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Special points of interest:

Our next gathering will be on Monday, May 18, 2026, at 7:00 pm. MC/VMC Clubs meet on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Next Young Eagles Rally & pancake breakfast is Saturday, May 10, 2026. We're always looking for good ideas for programs. Please contact Chris St. Germain with your information.



LOOKIN' GOOD

The face of the Larry Young Eagle Hangar is looking a lot better. That is because of Hattie Cunningham, who rescued more than \$700 worth of plants and shrubs from being bulldozed away. No one asked – she just did it. Hattie spent her own time on the landscaping project with some help from Chris St. Germain and free mulch from Patrick Schutt. The next time you see Hattie, please express your thanks for her hard work that not only looks great but saved us a lot of money. Yeah, Hattie!

- President: **Rob Schmitt**
 Vice President and Young Eagles Coordinator: **Chris St. Germain**
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 Treasurer: **Sandy Rice**
 Board: **Jim Brady, Larry Rhoads, Phil Ishmael, Griff Pickett, Tom Licata, & Alexandro Paredes**
 Tech Counselors: **Bill Gill, Mark Burrow, & John Rice.**
 Flight Advisor: **Bill Gill**
 Program Chairman: **Chris St. Germain**
 Maintenance: **Tom Licata**
 Newsletter: **Bruce Hood**
 Web Editor: **James Perkins**
 Eagle Flight Coordinator: **Matt Williams**

EAA Chapter 91, Lee's Summit Municipal Airport (KLXT)
Lee's Summit, Missouri

President's Corner

EAA Chapter 91 president Rob Schmitt

April was a busy month for the chapter. Great to see all the volunteers showing up to make our first Young Eagles event of the year a huge success! Yes, it was a little windy, but we still managed to get the kids flown.

Then, we followed that up with another successful Young Eagles event over in Columbia, MO, on April 25. Much thanks to the pilots who were able to make it there to support the event.

Our next Young Eagles event will be on May 16. If you have never made it to one of our potluck socials, I highly encourage it. We will set up the hangar for Young Eagles on Friday, May 15, at 1 pm. We take advantage of that day to also have one of our typical potluck social dinners at 6 pm the same day. The chapter usually provides the main course. We ask the members to bring a side dish or dessert to round out the meal. The theme for May will be Mexican, so the chapter will be providing tacos and enchiladas.

Congratulations Charlie Licata, the winner of this spring's Hedrick Scholarship for \$2,000. He is working on IFR training with his funds.

It is also time to start thinking about AirVenture. We have booked the Chapters Pavilion in Camp Scholar for our traditional lunch this year, so save the date.

Upcoming Chapter 91 highlights include:

- IMC/VMC Club, Monday, May 11, 7 pm.
- Hangar setup and potluck dinner, May 15, 1 pm for setup, 6 pm for potluck.
- Young Eagles/Pancake Breakfast, Saturday, May 16.
- Chapter meeting, Monday, May 18, 7 pm.
- Next board meeting, Monday, June 1, 7 pm.



EAA CHAPTER 91 GATHERING MINUTES

April 20, 2026

- I. The meeting was called to order by President Rob Schmitt at 7:01 pm, with Brian Tepper leading the Pledge of Allegiance following a warm welcome to all our new members and guests. Rob provided the president's update regarding the chapter's great spring start. So far, we have successfully completed our hangar cleanup, EAA workshop, and first Young Eagles program. In May, we have our Flying Start program on the 9th, and another Young Eagles event on the 16th. The meeting minutes from March's gathering were approved with a motion by Phil Ishmael and a second by Bruce Hood. The motion passed. Bricks for Marty Young and Randy Robinson have been ordered for placement in the Memorial Walk. Chris provided a recap of the April 18th Young Eagles event. We flew fifty-eight kids total! Our next event at Lee's Summit will be on May 16 and is full already. Another event will be taking place in Columbia, MO, on April 25.
- II. Old Business: Jim Brady shares that applications are now open for the Ray Scholarship, and that the chapter hopes to announce the winner by the end of next month. Ben Caughron has his final check ride scheduled for May 1st, which is exciting news! Our previous Ray Scholar, Veronica Amburn, has received her CFI! So far, three out of the Chapter's eight Ray Scholars have gotten their CFI. Veronica is working on her CFII and is hoping to have her MEI by Christmas. Rob announced that Charlie Licata is the recipient of this round of the Hedrick Scholarship! Charlie will be working on his instrument rating with Patrick Flannigan. The chapter plans on awarding another Hedrick scholarship in the fall. To support the May 16th Young Eagles event, there will be a hangar setup and potluck dinner on Friday, May 15. The theme will be Mexican! The Chapter's Flying Start program will be on May 9 at the Eagle Hangar. Matt Williams and Chris Hope are the coordinators and will be running the free program to introduce new adults to aviation. Rob shared details about Oshkosh chapter camping before sharing with the chapter details regarding the September 19th Special Olympics event taking place at the Lee's Summit airport. The event will be at Hangar 2 from 10 am to 3 pm, and it was agreed that the chapter will be supporting the event with food service. This event does coincide with the September Young Eagles rally, so we will be in need of extra volunteers that day! Chapter 91 also received feedback via the chapter survey, and overall responses were good! The chapter will be focusing on items where growth can be made. The plan is to continue with youth engagement, improve the website, and talk about a chapter project.
- III. New Business: Wants and Needs: Nancy Inderwiesen has a flight suit, a jacket, and an EZ Electric Tug. Susan Calvin has post lights for incandescent bulbs. Jeanné Willerth shared that it is time for the Air Race Classic, which will have a stop in St. Joseph. She is also looking for sponsors for her team. Griff needs a specialty quarter-inch torque wrench, 4-8 inches long. Fred Schieszer is looking for slushing compound. If anyone is interested, please reach out to the individuals above!
- IV. Calendar: May board meeting: Monday, May 4, 7 pm. Flying Start Program: May 9, 8am – 12 pm. IMC/VMC Club: Monday, May 11, at 7 pm. In-person only. Hangar setup: 1 pm and Potluck 6 pm, May 15, Mexican theme.
 - a. Young Eagles/Pancake Breakfast May 16.
 - b. Next chapter gathering Monday, May 18, at 7 pm.
- V. Presentation: Aircraft Electrical Systems Design software.
- VI. Adjournment



Our next meeting of the VMC Club will be **Monday, May 11th at 7:00 p.m.**

If you fly long enough, you learn that “Stuff Happens”. Those aircraft systems that your instructor pounded into you, those emergency procedures that you discussed, suddenly take on a new importance.

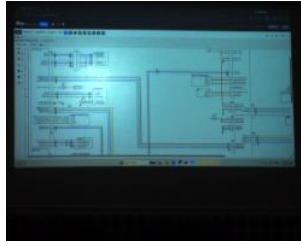
This month we are going to look at an actual electrical situation. We will be asking, “How would you deal with this?” And for some of the pilots in the room, the question will be, “How did you deal with this when it happened to you?”

We meet at the Chapter 91 EAA hangar at the Lee's Summit Airport. Driving directions - take I-470 to Exit 9, Douglas Drive / Lee's Summit Drive, and turn north. At the bottom of the hill, turn right and follow the road to the end. The Larry Young Eagle hangar is on the west side of the parking lot next to the Cessna on a Post.

There is no cost to sit in on our monthly meetings. VMC membership is free to EAA members and guests. Not an EAA member? Ask me about a free six-month EAA membership.

Chris Hope, CFI-I, IMC Club Facilitator
2018 FAA Flight Instructor of the Year, Central Region

LAST MONTH'S PROGRAMS



Building an airplane is complicated, especially when it comes to designing and creating the electrical system. Today's kits are very thorough, but some steps are left to the discretion of the builder. For example, planning your panel's layout, and linking the chosen avionics. That means it's up to you to determine how to run and connect all those wires that make the system work. While a few people are competent at that sort of thing, the rest of us – the ninety-nine percenters – see it as a whole other kettle of fish.

But one guy figured out how to make that chore easy. Kobbe Farwick was frustrated from trying to have Photoshop accomplish this difficult task, so he came up with a brilliant idea. That idea now exists as SkyWire Studio, a web-based software program that allows you to drag and drop the appropriate avionics components into your plan to create a complete wiring diagram. Now, even we ninety-nine percenters can do it. Amazingly, the basic program is free, though the more robust features come with a reasonable subscription price. Plus, you only pay for your use – when the project is completed, you no longer have to deal with it. Pretty smart.

Kobbe was our speaker last month, and he made a lot of converts with his program to simplify electrical-system design. SkyWire Studio's ever-expanding component library includes nearly all of the available avionics, including the complete Garmin line. Kobbe's background prepared him to develop this awesome program since he is a pilot, was an Air Force avionics technician, and holds an electrical engineering degree. Using the actual program projected to our screen, he demonstrated how simple it is to adjust or change a plan. The incredible ease and user friendliness belie the genius behind this program. Today, major avionics manufacturers are strongly promoting the use of Kobbe's creation, and more avionics shops are implementing it into their operations. This was a most fascinating presentation, and it's great to know he's a local guy! Thanks, Kobbe.

THIS MONTH'S PROGRAM

One of the most common questions within any EAA chapter centers on whether or not the members should get involved with a chapter project. That translates into: "As a chapter, should we build an airplane?" That is a legitimate question, and one which many have asked. Interestingly, all EAA chapters have many members who are not pilots; comparatively few have ever built or even helped build an airplane. So, it makes sense that a chapter might want to tackle such a project for the sake of all its members. But there's more involved than just the build. Who will own the finished project? Where does the liability end? How should the legal and tax-related angles be addressed?

Well, this is exactly what Rob Schmitt, our president, and this month's speaker will discuss with us at our upcoming gathering on Monday, May 18, starting at seven p.m. As always, we congregate at the Larry Young Eagle Hangar meeting room at Kansas City – Lee's Summit Regional Airport. (Yes, the name has been changed officially.) If you have ever wondered what's involved with the chapter building an airplane as a club project, now's the time to hear the answers. Rob has become knowledgeable on this topic, and it's time to address it. We hope to see you there.

CALLING ALL TECHIES

The chapter is searching for some technical assistance. Our vice president, Young Eagles coordinator, and program chairman, Chris St. Germain, would love to have some help updating information on our website. Keeping it current takes effort, and Chris does more than his share for the chapter. Frankly, we don't believe he needs another job, so we would very much appreciate some help with this. If you are comfortable working on technical projects like this and would be willing to assist with this project, Chris would love to hear from you. He is more than willing to provide the support you need to start handling this important effort. You may have questions, so please feel free to contact Chris at his chapter email, youngeagles@eaachapter91.org. He'll be glad to discuss it with you. Or you can catch him at our next gathering on Monday, April 20. Thank you for your assistance.

SCHOLARSHIP UPDATES

RAY SCHOLARSHIP



Chapter 91 Ray Scholarship Coordinator Jim Brady has announced that since the chapter has been awarded another slot, he is now accepting applications for this year's award. We expect Jim to be at our next chapter gathering, Monday, May 18, where he will be able to answer any questions should you have someone in mind to nominate for this year's scholarship.

But he has also discovered that on May 1, our current Ray Scholar, Benjamin Caughron, passed his private pilot check ride and now has his ticket. You may recall that Benjamin was close to scheduling his check ride but had to leave for college in California before that could be arranged. When he arrived at school, his best choice flight-training facility flew Cessnas rather than Cherokees. So he had to endure yet another cultural change just to complete his ticket. But with Jim Brady's help, he got the job done. Our sincere congratulations to Benjamin. Well done!

HEDRICK SCHOLARSHIP

Recently, Rob Schmitt announced our latest Hedrick Scholarship winner as Charlie Lacota. Charlie is a former Ray Scholar who earned his private pilot's license using that source, and he's now working on his instrument rating with the financial assistance of this program. We look forward to hearing that Charlie has earned the right to fly through the clouds. Good luck, Charlie.



SOME OF LAST MONTH'S YOUNG EAGLES



YOUNG EAGLES IN COLUMBIA

On Saturday, April 25, pilots and other members from Chapter 91 winged their way east to help conduct a Young Eagles event at the Columbia Regional Airport. For the second time in as many years, Columbia's Jet Center FBO requested our assistance with introducing several young people to aviation. Since Columbia does not have an EAA chapter, we were asked to fill the void. Along with the assistance of a few pilots from Jefferson City and other surrounding areas, and under the always-able tutelage of Chris St. Germain, some forty-two kids were able to fly that day. They loved it. And their parents were quite effusive with their praise and thanks for helping accomplish this milestone.

Contributing chapter members included Phil Ishmael, Brian Tepper, Larry Rhoads, Rob Schmitt, Chris Hope, Paige Maggott, Hattie Cunningham, and Bruce Hood. Thanks to Chris St. Germain for the picture of all the pilots.



A LETTER FROM VERONICA AMBURN



Good afternoon, Dr. Brady,

In the interest of maintaining my ties with the chapter and continuing to thank you for choosing me as a Ray Scholar, I wanted to send you a quick email informing you of my progress in my collegiate flight training. Please feel free to share this update with the rest of the chapter at the next monthly meeting.

This month I finished my current flight course and passed the checkride to obtain my CFI certificate. This summer, I will begin work on obtaining my CFII, which will be the last flight certificate I need to obtain through UND. Currently I am on track to finish the rest of my classes next year and graduate in the spring of 2027.

I am very much enjoying my classes and flight training here at UND. I am learning a lot of information, both academically and with career advice from my professors. I am still trying to figure out what exactly I want to do with my flying career after graduation. For now, I plan to begin flight instructing while I figure it out. After all, I will need to do that regardless, as any job is going to require many more flight hours than I have at present.

Hope everything back at Lee's Summit is going well, and you are enjoying a nice spring. We are still getting bouts of snow up here, though I hope this weekend will be the last of it. I hope to make it home for at least a little bit the first few weeks of this summer, but we will see what my class and flight training load allows. I will try to continue to stay in touch with you and the rest of Chapter 91. Good luck with this year's Young Eagles season. I miss helping out with those!

Sincerely,

Veronica Amburn

ANOTHER FLYING START SUCCESS

The weather gods must have been in a great mood on Saturday, May 9, because they blessed our Flying Start attendees and pilots with perfect temperatures, absolutely gorgeous skies, and gentle breezes. You couldn't ask for better conditions to take a group of adults up for introductory flights. The Flying Start program mirrors our Young Eagles event, but for people at an age where they can actually earn a license. Not only do they learn what is involved with getting a pilot's license, they also fly with a pilot who spends time answering all their questions. They even get to participate in the preflight inspection. Ten interested souls participated, and all received the information they were looking for.

Coordinators Matt Williams and Chris Hope did a great job of organizing the day, and Matt kicked it off with a brief introduction to what to expect, plus an explanation of EAA and its benefits. Chris followed up with further details about flight schools and curricula, and Earl Downs, a former DPE, closed the loop by covering details of the final examinations. Local flight schools and flying clubs manned displays in the hangar to help answer more questions.

Our thanks to Matt, Chris, and Earl. We also want to thank our pilots: Chris Hope, Frank Flink, Paige Maggott, Jeanné Willerth, Logan Fahy, Chris St. Germain, Larry Rhoads, Brian Tepper, Daryl Nelson, Ashton Sterk, and Kevin Schultz.



NEXT YOUNG EAGLES

Young Eagles season is here, and we will be holding our next rally and pancake breakfast on Saturday, May 16. The flying weather is starting to stabilize, so we anticipate a somewhat smoother ride this month than last. Yeah, it got pretty bumpy. Young Eagles Coordinator Chris St. Germain says the manifest filled quickly (as usual), so we're expecting a rather typical sixty or so youngsters to come out.

If you would like to come see what this is all about, you are cordially invited to do so. We always have need for a few extra hands, so we promise you will not be bored. Please come join us. You might even get addicted.

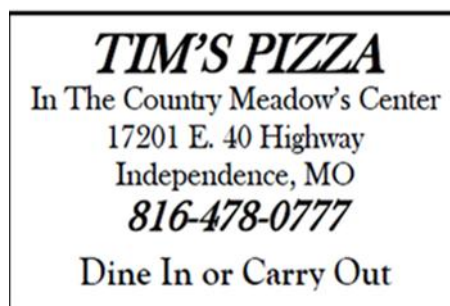
NEXT POTLUCK COOKOUT

If you are looking for a nice place to take your better half for dinner, Chapter 91 has the answer. Come for our monthly potluck cookout, Friday evening, May 15. The chapter will provide taco meat, condiments, and two meats for tacos – ground beef and pulled chicken. We ask that you bring an appropriate side dish to share with others, so refried beans, sopapillas, or any other Mexican-like foods would be great.

We will meet in the Larry Young Eagle Hangar. This follows our efforts to prepare the hangar for the next day's Young Eagles event, but you are not required to participate in either of those to join us for dinner. We will start serving promptly at six p.m., so please plan to join us.

CHAPTER CAMPING SLOTS AVAILABLE

Rob Schmitt recently announced that we still have two slots available for chapter camping at AirVenture this year. Chapter camping allows members to set up camp sites together. This is a very popular scheme, and if you would like to participate, the cost is just \$378 for the entire week. For more information or to grab one of those available slots, contact Rob at robert7721@aol.com.



THE ROYALS NEED A FLYOVER

Breck Dickey, Sport Development Coordinator for the KC Royals, sent Rob a message asking for an airplane to do a flyover at their upcoming Little League District Tournaments this summer. Contact Mr. Dickey if you would like more information or would like to volunteer. -- Editor

This will be our first year bringing Little League District Tournament play back to Kansas City, and we're excited to create a memorable experience for the players and families involved. The tournaments will feature approximately 400 players representing eight leagues from across the Kansas City area. We were encouraged to contact you regarding the possibility of coordinating a commemorative flyover during the National Anthem on our opening ceremonies night.

Opening Ceremony nights:

- Softball Opening Ceremony - June 18
- Baseball Opening Ceremony - June 24

Event Location:

RAD Complex
9600 Blue River Rd.
Kansas City, MO 64131

We would greatly appreciate any consideration and would be happy to provide additional details if needed. If there is someone else you believe would be better suited for this opportunity, we would also appreciate being pointed in the right direction.

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

Breck Dickey,

816 242-5713 Email: Breck.Dickey@royals.com

THE FIRST AIRPLANE MECHANIC

by Earl Downs

Orville and Wilbur Wright were the first to fly a powered airplane, but they were not the first aviation mechanics. Inventors, designers, pilots, and skilled craftsmen? Yes, but they still needed a mechanic.

The story of Charlie Taylor leads to the question of whether aircraft mechanics exist because of pilots, or whether pilots exist because of mechanics.

Born on a small Illinois farm on May 24, 1868, Charles Edward Taylor exhibited an early aptitude for things mechanical. He quit school at twelve, went to work at the *Nebraska State Journal*, and was soon taking care of its machinery. In 1896, with his wife, he moved to Dayton, Ohio, where he went to work for Stoddard Manufacturing, which made farm equipment and bicycles. He met Orville and Wilbur Wright soon thereafter when the brothers rented their bicycle shop building from Mrs. Taylor's uncle.

Charlie opened a machine shop in 1898, and the Wrights brought him special jobs, including a bicycle coaster brake they had designed. The Wrights hired him for \$18 a week, and he started working for them on June 15, 1901.

Charlie is quoted as saying, "So far as I can figure out, Will and Orv hired me to worry about their bicycle business so they could concentrate on their flying studies and experiments . . . and I must have satisfied them, for they didn't hire anyone else for eight years. If they had any idea in June 1901 that someday they'd be making a gasoline internal-combustion engine for an airplane and would need some first-rate machine work for it, they sure didn't say anything about it to me."

As the Wright brothers started experimenting with gliders and a wind tunnel (built by Charlie) for airfoil testing, it became clear they could not find an engine that was suitable to power their proposed aircraft. The Wrights decided to build their own engine, and this job was given to Charlie, who is quoted as saying, "It was up to me. My only experience with a gasoline engine was an attempt to repair one in an automobile in 1901."

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Charlie did the research to design the engine and machined all the parts, which allowed the Wright brothers to achieve their first flight of a powered airplane in December of 1903.

Charlie continued working for the Wrights until 1919 and finally got his first airplane ride, piloted by Orville, in 1910. In 1911, Charlie hooked up with Calbraith Perry Rodgers and maintained his *Wright Model EX* airplane as Rodgers “crashed” his way across the country, being the first transcontinental airplane flight (Charlie led the flight on a train).

If this short story about Charlie Taylor interested you, there’s much more you can learn about him and his long aviation career.

Charlie “Headed West” in 1958.



SMALL ENGINE MECHANIC NEEDED

As you might imagine, with any volunteer-based organization, staying on top of the proper maintenance and upkeep of some of our equipment requires extra help and organization. We are looking for someone willing to help with this function for our riding mower. So, if you are well organized and handy at small engine maintenance, please contact Rob Schmitt at robert7721@aol.com. You don't have to commit, but you can find out what the needs are. Rob will be glad to explain all that. Then, if you would like to tackle the job, he will be pleased to sign you up. As with every one of our volunteer positions, the compensation is outstanding! Just wait until you see all those zeros on your paycheck!

LOOKING FOR A GOOD HOME

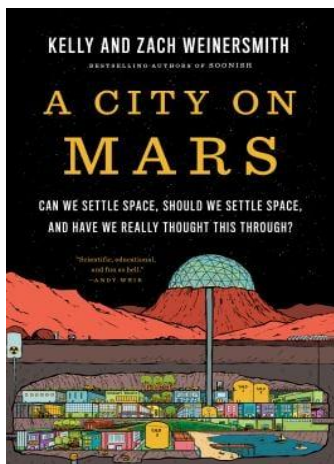
Chapter 91 is offering some lucky individual or organization a complete set of six eight-foot by two-foot, double-thick, three-quarter-inch plywood slabs. These would make excellent tops for workbenches, or even cattle loading ramps. The chapter built them several years ago to support EAA's B-17 so it wouldn't sink into the asphalt parking apron. It worked beautifully, but the B-17 is not flying (at least not yet), and we need the space for a very large air compressor being donated by Mike Dooley. These six pieces are designed to be stacked in twos, resulting in three three-inch-thick sets. They are robust and durable, plus, the price is right – free (of course, we'd always welcome a donation if you'd like). If you are not familiar with them, you can take a look at our next gathering – or any other time you're at the clubhouse. They're in the main hangar, residing in a corner of the shop area on the west side. If you are interested, please contact Rob Schmitt at 816 309-0099. We hope you will help us find them a good home.

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Book Review – A City on Mars – Can we Settle Space, Should we Settle Space, and Have We Really Thought This Through?

by Kelly and Zach Weinersmith

Review by Chris Hope, Master CFI



The Weinersmiths are two space geeks who were enthralled with the concept of living in space. But after several years of talking to people about how that was really going to happen, they admit that they have lost their enthusiasm. In a light-hearted manner, they talk about the challenges of living on a space station, of living on the moon, and of living on Mars.

Of living on the moon – well, at least the moon is benign. It is not trying to kill you. Okay, there is no oxygen to breathe, no food or water to sustain you, and the dust on the lunar surface is like tiny shards of glass that cut into everything they touch. And for those of you who like electricity, realize that there is no fossil fuel, no wind or water power, and solar power only lasts half of the time in any given locale. Oh, and the nice shielding from radiation that we get on Earth does not exist either. But otherwise, not too bad a place to settle in with the neighbors and raise a family.

Mars? Ah, that is different. Mars is actively trying to kill you. The surface is made up of chemicals that want to kill you, and the planet is covered by pretty much a dust storm. As the authors state, “The net result here is that if you step outside, you still die about as quickly as you would on the moon, but from time to time the sky is blotted out by killer toxic dirt.”

Much of what we read about living on the moon or on Mars, or even in giant space stations, revolves around getting there, and not about a society living there. The authors delve into some topics that I have never considered. If we are to have a thriving society, we need to be reproducing ourselves. Sex in space? Depending on who you ask, it might have been attempted. Nurturing a fetus in space with a constant bombardment of radiation? Hmm, we don't know about that. And although we have had adults living in space, we don't know much (anything) about how kids would fare. Medical care? Day-to-day life? We have not thought about that too much.

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There is an argument that in space we will all live as one big happy family. How has that worked out on earth? Space colonies will be established either by governments (currently the United States, Russia, China or India), or some individual (presently Elon Musk or Jeff Bezos). No matter who gets there first, what will be the rules about sharing?

And, do we intend to come home to Mother Earth from time to time? Not too bad from the moon, only takes a couple of days, and the flight home can leave almost any time. Mars? Well, at best it will take two years, and the train can only leave the station about once every two years. Once you are there, you had best settle in.

This is a lighthearted discussion about a serious subject. I found it quite compelling.

*Chris loves to read, write, and fly, but not necessarily in that order
You can reach him at: ThehopesChris@gmail.com*



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AVIATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



Now Accepting Applications for AOPA Foundation Aviation Scholarships!

Tell your students and clients about the AOPA Foundation Scholarship program. Or check it out for yourself

Scholarships for High School Students

Since 2019, the Ray Foundation has generously provided \$1 million annually in flight training scholarships to high school students and educators actively involved in the AOPA Foundation High School Aviation STEM Curriculum. Eligible applicants can receive up to \$12,000 in financial support to pursue their private pilot certificate. AOPA also offers a [FREE High School membership](#) to students aged 13 to 20.

Scholarships for Aspiring and Experienced Pilots

Our aviation scholarships are tailored to support a variety of goals, including primary certification, advanced ratings, transitioning to a new aircraft, or specialized training.

Applications are Open!

Encourage your students and clients to visit aopa.org/scholarships. The scholarship deadline is June 30, 2026.

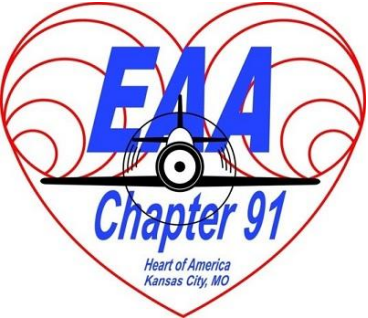
[LEARN MORE](#)

The AOPA Foundation Aviation Scholarship program is made possible thanks to donations

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THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
EAA CHAPTER 91
May 10, 2026



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