.

Possible 2026 Guest Speakers

Aviation Insurance Agent

Retired SR-71 Pilot

Sean Londrigan, Sr, USAF V-22 Osprey Development

Briefing

AOPA Airport Reps for PNS and/or JKA

Kevin Kropp, PSC Student Services Advisor, Aviation Mechanics

Dr. Scott Rossow, DO, DABR, CFII, FAA Deputy Regional Flight Surgeon,
Central Region

Possible 2026 Field Trips

Kevin Kropp, ST Engineering at PNS

AIRBUS at BFM

Continental Motors aircraft engine factory Mobile

Museum of Naval Aviation

EAA and Local Chapter Sites

[EAA 485](#)

[EAA HDQTRS](#)

[EAA 416](#)

[Interesting Links](#)

[Making the First Airbus 220 Time Lapse](#)

[Jetman Unleashed in Dubai](#)

[Boeing 737 Time Lapse Build](#)

[F-18 Low Level](#)

[High Speed Carrier Maneuvering](#)

[Miscellaneous](#)

[1800wxbrief.com](#)

[FAA Notams](#)

[Barnstormers](#)

[Skyvector.com](#) Flight Planning, Charts

[AirNav.com](#) Airport info, Fuel Prices

[EAA 1265](#)

[EAA 108](#)

Normally meetings will be held at [Roscoe Field Airport \(82J\)](#) (Uni 122.8) on the **Second Saturday** of each month at 10:00 AM unless otherwise posted.

If flying in, check NAS Pensacola (KNPA) NOTAMS for possible TFRs and the [Roscoe Field Airport website](#) under the Arrivals tab for important arrival and departure information.

Driving: From Hwy 98 turn south on Aileron Avenue and enter at the main airport entrance. Turn right at the dumpsters and follow the single-lane paved road. Just short of the blue aircraft hangars, turn left. Our white clubhouse is at the end on the left. If the main airport entrance gate is locked, continue south on Aileron Avenue to the end and turn left into the back gate. Open and close the gate behind you. Make a right once past the blue hangars. You'll see our white clubhouse at the end on the left.

For more info contact:

[Ralph Moser](#) (847) 736-4603.

2026 Officers and Committee Chairmen

President: [Ralph Moser](#)
(847) 736-4603

Vice President: [Mark Rogers](#)

Tech Counselor/Flight Advisor: (251) 228-0356

Secretary: [Jacob Abston](#)
(251)424-5004

Treasurer/Membership: [Kaydee MacDonald](#)

Ray Scholarship Coordinator: [Scott Swanson](#)
(309)-267-9710

Young Eagles Coordinator: Sean Londrigan
(217) 503-3534

Webmaster: [Doug Francisco](#)
(850) 453-5501

VMC Club / [Donna and DeWitt Barker](#)

IMC Club (850) 572-0288

Newsletter Editor: Courtney Wielander
(305) 917-5557

Tech Counselor [John McKiernan](#)
Flight Advisor (850) 291-4134

Thatcher CX4 Build





Home Of The
PANHANDLE PELICANS

EAA 485 Pensacola, FL

**EAA 485
news**

Upcoming Events

(CHAPTER EVENTS IN CAPS):

February 14th, MONTHLY CHAPTER

—Guest Speaker

MEETINGS – Program TBA

February 24-26 EAA Virtual Ultralight
Days [Webinars]

March 14th, MONTHLY CHAPTER

MEETINGS – Program TBA

March 28-29, Wings Over Meridian
(KMEI)

**March 28th, SPRING YOUNG EAGLES
RALLY**

April 11TH, MONTHLY CHAPTER

MEETINGS – Program TBA

**April 14-19, Sun ‘n Fun Aerospace Expo,
Lakeland, FL**

July 15-18, Pensacola Beach Air Show

July 20-26th, Air Venture, Oshkosh, WI

November 6-7, Blue Angels Homecoming
Air Show

Next chapter meeting is:

Saturday, February 14th, 2025

0830-0930, VMC/IMC Club Meeting.

1000-1100, General Membership
Meeting:

Pledge

Guests

Officers Reports: President,
Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer/
Membership

Ray Scholarship – Scott Swanson

Young Eagles – Sean Londrigan

Member Build Projects Update

Guest Speaker – – Member Larry
Mattiello, Aviation Insurance

Lunch after meeting (thanks to James
Hobbs + ?) - Cheeseburgers/Chips/
Cookies/Soft Drinks - \$5 donation
requested

****Ray 2026 Student Pilot Certificate
Applicant CFI endorsements, Main
Meeting Room****

***ALL 2026 CHAPTER MEETINGS ARE
CURRENTLY SCHEDULED ON SECOND
SATURDAY MORNING OF MONTH, Jan-Nov.
See eaa485.org, EVENT CALENDAR for dates.**