



# THE STROBE



EAA 512 Placerville

July 22

## Prez Sez...

OSHKOSH PLANS & MORE

### Cosmic View

The Summer equinox has come and passed. We are cruising through space in the year 2022 at 67,000 mph. NASA's Webb telescope reveals Cosmic Cliffs ahead, a glittering landscape of the birth of a star. It is beyond my comprehension and looks like turbulence ahead. Fasten your seat belts!



## GENERAL MEETING

July 20

Picnic 6pm

Meeting 7pm

*Ya'll remember to  
bring dessert or a side dish!*

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## Down here on Earth

The July 2 pancake breakfast kicked off a holiday weekend and was well attended by a dozen fly-in pilots, airport tenants and friends of the airport. We served over 200 guests, emptied the sausage bin, and scrambled the last egg.

I think back to 2021 when I was planning a trip to Oshkosh. Auto gas was hovering around \$3 per gallon nationally. Now that number is north of \$6 in California and 100LL is \$7.39 at Placerville. Chapter members like Judi and Zane, Dick and Neil, are planning their pilgrimage to AirVenture on ForeFlight in a personal plane, while others may be heading to the TSA line for United or SWA. I hope next month they report their trip highlights, adventures, and successes. I will track Judi and Zane cross the Rocky Mountains and follow I-80 all the way to Oshkosh in three days with good weather and a stop-over in Chicago.

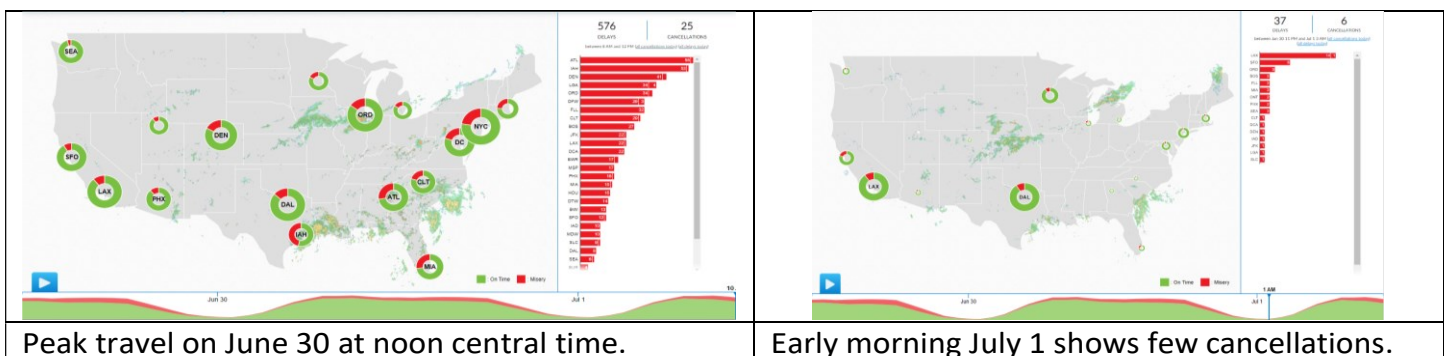
Flight Aware tracks delays and cancellations across the nation on a Misery Map or chart captured below. That's what they call it! The chart plays like a video with diurnal peaks and valleys. <https://flightaware.com/miserymap/usall/1656696600> showing airport delays in red and green circles over the preceding 48-hour period.

Airline travel is now at pre-pandemic levels and at capacity. A pilot shortage is exasperated by early retirements and a pilot slow-down. A one-stop flight on SWA to Milwaukee costs over \$800 with no economy fares available. If you have that "Want to get away" feeling, one day in the future you will put on your virtual goggles and live stream Oshkosh!

Back here at Placerville, we are watching the air attack on fires to the south. Every day, there is helicopter activity whipping up dust and dry grass on the field. Pilots beware of wake turbulence if you see or hear a chopper in the vicinity.

At our chapter board meeting this week, we monitored the airport advisory committee on Zoom discuss relevant topics about our airport, including hangar/vegetation fire safety, hangar development and management, and Caldor Fire reimbursement. While other airports in the foothills and mountains have received payments from government agencies for the use of their facility, such as tie-down fees and fuel flow (think of a corkage fee), Placerville has not. I repeat, Placerville has not. Astonishing! The airport was shut down for two weeks or more and got nothing.

The chapter is financially healthy and comfortably in the green with revenues from



the pancake breakfast. Our seven breakfast events each year is our principal source of income, but in these inflationary times, we have a potential new source of income, thanks to the efforts of Judi Gordon.

**"Awesome news!"**. She applied for the chapter, and we were approved for the Adopt-A-Highway program for litter control along Highway 50 in the Cameron Pack area, a 2-mile stretch both east and west bound. This is a five-year program which will provide a stream of cash, potentially \$500/month, to fund our Sunny Atkins scholarship program and hangar improvements. This is **SIGNIFICANT!** It will require a team of volunteers and scholars to pick up litter each month along the highway. We will have more details after CAL DOT conducts a site review and issues permits to the chapter for signature, followed by a safety video and safety orientation. We need members to sign-up at the chapter meeting.

### Chapter Scholarships

The chapter scholars are in various stages of flight training with their scholarship money. The table shows the start month and year, a successful **check-ride**, **SOLO** or **future** event. Congratulations to Aidan Andrews who completed his check-ride to receive his private pilot certificate in six months on June 15. Aidan will be attending an aviation college in Montana in the fall.

Jim Wilson

Scholar	Goal	Scholarship	2020	2021	YTD 2022	Aug-Sep 2022
Andrew Gordon	Sport	Ray	Jun	✓		
Jaeger Ruckman	Private	Ray		Sept		✓ride
Nathan West	Private	Atkins		Sept	✓	
Aidan Andrews	Private	Ray		Nov	✓	
Ben Varozza	Private	Ray			SOLO	
Liana Round	Solo	Atkins				SOLO
Tobias Klein	A & P	Atkins				
Zane Ruckman	Glider	Atkins			SOLO	



## EAA Chapter 512

Placerville, CA

Tracey Fremd

Please get your order in for a **personalized magnetic name badge**

\$12.50/ea.

Text Audrey at 530-409-4468 or email to [flyingchic@usa.com](mailto:flyingchic@usa.com)

Delivery is approximately 2 weeks.

## Sacramento Executive is Back

Sacramento Executive Airport has resolved staffing issues and is pleased to announce that control tower operations have resumed with staff on-duty Sunday-Saturday from 0600 to 2100hrs local. Pattern work may resume and flight following requests are welcomed. Refer to the current ATIS: 125.5 VHF or ASOS: (916) 421-0923.

## 2022 California Capital Airshow

The 2022 California Capital Airshow commemorates the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States Air Force with an airshow heavily skewed toward military air power. In acknowledgment of this significant anniversary, the flight line will be filled with US Air Force assets, complimented by NATO military aircraft largely unknown to American airshow audiences. Picture a NATO country's equivalent of our Air Force One, and the B1, B2 and B52 in formation over the skies of Sacramento! The airshow is coordinating with the US Department of Defense to make this happen, so stay tuned – it's going to be exciting! **General aviation fly-in traffic is always welcomed and encouraged**, so mark your calendar for October 1-2 and we'll see you there!!!

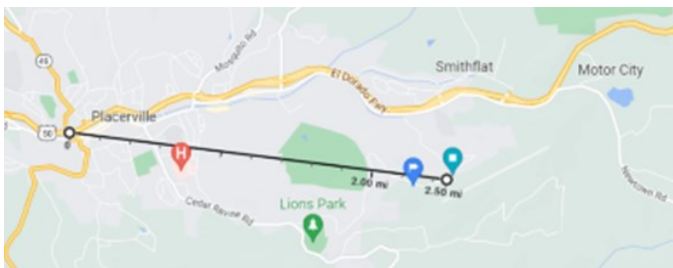


# THE PLACERVILLE AIRPORT REPORT

June 2022

Anyone who knows PVF, knows PVF is a jewel in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. At an elevation of 2585 feet, the runway historically provided a fog-free refueling stop for military trainers operating throughout the west coast.

The airport was established in 1929 on Texas Hill 2.5 miles east of the town of Placerville. Placerville is half the distance (44 miles) from the beginning of Hwy 50 to Echo Summit (88 miles) to the east at 7,200 feet elevation.



I am not an investigative reporter, but after attending an airport advisory committee meeting by Zoom in May, my curiosity grew about airport operations, administration, and governance. I have been a casual observer and tenant of the airport since 2011 when I attended Oshkosh and joined the EAA. When I returned from AirVenture, I joined the local EAA chapter 512, resumed flight instruction after a 45-year absence and have been active ever since. Over the years, I had questions like: *Why is the east end of the airport subdivided for hangars with taxiways, but hangars were never constructed? Why does a beautiful road terminate at a locked gate?*

The short answer is when the area was developed with access road, level hangar sites and taxiways, the fire marshal halted the

construction of hangars because there was no infrastructure for water or utilities.

Now, as I serve as the president of the chapter, I get calls from visiting pilots. One couple flew in from Palm Springs looking to relocate. They were not here looking for real estate, they were searching for a hangar for their Cessna 182 and RV-8. No point in "house hunting" if the search for a hangar or building site comes up empty.

## Monthly Gatherings

Each month, visitors fly-in from miles around for our pancake breakfast. The EAA chapter occupies an historic landmark building erected in 1978. The Quonset hangar was formerly an engine repair facility at the Alameda Naval Air Station during World War II. It was moved to Texas Hill by the chapter founders, including our first president Bob O'Hara (1930-2020). People enjoy its quaint ambiance. During pancake breakfast we serve 150 guests and a dozen or more planes line the ramp.

The chapter began hosting the **Vintage Display Day** to coincide with pancake breakfast on the first Saturday and Sunday each month beginning in April. I helped Dick put the list in Excel and alphabetize it. With over 35 historic and vintage aircraft on display, visitors enjoy a stroll to all the open hangars!

Airport tenants get to know their neighbors and enjoy a little hangar talk. One such couple, Pat, and his wife, inquired if there were any hangars available for rent or for sale for their 1982 Beech A36. They want to bring it home from the avionics shop but have no place to hangar it.

On display days, open hangars reveal the airplanes inside. But my curiosity grew at the hangars that are NOT open. In the 10 plus years

I have been here, I never saw the doors open on SP-02, near the west-end restrooms. Not until a month ago, when the airport technician opened the hangar to remove its contents, did I see what's inside the locked metal tomb. As I approached the hangar, the contents were revealed: old dusty furniture and a fiberglass boat. **I thought airplane hangars are supported to contain airplanes.**

My curiosity led me to a valuable online resource to understand airports. The **Airport Master Record** is an FAA document (Form OMB-2120-0015) published and available online. Data is collected or provided by airport managers throughout the nation. After downloading an Excel file from the FAA site, a little analysis gave me a "benchmark" by which to compare over 20 airports near to Placerville. This revealed some interesting facts. One data point records the number of single-engine aircraft on the field. For Placerville, the number 58 seemed an obvious error. The airport technician reports the actual count is 113. Why the inaccuracy? When will the data be corrected? How accurate is the other data on the AMR? How is the data collected? The AMR record counts operations as a take-off and landing by local GA and ITNRNT (intermittent or non-local) aircraft operations. The table below is a sample of the airports.

The AMR does not reveal the number of hangars or tie-downs at an airport, only the number of acres. But with Google maps, one can capture a bird's eye view of the landscape with detail down to tie-down markings and size of hangars.

A hangar is a rare commodity which has great value if for sale or month-to-month rental. Knowing some aircraft owners are desperately seeking a hangar to protect their high-valued airplane from the elements, and from the vandalism at the airport, which has become increasingly brazen and rampant. There are over 100 hangars on the field and 80 tie-downs. During the peak of general aviation in the 1980's, there were more than 200 aircraft at Placerville.

In the 40 years since, the aircraft count is down 40%, but the value is over three times greater. The number of hangars has changed little, holding steady at about 100. There is not a single vacant space at the Placerville airport to build one more hangar, except for the east end.

*Why are some hangars vacant, locked, and tenants absent for so long?*

ID	CITY	SINGLE ENG	AIR TAXI	GA LOCAL	GA ITNRNT	TOTAL OPS
TVL	SO LAKE TAHOE	18	1100	4668	19632	25875
O22	COLUMBIA	95	1740	21000	22900	45657
<b>PVF</b>	<b>PLACERVILLE</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>27000</b>	<b>30600</b>	<b>59400</b>
LHM	LINCOLN	58	3200	37100	34100	74400
AUN	AUBURN	104	1100	36965	37000	75000
CCR	CONCORD	284	5000	44800	40900	90700
MHR	MATHER	10	12500	13700	36800	99500
SAC EXE	SACRAMENTO	149	2200	35900	72900	111000

FAA has a hangar use policy. It essentially states "If hangars are not reserved for aeronautical use, Federal airport grant funds could inadvertently subsidize non-aeronautical users, and aeronautical users could be denied access to needed airport facilities."

"To ensure appropriate use of hangars, an airport sponsor should:

- manage the use of hangars through an airport leasing program that requires a written lease agreement or permit;
- monitor the use of hangars on the airport and take steps to prevent unapproved non-aeronautical use;
- minimize the length of time to provide hangar space for those on a "waiting list"; and require non-aviation users pay a fair market rental for the use of the hangar and if needed, the hangar is returned to aviation use, under circumstances where temporary non-aeronautical use of a vacant hangar is permitted."

It may be written in the lease or the by-laws that a hangar, if absent an aircraft after 6 months, the tenant is in violation of the lease agreement or an FAA rule. If a hangar is empty for more than a year, is that considered aviation-use or non-aviation use?

I know a box hangar on the west end has been vacant for over 3 years while the owner looks for a replacement airplane. Why does the airport ignore the rule?

Another hangar has been vacant for over three years. Health issues have prevented the owners from flying cross country. The hangar sits vacant.

At our last pancake breakfast, a hangar for sale sign appeared and was removed within the hour. Hang a **FOR SALE** sign, the killer pilots swarm the hangar looking to nest.

This is not a free and fair market. There is no multiple listing of hangars on the market. The purchase of a hangar is like insider trading. Word-of-mouth travels quickly.

Placerville airport is like an island in a sea of canyons, hills, and forest. Only 243 acres, about the same size as Auburn. ***So, what's the difference?*** PVF is on the top of a mountain, a flat top asphalt surface like an aircraft carrier. Access roads were never improved, and a hairpin turn swallow tanker trucks that follow Google directions. The only building sites are on the east end, but the decades old development plans were rejected by the fire marshal for lack of water and utilities after a significant investment in pavement and taxiways.



Auburn is of similar size, but the terrain is flat and adjacent to an industrial area.

At a recent advisory committee meeting, a passionate discussion of the east end was resurrected but without resolution. A "new" tenant and county resident who also lives in San Jose wants to build a hangar at Placerville.

He was astonished at airport management for their IN-ACTION and failure to get reimbursement from fire-fighting funds for tie-down and fuel flow. Helicopter operators bring in their own fuel trucks and do not use fuel from the airport, which means enormous lost revenue. This would seem to be gross negligence on the part of airport management. A dereliction of duty and no accountability. And this has been going on for at least the last eight years.

Other airports in El Dorado County and adjacent counties have received thousands of dollars to compensate for airport operations and closures. Placerville was closed to all GA operations for a nearly a month at the peak of the fire season in September 2021. The AMR ITNRNT operations count includes helicopter fire-fighting operations and exceeds 30,000, and with GA is nearly 60,000 (2017 data). Placerville ranks in the top one-third of the adjacent airports in terms of total operations. This clearly demonstrates the enormous value the airport brings to the community and El Dorado County.

The latest rumor has the county sheriff acquiring a helicopter and needing a hangar facility for operations. Will the county move forward with a development plan? Or will this become just another albatross in search of a landing zone- a bird that stays aloft for long periods at sea without a home?

Jim Wilson

# Solo

A big congratulations to Ben Varozza  
for soloing on June 26<sup>th</sup>!



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## 2022 VETERAN VINTAGE

## AIRCRAFT DISPLAYS AT PLACERVILLE AIRPORT

SATURDAY & SUNDAY 9am-1pm

AUG 6, 7

SEPT 3, 4

## FREE TO THE PUBLIC

SPONSORED BY  
HANGTOWN EAA 512 AND  
HELD IN CONJUNCTION  
WITH OUR FAMOUS  
SATURDAY PANCAKE  
BREAKFASTS



# MEMES AND THINGS

*How you feel  
on your first solo*

Before

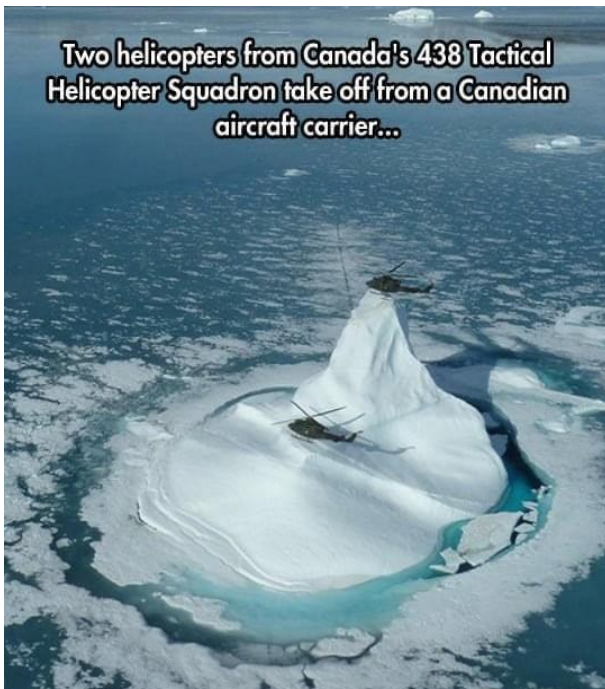
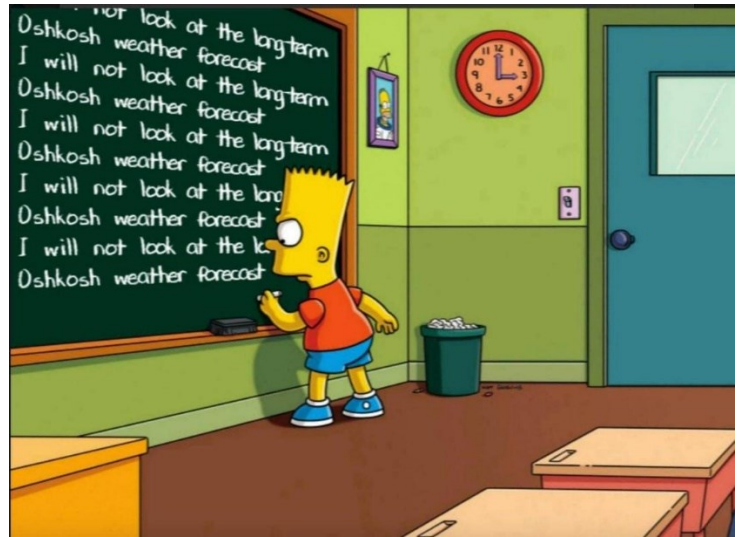
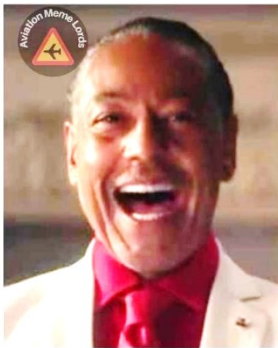
During

After



My CFI with a  
brand new  
student pilot

My CFI  
with me



**EAA Chapter 512  
Monthly Board of Directors  
Minutes  
June 8, 2022**

*\*Minutes are now being  
approved a month prior to  
publishing*

**Zoom meeting called to order at: 7:05 p.m. by: Jim Wilson**

**Board Members Present:**

Jim Wilson, *President*  
Jim Pinkowski, *Vice President*

Judi Gordon - *Treasurer*  
Neil Robinson, *General Director*

**Approval of Minutes** – The minutes of the June Board Meeting were approved. They will be attached to the July Strobe.

**Board Member Reports & Announcements**

- **Jim Wilson – President**
  - **Top Gun: Maverick**
    - 5/28 was a good showing.
    - 16 people attended, 3 no show.
  - **June Pancake Breakfast**
    - 6/4/22: \$1,086: \$885 breakfast, \$131 donations, \$70 calendars
    - Cool weather hindered attendance. 6 aircraft flew in from local area, including AIR CAM from Cam Park.
    - Served 110 paying guests and 15 staff (estimate)
  - **Cameron Park (O61) Burrito Breakfast**
    - 6/5/22: \$701: \$535 breakfast, \$166 donations
    - It POURED! Only one aircraft flew in from Sac Exec.
    - Served 65 paying guests and 10 staff (estimate)
  - **Area 51.2**
    - Appoint Area 51.2 planning committee. Members: seeking minimum of 4: Jim Wilson, James Johnson, Dale Kral, Zane Ruckman.
    - Work party- Postpone until after AirVenture.
  - **Chapter recognition;** Hang GOLD banner when it arrives. Gold banner added to chapter website. Banner received with incorrect year 2022, should be 2020-2021.
  - **T-Mobile router** received and installed at the audio-video cart and will be mounted on the 4 x 4 post. It is small and portable which allows use during YE event staged out of flight simulator trailer.. Internet connection is very good in the hangar.
  - **Ray Aviation Scholarship**
    - Jaeger Ruckman - 2021 RAY SCHOLAR Placerville
      - Passed his written test with 85% on 3/24. Total flight time as of 6/1, 47.6 hrs.
      - Ray Foundation has released the final \$2,000, which was deposited into our account on 4/11/22. Total R & I expenses to date \$6521 or \$146/hr.
      - Motion was approved to pay Great Planes invoice \$319 for May.
      - Will Mathews invoiced \$145.
    - Aidan Andrews - 2021 RAY SCHOLAR Cameron Park
      - Instruction began mid Nov at PVF. He flew 11.2 hrs. at PVF then moved to Cameron Park. He soloed in 26 hours meeting his deadline of 2/28. Total cost to date est. \$7864 or \$179/hr.
      - Ray Foundation released final \$2,000 on 6/3/2022
      - Total time at the end of May estimated to be 50 hr. His monthly reports do not total flight hours.

Aiden passed the FAA written exam on 4/5 with a 77%. Jim received results today which are required for the written report to EAA and final payment of \$2,000 in funds.

- Jim will submit the online report this week.
  - Sierra Nevada has invoices that we have not yet paid waiting on Aidan to provide a progress report to Jim Wilson. No remaining funds for additional instruction and checkride are available.
  - Checkride was scheduled for 5/22. Est. cost \$1000 for DPE and aircraft. Checkride was stopped and rescheduled for 6/3. He failed in one area of second checkride and must retake. Aidan has failed to provide any status update to Jim as the scholarship coordinator. Until he does, we should not pay past due invoices to Sierra Nevada from available funds.
  - Ben Varozza - 2022 RAY SCHOLAR
    - Chapter was awarded two 50/50 matching funds scholarships
    - Chapter selected Ben Varozza as the first scholar. Ray Foundation paid the first \$2,000, and we matched \$2,000 from Sunny Atkins for a total of \$4,000.
    - The objective is to complete training in 5 months, before enrolling in college in Florida in late August.
    - 17.9 hours as of 6/1/22. Ben should solo this week.
    - Motion approved to pay Great Planes' invoice for \$847 for May.
    - Will Mathews invoiced \$315.
  - The second 50/50 is optional. We have until September to select a scholar for the October 31 deadline and to raise the funds. We have \$7,266.81 in Sunny Atkins funds available.
  - **Sunny Atkins Scholarship**
    - Liana Round:
      - Began instruction May 6. Flew 3.7 hours dual with Will.
      - Motion approved to pay Great Planes' invoice of \$407.
      - Will Mathews invoiced \$185.
    - Zane Ruckman:
      - On 2/3/2022, Zane applied for a Sunny Atkins Scholarship for his glider rating.
      - He has been taking lessons in Judi's motorglider (\$85/hour wet + \$25/hour instructor).
      - On 3/12, the scholarship committee voted to award Zane \$1,500.
      - Zane soloed on 4/24/22
      - He has 15.5 hours as of 6/8/2022.
      - Motion approved to pay Judi Gordon's invoice for \$416.50.
  - **Upcoming Events**
    - June 11 YE event: 33 kids, 8 pilots. We will stage from the area between the airport office and the fuel island. Aircraft will load and unload east of the transient parking. Helicopters are on call and immediately adjacent to the fuel pit. Potential to launch at any time. Kim and Neil will work the registration/check-in table. Collect \$2 for hotdog and water.
    - June 15: Membership meeting
      - Picnic dinner
      - Any guest speakers or chapter members who wish to speak?
    - July 25 - 31: AirVenture, OshKosh, WI
      - We won the pancake breakfast lottery and are serving on Saturday, 7/30. Need 14 volunteers.
      - We have reserved 3 campsites and have added a 4th for free.
      - People attending:
        - YES (18): Glenn Gordon, Judi Gordon, Andrew Gordon, (+ 3 friends), Zane Ruckman, John Montorello, Marissa Montorello, Venkat Tirimula, David Rucinski, Beki Parks, Michael Hogg, Jaeger Ruckman, Nathan West, Saad Bushnaq, Saad's sister, Brooks Mershon
        - PROBABLY: Nathan Prince (+1 friend)
- MAYBE: Will Matthews, Dick Wampach (+1 passenger), Tracy Bertram, Nathan

- West, Elana Khavkin, Ben Khavkin,
  - PROBABLY NOT: Brand Family, Jim Wilson
- DATE TBD: Fundraiser postponed until the Fall - Dale and Amy Kral at 6 PM. Cost per plate between \$10 and \$15. Swedish Meatballs and egg noodles, salad, garlic bread, coffee. At \$15, dessert included, BYOB. See FLIER.
- September 10: Flying Start Event
- **Jim Pinkowski – Vice President**
  - **General Meeting Presentation**
    - There is much interest in lack of hangar availability and hangar use policy. This could be a subject for future presentation if members would like to collaborate with Jim Wilson and lead a discussion at our next meeting.
- **Judi Gordon – Treasurer**
  - Banking account balances as of 06/06/2022:
    - Cash and checks on hand: \$11,672.28
    - Chase Checking # 6001: \$14,360.84
    - Chase Savings # 8668: \$2,922.57 (Airport security account held in trust. Not property of EAA 512)

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT (AS OF 06/06/2022)
SUNNY ATKINS SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS	\$14,191.31 (LR: \$1,500, BV: \$4,182 (Ray Match), ZR: \$1,242.5 AVAILABLE: \$7,266.81)
RAY FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS	\$6,547.52 (JR: \$3,365.52, BV: \$1,182, AA: \$2,000)
OPERATING FUNDS	\$5,294.29
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$26,033.12 PLUS \$2,922.57 IN AIRPORT SECURITY ACCOUNT</b>

#### Committee Reports

- **Fundraising**
  - Tracey Fremd
  - Judi Gordon - Fundraising Opportunity for our scholars to give back to the chapter: Adopt-A-Highway and Clean California have teamed up to offer a volunteer incentive of up to \$250 per month for litter cleanup events. There are currently no available sites on route 50 in El Dorado County. We are waitlisted until further notice.
- **Membership – Zane Ruckman**
  - As a reminder: each paid group counts as 1. Each additional pilot (spouse, child) per group counts as 1. So the Ruckmans count as 2 (Zane, Jaeger) and a family with no pilots or one pilot counts as 1.
  - 69 groups paid to date, represented by 83 members, and 121 people. Included in the 69 groups, are 8 new groups in 2022, and 13 free 6-month memberships. 26 groups remain unpaid. I will be making phone calls.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m. by: Jim Wilson**