



THE APA APPROACH

April 2026

APA NEWSLETTER



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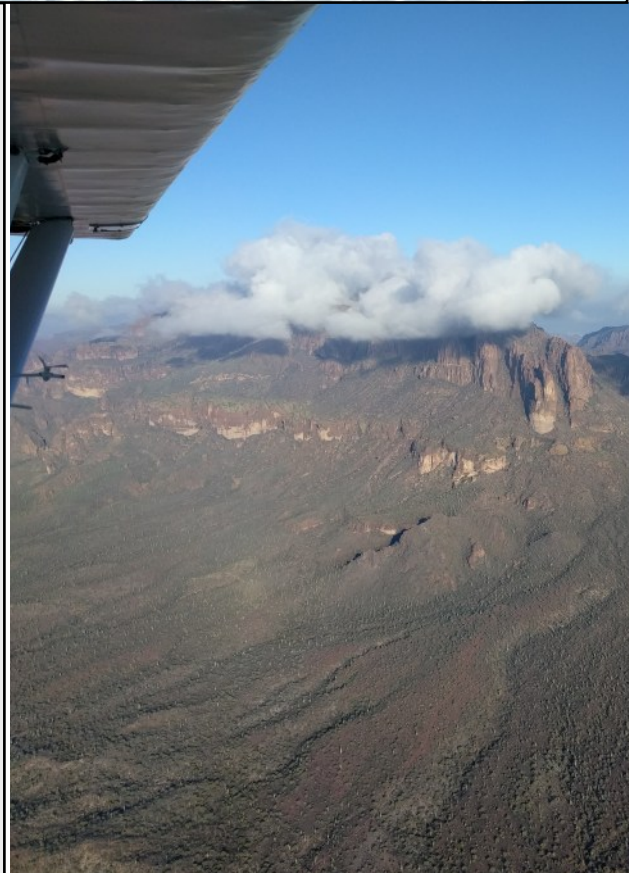
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President's Report

Welcome to the April 2026 edition of the APA Approach!

Thanks to everyone who joined us for our first combined Day Trip and Camping Weekend at Grapevine Airstrip. Although the weather was unseasonably warm, even for Arizona, we had a great turnout. Leanne Tawoda and Mike McCann served a great breakfast for the Day Trip crew, and we enjoyed our usual potluck dinner and a movie for those that stayed over for the camping on Saturday night. It was great to see so many new faces and we had two families make the trip from California with their kids for the weekend. They certainly had a great time, and it made all the effort APA puts into these events well worth it. Our last Grapevine Camping Weekend for this season is scheduled for April 17-19. However, we will be keeping an eye on the forecast temperatures so please keep an eye on our Facebook page for any schedule updates.



By now I'm sure everyone is aware that the Mesa City Council voted to approve the updated schedule of Fees and Charges for Falcon Field Airport effective May 1st, including landing fees, which is of course disappointing. We had a good turnout from Falcon Field tenants, flight schools, and the general aviation community that uses the airport, and there were many individuals, businesses, and organizations, including the APA, which requested to speak prior to the city council vote. Although the vast majority of those who spoke opposed the proposal, the city council quickly moved to approve the fees through a unanimous vote. The city attorney was careful to state at the beginning of the meeting that the fee proposal was solely based on ensuring the airport was financially self-sustaining and not an attempt to reduce aircraft noise and traffic, which is illegal. The residents who supported the proposal were also careful to echo that justification. However, their social media group posts and city council communications to the residents prior to the publication of the original fee proposal last December tell a different story.

As you may recall, one of the recommendations from AOPA, APA, and the Aviation Safety Advisory Group (ASAG) was to establish a Falcon Field Advisory board consisting of residents, airport tenants/users, and businesses to address concerns about user collaboration and financial transparency in developing the landing fee methodology and proposal. This recommendation was dismissed based on the city's view that the city council, in conjunction with airport management, is fully capable of adequately managing the airport and its impact on the community. As a point of reference, the City of Mesa has



As you may recall, one of the recommendations from AOPA, APA, and the Aviation Safety Advisory Group (ASAG) was to establish a Falcon Field Advisory board consisting of residents, airport tenants/users, and businesses to address concerns about user collaboration and financial transparency in developing the landing fee methodology and proposal. This recommendation was dismissed based on the city's view that the city council, in conjunction with airport management, is fully capable of adequately managing the airport and its impact on the community. As a point of reference, the City of Mesa has



twenty-three community advisory boards and committees “that allow residents to participate in local governance and provide input on various policies and services.” Yet they declined to set one up for the Airport. Disappointing.

So, what happens now? The city Department of Innovation & Technology is leading the procurement process for landing fee collection services and will make a recommendation by the middle of April. I’m sure there will be a lot of questions related to how the landing fee program will work, including billing,

collections, and exemptions. I’m confident the landing fee program will be challenged through an FAA Part 13 or Part 16 complaint and/or civil litigation from aviation organizations, airport users, or businesses—particularly the flight schools. More to come on this front.

As this edition of the newsletter goes to print, we have also learned that the Mesa Gateway Airport Authority (MGAA) has voted to implement a landing fee of \$24.35/landing for transient aircraft weighing less than 12,500 lbs MGLW beginning May 1st. Based aircraft will be exempt from landing fees. As noted in the MGAA letter to Phoenix area flight training schools, this fee change was driven by financial considerations related to a \$2M airfield cost center operating deficit and the impact of the fees imposed by Falcon Field on other regional airports. As the MGAA letter also noted “the implementation of a landing fee for aircraft weighing less than 6,000 lbs MGLW represents a major environmental shift for aviation in greater Phoenix.” We certainly agree with this statement and the reality is that these decisions set a broad precedent for general aviation nationwide.

AOPA, APA, and ASAG have also been working to ensure that Arizona House Bill 2210 is signed into law, which aims to prevent collecting fees from aircraft owners and operators using ADS-B. All these organizations testified in support of HB2210 during the Senate Appropriations/Transportation/Technology committee held on March 10th. The bill received a “Do Pass” recommendation from the committee with a party line vote and has been moved to the Senate Consent Calendar. If it passes without amendment, it will go to the Governor for signature. In the interim, we will continue working with the legislature to gain bipartisan support and ensure it is signed into law. Watch our Facebook page for updates on this important legislation.

Just a quick reminder to save the date for the APA Annual Membership Meeting scheduled for Saturday, May 16th. The meeting will be held at Highlands Church, 9050 E. Pinnacle Peak Road, Scottsdale. We look forward to seeing you there!

Thank you for supporting APA’s mission through your membership and please feel free to reach out to me at chris@azpilots.org if you have any comments, concerns or questions.

Fly Safe,

Chris



Volare Hangars

*New
Open!*

Pegasus Airpark 5AZ3
Queen Creek, AZ



Stellar Airpark P19
Chandler, AZ

*Coming
Soon!*



LIVE - WORK - PLAY - FLY



Fee Simple Hangar Condos



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Fast Flight Operations



Mixed Uses Allowed



Up to 90% Financing



Low Fuel Cost

Pegasus Airpark 5AZ3

34 Hangars built in 2024, remaining availability:

- two 60' x 60' | two 80' x 60' | one 80' x 80'
- 2 custom home lots with taxiway access

Stellar Airpark P19

27 Hangars + 11 tie downs to be built in 2025/26

- Three sizes 46' x 40' | 59' x 60' | 92' x 60'
- Starting reservations summer 2025



VOLARE HANGARS | 623.277.0000 | Info@VolareHangars.com

Executive Director's Report

Jim Timm — April 2026

The breakfast flights on Saturday morning have been excellent with relatively good weather for flying. In general, the temperatures has been a bit warmer than normal, and let's hope it doesn't get much warmer too soon. We all know what's to come as the months move closer to summer. Anyway, while the weather is still good, let's get out and go flying.

I suspect that many of you have been following what's happening at Mesa Falcon Field related to landing fees. There was a large turnout for the recent Mesa City Council meeting, and in spite of the major opposition to the city proposal, there was a 100% Council approval for what the airport had proposed. After the council meeting, APA was asked if we were going to file a lawsuit against the City of Mesa and the Airport. Because of our status as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization and related IRS rules I'm not sure we could, but most certainly because of the cost of such a venture, we would not. I suspect there isn't any question there will be lawsuits filed against the City and Airport by others that are impacted by the decision.

In the meantime, we in APA are very concerned that many of the negative things that were approved here will also happen at other airports in the Phoenix area, and may even possibly spill over to other airports in the state. Most of the airports in the state belong to the Arizona Airports Association (AZAA), and what is happening at Falcon Field will no doubt be a major item of discussion.

We are still waiting for action on a bill before our legislators in Washington to suppress the commercial use of the ADS-B information that many of us transmit. A member of the Arizona Safety Advisory Group, who is well connected with members of our State Legislature, has also taken action to have a bill presented (HB2210) and heard in the Arizona Legislature that would also prevent the commercial use of this ADS-B information that's being transmitted. In spite of the fact that this is really a safety issue, the AZAA is opposing this bill because they think that they may still want to use this ADS-B information for generating income for the airports. Also, there is concern that the bill may not be signed by our Governor unless there is full bipartisan support.



Remember, ADS-B information is not the only means for implementing landing fees. Camera systems have been used for verification of an airplanes landing for some time.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

FAA

We haven't heard of anything from the FAA that would impact your flying activity, but please be as-

sured that APA will always be on the alert for any rule changes that could impact your flying activity and immediately inform you.

AIRSPACE

We realize that the good weather we all enjoy is a major reason there is a lot of parachute activity happening around the central part of the state. Avoid flying near airports with known parachute activity and always be vigilant for parachutists. The parachute icon on the chart is a warning that there might be parachutists in the area. Often this parachute activity may consist of experienced military parachutists that are here to learn and practice new tactical procedures. Some of this jumping could also be high altitude jumping being initiated at Flight Levels, with parachutists descending through airspace far removed from their final landing site. If you can determine the surface wind direction, the safest place will be downwind of their Drop Zone. Always check NOTAMS for parachute activity on your route of flight, and if possible, use Flight Following for your proposed flight, and monitor en-route facility frequencies for parachute activity.

SAFETY

In the past the FAA SDL FSDO had always provided us with substantial FAA input for the Accident/ Incident report and also provided all the information for the Pilot Deviation and NMAC Reports. Because of the very late receipt of information and with the press of time, the Accident Report will have some information missing, and there won't be a Pilot Deviation Report until a suitable replacement is found. Hopefully the replacement will be in place for the next report period.

The Accident numbers are back up again, and it was fortunate that we didn't have any fatalities reported. We have had eleven accidents reported, and for the details of these accidents see my Accident Report located elsewhere in the newsletter.

Members, please continue to send accident information to itimm@azpilots.org with the date, location, aircraft make, if anyone got hurt, and with as much detail as possible. Thank you.

With regard to Pilot Deviations, there were twelve deviations reported and these deviations were committed by pilots with certificates ranging from Student Pilot through ATP. There was one out-of-state pilot of the twelve deviations reported, and there was 1 Brasher issued for a Runway Deviation. Pilots need to be more careful in their flying and carefully listen to ATC instructions. Pilots must always be aware of what type of airspace they are flying in or may be about to enter and know what will be expected of them.

In summary, the general aviation deviations this reporting period are:



“

Pilots must always be aware of what type of airspace they are flying in or may be about to enter and know what will be expected of them.

”



1 IFR Deviation	No Brasher
1 Class Delta Airspace Deviation	No Brasher
4 ATC Instructions	No Brashers
4 Runway Incursions	1 Brasher
1 Surface Incident	No Brasher
1 VFR Deviation Through Military class Delta	No Brasher

Because of time limitations, details of the deviations this month will not be provided.

There were no Near Mid Air Collision (NMAC) incidents reported during this past reporting period.

Before takeoff we seem to always get reports from ATC that drones are operating near the airport. We realize that these drones are extremely difficult to see and avoid, and educating many of these drone operators of the proper rules of operation is a problem that we all face. So please be very vigilant all the time.

CONSTRUCTION

A major hangar project is still underway on the south side of Phoenix Deer Valley Airport (DVT), and some taxiways have been moved to comply with FAA standards. While some of this activity has been completed, there is some activity that still remains. This results in changes to the normal taxi routing, so be sure to get airport NOTAMS and study them before your arrival.

Tucson International Airport still has a major construction project underway, and there are also numerous other smaller projects underway that could also impact your arrival. Always check the latest airport NOTAMS at your arrival airport, and study them well before your arrival.

APA works with airports around the state assisting with the updating of their Airport Master Plan by providing the pilot and aircraft owner's perspective in the process. The Airport Master Plan Update process usually requires about a year for completion.

THINGS TO DO - PLACES TO FLY FOR BREAKFAST

The fly-in breakfast at Coolidge Municipal Airport (P08) is on the first Saturday of the month during the cooler part of the year. April will be the last one until next October.

On the second Saturday of the month consider flying down to Ryan Field (RYN) west of Tucson for breakfast or lunch at Ritchie's Restaurant. They are open daily from 6 am to 2 pm to serve you.

Grapevine is open full time and generally the third Saturday weekend camping and cookouts are planned. **April 17-19** will be the final weekend fly-in for the season. Check the APA newsletter for a

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Drones are extremely difficult to see and avoid, and educating many of these drone operators of the proper rules of operation is a problem that we all face.

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possible weekend change. The camp host will prepare the main course for dinner on Saturday, and campers please bring a side dish or dessert to share. **Grapevine, which lies within a National Forest, is heavily used by the Forest Service for fighting wildfires and used by the Military for Special Training, so be sure to check the APA Facebook page for NOTAMS.**



There is a fly-in breakfast on the last Saturday of the month at the Casa Grande Municipal Airport (CGZ). The new “Sky High” Cafe is open from Thursday thru Friday from 9 am-12 pm, and Saturday thru Monday from 8 am-12 pm with a limited menu. However, the Casa Grande Masonic Lodge will continue to be serving a breakfast in the air-conditioned terminal from 7 to 11 am on the last Saturday of the month.

When you fly to any of these venues, be sure to look for the Fly Arizona Passport Placard at the restaurant and also at the airport terminal. If you haven’t, scan the placard with the FlyAZ passport app to get credit on the passport program for being there.

Check with the APA Getaway Flights program and online calendar for fun weekend places to fly.

Jim



As a pilot and marketing consultant, I help scaling businesses grow faster by turning bold ideas into actionable strategies. My flexible, fractional model delivers expert advice without the full-time cost. Schedule a consultation today and let’s start building a plan that drives real results.



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andrew@ideasmanmarketing.com

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Photo credit: Garmin

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Photo Flights
Flight Review

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Courses



Enstrom F28C \$390/Hour

Glenn Roberts – Airplane & Helicopter CFI

602 463-5528

ArizonaSkiesAviation@gmail.com

APA Volunteer Opportunities

As an all-volunteer organization, APA relies on the generosity of our members and volunteers to accomplish our mission. To ensure that we're communicating volunteer opportunities, we will begin publishing a Volunteer Opportunity summary in the newsletter going forward.

Please take a look at the volunteer opportunities listed below and reach out to the APA point of contact for more details if you are interested in helping out.

Thank you in advance for your participation!

Opportunities		APA Point of Contact
APA Member Services	Mailing Donor Thank You Cards Mailing Membership Cards and a Welcome Letters Clothing Store Inventory and Shipping Orders	Sue (sue@azpilots.org)
Grapevine Monthly Camping Weekend Volunteer Hosts Needed!	Grapevine restarting in the Fall	Leanne (leanne@azpilots.org)
Airstrip Maintenance Volunteers Needed!	Grapevine (88AZ) (General Maintenance—watch the APA Facebook page for dates)	Mike Andresen (grapevine@azpilots.org)
	Red Creek (Fill Ruts, etc.)	Tommy Thomason (redcreek@azpilots.org)
	Double Circle Ranch (Airstrip Shoulder Mowing - Help Needed!)	In Work Thanks to Josh Leavitt and the Bryce Families! (doublecircle@azpilots.org)
	Forepaugh (General Strip Maintenance)	Tommy Thomason (forepaugh@azpilots.org)

Redbird LD Flight Simulator Rental at Chandler Air Service

Price: \$70.00

Call: (480) 093-6420

Email: fly@aerobatics.com



Amazing Fixed-Base Simulator for Rental

Price:\$ 70

Contact: Randy Brooks
(480) 466-5908

randall.brooks@apstraining.com

DAR-T Available for Field Approvals, Ferry Permits, & More

Contact: Steve Huff

Email: learaviator@yahoo.com

CFII Accepting New Students

Contact: Patrick Williams

(480) 737-5999

Email: pwilliamsaz@gmail.com



CLASSIFIEDS



Falcon Field Airport (FFZ) is a primarily general and business aviation airport located approximately 14 miles east of Phoenix Sky Harbor (PHX). A narrow corridor of airspace exists above the FFZ Class Delta airspace, and below the Class Bravo airspace for PHX, providing a way for VFR aircraft to transition through the area without the need to contact ATC. This corridor can be very busy, so pilots are reminded to maintain increased situational awareness while arriving or departing Falcon Field. [View a printable Pilot Handbook](#) of the FFZ information found on this Web page.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tRIShTBZzk>

Steven D Huff
 Designated Airworthiness Representative
Imports, Exports, Special Flight Permits
Field Approvals, 8130 Tags, Airworthiness Certifications
 learaviator@yahoo.com
 602-390-4246

I am a DAR-T and work in Buckeye (10AZ) all week. I am able to do Field Approvals, Ferry Permits, Airworthiness Certification for Standard and Experimental aircraft, 8130 tags, Export Certificates of Airworthiness Certificates and Replacement Airworthiness Certificates. I am open to all ideas for Field Approvals and can help figure out a way to get your project approved.

Steven Huff learaviator@yahoo.com 602-390-4246

C150D parts

Price: \$12,345
 Contact: Mark Helley
 (928) 261-8291
azhelleys@gmail.com

1970 Mooney M20E Chaparral

Price: \$95,000
 Hector Maldonado
 (602) 810-0382
az.pit.viper72@gmail.com



Prop Bulkhead

Price: \$12,345
 Contact: Mark Helley
azhelleys@gmail.com

Cessna 182 RG Partnership

Price: \$115.00
 Will Worthington
 (480) 748-3578
 Email: willw62az@gmail.com



CLASSIFIEDS

Featured

Saturday, April 25 Day Trip: Cochise County (Willcox) – P33

by Mike McCann



Trip Detail Recap:

- P33 Arrival time: 8:45 - 9:15am (please stagger arrival times)
- Breakfast will be served by the local EAA Chapter. Cost = donations accepted
- P33 is an AZ Passport destination

RSVP

Our April Day Trip will be a return to a recent favorite destination among our APA members as we head to Cochise County (aka “Willcox”) Airport. This will be our last trip to southern AZ until the Fall, and the second time we’ve made Willcox our Day Trip destination. At almost 4,200’ MSL, the morning temperatures should be very comfortable with great views of southeastern AZ.

RSVP’s are required as we need to provide a head count for breakfast since the local EAA Chapter has agreed to cook breakfast for our group.

Willcox Aviation will once again host APA’s visit:



Many thanks to **Willcox Aviation** who is once again our host for this event. They took over the FBO three years ago and have finished a complete remodeling of the FBO facility. Furthermore, they’ve also arranged to have the local EAA Chapter cook breakfast for our Day Trip participants. Many thanks to Katie Wear (co-owner, Wilcox Aviation) for making these arrangements!

Lastly, if you check the Wilcox 100LL fuel prices you’ll see that they are some of the lowest in the state. **Willcox Aviation will offer Day Trip participants an additional 50-cent/gallon discount on any fuel purchases made that morning!**

Wrap-Up:

As always, be sure to thoroughly preflight both yourself and your aircraft, and do a thorough flight planning as would be required for any cross-country flight. P33 is a non-tower-controlled airport, so pilots are encouraged to review [Advisory Circular 90-66C](#) for proper operation in non-towered airports.

Feel free to contact me with any questions (daytrips@azpilots.org) and we'll look forward to seeing you.

Safe flying,

Mike



Don't come to a safety program by yourself, but don't just bring your old buddy who always comes with you. Bring someone new, and get your BFF to also bring someone new.

We need you to help us expand our audience, to expand our reach, and to expand that ocean of faces.

Statistics show that the folks having accidents are the ones who don't participate in the WINGS or safety programs, so help us reach out to those folks and pull them in.

We never complain when a program runs out of chairs!!!

ISO 2-4 Place Backcountry Airplane

Looking to buy a 2-4 place airplane for backcountry work.

Call: Bob at (602) 228-9145

Email: bob@flightskills.com



ISO Partnership Tucson Area

Looking for a Partnership in Columbia/Cirrus

Contact: Michael Hutchinson

(831) 776-2210

Email: hutchinson93922@gmail.com

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March Grapevine Fly-in

By Leanne Tawoda

Coordinator, Grapevine Fly In

Greetings AZ Backcountry Pilots,

The March Grapevine Fly-In was the second to last for the season. The final weekend for the season will be April 17-19.

As Chris mentioned in the President's Report, we had a great weekend combining the usual backcountry camping with a Day Trip event on Saturday. It was a great success, and we'll certainly be repeating it next season. Mike McCann put together a great recap which you can see elsewhere in this edition of the newsletter.

Finally, I wanted to thank Jim and Dianne Wisda. They have tirelessly donated their time and enthusiasm to the APA for a couple of decades. I first met them when I attended my first Grapevine weekend. Although they had stopped flying and sold their own plane, they continued to participate in the fly in weekends.

I personally don't know how we will do it without them on Fridays during the fly in weekends, but I want to wish them a continued happy and healthy life. Jim and Diane, you will both be missed!

Happy flying,

Leanne



~ APA Scholarship Program ~

by Chris Nugent

We had another great turnout for last year's scholarship cycle with forty-three applications being submitted. Through your donations we were fortunate to be able to award ten scholarships to some deserving and well-qualified applicants. In this month's Scholarship Corner, we'll introduce some of our 2026 scholarship recipients.

2026 Scholarship Recipients

Katherine Binion – Chandler-Gilbert Community College



I am currently pursuing a career in aircraft maintenance with the goal of becoming a highly skilled aviation maintenance professional and certificated A&P mechanic who contributes to both operational safety and long-term reliability across the aviation industry. I currently work at Setnix LLC, a repair station in Tempe, Arizona, where I serve as a Lead Wire Harness Technician. Through this experience and the education, I am receiving, I have had the opportunity to develop hands-on technical skills, problem-solving abilities, and a strong appreciation for the responsibility that maintenance professionals carry in keeping aircraft safe and airworthy. My long-term objective is to continue advancing within the aviation industry while remaining actively involved in the General Aviation community through service and advocacy for safety and maintenance excellence.

The Arizona Pilots Association scholarship plays a critical role in helping me achieve these goals by easing the financial burden of my education and allowing me to remain focused on developing the technical knowledge required in this field. I am sincerely grateful to APA for this opportunity and look forward to contributing to both Commercial and General Aviation for years to come.

Corby Running – University of North Dakota

My name is Corby Running, and I am deeply honored to be selected as a recipient of the Arizona Pilots Association Scholarship for a second consecutive year. Since receiving this award last year, I have made significant strides in my training at Chandler Gilbert Community College. I am proud to share that this past fall, I successfully completed my Commercial Pilot License as well as my multi-engine add-on rating. These milestones, built upon the foundation



of my Navy service and my initial flight training, have brought me much closer to my goal of becoming a professional airline pilot. This spring, I am embarking on the next phase of my training: earning my Certified Flight Instructor (CFI) certificate.

My goal is to stay in Arizona to instruct, giving back to the local aviation community that has supported me so generously. The continued support from the Arizona Pilots Association is incredibly meaningful; it directly alleviates the financial costs of these advanced ratings and allows me to maintain total focus on my transition from student to instructor. I am profoundly grateful to the APA for their ongoing belief in my potential and for helping me turn my passion for flight into a career.

Elliana Nunez – Aviation Explorers Post 352

My name is Elli Nunez, I am currently working on my Private Pilot License with the Aviation Explorers Post 352. I invest a lot of my time giving back to the aviation community through volunteering and involvement, so receiving this scholarship from the Arizona Pilots Association is truly a blessing. Working full time at Cunningham Aviation, I have been self funding all of my aviation training, helping me to understand the investment beginning a career in aviation is. This scholarship directly helps me continue my training and progress toward earning my license, and it means a great deal to have that support returned to me. I am extremely grateful for this opportunity and for APA's investment in my future as a pilot.



Aiden Nelson – Chandler-Gilbert Community College – Aviation Maintenance Technology



I am deeply appreciative of being chosen to receive the Arizona Pilots Association Scholarship. Your investment in my education represents far more than financial assistance – it demonstrates your belief in the next generation of aviation professionals.

Your generosity motivates me to excel not only in my studies but also in my continued commitment to giving back to Arizona's aviation community through mentoring and volunteer service. I am committed to honoring this opportunity by working diligently toward my goals and eventually contributing to the safety and advancement of our industry. Thank you for making my educational aspirations more achievable and for your continued support.

More to come next month and thank you again for your generous support in helping APA build the next generation of Arizona aviation professionals.

Chris



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WE NEED PILOTS! FOR A FREE CHALLENGED KIDS FLY-DAY EVENT

March 28th at the Deer Valley Airport



Above & Beyond USA,
a 501(c)(3) charity, is holding a
Free Fly Day for Challenged Kids



We are excited to invite pilots to bring their aircraft and join us in creating unforgettable experiences for challenged kids! With the help of you as a volunteer pilot, we are able to put lots of smiles on these kids faces. And after the flight, you get to present your special co-pilot with their flight wings and certificate!

What is a Fly-Day Event?

An Above and Beyond USA event is for challenged children between the ages of 5 to 18. These children get an opportunity to **actually fly in a small aircraft!** The **FREE** event is staged inside an airport hangar where lots of activities, entertainment, and lunch is provided. After the flyer returns from their flight, they are presented with wings and a flight certificate from their pilot, **'YOU'**! They then walk down the 'Red Carpet' to cheers of congratulations and photographs.



Scan here or go to site below fore more information:
<https://aboveandbeyondusa.org/pilot-registration/>

Above & Beyond USA



Certified 501(c)(3)
Nonprofit Organization

Flight Coordinator: Steve Snyder 602-770-7670
Website: <https://AboveAndBeyondUSA.org/>

Join US on
Saturday, March 28th
At the Deer Valley Airport
Pilots receive **FREE** light breakfast
and grilled lunch



Scan above to
experience a pilot's
view of a Fly-Day Event!

<https://aboveandbeyondusa.org/gallery/>

March 2026 Day Trip Recap: Grapevine, Arizona (88AZ)

by Mike McCann

APA Day Trip Coordinator



Our first combined – Day trip / weekend Grapevine meet-up was a big success. Perfect weather was a big change from last Fall's original event date when we had to scrub the breakfast due to rain and winds.

We had 22 Day trip participants bringing 10 aircraft and coming from as far away as California to join APA's monthly Grapevine camping group for breakfast and hiking. Many of the Day Trip participants had never visited Grapevine before, which was a big reason for the March event, as well as getting to meet some of the APA members who are regular fly-in campers each month at Grapevine.



Some of the group gathered for an "official" Grapevine photo.

APA offers a monthly fly-in camping event (excluding the hot summer months) led by Leanne Tawoda (Grapevine Campout Coordinator). The weekend fly-in campouts include some great campfire cooking and Saturday night movies.



Grapevine was full of aircraft for the Saturday breakfast. Lots of hands made parking easy

APA invests considerable volunteer time and resources to maintain the Grapevine airstrip. Pilots are encouraged to visit Grapevine and enjoy this unique Arizona flying location. As Grapevine can sometimes be utilized by military and firefighting aircraft, be sure to check the APA Facebook page for NOTAMS and other restrictions before heading to Grapevine.



Our host and head chef for Saturday's camp breakfast



Some of group took advantage of the great weather and did some hiking after breakfast.



As always, when hiking in Arizona, it's wise to keep a sharp eye where you walk (as we learned!)

Thanks again to Leanne and her team and all those that participated in the March Day trip.

As always, feel free to contact me with any questions (daytrips@azpilots.org) and we'll look forward to seeing you.

Safe flying,

Mike



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AFTW

ARIZONA FLIGHT TRAINING WORKGROUP

WE ARE A SAFETY-FOCUSED GROUP OF AVIATION TRAINING PROFESSIONALS WHO RECOMMEND BEST PRACTICES FOR UTILIZING AIRSPACE IN ARIZONA WITH THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF REDUCING ACCIDENTS, INCIDENTS AND PILOT DEVIATIONS.

We make an effort to:

- **Facilitate communication and address safety concerns between flight schools, flight instructors, the FAA and other airspace users**
- **Share training tools, concepts, and ideas**
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- **Practice area charts and information**
- **Stanfield VOR procedures**
- **Safety Topics of the Month from the GAJSC**
- **Meeting minutes and events**
- **Flight training resources, news and more!**

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AFTW.ORG**



Spring Training

By Howard Deevers

In Pittsburgh, spring training meant that your team was going somewhere else. The Pittsburgh Pirates do spring training in Bradenton, Florida, right on Tampa Bay. Other northern teams have other locations, but they all travel for spring training.

Here in Arizona, we are already in the desirable area for spring training. The western teams travel to Arizona for spring training. The season starts at the end of April and goes into fall now.

In aviation, we don't really have a "spring training" because we have regulations on how often we need a Flight Review. As we all know, we are required to have a Flight Review every 24 months. A long time between seasons for us. However, there is another way to do that Flight Review, called the WINGS Program. Actually, you can do a Flight Review any time. You do not have to wait 24 months, then worry about passing a Flight Review. And we also know that any new rating counts as a Flight Review. Completion of any phase of the WINGS, also counts as a Flight Review.

In Pittsburgh, the Safety Program Manager at the Pittsburgh FSDO would sponsor a WINGS WEEK-END each spring. I called it "John's Spring Training Program." John would recruit flight instructors to volunteer their time for a Saturday and or Sunday weekend to do the flying part of the WINGS, and he had safety seminars set up to operate both days. Any pilot could come to that WINGS WEEK-END, attend a seminar for the Ground Requirement, and then fly with an Instructor for free. All they had to do was provide their own airplane or rent one.

This was before the internet, and all of the modern notifications we have today. It was at a different airport each year. Posters would be placed at all local airports, and the turn out for the "Spring Training" was impressive. John even arranged for a "Temporary Tower" at the non-towered GA airports.

But spring in Pittsburgh can bring a weather surprise at times, so some of our weekends were only one day. As we know, weather can be a factor for any flight, even here in Arizona, but less likely here.

In sports, Spring Training is used to get ready for a season, and for the coaches to see who the best players will be. In aviation, every flight should be considered spring training. We never stop learning and improving. The regulations are there for our protection. Some pilots do not fly every week. Others are even more active and fly every day.





At one of our "Spring Training" weekends, I was assigned a young man. We reviewed his logbook, and found that he had passed the Practical test for Private Pilot two years ago, and had flown only 2 hours since that time. Weather, time, money and family had gotten in the way of flying, but he still wanted to fly and knew that he needed to have that Flight Review. We flew in the rented plane that he had arranged at that airport. Unfortunately, he could not make an unassisted landing after many attempts. I had to tell him

that he could not act as PIC until he had more instruction and a sign off by any instructor. He did not have to take another checkride, but could get current with some help from any instructor.

My move to Arizona came right after that Spring Training, so I never found out how that young man did on further training. Winters can be long and brutal to the weekend pilots in Pittsburgh, so the Spring Training event was a welcome chance to get a refresher for their summer flying.

Here in Arizona, it is almost a reverse of that. The summer heat will keep many weekend pilots on the ground, but winter flying is much more fun. Do think of your next "Spring Training" event and come to a Safety Seminar sponsored by your ARIZONA PILOTS ASSOCIATION, and the FAAS-Team. They are free, and we want more safe pilots.

Check the website for a location near you. And don't forget to bring your wingman!

Howard



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March 2026 Aviation Accident & Incident Summary

by Jim Timm

The following are the reports of aviation accidents that have occurred in Arizona from Late February through March.

We hope to use the following detailed accident information to develop safety programs, briefings, and posters/flyers that would help pilots learn from the mistakes being made by others and be able to take the necessary action to prevent them from having a similar occurrence.

The Accident report is a bit limited in content because the FAA content was very limited. There were eleven accidents reported, and fortunately we didn't have any fatalities reported.

In continuing with the expanded scope of this report, we're using information from the Aviation Safety Network (ASN), NTSB, and APA Members. Hopefully the information from these sources will suit our purpose of trying to get an idea of what is happening out there so we can help make flying safer.

In the meantime, here are the results from the above sources.

Date: February 21, 2026

Source: ASN, NTSB

Location: San Carlos Indian Reservation Near Rocky Junction

Type: Cessna Cardinal 177B

Injuries: 2 Minor Injuries

No Pilot Information

UNKNOWN CIRCUMSTANCES

The aircraft was enroute and crashed under unknown circumstances.

Date: February 21, 2026

Source: ASN

Location: Near Parker

Type: Ryan Navion A

Injuries: 1 Uninjured

No Pilot Information

LOSS OF POWER

The airplane made an emergency landing at an abandoned racetrack due to engine issues.

Date: March 1, 2026

Source: ASN

Location: Carefree Airport (18AZ)

Type: American Champion 8 GCBC Denali Scout

Injuries: 1 Minor Injury

Private Pilot

BECAME INVERTED DURING LANDING

The airplane applied too much brake on landing and became inverted.

Date: March 2, 2026

Source: ASN

Location: Casa Grande Municipal Airport (CGZ)

Type: Lindstrand 260A Balloon

Injuries: 13 Uninjured, 1 Minor Injury

Commercial Pilot

BALLOON HIT A SMALL HILL

The hot air balloon made contact with a hilltop and then landed safely in a field. The pilot and twelve passengers were not injured, and one passenger sustained minor injuries.

Date: March 4, 2026
Source: ASN
Location: Phoenix Deer Valley Airport (DVT)
Type: Piper PA 28-140
Injuries: 2 Minor Injuries
Student Pilot

PARTIAL LOSS OF POWER

After departure from Deer Valley the aircraft climbed eastbound for 4 miles, and then abruptly turned left, and because of a partial loss of power initiated a descending track back towards the airport. The airplane hit the roof of a house and came to rest against a second house 2 miles east of the airport.

Date: March 9, 2026
Source: ASN
Location: Near Littlefield, AZ
Type: Denney Kitfox 4-1200 Classic IV
Injuries: 2 Minor Injuries
No Pilot Information

CONTROLLED FLIGHT INTO TERRAIN

The Kitfox light airplane departed Saint George Regional Airport (SGU), Utah, and experienced a downdraft and impacted terrain near Littlefield in Mohave County, AZ.

Date: March 10, 2026
Source: ASN Location: Near San Manuel
Type: Cirrus TRAC20 G7 (Cirrus SR20)
Injuries: 1 Uninjured Commercial Pilot

LOSS OF POWER

A Cirrus SR20 (marketed as a TRAC20 model for flight schools) was en route from El Paso to Phoenix Goodyear at 11,350 ft when the aircraft experienced engine issues and the pilot pulled the CAPS airframe parachute.

Date: March 13, 2026
Source: ASN
Location: Near Wilcox

Type: Cessna 182J Skylane
Injuries: 1 Uninjured
No Pilot Information

FUEL LEAKAGE

The airplane departed Phoenix Deer Valley Airport and the pilot reported a fuel leak, and landed on a gravel road near Wilcox.

Date: March 13, 2026
Source: ASN
Location: Flagstaff Airport (FLG)
Type: Cessna T182T Skylane
Injuries: 1 Uninjured
No Pilot Information

TIRE BLEW OUT

The airplane departed Phoenix Deer Valley Airport, and upon landing at Flagstaff the nose wheel tire blew out and the airplane went off the runway.

Date: March 13, 2026
Source: ASN
Location: Mesa Falcon Field (FFZ)
Type: Piper PA 28-181
Injuries: 1 Uninjured
No Pilot Information

WENT OFF THE RUNWAY

The aircraft went off the runway and hit a runway edge light.

Date: March 15, 2026
Source: ASN
Location: Cottonwood Airport (P52)
Type: Cessna 177B Cardinal
Injuries: 1 Uninjured
No Pilot Information

PILOT INDUCED OSCILLATIONS

The airplane porpoised on landing, and post flight inspection revealed damage to the fuselage.

AIRPARK NAME / CONTACT	CITY	Homes / sites	REALTOR
Big Springs Airpark	Prescott	12	
Mgr: Peter Hartman (928) 626-7207			
Castle Well	Morristown	8/11	
Mgr: Gerald DaFoe (810) 516-9122			
Eagle Roost Airpark	Aguila	85 / 115 (5 acre lots)	
Mgr: John Greissing (928) 685-3433			
Flying Diamond Airpark	Tucson	20/97	
Bill Grahn (520) 812-1085			
Flying J Ranch	Pima	2/ 28	
Mgr: Howard Jenkins (928) 485-9201			
Hangar Haciendas	Laveen	39 lots w/sep taxi ways	
Mgr: Scott Johnson (602) 320-2382			
High Mesa Air Park	Safford	/19 (2.5 acre lots)	
Mgr: Phil DiBartola 928-428-6811			
Inde Motorsports Ranch Airport	Wilcox	4/9 (1 acre lots) on 100 acres w/race track	
Mgr: Britney Kirk (520) 384-0796			
Indian Hills Airpark	Salome	75	
Mgr: Gerry Breeyear (928) 916-0608			
La Cholla Airpark	Oro Valley	122	
Mgr: Larry Newman (520) 297-8096			
Mogollon Airpark	Overgaard	60	
Mgr: Sherry admin@mogollonairpark.com			
Montezuma Heights Airpark	Camp Verde	43/44	
Dr. Dana Myatt (602) 888-1287			
Moreton Airpark	Wickenburg	2	
Mgr: Daniel Kropp (602) 315-0323			
Payson Airpark	Payson	40+	
Coord: Dennis Dueker (928) 472-4748			
Pegasus Airpark	Queen Creek	15/40	Erik McCormick - Choice One Properties 480 888 6380 Erik@Pilotexpeditions.com
https://azpegasusairpark.com/			
Pilot's Rest Airstrip	Paulden	4/25	
Resident: Carol 661-733-2247			
Ruby Star Airpark	Green Valley	13 / 74	
Mgr: Wendy Magras (520) 477-1534			
Valley of the Eagle (Sampley's) Airpark	Aguila	30	
Mgr: Jerry Witsken (928) 685-4859			
Skyranch at Carefree	Carefree	20	Erik McCormick - Choice One Properties 480 888 6380 Erik@Pilotexpeditions.com
Mgr: Tommy Thomason (480) 488-3571			
Stellar Air Park	Chandler	95/105	Erik McCormick - Choice One Properties 480 888 6380 Erik@Pilotexpeditions.com
Mgr: SRUA, Inc. (480) 295-2683			
Sun Valley Airpark	Fort Mohave	55/107	
MSVPOA Office (928) 768-9192			
Thunder Ridge Airpark	Morristown	9/14 (on 160 acres)	Cindy Esterly - Prestige Realty 623 217 7772 cindyMarketsAZ@gmail.com
John Anderson janderson72j@gmail.com			
Triangle Airpark	White Hills	115 acres	
Mgr: Walt Stout (702) 202-9851			
Twin Hawks	Marana	2/40 (4 acre lots) on 155 acres	
Mgr: Tim Blowers (520) 349-7677			
Western Sky	Salome	all 200 acres for sale	
Mgr: Bill McDonald (602) 809-4008			
Whetstone Airpark	Whetstone	5 / 12	
Mgr: Brian Ulmer (520) 456-0483			

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APA is a volunteer run organization. It survives on membership dues and sponsor revenue. Stefanie Spencer manages the website on a continuous basis.

Email Stefanie at:

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20th Editor reminds the Team to submit articles

25th Authors submit articles and advertisements

Contact the newsletter editor, Cathy Paradee:

newsletter@AZPilots.org

For anyone wanting to contribute to this newsletter please submit your writing in an email file along with photos and captions (separate files). The APA would like to publish information about what's happening in your area of Arizona. Subject matter could range from regulatory issues to new places to eat (or old places) to airport management to safety. Of course, the APA would like to know about any political activities that could potentially compromise Arizona's pilots or its airports.



Stefanie Spencer— Webmaster



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Volunteer 501 (c) (3) Organization

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