

June 2025



The Flypaper



*Igniting the Spirit of Aviation Through Camaraderie,
Community Outreach and Education*

**Featured Member's Fields:
Keith Unzicker's Airfield - Page 12**

**June Chapter Gathering
Wright Brothers Master Pilot
IMC and VMC Clubs
Milestones
From Oshkosh to the Skies
Prairie Aviation Museum
Youth Aviation Camp
Builders Updates**



Chapter 129 June Gathering 6/19

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Our June monthly Gathering will be on Thursday, June 19. Dinner at 6:00 featuring hamburgers, brats and hot dogs. Members please bring a side dish to share.

Our speaker this month will be **Mike Eppley**, Air Traffic Manager for the BMI Tower. Join us to get a view of KBMI from the tower perspective and a preview of operations at the new GA facility on the South side of the field.

Mike served 8 years in the US Air Force as an air traffic controller. Then for the last 30 years he worked for Midwest ATC Services, Inc. He controlled traffic in Eagle Colorado and Decatur Illinois before coming to BMI in 2000 and have been the manager here since 2001.

Following our meal and program, we will watch the movie, ***Pushing Tin*** - a fast paced movie in the world of air traffic control.



Mike Eppley provides a tour of the BMI tower for a group of High School STEM students as part of EAA Chapter 129's Summer STEM Event in 2022.

6:00 - Potluck Dinner - Burgers & Brats
- please bring a dish to share
6:45 - Chapter Announcements
7:00 - June Program
8:00 Movie

EAA Chapter 129 Hangar F15 2825 E Empire St Bloomington, IL



June 2025

EAA Chapter 129 Calendar of Events

31	May, Sat	7 – 9am 9am-12p	Chapter Weekly Pancake Breakfast Young Eagles KPNT
5	Jun, Thu	5:30 -7	Chapter Board Meeting
7	Jun, Sat	7 – 9am	Chapter Weekly Pancake Breakfast
14	Jun, Sat	7 – 9am	Chapter Weekly Pancake Breakfast
16-20	June	9am-4p	Aviation Youth Camp
19	June	6 - 8p	Chapter Gathering
21	Jun, Sat	Jun, Sat 9am - 12p All Day	7 – 9am Young Eagles KBMI Youth Camp at SIRS RC field
28	Jun, Sat	7 – 9am	Chapter Weekly Pancake Breakfast
3	Jul, Thu	5:30-7p	Chapter Board Meeting
5	Jul, Sat	7 – 9am	Chapter Weekly Pancake Breakfast

For more details on events, go to
[https://chapters.eaa.org/ea129/
event-calendar](https://chapters.eaa.org/ea129/event-calendar)

Or scan the QR code below



EAA 129 Event Calendar



Join us at the EAA Chapter 129 hangar for our
Gathering of Eagles breakfasts
**Saturday mornings 7:00 am to
9:00 am** for some great food and
some hangar flying at its best.



June 2025

Chapter 129 June VMC & IMC Clubs

The intent of EAA VMC & IMC Clubs is to create a community of pilots willing to share information, provide recognition, foster communications, promote safety, and build proficiency. Real world scenarios will be presented and discussed to determine the best solution from the conditions presented.

NOTE - Chapter 129's VMC and IMC clubs will take a break during June, July and August due to conflicting summer activities. We will resume meeting in September. We will continue to post the Questions of the Month with answers provided.



June Question of the Month:

You're about to depart on an IFR flight and although icing is not specifically forecast for your area, conditions include visible moisture and temperatures nearing freezing. At what point should you turn on your pitot heat?

(See Answer Page 29)

June Question of the Month:

One focus area for improving safety revolves around Controlled Flight Into Terrain (CFIT). According to the FAA, what are some of the factors involved in CFIT accidents, and what precautions can be taken to avoid CFIT accidents?

(See Answer Page 29)



Chapter 129 Selected for Airventure Pancake Breakfast

EAA Chapters have the opportunity to use the Camp Scholler Chapters Pavilion for their very own chapter pancake breakfast fundraiser. The pavilion is located in the Camp Scholler Campground, directly south of the Fly Market on the west side of Paul's Woods. EAA provides all the supplies and makings to manage the pancake breakfasts each morning of Airventure and the chapters take home the proceeds. EAA handles requests as a lottery system, where all chapters have an equal chance of being selected.



Chapter 129's number was pulled out for a Friday July 25 morning breakfast event. We will need 18 to 20 volunteers and will serve upwards of 800 to 900 campers.



June 2025

Pilot - Controller Forum - July 12

What: Pilot - Controller Forum

When: Saturday, July 12, 9am to 11am

Where: EAA Chapter 129 Hangar F15
2825 E Empire St, Bloomington, IL

Presented by: KBMI Control Tower and our FAASTeam

The pilot/controller forum will include representatives from local flight schools and businesses, the KBMI FAA Contract tower and FAASTeam. The forum's main topic will be the opening of the new General Aviation Ramp at CIRA. The forum will also provide a means to discuss other safety concerns as well as to address common errors. All pilots, regardless of experience level, are welcome to attend. Please bring questions and concerns that can be civilly discussed among the attendees.



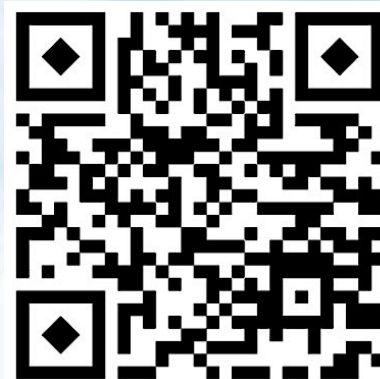
June Chapter 129 Aviation Youth Camp

Aviation Youth Camp

June 16 to 20 Ages 11 to 13, 9 am to 4 pm daily

Campers will be introduced to the world of aviation including:

- ▶ Interactive classes on aerodynamics, airplane construction, maintenance and weather
- ▶ Special behind the scenes visit to the Prairie Aviation Aviation Museum
- ▶ Campers will build a flyable radio controlled airplane
- ▶ We will tour local airport facilities i.e. OSF helicopter "Life Flight", Visit the actual Control tower.
- ▶ Tour Synergy Flight Center including their maintenance, charter and flight school departments
- ▶ An actual flight in an airplane, in accordance with EAAs Young Eagle program weather permitting



EAA CHAPTER 129
BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL, ILLINOIS



To register, use the QR Code or go to our registration site:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/>

June 2025

Members on the Move



Milestones

Chapter 129 members achieving
their goals in aviation



Two of our EAA Chapter 129 members have graduated from High School and are headed to college pursuing Aviation Careers. Congratulations, we are all eager to see what you will do!



Chapter member and Ray Aviation Scholar **Audrey Ruffcorn** is working to complete her PPL by end of summer before attending Pensacola Christian College in Pensacola, FL. Audrey soloed on Saturday, April 26 and graduated from Calvary Christian Academy in May. She is a member of the National Honor Society and recipient of the Servant Spirit Award (Highest award given at Calvary Christian Academy). She is working toward a career as a commercial pilot.



Member **Eva McCue** soloed at age 17 on July 7, 2024 and received her PPL October 2. She graduated from Lexington High School where she was a member of FAA, Key Club and the BACC Technical Honor Society. Eva will continue flight training at Parkland College in Champaign and then transfer to Lewis University to complete her bachelor's degree, earn her A&P certification, and work toward her ATP.



Chapter 129 May Chapter Gathering

The 60 MPH winds and huge dust storm on Friday night turned our Fly-in/Drive-in Gathering into a somewhat hazardous drive in event. Fifty seven folks braved the elements to gather at Thacker Airport for an evening filled with awards, good food and a fun movie.

We opened our evening with a presentation of George Wilts' **Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award**, presented by Nick Loftus, FAA Safety Team Program Manager. (See Page 9).

Following the ceremony, John Rettick offered a prayer for our meal and everyone present.

Our cooks offered grilled hamburgers, brats & peppers and hot dogs. Members brought a big assortment of side dishes and deserts to complete the meal.

Bill Thacker welcomed everyone to the monthly gathering and asked President Charlie Bates to outline the chapter activities in the past month and the month ahead. Visitors George Eades and his son of the Bloomington Civil Air Patrol Chapter were in attendance to support our growing relationship with CAP. And we recognized our former president, Kieth Doornbos and daughter Laura Benton whose family ran our chapter for many years. Our Aviation Youth Camp is coming up June 16 to 20 providing youth ages 11 to 14 with a weeklong experience at the airport. Our chapter will host a Pilot/Controller Forum on July 12, 9am to 11am to discuss the new GA ramp at BMI.

Many stayed for our 2004 movie **Flight of the Phoenix** which was viewed indoors due to the ongoing high winds. Our planned Saturday morning Fly-in Pancake Breakfast also surrendered to the high winds Saturday morning. Although we weren't blessed with the usual array of beautiful aircraft, our 30+ attendees were treated to a great breakfast and lots of hangar flying.

Thanks to Bill and Janis for hosting our May Gathering at their awesome facility!



The dust storm circa 5pm Friday



June 2025

Chapter 129 May Chapter Gathering

A very special highlight of our May gathering was the presentation of the **Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award** to EAA Chapter 129 member George Wilts. Presenting the award was Nick Loftus, FAA Safety Team Program Manager, Springfield FSDO. Nick opened the presentation with a historical review of the Wright Brothers' first flight and many details of the development of the Wright Flyer. He discussed the fundamental requirements for achieving the Master Pilot Award.

1. Hold an FAA Pilot Certificate
2. Have 50 or more years of piloting experience
3. Be a U.S. citizen
4. Have not had any airman certificate revoked

Nick discussed some of George's accomplishments through his aviation career that go far beyond those basic requirements.

- Co-founder of the Peru and Lacon-Marshall County EAA Chapters
- Active member in the Champaign, Quad Cities, and Bloomington EAA Chapters
- Member of the Oshkosh EAA chapter
- Volunteers at EAA AirVenture every year (only missed one or two since 1974)
- Has flown over 200 Young Eagles
- One of 14 builders on the AirCam that was built in celebration of the Young Eagles 25th anniversary
- Serves as a Technical Advisor for EAA in Oshkosh and Chapter 129

- Rebuilt a 1964 C150, a 1946 Aeronca Chief, and 4 other vintage aircraft

- Has provided many complimentary introductory flights to help get people involved in aviation

~See Award Page 9



Chapter 129 May Chapter Gathering

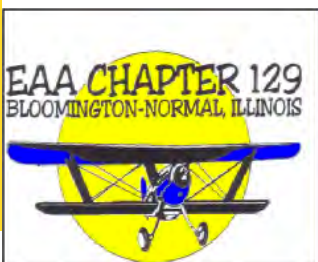
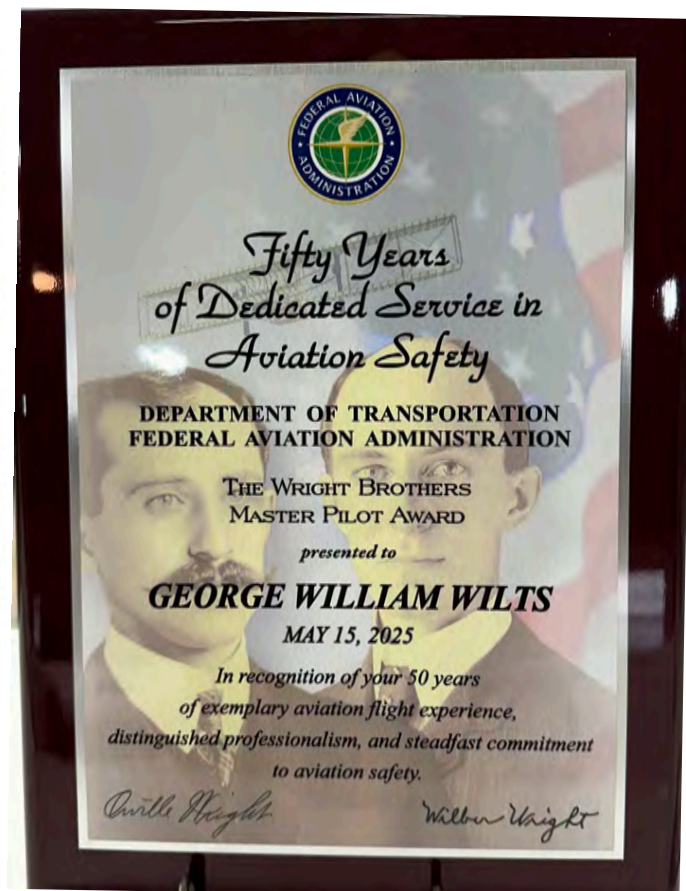
Janice Wilts was awarded the Wright Brother's Master Pilot Spouse Pin to recognize her contributions to EAA, aviation, and her support of George's passion for aviation.

- Encouraged George to go out to the airport and take his first lesson
- Supports George in all of his aviation endeavors
- Also volunteers at EAA AirVenture and local EAA events
- Volunteers at the EAA's Print/Mail Center

Congratulations George and Janice for your unselfish contributions to EAA and Chapter 129. We are all very proud of you and thank you for all you do for general aviation!



George and Janice were each presented with the Wright Brothers Master Pilot pin.



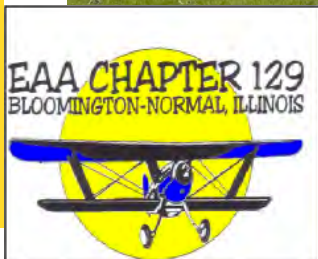
EAA Chapter 129 Honor Flight Team

EAA Chapter 129 has a group of members that regularly perform fly-overs for Veteran funerals and commemorative events in coordination with the Bloomington American Legion Post 635. On Monday, we flew for the Memorial Day event at Evergreen Cemetery, arriving at the cemetery at precisely 12:00 to align with the ground ceremonies. This would mark our 44th flyover.

On the previous Saturday and Sunday, the team provided surprise aerial visits for two of our chapter members' High School graduation parties. Eva and Audrey have been active members in our chapter and are headed to college pursuing aviation careers - we wanted to give them a good sendoff. Eva completed her PPL in October 2024 and Audrey soloed in April 2025 with plans to finish her PPL before heading off to college.

The Honor Flight Team spends nearly an hour preparing for each flight going over every detail of the planned flight from engine start to taxiing back in. Timing is critical but safety is our number one priority. Each flight ends with a detailed debrief of every phase.

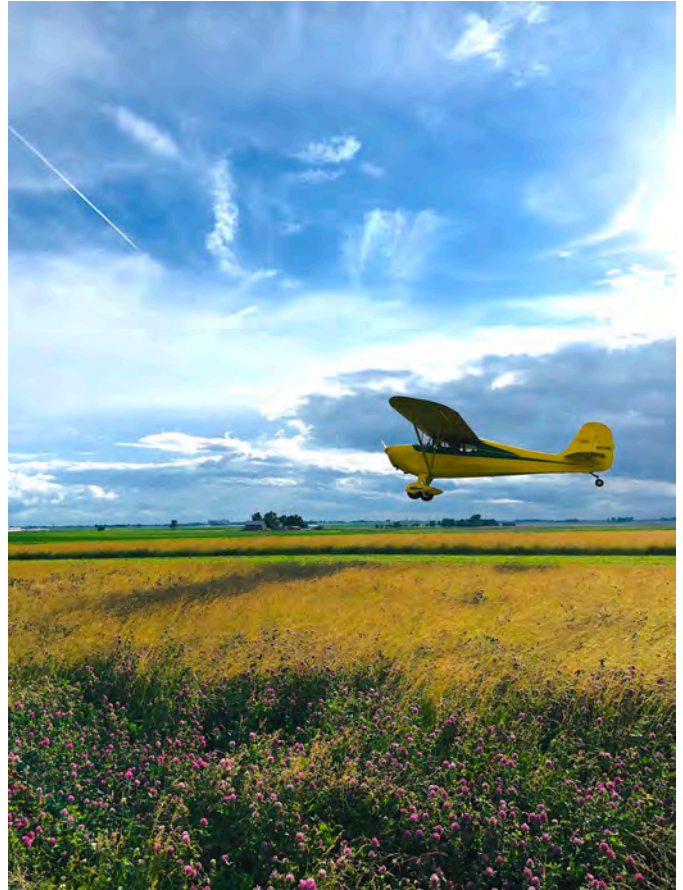
This Memorial Day was special for one member of our team. Matt Kerner wrote: *My father was a ww2 navy vet that served in North Africa. Dad was welcomed back to the states and finished out his time in Virginia. Dad passed just this spring and was given a full honor ceremony from the local legion. My son and I took dad's burial flag with us in the plane to honor his and all the other passed veterans on Monday. It meant a lot to me and all of my family that we were able to do this. All of my family in the area witnessed the flyover and said that it was a tearful moment knowing we were flying for dads memorial services. For the people who help put all the honor flights together and the participants, know that it does matter and means so much. Thanks. The Kerner's.*



Keith Unzicker's Airfield - 4IL9

Growing up in the country, we had a neighbor that had an airstrip and I really enjoyed watching him take off and land. It was always a dream of mine to have my own strip. In 2001, we bought an old farmhouse, with outbuildings, a machine shed and a few acres, with dreams abundant, we started the process of getting our own RLA. At that time, I was rebuilding our first plane, a 1955 Piper Tri-Pacer.

I contacted IDOT to get preliminary site approval and even with a cell phone tower in close proximity, using IDOT publication "Guidelines for Developing a RLA" we had the necessary setbacks and minimum effective length. Formal county zoning permission was requested in 2003 and the airstrip was approved in 2004. I did minimal site prep with my Dad's field cultivator. The grass seed mixture was purchased from FS. I rented a seed drill from Pheasants Forever, and waited for the grass to grow. My effective length is 1,900 feet, with total length nearly 2,300 feet. It is plenty wide, but that is how the planter spacing worked out best. The gentle rolling terrain makes it unique, but not difficult. Obstructions on the south end include trees, powerlines, and the cell phone tower. Soon there will be wind turbines to the south end, not ideal, but still doable. Solar spot lights, aimed up about 30 Degrees, make for excellent runway lights, but when the corn is tall, it can be very challenging at night.



~See 4IL9 Page 13



Keith Unzicker's Airfield - 4IL9

Having my own strip has made a number of rebuilds possible. It has been nice to have the projects right outside my door.

The first plane to be completed at 4IL9 was our 1955 PA22-150. I started the basket case rebuild in 1998 in an abandoned summer kitchen of the old farmhouse we were renting at the time. When we bought our current house, final assembly was done in my shed, then trucked to Oltman-Shuck for first flight as we waited for our strip approval.

The second plane to be restored was a 1947 11AC, much of the work was done in Eureka, but final assembly and "first" flight was done at 4IL9. This is the plane that both of my boys soloed in.

Next came our 1940 Culver Cadet basket case rebuild, started in 2010 and finished in 2017 and flies regularly. I have had it in the Affordable Vintage flight line 5 times. This year at Oshkosh, the Culver will participate in the Vintage in Review fly-by, scheduled for Thursday, 7/24.

Our 1966 Mooney was a "quick build kit". It sat for nearly 20 years before I bought it at a Wings of Hope auction in 2018. I say kit, because it needed everything gone through, but now it's been a very reliable traveling machine.

The Skybolt project has been dormant since finishing the ribs, tail, rudder pedals and some gear parts. I started it during the pandemic, but now have been working too much to keep progressing. I hope someday it will fly.

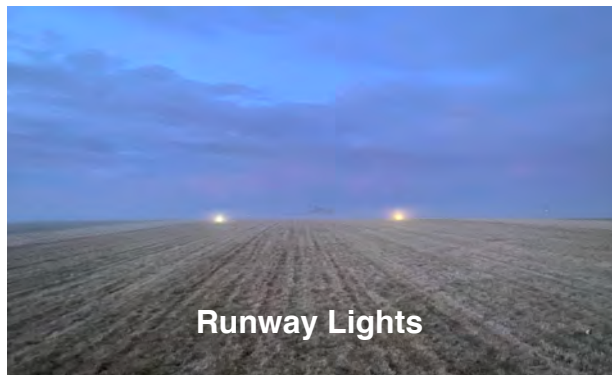


~See 4IL9 Page 11

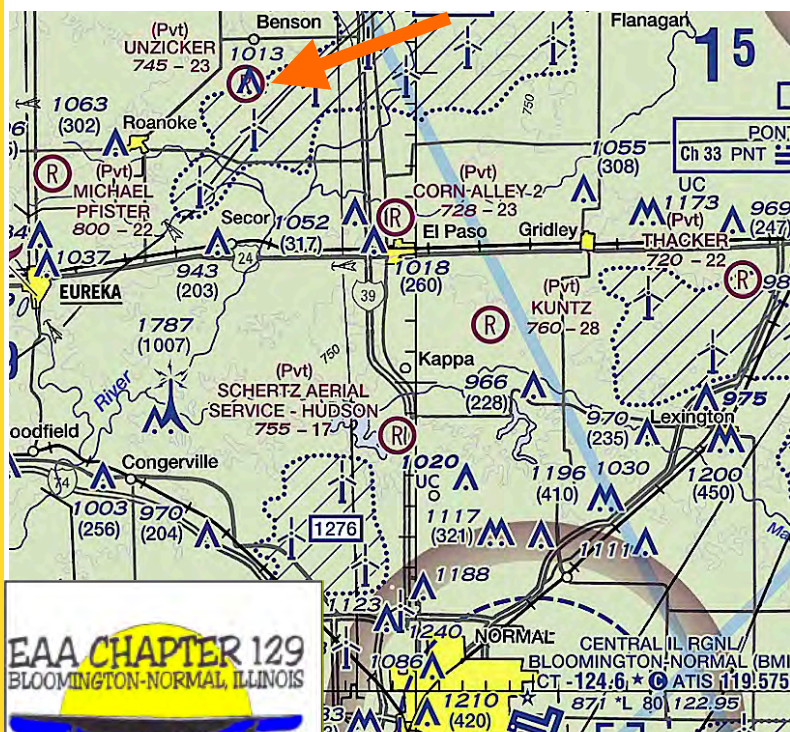
Keith Unzicker's Airfield - 4IL9

Some highlights of having our own airstrip for me have been sharing the sky with my friends and family, watching Ian and Andreas solo in the Chief, having my fellow aviators stop in to chat, and traveling with my family, and landing at home instead of driving home from the airport. It's not all perfect though, solar lights don't work on early morning departures and you better be home before they run out of juice. I often fly IFR, and when the ceilings get too low, I end up in Pontiac or Lacon. Mowing takes a lot of time, but the biggest disadvantage is in the winter with snow drifts and short days. I have been grounded for months and started to envy my friends with hangars on pavement, with snow removal, but by spring, I wouldn't trade my home strip for anything.

~ Keith Unzicker



Ian Unzicker, pictured with dad/CFI Keith Unzicker soloed in their Aeronca Chief on 8/21/24 at Unzicker's grass strip.



Aviator Visitors



June 2025

From Oshkosh to the Skies: The Flight Path of Eva McCue

By EAA Chapter 129 · Spring 2025

On any given weekend, Lexington, Illinois might seem like just another quiet Midwestern town. But for Eva McCue, it has served as the launchpad to a sky-high journey few teenagers can claim. At just 17, Eva balanced varsity basketball, choir performances, student government meetings, and multiple jobs—all while earning her private pilot certificate. Her story is not only about aviation, but also about grit, mentorship, and discovering one's path in the clouds.

Eva's passion for flight took root during a family trip in 2017 to EAA AirVenture in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. What began as a side excursion from a vacation in the Dells became the spark that lit her aviation fire. "We just walked around and I was amazed by all the different types of airplanes," Eva recalls. Her favorites? The warbirds—and they still are.

Growing up just a few miles from a crop-dusting strip, Eva spent many pandemic afternoons riding her four-wheeler to watch Air Tractors take off and land. Their power and grace made an impression. One day, she texted her dad: "I want to get my pilot's license."

From there, her journey accelerated. She took a Young Eagles flight with EAA Chapter 129's president, Charlie Bates, who let her follow along on the controls of a Piper Warrior and even snapped pictures of her grinning in

the "pilot's seat." "I couldn't keep the altitude steady," she laughs, "but I still have those photos—braces and all."

Her formal training began with instructor Bill Thacker on May 29, 2024—the last day of her junior year. She went straight from final exams to the hangar. Bill, a man she calls part-grandpa,

part-mentor, and entirely a friend, shaped her not only as a pilot but as a person. He first visited her automotive class to discuss rotary engines, helping her weigh options between becoming a mechanic or a pilot. Ultimately, aviation won.

Under Bill's guidance, Eva trained in a 1956 Super Cub and soloed in it before transitioning to a

Cessna 172 for the remainder of her instruction. The solo flight, a defining moment for any aviator, came unexpectedly. "Bill got quiet in the pattern," she remembers. "Quiet is good. That means nothing needs fixing." He stepped out, handed her

the radio, and gave her a kiss on the cheek. As she taxied back and took off alone, the Cub felt light and responsive. "You are in absolute control," she says. "It's a pretty cool moment in your aviation world."

Unbeknownst to Eva, Bill had invited her family to the hangar to witness the milestone. Her solo T-

shirt now hangs proudly on his wall, a tradition for every student who solos under his wing.

~ See Eva Page 16



From Oshkosh to the Skies: The Flight Path of Eva McCue

Training was no small feat. Eva juggled two and a half summer jobs, volleyball and basketball with daily flight lessons, using a planner to keep her busy schedule on track. Checkride prep overlapped with the chaos of senior year—homecoming, spirit week, and school tests, fall sports—but she powered through, often studying late into the night and running mock checkrides with her friend and flight partner, Jackson Zimmerman.

She admits that landing was her biggest challenge. "Landing mental blocks are real," she says. "Bill taught me to think like a goldfish—ten-second memory."

Her checkride took place at Ohio State University Airport, the alma mater of her instructor. The DPE? None other than Metro Warbird Johnny Ginley. And when it was done, Eva and Bill flew home together. Bill offered autopilot; she declined. "I wanted to hand-fly the whole way. Mid-flight, I turned to him and said, 'Thank you for opening this door for me.' He smiled and said, 'That's why I do what I do.'"

For Eva, aviation isn't just about flying. It's a pathway to community. When she first started attending EAA breakfasts, she was the only person under 30. Now, her presence has helped open doors for other students. She points to friends like Jude and Audrey, who followed

her lead. "When you stay involved," she emphasizes, "doors stay open."

The support she received from the aviation community, including seasoned commercial and military pilots, helped her realize the significance of her journey. "They know my name," she says. "They made me feel proud that I chose to do this."

Eva hopes to inspire others to begin their aviation paths. "A common misconception is that you have to be top of your class or a genius. I'm not. I just worked hard. You just need to want it."



Next up? Eva plans to begin her flight training through a junior college Part 141 program, then transfer to complete her bachelor's degree, earn her A&P certification, and work toward her ATP. Eventually, she hopes to fly private jets. But she admits that

life throws curveballs. For now, she's enjoying the view.

When asked what she'd tell her younger self at that first Oshkosh, Eva replies: "I'd give her a hug and say, 'You will be a pilot.' She wouldn't believe me, but it's true."

Eva's story is proof that with passion, persistence, and a supportive community, a teenager from a small town can soar above the clouds—and bring others along for the ride.



Chapter 129 Young Eagles Program



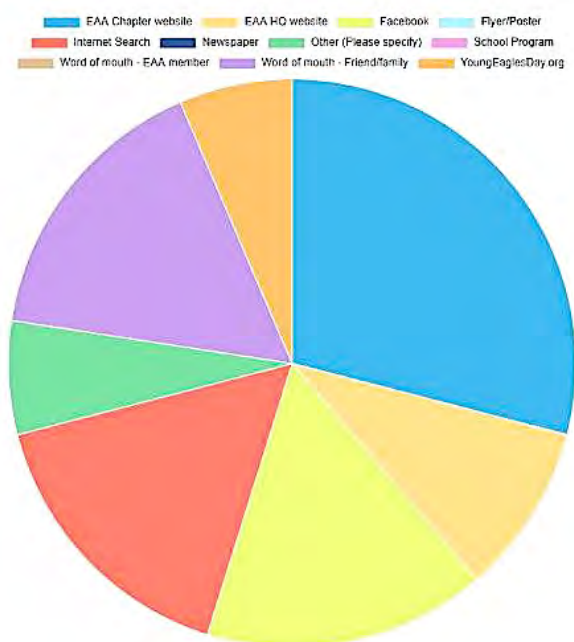
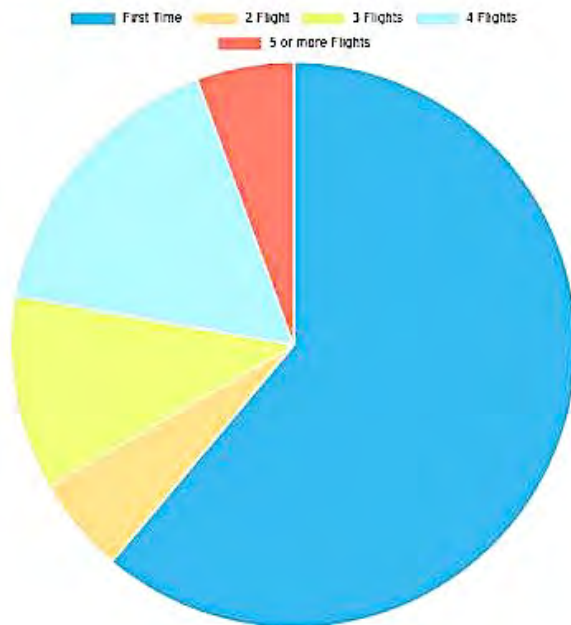
Chad McCue
Chapter 129 Young Eagles
Coordinator

Next Young Eagles Day - June 21, 2025

in Bloomington. Our rally scheduled for this weekend May 31st at Pontiac flying service has 35 registered. Volunteer Briefing/setup: 8:15 AM • Pilot Briefing: 8:30 AM • Young Eagles Flights: 9:00 - 11:00 AM Thanks to Scott and Kris Peterson for hosting.



We are seeing a variety of sources for people finding out about our rallies and a variety of experience in youth flying in multiple rallies. June registration is already open, let's max it out!



Our dates for the remaining 2025 Young Eagle Rally days are:

- June 21 - KBMI (Bloomington)
- July - *skipped for EAA AirVenture*
- August 16 - KBMI (Bloomington)
- September 20 - KBMI (Bloomington)
- October 18 - KAAA (Logan County in Lincoln)



Chad McCue EAA Chapter 129 Young Eagles
Coordinator

June 2025

Prairie Aviation Museum



[Visit Our Website](#)



May was a very busy month at the Prairie Aviation Museum. On May 10th, "OZ" our Hughes helicopter and roving ambassador, made its annual visit to Peoria's PNC Worldwide Day of Play. OZ had a continuous line of future helicopter pilots from 10:00 - 2:00. It was a beautiful day for the event.

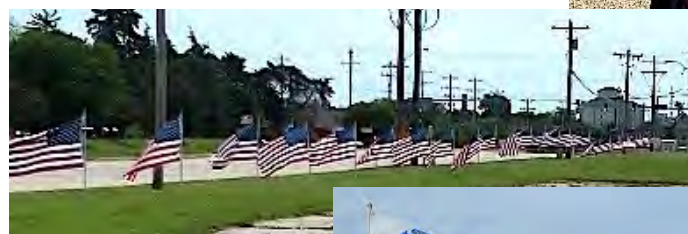
Kids of all ages (including parents) had a great time having hands-on experience on the fundamentals of flying a helicopter.

It was OZ's first public display of its new signage.

Prairie Aviation Museum's next big event was Saturday the 17th. It was our first Open Cockpit Day of the season. OCD was from 10:00 - 3:00. We had 214 visitors, beating 2024's May OCD.

Being Armed Forces Day, we had many veterans stationed at many of the displays as well as members of the local Civil Air Patrol (ages 12-18). In addition, we had the pleasure of hosting two U.S. Marine recruiters.

As part of the Memorial Day Weekend, PAM volunteers lined Empire Street with our 50 flags on Saturday. On Monday, OZ and our B-57 cockpit were in the middle of a half mile long parade.



June 2025

Prairie Aviation Museum



[Visit Our Website](#)

The Wednesday work group (9:00 – noon) was busy all of May with Phase I of storage/display/workshop expansion project. The first task was to empty our 20-year-old trailer of many items. We discovered that we are “little hoarders”. The next step was to remove the old trailer. Joe’s Towing is a very talented team. They had the old trailer out of our airpark in less than an hour, only using 1 cab and 1 BIG Rotator truck. It was fun to watch.

As we prepared to put out our 50 flags for Memorial Day, one of our members arrived from a trip south of Atlanta with two sets of rocket pods for the Cobra Seahawk gunship. With some muscle, we were able to quickly attach both sets of pods. Now, it is truly a “gunship”.

Looking forward to June, we will have multiple school/ daycare tours, Flag Day, a visit to the CornBelter’s field and our Open Cockpit Day June 21st (10 – 3). Our Wednesday workgroup will continue with our expansion project and start to refurbish the A-7 Corsair. We welcome anyone who would like to volunteer for these projects.



June 2025

Mark Langley's Christavia Build Project

Airplane Finished - "2nd Time"

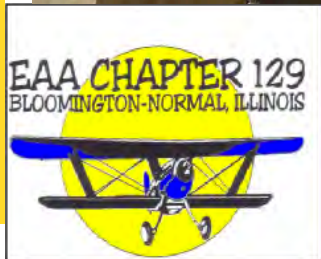
Another year went by, with me and all my friends finishing, what has been a good year of inspecting, repairing, reinspecting, welding, covering and painting and reassembling, always being safe and consistent.

Thanks go out to all who gave me support and advice of all kinds.

Now the inspections for the AWC, "Airworthiness Certificate" are waiting with the FAA and then Phase 1 testing as we continue to evaluate the aircraft and Me.

We need to remember, we all have expertise to impart and a helping hand is always appreciated. More to come as we move on through the build and the next phases. ~Mark Langley

Members from Chapter 129 helped install the wings on Mark's Christavia project after a Saturday breakfast gathering. Conveniently, Mark's hangar is just across the ramp in the adjacent hangar row.



June 2025

EAA Chapter Leadership Academy



Sign Up for a Chapter Leadership Academy! — Join us in Oshkosh for a two-day interactive workshop that will help you become a better chapter leader and provide valuable information that will improve your chapter.

- **October 23-24, 2025**
- **January 24-25, 2026**

[Sign up now! ›](#)



Virtual Chapter Leadership Boot Camp Recorded — The EAA Chapters team presented a virtual Chapter Leadership Boot Camp on March 4-5, 2025, for chapter leaders who were unable to attend an in-person training event. The recordings from this boot camp are now available for you to watch. You can view the entire 8-hour virtual boot camp by October 31, 2025, to receive Chapter Recognition credit this year. [Watch now ›](#)

Our Chapter 129 has had 15 members attend the EAA Chapter Leadership Academy over the past seven years and it has made a significant impact on our growth as a chapter. And not just in attendance, but in offerings for our members, outreach programs and education.

At the Academy, you'll have the opportunity to immerse yourself in a wide range of chapter-related subjects, such as business fundamentals, recruitment, fundraising, public relations, EAA resources, programs, and more! The academy provides an excellent opportunity to network with other chapter leaders as well as interact with EAA staff through interactive workshops and conferences.

EAA is now offering a Virtual Boot Camp for those unable to attend an in-person event. Even if you are not in a leadership position, you will learn more about how your chapter functions and how you can participate.

Keep in touch with what is happening at EAA each month with the Chapter Video Magazine. Charlie Becker and Jack Pelton discuss current events and activities at HQ.



Find the latest EAA's Chapter Videos at:
<http://eaa.brightcove.com/chapters/detail/videos>



Chapter Video Magazine

April 2025



June 2025

Promoting Safety - Another Strong Year for GA

The steady decline in accident rates over the past decade hasn't been due to one factor. Instead, it reflects the combined efforts of government and industry to improve education and training within the GA community. As these initiatives take root and expand, GA is building a stronger safety culture and moving closer to even lower accident rates. -Mike Ginter

PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES for 2024 suggest that it was another strong year of safety for general aviation. While the final numbers won't be official until all NTSB accident investigations are completed - a process that can take up to two years - the early outlook is encouraging.

As of September 30, 2024, there were 195 fatal GA accidents. This number represents 58 fewer fatal accidents than the goal of 253 established by the GA Joint Safety Committee as part of a 10-year effort to reduce the fatal accident rate by 10 percent, or 1 percent per year. Secondary data suggests flight activity is on the rise, even exceeding initial projections compared to 2023. Together, these trends signal a bright future for GA safety. Mike Ginter, a former U.S. Navy pilot and active GA pilot and aircraft owner, leads the AOPA Air Safety Institute.

Our 2024 accomplishments:

- More than 10 million engagements across ASI programing.
- ASI honored John and Martha King with the prestigious Richard G. McSpadden General Aviation Safety Award at the Hoover Awards event. This award celebrates exceptional contributions to advancing safety within the GA community.

- ASI recognized six air traffic controllers with its annual Flight Assist Commendations at the National Air Traffic Controllers Association Communicating for Safety conference and the Archie League Medal of Safety awards banquet. These commendations highlight the controllers' outstanding professionalism in guiding GA pilots through challenging and potentially life threatening situations.
- Released the thirty-fourth Richard G. McSpadden Report. This year's report underwent a modernization effort to align with industry standards, focusing primarily on noncommercial fixed-wing aircraft.
- Released *Fatal Flight Training Accident Report 2000-2019*, which was developed in collaboration with Liberty University

The report offers a detailed 20-year retrospective, comparing the first and last 10 years of the period. Renewed 6,354 CFI certificates with ASI's on line flight instructor refresher course.

- Produced 13 new videos covering a wide range of topics and formats. Released 12 new episodes of the *There I Was ...* podcast.
- ASI's quarterly "What Went Wrong" articles in AOPA Pilot provided readers with lessons learned from pertinent GA accidents.
- ASI produced its popular weekly Training and Safety Tips on aopa.org, and delivered a variety of seminar topics nationwide.

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Mike Ginter

AOPA Air Safety Institute



June 2025

"Pro Tips for Pilots Air Venture 2025 Briefing"

Topic: Practicing for the Oshkosh Arrival

On Wednesday, June 11, 2025 at 19:00 Central Daylight Time (17:00 PDT; 18:00 MDT; 20:00 EDT; 14:00 HST; 16:00 AKDT; 17:00 Arizona; Thursday, June 12, 2025 00:00 GMT)

Select Number: GL13137049

Description: **If your flying into Oshkosh for Air Venture 2025, then this webinar is for YOU!**

Sean Elliott, EAA Vice President of Advocacy and Safety along with **Charlie Precourt**, former NASA Astronaut, Space Shuttle Commander will speak on how you can properly prepare and practice landing safely at the Oshkosh Airport during Air Venture 2025.

All of us are familiar with the pilots required FAA Regulation on *91.103 Preflight action*. Each pilot in command shall, before beginning a flight, become familiar with all available information concerning that flight, but how many of us are practicing the Arrival Traffic Pattern at 500 feet that is flown at Air Venture for most of the arriving aircraft which is completely different then what most pilots are used to. **How many of us are comfortable landing on a painted dot one third down the runway?**

We will talk about the unique issues landing at Oshkosh and the importance of the pilot making the correct go around decision and more so bring your questions along and we will answer them!

To view further details and registration information for this webinar, [click here](#).

The sponsor for this seminar is: **FAASteam**

The following credit(s) are available for the WINGS/AMT Programs:

Basic Knowledge 1 - 1 Credit

[Click here to view the WINGS help page](#)

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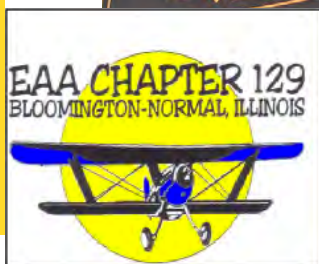
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June 2025

129 SWAG Arrivals

Chapter 129 still has a few shirts, caps and challenge coins available for sale.



EAA Chapter 129 SWAG

Hats.....\$17

T shirts.....\$18

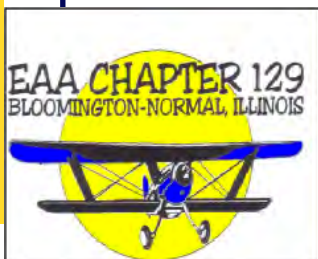
Polos.....\$32

Poker & KBMI shirts...\$10

Chapter 129 Patches ...\$5

Challenge Coins.....\$10

EAA Chapter 129 wishes to offer our sincere thanks to Pontiac Flying Service for their support and generous donation of training materials for our Chapter's recent Airplane Ground School.





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IMC/VMC QOM Answers



IMC QOM Answer: Pitot heat should be turned on whenever there is a possibility of icing conditions. This includes situations where the temperature is at or below freezing and there is visible moisture, such as clouds, rain, or fog. The pitot heat helps prevent ice from forming on the pitot tube, which could lead to inaccurate airspeed readings.

It's important to note that pitot heat is an anti-icing device, not a deicing device. This means it should be activated before ice starts to form, rather than after ice has already accumulated.

Best practices, as indicated by page 10-32 of FAA-H-8083-15B, Instrument Flying Handbook, suggest the pitot heat should be turned on prior to departure.

Some Pilot Operating Handbooks provide specific guidance as to the use of pitot heat. For example, the Before Takeoff Checklist for the Piper PA-46 says to turn on the pitot heat for flight into icing conditions when visible moisture below +5 degrees C is anticipated or encountered.

Additional information on the topic can be found in AC 91-74B, Flight in Icing Conditions.



VMC QOM Answer: Among the factors involved with CFIT accidents are:

- Loss of situational awareness
- Wire strikes, many of which occur below 200 feet AGL, and are not associated with agricultural application
- IFR procedural mistakes

Surprisingly, the majority of CFIT accidents occur in day VFR. Suggested techniques for avoiding CFIT accidents include:

- Using simulators to improve familiarity with approaches
- Proficiency training, including the Wings Pilot Proficiency Program
- Maintain a minimum of 2,000 feet AGL while in flight Additional information can be found in AC 61-134, General Aviation CFIT Awareness



May Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

May 1 EAA Chapter 129 Board of Directors meeting 5:30 p.m. Hanger F15

Board members present: Charlie Bates, President; Wayne Sampson, Treasurer and Director of Development; Doug Reeves, Secretary; Wayne Aldrich, STEM Coordinator and Ray Scholarship Coordinator; Guest member John Rettick joined the meeting.

Members absent: Chad McCue, Vice President, and Young Eagles Coordinator; Kirk Sampson, Media, and Web Editor

President's report- No report

Treasurer's report – Wayne reviewed the current financial report and discussed gross income for April of \$1,924.00 with expenses including purchase of shirts and caps of \$3,454.18 for a net loss for the month of \$1,530.18. The upfront cost of the shirts and hats was \$1,588.89 to be recovered when members reimburse the chapter. Wayne discussed the reserves for the shared aviation scholarship that the chapter may exercise next year.

· Young Eagles No report

· STEM/Camps Wayne discussed the proposed agenda for the summer “Build & Fly” camp. President Charlie Bates shared the Aviation Youth Camp promotional flyer he had created. Suggestions were offered to include a QR code to allow interested youth to connect with the registration form. Wayne shared the proposed registration form with contact information needed. Additions suggested were adding t-shirt size, M/F, and a camp waiver form and a YE waiver. Wayne offered the assignments for presenters for the various subjects offered during the camp. Each presenter should develop material relevant to the subject and can recruit assistance from other members. Additional assistance will be needed besides the presenters to be support runners, plane schedulers, YE assistants, Team Build assistants, Simulator assistants and transportation assistants. Dates are Monday June 16 through Friday June 19 with an optional day Saturday June 20 for the SIRS experience. All presentation materials will be saved for future use.

Wayne reminded the board of the shared camp with the Children's Discovery Museum scheduled for 29 and 30 July at the EAA hanger and PAM. Much of the material presented at the STEM camp can be used for the CDM camp.

Members Bill Thacker, Audrey Ruffcorn, Doug Reeves, and Chad McCue are assisting Wayne at the Saunemin IL 8th Grade career day Friday May 2. The display will be in coordination with the Pontiac Flying Service, Chris Peterson. An estimate of three hundred students will be attending from Livingston County schools.

- Build and Fly update President Charlie Bates will order the new build airplane for the STEM camp.

· Gathering Coordination – The next chapter gathering will be held Friday May 16 and Saturday May 17 at IILL, Thacker Field. A list of food and supplies needed will be developed, and volunteers are invited to assist. Bill Thacker has a movie planned for Friday night on the hanger door.

· IMC/VMC Club Jay Allen is scheduled to present the May 3 IMC meeting and Bill Thacker will present the May 10 VMC meeting. Future meetings will be postponed until September to encourage summer flying.



May Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

· Lunch flyouts/ Poker Run update – The Poker Run was a success with twelve pilots participating. Awards were given to the top three poker hands. Lunch was served with brats, sausages, and hamburgers.

Fly out to lunch with Matt is scheduled for Saturday May 24 flying to Decatur East End Grill at 12:00.

Facilities/Quartermaster-Wayne Aldrich suggested that we contact CIRA for a tour of the new hanger facility.

· Roster management – Wayne Sampson said that he will work with Chad McCue to verify free memberships provided to new attendees from IMC/VMC Club meetings. Chad is working with the EAA corporate team to document membership status.

· SWAG update – Shirts and hats were available for pickup at the Saturday Gathering of Eagles breakfast. Payment for the swag should go to Wayne Sampson.

-New Business

John Rettick was recognized as a new commissioner for the new Central Illinois Airport Authority. John was installed at the first meeting of CIRA Thursday May 1. Congratulations to John!

The May Fly-out to Thacker Field scheduled for May 16,17 will include the award of the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award to George Wilts. The award is the FAA's most prestigious award for pilots who have demonstrated 50 years of piloting aircraft as Master Pilots.

The June chapter gathering speaker is expected to be a representative of the NOAA weather station in Lincoln.

Adjournment The meeting was adjourned at 7:00

Respectfully submitted,
Douglass Reeves, Secretary EAA Chapter 129



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June 2025