EAA485

May 2025—Panhandle Pelicans

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

As I write this, we just completed another successful Young Eagle Rally. Forty-four kids signed up, thirty-six showed up, and we flew them ALL. *And* we did it under challenging wind conditions using only six airplanes. Tanner Matheny (Navion) and Roy Bentley (C182) each hauled eleven kids, filling the seats, to help make this happen. Eighteen ground volunteers—a SUPERB turnout—were coordinated by Scott Swanson. It was especially heartening to see lots of our younger pilots/scholars/scholarship applicants there. Craig Spoke and Bill Diaz did their usual yeoman work with registration and paperwork, despite the "new and improved" EAA online registration system giving them fits. And we signed up a new member or two. Well done, everyone!

Looking forward, Roscoe Airport will be hosting a Pancake Breakfast May 17th. They will provide the marketing, grills, food, and location (a large tent near FBO hanger). We will provide the manpower. We're hoping for around 100 fly-in/drive-in customers. I'll pass around a sign-up at the May 10th meeting. It would be nice to have a dozen or so volunteers. For those of you not able to attend the May 10th meeting but wanting to volunteer May 17th, please text me at 847-736-4603. I'll provide you details when available.

An improvement I hope you will notice in our operation has to do with newsletter distribution. I tried to do this for Courtney in recent months, and have just never got it right. Member Craig Spoke, a career IT instructor and email expert, has volunteered to take it over. He's got it! As you've already seen by his mailing of the Roy E. Ray Fly-In information, he will also mail out time-sensitive events and info that can't wait for the next monthly newsletter. Thanks, Craig!

See you May 10th!

Ralph

RAY AVIATION UPDATE

Webber Cantin has been flying almost every day and has completed over 10 hours of flight time since being awarded the scholarship.

Lily Bannon has also been flying often. She had a minor setback after one of her first flights. She slipped when getting out of the aircraft and sprained her wrist. But she was back flying in a couple of days. Then in the following week her plane had a flat tire just as they were cleared for takeoff. She said better at that time than on landing.

Sophia Almond has been flying as wind and weather permits. She is working on her night flights and starting to prepare for her check ride. She is hoping to graduate high school and get her private pilot certificate at almost the same time.

Since completing her instrument training, Samantha Watkins is continuing towards her commercial certificate.

Brian Harris, Ray Scholar #2, is taking a new position as a CFI at Pensacola Air. He is very excited about this opportunity.

—Craig Spoke

April 12th, 2025 Secretary Report

VMC: lost & unlucky

IMC: scattered thunderstorm

Meeting

April 19 we had our Spring Young Eagles Rally.

May 1-3 was the Roy E. Ray fly-in

May 10: local military airspace briefing

June 7: tentative Paradigm Parachutes tour after meeting

June 14: CJFA Young Eagles Rally

We made Gold Status for our chapter in 2024.

We had our Ray Scholarship Awards Ceremony for our two Ray Scholars.

—Jacob Abston

DRANO'S ZENITH 750 UPDATE

I have recently spent a considerable amount of time trying to make sense of sensors in my Rotax engine, specifically temperature sensors for the CHT and the coolant. You may recall that the Rotax engine has air cooled cylinders and cylinder heads cooled with coolant (antifreeze). The maximum operating temperature limits for the antifreeze and the cylinder heads are not the same so it behooves the builder/pilot to keep track of both. "Behooves" is just a sophisticated way of saying, "Y'all better get this right buckaroo!" The Rotax RPM limits are 5800 max for five minutes, 5500 max continuous. My point here is that it is a little engine at very high RPM so little things become big issues quickly. Closely monitoring the engine temperatures is a really good idea.

My engine came with one of the two required CHT sensors and an anti-freeze sensor that does not work. When tested, it did not respond to anything between ice water and boiling water. The engine is built in Austria, the OEM sensors are J-type sensors built in Germany by a company called VDO. To further complicate things, the sensors are 10mm x 1.5 thread making it an oddity. You add all the uniqueness of this arrangement together and it spells p-r-i-c-e-y. I ordered one from a US supplier of Rotax parts then another from a less expensive source in England. So, I now had three: one that came with the engine, one from a US supplier, one from England….an old one, a brass one, and a chromed one that looked like the old one...supposedly all the same VDO sensor. I decided to try and test them to compare readings. Pictured are the old sensor and the one from the US supplier. The one from England is already installed.

A J-type temperature sensor is a resistive sensor, these measure temperature by detecting changes in electrical resistance. It measures temperature by the amount of resistance (ohms) within the sensor across the temperature range the sensor is rated for and it is not a linear relationship. The temperature/value reading falls along a curve, so you have to know temperatures and corresponding ohms across the sensor rating in order to manually program an EMS if it is not already calibrated to that sensor. My EMS is not calibrated for VDO sensors.

I corresponded with the sensor source in England, and they were good enough to provide me with the sensor factory ohm readings schedule against the temperatures. I set up a wire bracket that held these sensors in a cup, grabbed my wife's electric tea pot, set up my multi tester to take readings from boiling water down to 122F, and started testing to compare those readings to the factory schedule and relative to each other. Ugh! It was wild, the readings were all over the place; only one matched up reasonably. The closest match was the newest sensor (the one from England) and the factory chart.

There is a logic to that, and I decided to go with it. I ordered two more sensors from my source in the UK so that I will have three new sensors, all from the same source. I'm trying hard to "behoove" myself here and believe this is going to work….But I will keep you informed.

—Drano

Chapter Build Project Report

"Latest progress on the Thatcher. Ethan Smith is a regular participant in the "old fart" club. We are currently laying bidirectional molds and "wetting out" with fiberglass resin to fabricate the upper and lower cowlings."

Young Eagles Event

We hosted a successful Spring Young Eagles Rally Saturday, April 19th. All thirty-six kids that showed up got a flight. No ground or air incidents or accidents, on a day with challenging winds. That's a great credit to all the pilots and ground volunteers.

For the majority of the kids, it was their first flight in any airplane. I would like to thank the six pilots and nineteen (maybe more?) ground volunteers that made it happen.

Special shoutout to two people—Scott Swanson for coordinating the Ground Volunteers, and past scholarship winner Cody Rhoades, for flying Young Eagles for the first time (see photo).

We used the excellent new 5-minute EAA briefing video for the parents and kids, which helped move things along. Luckily, the pilots of the two four-seat aircraft were willing to load up all seats, so we wrapped up around noon. For a great recap with lots of photos, thanks to Doug Francisco, see EVENT ARCHIVES on eaa485.org.

Pilots/Aircraft who flew: John McKiernan (RV-7), Duane Thiessen (RV-6), Roy Bentley (Cessna 182), Tanner Matheny (Navion), Mark Rogers (RV-14A), and Cody Rhoades (Cessna 152).

Ground Volunteers (I apologize if I miss someone): Scott Swanson, Craig Spoke, Bill Diaz, DeWitt Barker, Donna Barker, Joe Buis, Jacob Abston, Sean Londrigan, Kenny Kerr, Cameron Kerr, Nick Hanssen, Webber Cantin, Eric Cantin, Sophia Almond, Jackson Batten, Anna Peaden, Doug Francisco, Ralph Moser, and Ethan Smith.

Our next event will be the private Chappie James Flight Academy Young Eagle Rally, flying up to thirty of their summer graduates on Saturday, June 14th. I would like to put in an early request again for pilots and ground volunteers. If we get ten airplanes and fly three flights each, we can have it wrapped up by 1100 or so, before the heat gets too stifling. Let's get more of our scholarship-winning private pilots out there flying Young Eagles!

—Ralph Moser for Eric Goldman

Bob McGoun Obituary

Sad News

Bob McGoun, a longtime member of EAA Chapter 485 passed away on April 26th after a longtime illness.

Bob opened his hangar at Shields Field in 2008-2012 for chapter meetings when 485 left Ferguson airport. The Thatcher CX4 build project was rejuvenated and chapter membership grew each year. Without his generosity the chapter may not have survived.

Obituary

Robert Rowland (Bob) McGoun, Age 89, Born in Newcastle, Pennsylvania on March 13,1936. Died in Pensacola, FL on April 26, 2025.

Family moved to Pensacola when Bob was 5 years old and his father trained Navy pilots for World War II. His father also taught Bob to fly at a young age. After serving in the Army, Bob began his 37 year career as an engineer at Chemstrand/Monsanto. There he met and married the love of his life Ann Horn McGoun. They Shared 48 years together until her passing in 2010. He was a devoted father and Scout Master in his community for many years where he guided scouts on countless adventures. He was a private Pilot and enjoyed fly-ins.

Those left to cherish his memory are son John McGoun (Natalie), and Grandchildren; Shelby McGoun (Isaac), Ryan and Justin and his longtime Friend Sarah.

Service will be held on Thursday May 1, 2025 at Pensacola Memorial Gardens 7433 Pine Forest Road, Pensacola, FL 32526 Visitation beginning at 1:00pm with service at 2:00pm and interment to follow.

To send flowers to the family or plant a tree in memory of Robert, please visit our floral store.
To plant trees in memory, please visit the Sympathy Store

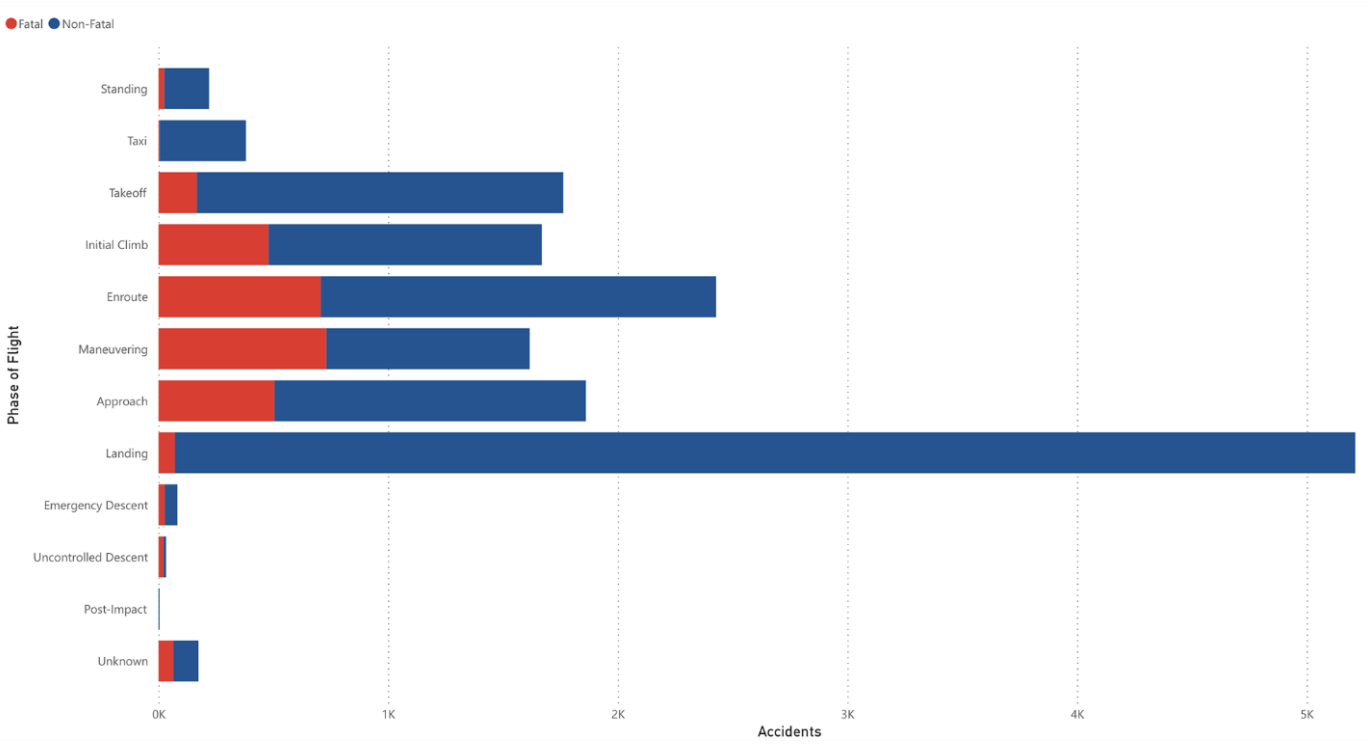
What matters for VFR proficiency: better landings

August 26, 2024 —John Zimmerman

Earlier this year I argued that if IFR pilots wanted to prevent accidents, they should focus on the most boring of skills: basic attitude instrument flying. Now it's time to look at VFR pilots, and to spare you the suspense, the answer is similarly prosaic: loss of control on landing damages more airplanes than any other accident scenario. What can be done?

First, some perspective. In July 2023, to take a representative month, there were 54 accidents reported to the NTSB that occurred during the landing phase. There were undoubtedly at least twice as many incidents and "fender benders" that do not show up in the NTSB database, like hard landings that led to airplane inspections or trips through the grass that mostly damaged the pilot's ego. That means every day in the summer somewhere between two and five airplanes are damaged—just on landing!

In fact, landing is by far the most common phase of flight for accidents, as this 10-year graph of accidents from the NTSB makes clear:



That is simply unacceptable. Even if lives are not lost (and as you can see, the vast majority of landing accidents are not fatal), landing accidents mean airplanes are seriously damaged, insurance premiums rise for the rest of us, pilot confidence is shattered, and passengers vow never to fly GA again. The cost is staggering, and cannot be measured in fatalities alone.

Improving this situation is both hard and simple. Hard because, as I've written about before, the simple phrase "loss of control" conceals a huge variety of root causes, from blown tires to pilot distraction. And yet we should be careful not to overcomplicate things.

Airspeed control

"Airspeed is life" the old saying reminds us. That's too simplistic for me; I prefer to think about it like food, where either too much or too little can kill you. Yes, pilots are warned that too little airspeed can lead to a hard landing or a fatal stall/spin accident on short final. But too much airspeed can lead to bounced landings if the pilot tries to force the airplane on the runway or a runway excursion if the airplane runs out of room before it runs out of speed. Neither one is good.

Consider the Cherokee pilot in Wisconsin who approached too fast: "The pilot reported that during the landing at the destination airport, the airplane floated down the runway, landed long, and did not slow as expected. He continued to apply the brakes as the airplane neared the end of the runway… The airplane nosed over in the grass and came to rest inverted which resulted in substantial damage to the right wing and empennage."
On the other hand, a Cherokee Six pilot in Florida who was too slow: "the airplane appeared slower than normal during the landing approach and… the wings were wobbling. The airplane touched down on its nose landing gear and bounced back into the air as the pilot simultaneously increased engine power. The left wing dropped and the airplane descended off the side of the runway, impacted terrain, and cartwheeled before coming to rest."

Too much speed is almost as bad as too little.

It's not just GA pilots who can struggle with airspeed control. In business jets and airliners, the issue is usually being too fast, leading to a runway excursion and often substantial damage or even fatalities. IATA has made this a focus in recent years, with some positive results to show for it.

No matter what the airplane or airport, the key skill is to fly the right airspeed throughout the traffic pattern and especially on final. The FAA's approach to this problem has been to emphasize energy management, a valuable concept that is nonetheless confusing in its current teaching style (as we have debated here at Air Facts). The FAA's *Airplane Flying Handbook* says, in a rather clinical fashion, "Mistakes in managing the airplane's energy state can be deadly." Fair enough, but preventing those mistakes requires more stick time and good situational awareness, not complicated graphs about the energy state of the airplane.

In particular, a fanatical devotion to maintaining a precise airspeed at all times is perhaps the single most valuable skill for any pilot to hone. There's more to a good landing than just being on speed, but it's a great start—even if you're high on final, you can easily correct if you're on speed. Besides, airspeed control is a useful skill for many other phases of flight, from maximum performance climbs to nonstandard approaches at busy airports. Make this one of the key measures of your pilot proficiency: can you maintain a predetermined airspeed with a maximum deviation of +10/-5 knots (the Private Pilot ACS)?

Fortunately airspeed control is easy to practice, so it can be integrated into almost every flight, with or without an instructor. In fact, I believe most pilots need fewer stalls and more slow flight in their training diet (at least after the Private checkride). Design a practice routine for your airplane and it can be completed in just a few minutes while you fly to your next $100 hamburger or shoot landings. For example, fly 65 knots level (+/-2 knots if you can), then fly 65 knots climbing, then 65 knots descending, then 65 knots descending and turning. Repeat at 55 or 75 knots for more practice (or whatever airspeed works for your airplane). This tests your ability to manage pitch, bank, and power in a coordinated fashion while dividing your attention—you could call it energy management but to me it's just developing a feel for the airplane.

Directional control

Precise airspeed control should get you to the runway in good shape, but as all pilots know it's the last six inches that really count. Here's where the second skill comes into play: directional control. Plenty of runway excursions, especially in GA airplanes, are not caused by excess speed but by lack of proper or sufficient control inputs. This is especially true in windy conditions, but honestly many of these accidents don't involve significant wind.

For example, a Cessna 150 pilot lost control of the airplane after touchdown and probably totaled the airplane: "The pilot reported that, during the landing roll, a gust of wind lifted the right wing of the airplane. The pilot was unable to maintain directional control and the airplane departed the left side of the runway and nosed over in a grassy area adjacent to the runway." Wind was only 7 knots and the runway was 75 feet wide, so blaming this one on the wind is a bit of a stretch.
A similar fate befell a Mooney pilot in Texas: "During landing, the airplane drifted right of the runway centerline. The pilot was unable to maintain directional control, and the airplane exited the runway and impacted a tree and a parked golfcart." Again, the wind speed was 8 knots with no measured gusts.

Apps like CloudAhoy can help you honestly evaluate your performance.

Step one in preventing such accidents is to notice the airplane is drifting, which sounds simple but is surprisingly hard when a pilot is task-saturated. Track the runway centerline like a hawk, beginning on final, and consider making this a callout—I know some pilots who verbally confirm, "gear down, on centerline" on short final. During the flare, make sure your eyes are focused on the end of the runway, not the left main wheel or the instrument panel. Most pilots constantly watch their height above runway but you should also be constantly judging alignment, so look for subtle signs that the airplane is drifting off centerline.

This is also an area where debriefing tools like CloudAhoy or FlySto can keep you honest and help you monitor your performance over time. Were you really on centerline or are you a little rusty after a winter break? The track log doesn't lie. Especially for a proficiency flight, using a Sentry or Stratus to log the flight and then replay it afterwards is a valuable (and sometimes humbling) experience.

This is all about developing feel: with airspeed control, you're trying to develop a feel for the airplane's energy state (there, I said it); with directional control, you're trying to develop a feel for the airplane's track and its orientation relative to the runway. The more this can be done instinctively, the better. That means practice.

Flying more is always good advice, but at a more basic level some pilots simply need to be more assertive. Yes, over-controlling can cause issues, but that's a pretty rare problem (I couldn't find an example in the NTSB database after three hours of looking). Too often I see the opposite problem, a sort of passivity that can slide into resignation: as the airplane drifts towards the grass, the pilot seems to be along for the ride.

I've certainly been guilty of this myself. I can still remember one of my early flight instructors grabbing the controls and practically shouting at me as we wobbled down the runway one day, "*you* need to make this &$*%@ airplane do exactly what *you* want—that's why you're called pilot in command!" A bit harsh, perhaps, but 100% correct, and a lesson I have not forgotten. Sometimes it really does feel like the wind is fighting you, but the only answer is to fight back.

Of course wind can be a challenge, and crosswind landings often top the list of pilots' least favorite maneuver, but that's no excuse. If we're going to fly on anything approaching a regular schedule, we must get comfortable operating in crosswinds and gusty conditions. Your primary training syllabus may not be enough, so it pays to be proactive about ongoing training. Seek out flight instruction when it's gusty or bring a more experienced pilot along if conditions are marginal. Even better, get some tailwheel instruction and learn how to really move those controls.

Go-arounds

That's not the whole story, though. Read the NTSB reports and another accident scenario jumps out at you: the botched go-around. Not all landings work out so there's no shame in aborting the landing and trying again, but the number of go-around accidents is alarming considering how rare this maneuver is.

Step one is to remain calm, or as famous basketball coach John Wooden used to say, "be quick, but don't hurry." A go-around does demand a quick reaction, but there is no point in panicking or rushing through what is usually a maximum performance maneuver. Jamming the throttle in, pulling up the flaps too quickly, and yanking the yoke back is a recipe for a stall/spin.

Better to smoothly add power and establish a climb, while focusing on aircraft control above all. You don't have all day, but you probably have more time than you think. The best way to reinforce this is to go practice it, something that doesn't get much attention from most pilots.

Go-arounds from 10 feet rarely work out.

Panic quite literally took hold of a Cessna 172 pilot in California, with tragic results: "the airplane landed normally, but during the landing roll, the front seat passenger heard a 'pop' sound and subsequently felt the airplane shake, at which time the pilot started to panic. The pilot advanced the throttle and the airplane lifted off the runway surface again. Surveillance video captured the airplane as it began to climb in a nose-high attitude, drifted left of the runway, then rolled inverted and rapidly descended." It's hard to know for sure, but it's quite possible this would have been an uneventful landing had emotion not taken over.

In addition to panic, this accident suggests another issue with go-arounds: don't wait too long to make the decision. The best go-arounds happen from 300 feet, not 30, which is why many airlines require a go-around if the airplane is not stabilized by 500 feet in VFR conditions. That would have saved a Cherokee pilot who was involved in a serious accident: "While crossing the runway threshold, the airplane was 'a little high' and still not aligned along the runway centerline. The pilot reduced the engine power and continued his attempt to align the airplane with the runway using the rudder. The pilot then decided to go around just as the landing gear contacted the runway, adding engine power and pulling back the control yoke. The airplane then veered to the left and departed the runway surface as the pilot reduced the engine power back to idle to stop the go-around attempt."

Some flight instructors like to say, "you can always go around." While it's an admirable sentiment, it's flat out wrong. There comes a time when it's best to just ride the airplane into the grass at 20 knots instead of going around and potentially crashing at 80 knots. One might lead to a bump; the other will probably be fatal. Making that decision is incredibly hard to do in the heat of battle, so better to plan it out beforehand. A good rule is that if all three wheels are on the ground, you probably shouldn't go around. On short runways, it's also smart to pick a specific go-around point, a place where you will automatically add power if the airplane has not touched down yet.

Consider what happened to a Beech B35 in Indiana: "Airport surveillance video captured the airplane on landing rollout. The airplane was observed departing the left side of the runway before it started a climb and impacted trees." A go-around to save a runway excursion seems like a bad trade. This scenario would have been a serious crash but probably survivable had the engine remained at idle power. Instead, the pilot was killed.

Putting it all together

Situational awareness and prompt recognition of a deteriorating trend is the critical skill that ties all of this together. You can't prevent or react to a bad landing if you don't notice it's happening. So on your next trip around the pattern, pay attention to your airspeed and runway alignment. Are you flying a constant airspeed or is it jumping around? Are you consistently fast or slow? Are you flying a predetermined profile (power setting, flap setting, etc.) or just chasing the gauges? Are you accounting for the wind on short final? Can you use your EFB app to record the flight for easy playback at zero knots? A little self-reflection on these topics can be the starting point for safer landings.

But just like we found with instrument flying, there is no substitute for recent experience. Most of these skills require regular practice or they quickly atrophy, which means safe flying is a lifelong commitment, not an item to check off your to-do list. There is no experience level where landings become automatic, as the NTSB reports prove (one of the accident pilots mentioned above had over 14,000 hours).

Just remember the goal: it's not about greasing every landing, it's about making every one safe.

FOR SALE:

Lightspeed Sierra head-set. New, never used. Purchased as a companion to my Zulu 3 headset. I no longer need the Sierra, $550.00 or best offer.

Craig Spoke.

cspoke381@gmail.com.

251-550-5795.

EAA and Local Chapter Sites

EAA 485 EAA 1265

EAA HDQTRS EAA 108

Interesting Links

Blue Angel 360 Way cool

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

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Ray Scholarship Coordinator: Craig Spoke (251) 550-5795

Young Eagles Coordinator: Eric Goldman (317) 910-2513

Webmaster: Doug Francisco (850) 453-5501

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 go past the main airport entrance and take the next left. Go thru the gate and make a left on the gravel road. Make a right past the T hangars you'll see our building down on the left side. Anyone interested in sharing general aviation, aircraft building, maintaining and restoring is welcome.
For more info contact:

Ralph Moser (847) 736-4603

EAA 485 news

Home Of The
PANHANDLE PELICANS
EAA 485 Pensacola, FL

Chapter Meetings:

Saturday, May 10th, 2025

08:30-09:30, VMC/IMC Club Meeting.

10:00-11:00, General Membership Meeting:

- **Pledge**
- **Guests**
- **Officers Reports: Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer/Membership**
- **Young Eagles – Eric Goldman**
- **Ray Scholarship – Craig Spoke**
- **Member Build Projects Update**
- **Guest Speaker—LT Joe Buis—Local Military Airspace Briefing**

Cheeseburger Lunch

CHAPTER DUES:

For those who haven't gotten around to paying dues yet—it's $25 per year as usual and can be paid during the meetings or mailed to Scott Swanson.

Scott Swanson
711 Marlinspike Dr.
Pensacola, FL 32507

Upcoming Events

(CHAPTER EVENTS IN CAPS):

May 17th, ROSCOE PANCAKE BREAKFAST

June 7th, MONTHLY CHAPTER MEETINGS + Paradigm Parachutes Tour (tentative)

June 14th, CJFA GRADUATION YOUNG EAGLES FLYING (Private Event)

July 9-12th, Red White & Blues Pensacola Beach Airshow

July 12th, MONTHLY CHAPTER MEETINGS

July 12-13, Pensacola Beach Air Show

July 21-27th, Air Venture Oshkosh https://www.eaa.org/airventure

Aug. 9th, MONTHLY CHAPTER MEETINGS

August 16-17, AOPA Fly-In, Akron, OH (KAKR). "Props and Pistons Festival"

September 10-14th, National Championship Air Races (KROW). https://airrace.org