



**THE SKY ISLAND EAGLES**

**2025**  
HAPPY NEW YEAR  
**2025**

**January 2025**

### **From the Prez:**

Greetings to all the members of Chapter 776. As a new member and the newly installed president of the chapter, I take this opportunity to give the membership more information on my history and my ideas for the chapter. But first off, I want to thank Cliff Van Vleet for his many years of leadership and dedication to our chapter; we would not have survived without him. The good news is that Cliff has asked to continue his service as a member of the Board of Directors, so we will have the benefit of his wisdom and experience.

While I am new to Sierra Vista, I am not new to Arizona. I first moved here in 1991 upon my retirement from the USAF after 23 years. During my USAF career, like many fighter jocks, I have done things that the average person cannot imagine, and I am immensely grateful for having had those opportunities. My primary duty was flying as a fighter WSO in F-4C/D/E and F-111A/E aircraft. I spent my entire operational career flying overseas in PACAF and USAFE. Between flying assignments. I was lucky enough to land positions in international relations, first in JUSMAAG Spain doing international training and foreign military sales. Later I was assigned to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Pentagon as an Intelligence Action Officer briefing the Chairman and the J-3 daily. My



## **EAA Chapter 776**

[\(Email chapter officers\)](#)

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Director & Newsletter Editor [Larry Portouw](#)  
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## **Upcoming Events**

[EAA Ch 776 meeting January 14th, 6pm](#)  
[at the KFHU Terminal Building](#)

Pilot Gathering Saturday 11 January at  
9am at the Whetstone Airstrip.

[Buckeye Air Fair February 14-16](#)

[Cactus Fly-in, March 8<sup>th</sup>, Casa Grande](#)

Coolidge Fly-in b'fast. 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday

Grapevine camping/BBQ 3d Saturday

Casa Grande fly-in b'fast 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday

[Arizona Pilot's Association \(APA\) Calendar](#)

[APA Newsletter](#)

[New Mexico Pilot's Association Calendar](#)

[This Day in Aviation](#)

final assignment was with Southern Air Forces as the USAF manager for the Panama Canal turnover, with additional duty as 12AF manager of BRAC activities in the western U.S.

Upon arriving in Arizona in 1991 I immediately began planning a flying career in the civilian world. I got my CFI from Chandler Air Service in mid-1992 and bought a small, one airplane flight school in October of that year, SunAir Aviation Center, at Scottsdale Airport. My focus was on tailwheel and aerobatic training in a Citabria. Within one year and a half I had seven airplanes for training and rent: 2xCitabria; 1xSuper Decathlon; 1xGreat Lakes; 1xPitts S-2A, a Waco UPF-7, and a Cessna 172N. All but the Pitts and the Waco were for rent to qualified pilots. As the only tailwheel and aerobatic school (at the time) on the north side of Phoenix, I had the opportunity to fly dozens of different types of aircraft from Cessna 150s (Sabena Airlines aerobatic contract) to the Dallas Cowboys Lear Jet 35. It was a busy time but manageable until my son was born and my wife objected to me working 7 days a week. Fate stepped in and, out of the blue, I was offered a job managing a contract for two airbases in Spain. It must have been the right thing to do because almost immediately I was able to sell the business, pack up, and move to Spain. This brought a screeching halt to my five times daily akro flights and I was on an aviation sabbatical for six years, with only an occasional flight when I was back in the U.S. On conclusion of that contract, I took the opportunity to go to Afghanistan as country manager for a company with contracts with the U.S. Embassy there. After a year there we moved back to Arizona where we bought a house in Anthem. I joined a partnership in a Super Decathlon and updated my flying skills again.

Not being able to stay in one place for long, I accepted an employment offer to go to Iraq with Halliburton to be Contract Manager for the PCO Oil contract for restoration of the Iraqi oil fields. A grueling existence but hugely rewarding, both professionally and financially for me.

Back in the U.S. I worked for several Government contracting companies as a Director of Business Development and eventually, Chief Operating Officer. The whole time I owned several airplanes (all tailwheel) and had the pleasure of building a Super AcroSport I. Finally, in 2024, my wife and I got tired of maintaining a house where we never went upstairs and decided to move back to Arizona. We also decided that we had seen enough of Maricopa County and its heat and traffic and bought a house in Sierra Vista. We have not looked back and are completely satisfied with our new home and environment.

I am not the youngest nor the oldest member of Chapter 776, but no one can doubt that we are rapidly aging out. As president I intend to primarily focus on increasing our membership, both in numbers and in demographics. The 776 board is already at work on how we are to accomplish that, and we will be seeking your inputs to help us do so. I would also like to take us back to our roots and get more people building aircraft. Not only is that an immensely satisfying personal achievement, but it is also a focal point for everyone in the chapter to take part, either with hands or with ideas.

Thank you for your trust in electing me as president; I embrace the role and look forward to working with all of you,

Be Safe,

*Greg*



## Young Eagles

Mark your calendars. We are working on a rally to fly German exchange students from Sierra Vista's sister city of Radebeul, GE. It is Tentatively February 22<sup>d</sup> with a rain date of March 1<sup>st</sup>. If you can volunteer or can fly, please let Larry know at [Here](#).



## EAA CHAPTER 776 THE SKY ISLAND EAGLES December 2024 Minutes

It was a very small crowd this time due to the Holidays. Those attending were George Clarke, Cliff and Carole Van Vleet, Jon Nelson, Paul Brick, Joe Spurgeon, Ben Middleton, Anne Ballinger, and Chris Daley.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Cliff asked for the Secretary Report. Secretary Clarke asked that the November minutes, as published in the December Newsletter, be approved. A motion was made, and the minutes were approved.

Cliff then asked for the Treasurer Report and Jon Nelson reported that the chapter had \$1,927.54 in checking, \$6,801.56 in savings (Young Eagle), and \$15,137.19 in the current TSC (Young Eagle) accounts.

There was no Young Eagle report nor a Sierra Vista Transportation report.

Cliff next gave us a heads-up that a friend, medivac helicopter mechanic, and now a resident of the Denver area, Dan Metz, was on the back page of the current EAA Sport Aviation.

The decision to continue the annual gifting of \$1,000.00 to Cheri McGunagle for the use of scholarship recipients for next summer's EAA Air Academy will be put to a vote at the Jan 2025 meeting.

If anyone from the chapter remembers the name of the mechanic at Aerocrafters and his old contact information please advise the following. This would have been in the 1990's. Young Kim, 425-232-9315, lives in the Atlanta area and is trying to identify this mechanic. He has Somkit Some's instructor number to search the FAA data base, but so far Somekit has not been of assistance.

EAA annual chapter national dues have been paid by Cliff for 2025, and he has submitted a reimbursement request from Treasurer Jon Nelson.

The call to the membership advised us that Dick Decker's pilot get-together would be in Wilcox next Saturday the 14<sup>th</sup> of Dec starting around 0900.

After noting that the Jan 2025 meeting would be at the City Terminal at 6:PM on the 14<sup>th</sup>, Cliff closed the meeting.

NOTE: This will be Cliff's last meeting as President as incoming President Greg Loughran will take over that position in Jan 2025. This has been an in creditable run for Cliff and Carole since they joined Ch 776 in 1988, and the chapter owes him and Carole so much for all these years that they have contributed to the survival and success of Chapter 776. Cliff will remain on the board and Carole gets a much earned and needed retirement from all things Young Eagle. From all of us, thank you both so very much.



## Education Corner

1) Where will a pilot likely find the first signs of icing when super-cooled droplets begin to freeze to an airplane?

- a. Small and/or narrow objects such as antennas or an OAT probe are the best collectors of droplets and ice up most rapidly.
- b. Induction icing will always occur before structural icing causing the first

signs of icing to be a decrease in engine power.

c. Large objects such as the wings or windscreen impact the largest number of super-cooled droplets and ice up most rapidly.

2) If, while in Class E airspace, a clearance is received to 'maintain VFR conditions on top,' the pilot should maintain a VFR cruising altitude based on the direction of the

- a. magnetic course.
- b. true course.
- c. magnetic heading.

3) How long must you wait to apply for a certificate or rating after a conviction for possessing narcotics?

- a. 1 year.
- b. 18 months.
- c. 2 years.

4) During the life cycle of a thunderstorm, which stage is characterized predominately by downdrafts?

- a. Mature.
- b. Cumulus.
- c. Dissipating.

5) Which instrument indicates the quality of a turn?

- a. Heading indicator or magnetic compass.
- b. Ball of the turn coordinator.
- c. Attitude indicator.

6) At the beginning of a turn from a northerly heading:

- a. The compass will show a turn in the opposite direction.
- b. The compass will lead the turn.
- c. The compass will show the correct heading.

Answers: 1) a, 2) a, 3) a, 4) c, 5) b, and 6) a.



## Safety Corner

### *Angle of Attack Indicators*

- [FAA on AoA indicators](#)
- [AvWeb: FAA Recommends Adding AoA to all Airplanes](#)

### Over the Counter Drug and supplement interactions

See the numerous changes in regulations and procedures below in the News and Links section.



## News and Links

[EAA Video Magazine- January 2025](#)

[Changes to Basic Med](#)

[Color Vision Testing change](#)

In the category of leave it to the government to make simple things more complicated:

[Changes to currency rules](#)

[Changes for CFIs](#)

Everything you ever wanted to know about [aviation fuel](#).



## For SALE

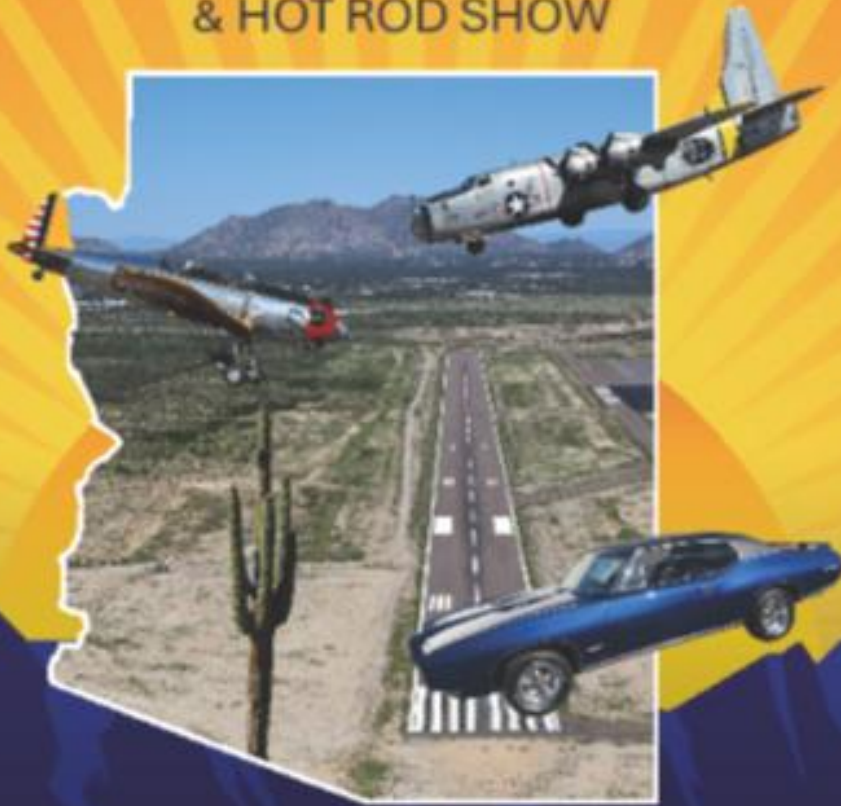
Larry sold his "other" Tri-Pacer project and now has full use of his hangar at Benson.



**Editor's notes:** Please submit input, to include articles, pictures, for sale items, and upcoming events before the end of the month to Larry Portouw, [aviator@portouw.com](mailto:aviator@portouw.com). If you have a submission for a Safety Corner article, please send it to [aviator@portouw.com](mailto:aviator@portouw.com).



# 67th ANNUAL CACTUS FLY-IN & HOT ROD SHOW



**MARCH 8, 2025**  
CASA GRANDE AIRPORT

Join the fun with vintage aircraft, war birds, hot rods and food. Early aircraft arrivals are invited to Cactus open-house Friday evening with snacks and beverages. Spaces available for on-field RV parking and camping. Enjoy a Saturday morning pancake breakfast and food trucks all day while viewing amazing antique and classic aircraft and hot rods.

**ENTRY DONATION: \$10 / Person \$20 / Car Load (CASH)**  
**FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: [CACTUSFLYIN.ORG](http://CACTUSFLYIN.ORG)**