

# Runway 15



The Monthly Newsletter for Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 1541, Lincoln, California

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## On the Horizon: Calendar of Events

For the most up-to-date information, go to the chapter website: <https://eaa1541.org/>

Date	Topic
Thursday March 5, 2026 7-8 pm	<b>IMC/VMC club online</b> "What Would You Do? scenarios" FAA Wings credit available
Saturday March 14 11-1 pm	<b>Second Saturday BBQ lunch</b> Program: <b>A Kitfox 22 years in the making</b> <i>Chapter members Paul Cannon, Bruce Estes, and Dan Masys</i>
Saturday, March 21	<b>Chapter Fly-out to Oroville</b> Details to be sent to the members email list, and published on our website.

Saturday,  
March 21,  
2026  
8:00a – 12n

**KLHM Vintage Aircraft  
Display day**  
Airport main ramp

## EAA CHAPTER 1541 INFORMATION

Meetings	Usually the second Saturday of each month held at KLHM Hangar S-12. Details available on the website.
E-mail	<a href="mailto:eaa1541@gmail.com">eaa1541@gmail.com</a>
Website	<a href="https://eaa1541.org">https://eaa1541.org</a>
Mailing Address	EAA chapter 1541, PO Box 1126, Lincoln, CA 95648
Chapter Hangar	Hangar S-12, Lincoln Airport
President	Scott Thompson
Vice President	Vacant
Secretary	Penny Mach
Treasurer	Scott Whelan
Chapter Board of Directors	Paul Darbo Tim Devine Jim Hughes Lesa McArdle Josh Smith
Membership	Chapter dues: \$30 per year for individuals and families; \$300 for gold



## President's Corner



Our February Second Saturday gathering on Valentine's Day, February 14, was a particularly successful day. Our program presenter was U.S. Navy F-18 fighter pilot **Tom Taylor** (ret.) who is also a new chapter member. We spread the word to the local community and other EAA chapters ahead of time about the event and had a standing room only crowd as a result. We served at least seventy meals, something that I think pushed the overall attendance to nearly triple digits. It was one of our best events and it sure seemed like everybody had a great time. Tom did a memorable presentation, with lots of interesting questions from our group to round out the time. What? You don't remember it? Or perhaps you missed it altogether. Not to worry. We recorded it and you can watch it now in the comfort of your living room or your hangar. Details on where to find it on our chapter's YouTube channel can be found elsewhere in

this fine newsletter and also on our chapter website.

So, we press on into 2026 with a bit of variety in our planning. We continue to try and find interesting programs for our gatherings, and for our March meeting, we'll have dedicated KitFox builder **Paul Cannon** and able technical counselor **Dan Masys** present on the 22-year long homebuilt project that successfully flew for the first time in January. The KitFox spent 2025 in our hangar getting completed, and experienced KitFox pilot **Bruce Estes** made the airplane's first flight on January 27. During the presentation, Bruce will also add his comments on making the first flight, and we'll have video coverage proving he made a perfect first-flight landing that day. This presentation will also highlight the new Task-based phase one flight testing rules that are not dependent upon total hours flown (25 or 40).



Also on the horizon are a couple of special events. We have a **Chapter Fly-Out** set for the morning of Saturday, March 21. It's our first fly-out of the year, and the plan is to get as many planes, pilots, and passengers all heading in the same direction for a brunch stop and an interesting hangar tour at the Oroville airport, just 37 nm north of Lincoln as the Cessna flies. Not a long way...just long enough to have some flying fun and some good food. Sign up information is forthcoming soon...look for an email with more information. We'll have signups available for chapter passengers, too, hoping for some extra seats on the airplanes.

Another special event that we are working on combines a bit of flight training and proficiency with hamburgers. Intrigued? Well, our June Second Saturday gathering (that would be Saturday, June 10) may offer the opportunity for some landing accuracy training for those who might be flying to the big

AirVenture airshow at Oshkosh in July. Or, just some proficiency training in spot landings for any interested pilot. As all pilots know, landing accuracy is essential for any flying, but for getting into Oshkosh for the show, landing accuracy is not only essential, but also judged by ATC and a thousand of your closest friends watching from the sidelines. So, what we want to do that Saturday gathering is a late-afternoon **spot landing practice session**. We hope to replicate the environment at Oshkosh by having some large, temporarily-painted dots added to the Lincoln runway. Then any and all pilots can make landing approaches to dots as they are assigned while on downwind. We'll try to have some live action cameras in place so those in the hangar can see the results. After all the flying, it will be time for a nice BBQ dinner and some social time while the engines cool off. Something different...something fun. We have a few high hoops to jump over before this all happens, but we're starting early and hope to get it together. More on that later.

Along the same lines, we are in the initial part of attempting to get as many chapter pilots who are flying back to Oshkosh for AirVenture in July to make a chapter caravan out of it, with some planned stops along the way and camping together under the wings at the airshow. More on that later too, but it is in the works.

We are also in the process of putting together yet another fly-out for late May...the fifth Saturday of May and the week after Memorial Day weekend. We've had an invite for a hangar tour at **Cameron Park** that will definitely prove interesting.

So, lots of planning going on behind the scenes...all this in addition to our youth scholarship programs. Speaking of that...we are in the midst of selecting the two young people that the chapter will sponsor at the **Air Academy** this summer at Oshkosh. And, we are in the first stages of selecting one or both of our **2026 Ray Aviation Scholars**...deadline for those applications is February 28. See the email sent earlier in February or our chapter's website for more information.

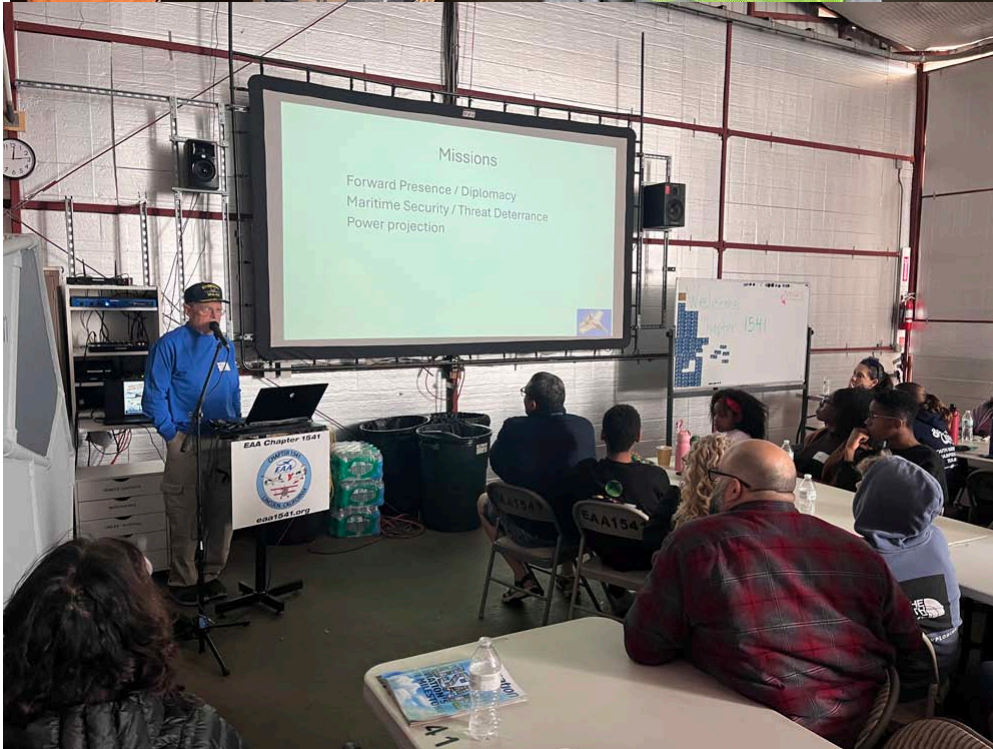
And finally, we continue to hold our **Young Eagles** rallies. We had to postpone the January rally due to forecast fog (which, of course, did not materialize), but we are now set for Saturday, February 28, with a whole slew of kids set to fly and a bunch of volunteer pilots and ground folks coming out help out.

So, lots going on. Kind of wears me out a bit just thinking about it, but I'll get over it.



Scott Thompson  
EAA chapter 1541 President

## Our February Gathering with F-18 Pilot Tom Taylor



Miss it? Or want to see again the topics you found most interesting?  
Check out our [Members' video page](#) that has the complete video and links to everything Tom talked about:

<https://eaa1541.org/members/membership-meeting-videos/>

## Power Tug On the Move



Once upon a time there was power tug, specifically a PowerTug 35EZ Tugger with a Briggs & Stratton 3.5-hp non-turbocharged engine. This said power tug was owned by chapter member Mark Seimens, who did not need it any more. He graciously donated it to EAA Chapter 1541. Said power tug was marketed and sold by chapter donation expert Bruce Estes to chapter member Paul "Dubs" Darbo, and the substantial sales amount was added to our chapter's scholarship fund.

Well, a number of years went by, and it came to pass that Dubs ended up having to sell his Mooney (see the article entitled **One Pilot's Journey**, below), and no longer had a need for said power tug. So, he donated it to EAA Chapter 1541, and our chapter donation expert and tug maintenance specialist Bruce Estes tweaked things up a bit, and offered it for sale on behalf of the chapter. Last month, said power tug was sold to another chapter member who will no doubt put it to good use. Once again, the substantial sales amount is being added to our chapter's youth scholarship fund. It seems that what comes around goes around several times over.

Thanks to the donors, the purchasers, and the donation expert who have made all this possible.

## One Pilot's Journey

By Paul "Dubs" Darbo

Upon completing a successful PPL checkride in early January 1967, the dream had been to someday own an airplane and fly all over the United States. However, a cross-country solo flight two weeks earlier had been to see a U.S. Air Force recruiter to sign and swear in for a four-year enlistment, and the dream was quietly set aside, not abandoned, merely deferred.

Returning home with a wife, child, and two dogs, I finished college while flying slipped from the foreground of my life. After college, a move to California to start a career—one that included three jobs and four moves in three years—brought my flying to an end in late January 1976, with only 165 hours logged.

Forty years passed. I was grounded, yet flight never truly left me. When an airplane crossed overhead, I would stop and watch until it disappeared, imagining myself once again in the cockpit—flying the approach, easing into the climb, or tracing whatever maneuver it seemed to be making. It was a small, almost unconscious habit that stayed with me for decades.

By late 2015, retirement was no longer a distant idea. With it came the careful thought that I might still return to flying. Joining EAA Chapter 1541 at Lincoln was a modest first step—less a commitment than a quiet reentry into a world I had never stopped missing. Aviation had moved on in my absence; the NAS and the technology were far removed from what I had known. I was aware, too, that time mattered now. A five-year build project might outlast my flying years, so if I was going to fly again, it would have to be in an airplane ready to go.

The search stretched on for two years. Nothing seemed quite right—always a compromise between mission, experience, and what I could reasonably afford. When my end-of-month January 2018 retirement date was set in early December, I still hadn't found an airplane and had begun to accept that perhaps it wasn't meant to happen. Then, at the EAA 1541 Christmas party later that month, I learned another member, Ernie Brock, was selling a Mooney M20G at a fair price. It didn't feel dramatic or impulsive. It simply felt right.

The Mooney's annual inspection was completed four days after I retired. Two days later started ten hours of training with a CFI—required by the insurance company and, just as importantly, by good judgment—to earn a complex endorsement. When that was finished, my first solo flight in forty-two years was a short one -- fifty miles for a \$100 hamburger. Yet the distance hardly mattered. What mattered was that I was alone again in the cockpit.

In 2019, the long-held dream of flying across the country finally took shape in a fifty-two day trip to visit friends and family, reaching as far as (almost) Washington, D.C. More trips followed in the years after—shorter now, and fewer—but each one carried a quiet satisfaction. After all that time, flight had returned, not as a pursuit, but as a companion.

Then, an unexpected connection emerged. In early 2022, I received a message from Marty Anderson. His grandfather had owned my Mooney from the mid-1970s until nearly the turn of the century. He included photographs of himself as a four-year-old, standing beside the airplane and one sitting in its cockpit. Those moments had been his introduction to aviation, a path that eventually led him to the left seat of a 737 for a regional airline.



We stayed in touch, and over time a friendship developed. He lived in Minnesota, and I flew often to Wisconsin, so we eventually found a way to align his schedule with my travels. In June 2024, on the first leg of my return to California from Madison, I stopped in Mason City, Iowa. Marty flew in on a rented airplane to meet me there and spend time once again with his grandfather's Mooney. By then, I knew my flying days were drawing to a close, and he quietly let me know that when I was ready, he would be interested in owning the airplane.

When I turned eighty, my insurance company informed me that policy renewal would require an experienced Mooney M20G pilot to fly with me. Nearly ninety percent of my 615 logged hours had been solo cross-country flights, and the message was clear. It was time. Marty was ready, and so, finally, was I.

The pre-buy inspection, performed by a highly respected Mooney mechanic, confirmed what I already knew—the airplane was in excellent condition. One small discovery carried unexpected weight: in the POH, tucked in the glove compartment, was a name-and-address sticker on the title page. It was Marty's grandfather's.

We reached a verbal agreement, contingent on a test flight. Early December in Lincoln was socked in for days, and Marty eventually had to return home to resume work. When he came back in late January, we flew the pattern together—three full-stop landings—then signed the paperwork. He departed for St. Paul, and just like that, the airplane was no longer mine.



Later, Marty told me that when his parents saw the Mooney, they remarked that it looked better than when his mother's father had owned it. That meant more to me than they probably realized. Ernie and I had loved that airplane and cared for it well.

My time with this Mooney has ended, but it rests now in familiar hands, back with a family that once loved it long ago. In a quiet way, that feels right.

Afterward: Email sent to me by Marty:

*"I also want to report that I was a little on the fence about the sensibility of owning an airplane. I already had access to plenty of other airplanes for rent, with no obligation or expense unless a tach was turning.*

*Fortunately, being the sentimental guy that I am, I told myself that I would regret it way more, if I didn't go through with it. After a couple weeks of ownership I couldn't be happier! The epic flight back from California was a grand adventure. Mostly because I wasn't sure in an engine 500 hours past TBO would make it all the way home, or if the weather would trap me somewhere along the way.*

*Thankfully everything ran smoothly, especially the engine, and I was very impressed with the airplane and how well everything worked. The airplane also has a very familiar smell, and it has been fun paging through the old 1968 POH and seeing all my of my grandfather's handwritten notes and highlights. Owning and flying this airplane now, has a pride attached to it that goes far beyond anything I have experienced with other airplanes.*

*Thanks for helping make all this happen! I am looking forward to the many adventures with it that are yet to come.*

*Sincerely,  
Marty*

## Things Not To Do With Your Airplane



A reminder of how things used to be done before the days of Computer-Generated Imagery (CGI) for movie-making. This shows a Twin Beech flown by movie pilot Frank Tallman making a precision flight through a billboard for a scene in the screwball comedy *It's A Mad Mad Mad Mad World* released back in the heady days of 1963. Tallman had just a few feet of clearance on each side of the steel framework for his wingspan, and the sign itself was made of supposedly-frangible Styrofoam. It turned out to be not-all-that frangible, and the plane was significantly damaged for the shot. It limped back to a landing at nearby Orange County Airport (SNA). For the record, this scene was filmed on December 19, 1962, in the rural countryside southeast of Irvine in southern California...though that idyllic rural setting is now under a major freeway interchange and large warehouses. All for a very brief scene that you can see right here in this [YouTube video](#) that happens to show all the Twin Beech scenes used in the film, all flown by Frank Tallman.

## Membership Update

Please welcome the following new members to EAA Chapter 1541:

**Tom Taylor:** Tom was our featured speaker this month and presented a wonderful program. He looks forward to interacting more with the chapter members and learning about the many activities going on in the chapter. Tom is also looking forward to flying Young Eagles in his RV-7.

**Ryan H.:** Ryan is a student member who is interested in learning to fly.

**Peter C.:** Peter is a student member who has taken two Young Eagles flights and looks forward to becoming more involved in chapter activities.

**The Fusco Family:** Frankie, Jennifer, and Marco look forward to exploring all that EAA and our chapter has to offer. They are especially interested in Air Academy and looking forward to Marco's 1<sup>st</sup> Young Eagles flight.

### Membership Renewal

**Thank you** to all the members who have already sent in their 2026 membership renewal payment!

Just a reminder that chapter membership renewals were due **January 1<sup>st</sup>**. Annual membership dues in 2026 will remain at \$30 for both individual and family memberships. We will continue to offer an individual Gold membership at \$300.

Please renew your membership before **March 31st** to avoid missing out on membership news. We thank you for your continued support of our chapter.

## Ray Scholar Update

Congratulations to our Ray Scholar, Aria on passing her FAA Written exam! She is progressing well and just needs a few more flights before she is ready for her PPL checkride.

## 2026 Ray Aviation Scholarship



Our chapter applied for a 2026 Ray Aviation Scholarship from EAA and we are happy to announce we were selected to administer not one, but two 25/75 aviation scholarships. The scholarship in 2026 will remain at \$12,000 with the chapter funding 25% and the Ray Foundation funding 75%.

Applications for the scholarship are now available and due by February 28<sup>th</sup>. Send email to [eaal541@gmail.com](mailto:eaal541@gmail.com) if you are interested in applying.

## Treasurer's Report

**Members:** As of January 31<sup>st</sup>, our chapter membership stands at 66, including 7 Gold memberships.

**Dues Reminder:** Just a friendly reminder for those who haven't paid your dues yet, now's the time. You can renew on-line using [PayPal](#), mail a check to our PO Box, or in person at any chapter meeting. This is also a good time to verify your EAA National membership is also up to date. Thank you again for your support

**Ray Scholar:** As of January 31<sup>st</sup>, the balance is - \$2,959.00.

**Activity:**

**R&S Scholarship fund:**  
 Increases – Income from the donation buckets at the lunch meeting and recycling – \$59.28  
 Decreases – No Activity  
**Hangar fund:** No Activity  
**Chapter's fund:**  
 Increases – Member Dues \$1,800.00,  
 Meal sales - \$135.00  
 Decreases – Food Costs – \$101.61

Account Balances:

<b>Hangar Fund</b>	
Ending Balance	\$ 30,216.48
<b>R&amp;S Scholarship Fund</b>	
Ending Balance	\$ 27,441.31
<b>General Fund</b>	
Ending Balance	\$ 20,582.21
<b>Ray Scholar Fund</b>	
Ending Balance	\$ (2,959.00)
<b>Balance of all accounts</b>	
January 31, 2026	\$ 75,281.00

**Aviation thought for the month:** *A fool and his money are soon flying more aircraft than he can handle. –*

Unknown

Respectfully Submitted,  
 Scott Whelan  
 Treasurer  
 EAA Chapter 1541

## Project Updates and Adventures

**Brent Smith** writes:



The modifications required after September's failed crow hop tests have been completed, my Mini-IMP Menehune has been reassembled and taxi testing resumed on Monday, 2/9/26. All went well with engine temps remaining within specs as we got up to just over 30 mph. While taxiing back to the hangar, however, I noticed a flickering amber light and an ammeter reading of -14 amps. What the....haven't we been here before?! After a diagnostic and consultation with Dan Masys and Tom Folkerts, I ordered a new alternator output circuit breaker to replace the one that had an inconsistent test result and pulled the alternator out of the accessory case....in two pieces!!!!

Yep, been here before in August 2024 when the alternator drive shaft snapped with only 8.0 hours on it. The replacement had 9.6 hours. It's now on its way back to Hartzell Engine Technologies for complete disassembly and inspection. So, the saga continues. Stay tuned.

Brent

**And your final preflight instruction for this issue**

