The Mooney Flyer

The Official Online Magazine for the Mooney Community

www.TheMooneyFlyer.com

October 2025

Editors

Phil Corman | Jim Price

Contributors

Jerry Proctor | Tom Rouch | Richard Brown | Parvez Dara
Terry Carraway | Don Peterson

Departments

Editor on the Loose – *Nobody Asked; just our Humble Opinion*

Mooney Mail – *Feedback from our Flyer readers.*

Ask the Top Gun –*Tom Rouch answers your questions*

Upcoming Fly-Ins – *Fly somewhere and have fun!*

Have You Heard? – *This month's Relevant GA news & links*

Mooney CFIs – *The most comprehensive listing in the USA*

Features

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The views expressed in each author's article are their own.
The Mooney Flyer's goal is to educate, inform, and entertain Mooniacs.

Wings to Walla Walla

The fly-in to Walla Walla this past month was a success. From left to right: Robin & Tim O'Neal, Wilma & Ivan Petrzelka, Yariv & June Simantov, Tom Foster & Cathie Coulter with their daughter Nicole. We had a great time with wine tasting and dinner at Isenhower Cellars.

What Makes a Mooney Mechanic

A good Mooney mechanic isn't just a general A&P. He or she needs a mix of technical knowledge, finesse, and the right mindset for these unique airplanes. Here are the traits that stand out:

1. Deep Familiarity with Mooney Systems

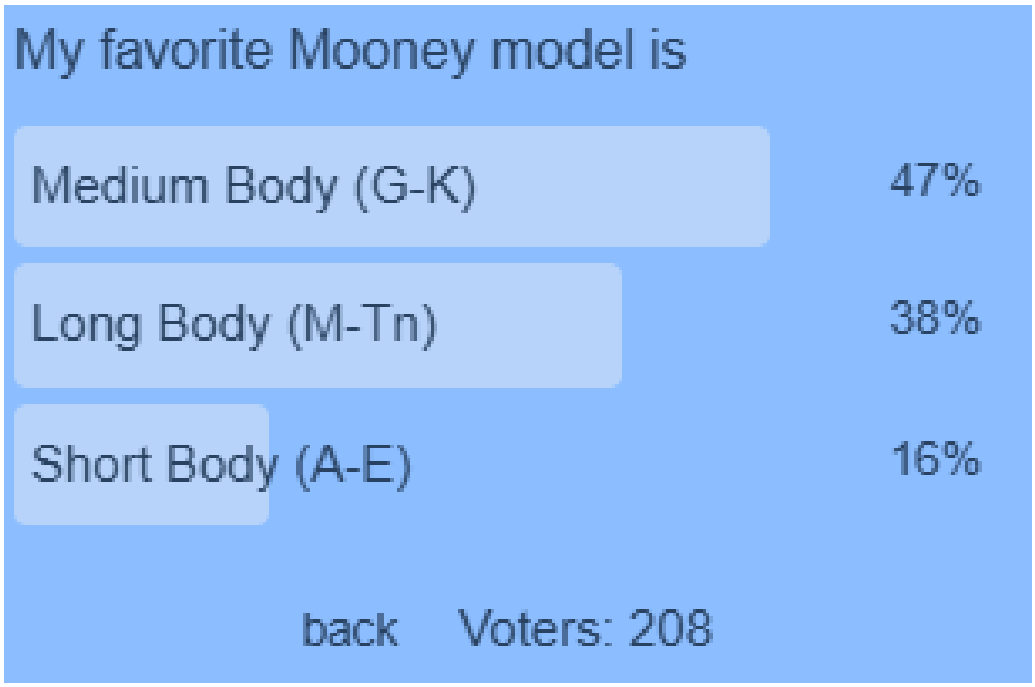
- Rigging expertise: Mooneys rely heavily on proper control and gear rigging. A small misalignment can affect handling or gear operation.
- Landing gear knowledge: The Mooney's manual and electric gear systems are distinctive, and troubleshooting requires experience.
- Wet wing fuel tanks: A mechanic should understand sealing, resealing, and leak prevention in Mooney fuel tanks.
- Tailcone & empennage structure: Mooneys have tight spaces and unique structural considerations that not every mechanic has seen before.

2. Attention to Precision

- Mooneys fly fast because they're tight and streamlined. A sloppy cowling fit, misaligned gear door, or out-of-tolerance trim can cost speed, or worse, it could compromise safety.
- Precision in torque values, control travel limits, and sealants is essential.

3. Systems Understanding Beyond the Basics
    - Knowledge of Mooney's specific avionics installations, speed mods, and STCs common to the fleet.
    - Familiarity with Continental and Lycoming engines used in Mooneys and how Mooney installs and cools them.
4. Problem-Solving Mindset
    - Many Mooneys are 30 – 50 years old, meaning mechanics often face creative repairs, legacy parts, and STC'd modifications layered over time.
    - Ability to research service bulletins, factory manuals, and owner forums for obscure fixes.
5. Respect for the Aircraft's Value
    - Mooney owners are passionate and detail oriented. A good mechanic understands that trust and communication are just as important as turning wrenches.
    - Treating the airplane as more than "just another GA bird" matters.
6. Patience & Accessibility
    - Working in tight spaces—like behind the panel or inside the tailcone—requires patience.
    - A willingness to explain findings and maintenance choices to owners builds strong partnerships.

👉 In short: A great Mooney mechanic is part specialist, part detective, and part craftsman — someone who respects the precision that makes these airplanes special.



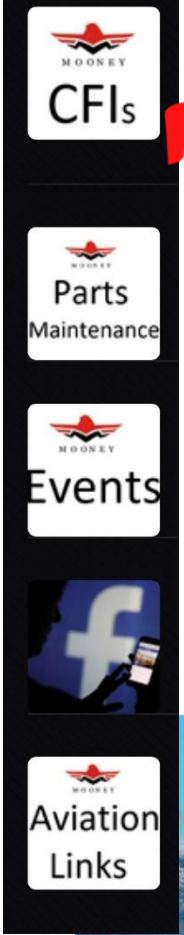
Next month's poll: "My Favorite Geography to fly my Mooney is"

CLICK HERE to vote

CLICK HERE to view the most comprehensive list of Mooney Instructors in the USA

Need a Mooney CFI?

CLICK HERE to find one



You can also go to https://themooneyflyer.com/ and click on CFIS – (located in the top menu).

You can also click on the CFIs icon, found in the website's right column menu.

CFIs can list their name and contact information on our website. To modify your current CFI listing, send an email to TheMooneyFlyer@gmail.com

Be sure to include your home base and state.

I am so happy to have found The Mooney Flyer. I have owned Mooneys since 1989 and always been a member MAPA till their demise whenever that happened. I enjoyed this latest magazine and looking forward to receiving new editions as they arrive. Good to be back! **Steve E 5766Y**

Re your excellent article on aging pilots: Many moons ago I had an assignment to produce an article for a national aviation magazine, (can't remember which), concerning a Palm Desert lady of 79 years who'd just earned her Private license. Hilda was great. When asked why she wanted to learn to fly she answered, "Because I wanted to do more than just bake cookies for my grandchildren." Her CFI told me, "Sure the 'kids' have faster reflexes, but Hilda flight plans more thoroughly and has more confidence in the cockpit. If I had to choose, I'd fly with her." What was next for her? "Probably either an Instrument or multi-engine rating, or possibly scuba diving…."

(In my life as a writer-photographer-editor I had at least one feature article in 172 magazines, one magazine with more than 1,000 articles over the decades.) **Chester P**

Dear Phil, I wrote this past summer, and you published in the July issue a query regarding a propensity of Mooneys to drop a wing towards a spin after stall. Thank you for publishing my question, but I was hoping to get your opinion. Just read the September issue and was not surprised by the results of your poll "Regarding stalls in my Mooney." Sixty-two percent of the respondents reported unsavory stall characteristics while fifteen percent avoid them period. A mere twenty four percent reported "No big deal." I'd love to hear your thoughts sir.

Editor Note: *We are sorry. We thought we had already responded to you. We liked your question so much, we polled it. You were not alone.*

Most of the problem with a wing falling off in a stall presents itself more in older short and medium body Mooneys from M20A to M20K. Not nearly so much in long bodies.

Most of the time losing a wing at stall break is caused by not centering the ball. However, in this case, according to Mooney knowledgeable folks, it is due to rigging. Sometimes it is because a stall strip has moved due to age. At the factory, the stall strips are set to ensure a straight on stall, but after all these years, things age and maybe move a little. Go to https://www.boldmethod.com/learn-to-fly/aircraft-systems/how-stall-strips-work-on-aircraft-explained/ for a nice summary of how stall strips work.

You can feel if a wing is going to drop about 3-5kts before the break. If you feel this, compensate with some rudder to hold the wing. This will mitigate having the wing break and enter a spin.

Hope this info helps

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P.S. - We do Tanks and Maintenance too! Meet Us at MooneyMax in Branson Mo!

PRESS RELEASE

Houston Tank Specialists, LLC is very excited to announce the release of our new “PUC-SAVERS” System. This is the newest maintenance system now available for your Mooney airplane! The “PUC-SAVERS” System addresses one of the most neglected and abused parts on your landing gear. The “PUC-SAVERS” System adds to the life of your rubber shock disks, tires, and fuel tanks sealer. The “PUC-SAVERS” System takes the full load off of the landing gear rubber shock disks and tires. This allows the shock disks to expand back as much is possible to their original shape during any term of storage. The use of the “PUC-SAVERS” System allows the disks to absorb more of the shocks rather than transmit them to the airframe during takeoff and landing operations. The results from the use of the “PUC-SAVERS” System cause the plane to sit at the proper attitude for takeoff and landing. The use of the “PUC-SAVERS” System helps significantly reduce tire storage flat spots which leads to abnormal wear. The “PUC-SAVERS” System is easy to remove before the flight and quick to install at the completion of the flight.

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Contact Houston Tanks Specialists at PucSavers@HTSLLC.NET, Phone 281-799-8487.

I very rarely recommend any products but this one is PURE GENIUS !!

Therefore, I am going to HIGHLY RECOMMEND you considering this BRAND NEW PUC-SAVER System for your Mooney the following reasons:

1.) The PUC-SAVER System can Significantly enhance the normal lifespan of your landing gear shock discs by relieving the compression pressure on the disc tower for each landing gear.

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3.) The PUC-SAVER System allows full "wet tank" storage without compressing the shock discs or tires. This keeps sealant in your Mooney wet without the penalty of extra weight on the shock disc towers or any of the tires.

Richard Simile

Thunderbird Aircraft Sales

Preparing for Your Flight Review

You need not have a flight review if, within the last two years you:

- Had a practical exam for **any** certificate, category or class rating, including any CFI practical exam.
- Had a pilot proficiency check administered by the FAA.
- Had a Part 121 or 135 pilot proficiency check.
- Had a Part 141 Chief pilot proficiency check
- Had a military pilot proficiency check.
- Had a pilot examiner annual flight check.
- Completed any phase of the FAA Wings Program in the last 24 months. (See https://www.faasafety.gov/ for details).

Your Certified Flight Instructor (CFI)

- He or she must be qualified in your airplane's **Category (Airplane)** and **Class (Single Engine Land)**.
- He or she doesn't need to have five hours of PIC flight time in your model aircraft.

The Flight Review Requires

- One hour of oral (Part 91) and
- One hour of flight.
    - If you fly less than 50 hours a year, or you haven't flown for a long time, you can expect a longer oral and flight.

Logging Flight Time – PIC or Dual

You don't need a current medical to have an annual review, but if your medical has expired, the Flight Review time will be logged as "dual." Once you receive a medical, you can log PIC time.

If you have a current medical or qualify for BasicMed, log the Flight Review time as PIC.

Deviating from the Rules (*FAR 91.3)*

- If an in-flight emergency requires immediate action, the PIC may deviate from the rules as necessary.
- If the PIC deviates from a rule, he or she shall, upon the request of the Administrator, send a written report to the Administrator.

Required Documents

What documents does a private pilot need to have in his possession when flying?

Answer: Current pilot certificate, current medical (could be "BasicMed"), acceptable photo ID. FAR 61.3, 61.23

What documents need to be in the airplane when flying in the USA? FAR 91.203

Answer:

- **A**irworthiness certificate.
- **R**egistration certificate.
- **R**adio license, for SOME commercial operations & if traveling outside the USA. To order online, go to http://wireless.fcc.gov/uls/index.htm?job=home
- **O**perating limitations (The Owner's Manual).
- **W**eight and balance data.

Who is responsible for ensuring the airplane is in an airworthy condition?

Answer: The Pilot in Command is directly responsible for and is the final authority as to the operation of the aircraft. FAR 91.7. The pilot in command shall discontinue the flight when unairworthy mechanical, electrical, or structural conditions occur.

Who is responsible for maintaining the airplane is in an airworthy condition? What inspections are required?

Answer: The Owner/Operator is directly responsible to ensure the aircraft has received an Annual Inspection. If the aircraft is used for hire, then 100-hour inspections are also required. FAR 91.405

What instruments and avionics are required for VFR flight, Day and Night?

Answer: (You can also see FAR 91.205 (d) for required equipment).

- **A**IRSPEED Indicator. (A1)
- **T**ACHOMETER, (for each engine). (T1)
- **O**IL PRESSURE gauge, (for each engine using a pressure system). (O1&2)
- **M**ANIFOLD PRESSURE gauge (M) for each <u>altitude engine</u> (A turbocharged reciprocating engine's manifold pressure is boosted and therefore, you must be able to monitor that pressure).
- **A**LTIMETER. (A2)
- **T**EMP gauge for each <u>liquid cooled</u> engine.

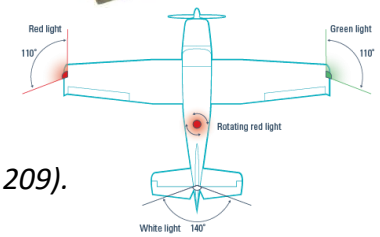
VFR Day Instrument Requirements

Tomato Flames

- **O**IL TEMP gauge (O1&2) for each <u>air-cooled</u> engine.
- **F**UEL gauge for each tank (F).
- **L**ANDING GEAR POSITION indicator, (if the aircraft has retractable gear). (L)
- **A**NTI-COLLISION LIGHT system (A3), if the aircraft was certified after March 11, 1996. (In the event of an Anti-collision light failure, you may continue to a location where repairs or replacement can be made).
- **M**AGNETIC DIRECTION INDICATOR (M2) (Installed in the aircraft).
- **E**LT (E) (FAR 91.207).
- **S**EAT BELTS (S). If the aircraft was certified after July 1978, you'll also need Shoulder Straps.

Required Equipment, VFR NIGHT: FLAPS

FUSES. If your aircraft is equipped with fuses, you'll need 3 of each kind, and they must be accessible in flight. Note: If your airplane has circuit breakers, there's no need to have fuses.



- **L**ANDING LIGHT – but only if you are flying for hire.
- **A**NTI-COLLISION LIGHT SYSTEM, if certified after August 11, 1971.
  - In the event of failure, you may continue to a location where repairs or replacement(s) can be made.
- **P**OSITION LIGHTS. Must be on from sunset to sunrise. *(Ref. FAR 91.209).*

SOURCE OF ELECTRICAL POWER (an alternator or generator).

Checking your VOR(s) – Flying IFR

Reference FAR 91.171 - To fly IFR using the VOR system, your VORs are required to be checked every 30 days

VOR equipment check for IFR operations:

(a) No person may operate a civil aircraft under IFR using the VOR system of radio navigation unless the VOR equipment of that aircraft—

(1) Is maintained, checked, and inspected under an approved procedure; or

(2) Has been operationally checked within the preceding 30 days, and was found to be within the limits of the permissible indicated bearing error set forth in paragraph (b) or (c) of this section.

(b) Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, each person conducting a VOR check under paragraph (a)(2) of this section shall—

(1) Use, at the airport of intended departure, an FAA-operated or approved test signal or a test signal radiated by a certificated and appropriately rated radio repair station or, outside the United States, a test signal operated or approved by an appropriate authority to check the VOR equipment (the maximum permissible indicated bearing error is plus or minus 4 degrees); or

(2) Use, at the airport of intended departure, a point on the airport surface designated as a VOR system checkpoint by the Administrator, or, outside the United States, by an appropriate authority (the maximum permissible bearing error is plus or minus 4 degrees);

(3) If neither a test signal nor a designated checkpoint on the surface is available, use an airborne checkpoint designated by the Administrator or, outside the United States, by an appropriate authority (the maximum permissible bearing error is plus or minus 6 degrees); or

(4) If no check signal or point is available, while in flight—

(i) Select a VOR radial that lies along the centerline of an established VOR airway;

(ii) Select a prominent ground point along the selected radial preferably more than 20 nautical miles from the VOR ground facility and maneuver the aircraft directly over the point at a reasonably low altitude; and

(iii) Note the VOR bearing indicated by the receiver when over the ground point (the maximum permissible variation between the published radial and the indicated bearing is 6 degrees).

(c) If dual system VOR (units independent of each other except for the antenna) is installed in the aircraft, the person checking the equipment may check one system against the other in place of the check procedures specified in paragraph (b) of this section. Both systems shall be tuned to the same VOR ground facility and note the indicated bearings to that station. The maximum permissible variation between the two indicated bearings is 4 degrees.

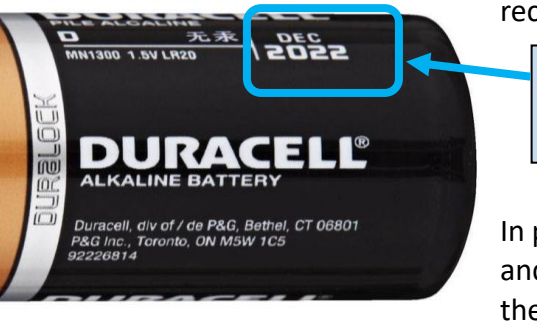
(d) Each person making the VOR operational check, as specified in paragraph (b) or (c) of this section, shall enter the date, place, bearing error, and sign the aircraft log or other record. In addition, if a test signal radiated by a repair station, as specified in paragraph (b)(1) of this section, is used, an entry must be made in the aircraft log or other record by the repair station certificate holder or the certificate holder's representative certifying to the bearing transmitted by the repair station for the check and the date of transmission.

91.207 – ELTs are required to be checked every 12 months for:

- Proper installation
- Battery corrosion
- Operation of the controls and crash sensor
- The presence of a sufficient signal radiated from its antenna.

ELT batteries must be replaced:

- If the transmitter has been in use for more than 1 cumulative hour, or
- When 50% of their useful life has expired. If the batteries are rechargeable, replace when 50% of the charge life has expired.



In plain English, all of the batteries must have the same expiration date and they must be replaced upon reaching 50% of their useful life, based on the expiration date on each battery cell.

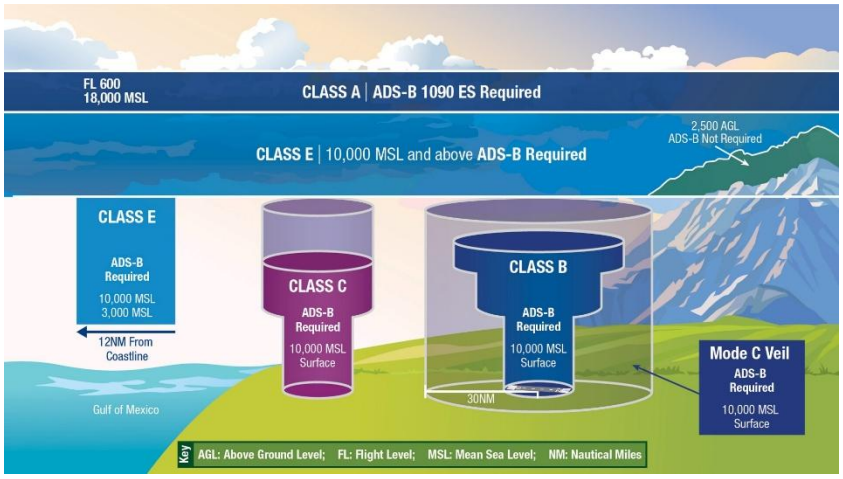
The new expiration date for replacing (or recharging) the battery must be legibly marked on the outside of the transmitter and entered in the aircraft maintenance record.

Transponders are required to be checked every 24 months (Expires the last day of the 24th month). 91.215 & 91.217

A Mode C Transponder & ADS-B Out is required:

- In Class A airspace
- Within 30 nm of the Class B primary airport (The CLASS B VEIL)
- In and above Class C
- When operating above 10,000 MSL, (excluding the airspace below 2,500 AGL).

91.225 – ADS-B 1090 MHz ES (Extended Squitter) must be installed and operating if:



- Flying in Class A
- Flying within the Class B veil
- Flying within Class C.
- When operating above 10,000 MSL in Class E, (excluding the airspace below 2,500 AGL).

91.411 – If flying IFR, Altimeter and altitude reporting equipment tests and inspections are required

- Every 24 Months. (Tests and Inspections expire the last day of the 24th month).

How Mooneys Demand Skill but Reward Precision

Walk across any ramp in America and a Mooney will catch your eye. The lines are unmistakable—sleek, efficient, and purposeful. With its forward-swept tail and turtle-deck fuselage, it looks like it was built for speed (because it was). However, that speed comes at a price. Mooneys demand discipline and they don't tolerate laziness or imprecision. That's exactly why so many pilots fall in love with them.

More Than Just a Fast Cross-Country Machine

Al Mooney's original design philosophy was very simple. He just wanted to build the most efficient airplane possible. The result was the M20 series, introduced in the 1950s, which has since become a cult classic in general aviation. While other manufacturers focused on comfort or trainer-friendly handling, Mooney leaned into performance.

The wing is laminar-flow, designed to minimize drag. The fuselage is tight and low-slung. Even the landing gear tucks up neatly, ensuring the airplane slices through the air. The result? Cruise speeds in the 160 – 200 knot range while burning fuel comparable to slower four-place airplanes. However, that slick efficiency also makes the Mooney far less forgiving of sloppy technique.

Honest Airplane, Demanding Pilot

Ask any pilot who's transitioned into a Mooney and you'll hear a similar story. The first flights often involve a surprise. You can't just "drive it down final" and hope for the best.

A Mooney M20J owner recalls, "On my first landing in the Mooney, I came in 10 knots too fast. I floated halfway down the runway before I finally got it on the ground. My Cessna never punished me like that. The Mooney did and it made me a better pilot for it."

That honesty is the airplane's hallmark. Fly it right, and the Mooney rewards you with stable handling and pinpoint performance. Fly it wrong, and you'll know it immediately.

Learning the Mooney Way

Transition training is critical, and most Mooney CFIs emphasize the same key lessons:

- Fly the numbers. Approach speed isn't a suggestion, it's the difference between a perfect landing and a runway overrun.
- Plan ahead. At cruise speeds, you can't wait until you're over the airport to think about slowing down. Start your descent early.
- Respect energy. The Mooney is slick and once it builds speed, it doesn't want to lose it. Pilots learn to use gear, flaps, speed brakes (if you have them), and descent profiles to carefully manage energy.

We all know to fly $1.3V_{s0}$. But to fly "precisely" you need to remember that $1.3V_{s0}$ is not a constant. As your Mooney gets lighter, $1.3V_{s0}$ gets lower. I use a rule of thumb to reduce my speed on final by 2-3 knots for every 300 lbs. under gross weight.

As one instructor put it, “The Mooney doesn’t care how you used to fly your Cherokee. It demands you fly a Mooney the way a Mooney should be flown.”

The Rewards of Discipline

Discipline pays off. A well-flown Mooney will cover ground at speeds once reserved for turboprops, yet sip fuel like a trainer. For long-distance travelers, it’s hard to beat the efficiency.

Pilots also speak about the intangible rewards. “When I grease a landing in my Mooney,” says an Ovation pilot, “I know it’s because I flew the airplane with precision. It feels earned.”

Flying a Mooney is about more than transport—it’s about mastery. Every cross-country, every approach, every landing, sharpens a pilot’s skills.

Why Mooneys Endure

Mooney Aircraft Corporation has had a roller-coaster history with shifting ownership, pauses in production, and financial challenges. Yet the airplanes endure. Why? Because no other aircraft quite matches the combination of speed, economy, and pilot satisfaction.

Mooneys attract a particular kind of aviator, those who value efficiency, precision, and performance over comfort or flash. They’re pilots who want to be challenged, not coddled. And for that type of flyer, the Mooney is a perfect fit.

Sidebar: Tips for New Mooney Pilots

- Get transition training. Don’t skip this! Having a Mooney-experienced instructor is invaluable.
- Respect approach speeds. Memorize the book numbers and stick to them.
- Plan your descents. Think 10 – 20 miles ahead and don’t expect speed brakes to do all the work.
- Use trim and stay ahead. The controls are responsive, so manage them proactively.
- Enjoy the payoff. Remember you bought the airplane for its speed, efficiency, and the joy of flying it right.

Final Thoughts

Flying a Mooney isn’t for everyone. It requires effort, attention, and precision on every flight. However, for those who embrace its demands, the Mooney offers something rare, an airplane that makes you a sharper pilot while delivering unmatched performance.

It may not be the easiest airplane to fly, but that’s exactly why pilots love it. The Mooney challenges you—and in aviation, challenge often brings out the best.

Plan Now to Become a Safer Pilot in 2025

Attend a Mooney Pilot Proficiency Program. Visit MooneySafety.com to learn more.
You can register at https://www.mooneysafety.com/ppp-registration/

You can also email Lela Hughes, lelahughes49@gmail.com or call 210-289-6939.

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Self Preservation

by Parvez Dara, MD ATP Master CFII

In the interim between thought and action, there lurks within all of us the ghost of fear. Fear is a self-preserving instinct that keeps us cautious. Sometimes it makes us timid and careful. The flux between these two emotions is where we play the games of chance. Flying is a practiced art form. It is learned, carefully practiced and in most cases, practiced on a continuing basis. Ask the Airline pilot and he will in confidence tell you interesting stories of this and that. Ask a GA pilot and the yarns become balls of many-colored threads.

The other day, I met a pilot of great distinction and asked him if he was ever afraid of flying into low IFR? He answered, “We do it all the time [in the Airlines].” That’s because in the Airlines, there is a protocol and published Rules of the game to guide the pilot into a thorough preflight check. Once completed and verified, the thrust lurches the large aluminum body forward and a gentle tug pulls it off the runway. The Autopilot takes over and the aircraft sails away to 30+ thousand feet into a blue sky and mostly clear air.

I asked him about the GA scenario, where he enjoyed some personal time in his favorite aircraft. He seemed a bit more reflective. He said he had personal minimums. I asked what these were. He regularly flew Instrument flights, but before each flight, he checked every piece of equipment. In fact, to keep his head in the game, before each solo long-distance flight where he could encounter weather and low ceilings, he would practice an ILS and/or an RNAV approach to minimums. His personal minimums were 500 feet and 1 mile visibility. Interesting, don’t you think? A man with oodles of hours in the left seat of airliners and in his personal GA prop aircraft, he has a carefully crafted design for his own personal flight. I was duly impressed.

Many years ago, I sat in the right seat of a pilot in his fifties, with many hours under his belt. He seemed very confident in his abilities. He said he had flown over 300 hours in instrument conditions.

The place was Muskegon, Michigan. The low-level mist had turned into a cloud cover as the temperature, dewpoint spread shrank and then kissed. He asked for a VFR on top clearance as he was instructed, and we started to taxi to the departure runway. I noticed a slight tremor in his hands. Perhaps it was my own thoughts, but I decidedly did see some minor shakes. As we lined up and waited on the runway, the view in front showed the runway and the 500-foot ceilings covered us all like an undulating canopy. He applied full power and the M20R Mooney hurtled into action. We rolled down the runway and rolled a little longer. I gently pulled on the yoke to help the flight along. We were instructed to fly runway heading and then turn 90 degrees to the right, climbing to 2,000 feet and then 5,000 feet in 10 minutes. As we encountered the clouds, my eyes were glued to the PFD. As he banked the aircraft to the right and kept the bank angle constant, we were shortly in a 45-degree bank. All sorts of groans grew out of the aircraft momentum. I helped steady the turn and quietly placed my knee under the yoke. He seemed all over the place and quite flustered. I took over the controls, flew us out of the soup and once above the clouds, I handed him back the controls. He slowly calmed down and got his bearings. We completed all the

Flight Review requirements in the VFR on top. Slowly and steadily, he grew accustomed to the controls. As we entered the clouds in our descent, he seemed quite a bit better. We flew three approaches to missed approaches and then the fourth approach to a full stop. He did well on the last two.

After landing, I asked him when was the last time he had flown in actual instrument conditions? He said, “This was the first time.” Most of his instrument flying was with “foggles!” I suggested he get plenty of real instrument flying time with an instructor in the right seat so his confidence and abilities would become one. He agreed!

Reality is quite different than an artificially created safe environment. It bites faster, quicker, and deeper if you mess with it. “Foggles” still allow you a view from the periphery and hence is an abstract version of the real and potentially deadly “bog!” You can throw it away at a moment’s notice or look up and find your bearing, but in the clouds, there are no escape routes. There is no substitute for the learned, practiced, and experienced art of instrument flying.

So please, go out there and fly the real smoky clouds with your instructor and gain confidence before you embark in instrument conditions. Remember, 300 hours of “foggles” equals 0 hours of real time. Carefully craft your personal minimums and always do multiple preflight checks on the aircraft before embarking on an instrument flight.

There is someone waiting for you back home.

Fly SAFE, as Safety is No Accident.

A Weekend in the Mountains and an Early Storm

By Richard Brown

We love our place in Colorado. For me, there's something about the mountains that just feels a little bit like heaven. It's going to sound strange that in 2024, we never saw our place without snow. With all of Mom's health problems last year—eventually passing away in December—along with weddings for two of our kids and various other commitments, we never made it to Colorado from spring through fall. I had this silly idea that 2025 was going to be less busy than 2024. It has been a different kind of busy, but busy nonetheless, and with fall approaching, we hadn't been back since our last ski trip in March.

I blocked off Labor Day Weekend, and we made plans to spend the weekend in the mountains and hopefully, if the weather cooperated, on the way back to California, we could stop in Phoenix to visit Dad. Phoenix had been experiencing some of the afternoon thunderstorms they're known for this time of year, including an incredible haboob that you may have seen videos of as it swallowed Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport.

One week out, I started watching Windy for the trends, and as the week progressed, I was more hopeful that the Phoenix pit stop would work out. I didn't let Dad know and planned to just surprise him if it happened. He's really struggling with his memory, and the "might stop by" idea would likely just cause confusion.

Friday morning, we headed to the airport and loaded up the plane. Fullerton (KFUL) to Pagosa Springs (KPSO) is right on the edge of my range, if the winds are calm. My personal minimum is to be on the ground with 10 gallons in one tank, which gives me right about 4 hours of flight time. If I'm honest, that's also about an hour past the range of my backside, but I'll do it if it means the trip is over without a stop.

With favorable winds, but a chance of scattered thunderstorms along the route, I planned for a fuel stop in Williams, Arizona (KCMR). I wanted extra fuel should I need to go around storms. The flight to Williams was beautiful, with the sun rising in the east and some scattered clouds adding variety to the view after we passed the Hualapai Mountains. There were also a few bumps as we entered some less stable air.

Williams is a great fuel stop. It's right about the halfway point, chopping the trip into around two-hour legs, and sitting at 6,690', there isn't much time spent in the descent or climbing back up to cruise. Every airport has pluses and minuses, and for Williams, it's the winds. They are often squirrely, and this flight was no different. The AWOS was reporting 9 gusting 15, (which doesn't sound too bad), but shifting over 70° from 160 to 230. We were landing on 18, so there was a chance they would either be down the runway or 50° from the right.

Me: "Shifting winds from 160 to 230, winds are like eeeeee," as I waved my hand from side to side.
Kathy: "Do you want to go somewhere else for gas?"
Me: "No, that's fine."

Kathy: “Just be sporty?”
Me: “Yeah, it’ll be sporty. Be on the rudders.”

We continued the approach from the west, bouncing a little more as we got closer to the ground, where the mechanical turbulence came into play. Coming in from the west, we crossed over midfield to enter the pattern on a left downwind and came around to land. Coming down final, I was making constant adjustments with the rudder pedals and yoke. I stayed a little faster than normal to account for the gust factor. That would also give me more rudder authority in the event there was more crosswind than headwind.

Kathy really has her “sea legs,” or is it “air legs” when you're flying? She knows distractions are a bad deal when landing. The wheels were just about to kiss the ground when a little gust lifted us back up for some more float and adjustments of the yoke, before settling down for good. She didn’t make a peep or gestures with her arms. The only indication that she didn’t “enjoy” it was the momentary grimace I saw when I later watched the video.

Me: “There we go!”
Kathy: “Rodeo!”
Me: “That was sporty!”

I filled both tanks, we stretched our legs and stopped in the FBO to use the restroom. I took advantage of having cell service to take a look at the current radar picture along our route. There were some storms to the south of the route, but nothing that looked like it would be threatening.

The density altitude was 8,700’, giving us a longer ground roll before the Mooney departed the ground. I pushed the nose over, pulled up the gear, let the speed build, and lifted flaps. As we gained a little more speed, we settled in to about a 400 fpm climb to 9,500’. We made our way past Humphrey’s Peak, which was shrouded in clouds, and across the Painted Desert and Black Mesa before passing the Chinle Valley. We flew right over Ship Rock, its jagged peak jutting up from the valley floor and spines stretching out to the south and west.

The sky slowly transitioned from a scattered layer to full overcast. Eventually, the clouds decided they had more moisture than they could hold, and a very light rain was falling, hopefully cleaning some of the bugs off the leading edges. Visibility was still great at over 10 miles despite the light rain. We were soon flying up the valley cut by the Piedra River, past the familiar sight of Chimney Rock, and over Pagosa Springs. We landed in light rain and taxied to transient parking. We stepped into what felt like a little more than the 7-knot winds reported by the AWOS.

We had a great weekend and hiked to Piedra Falls. We saw a lot of deer wandering through our yard and even had an appearance by a brown bear. Sunday evening, I was 90% sure the Phoenix stop would work but told my wife I would make the final decision in the morning.

Monday morning, I got up and sat down at my computer to review the weather. The forecast on Windy and Aviationweather.gov both showed the same thing – thunderstorms over the mountains east of Phoenix by midday, moving into the Phoenix area by early evening, and then dissipating later in the evening. This was backed up by the TAF at Mesa Gateway, which listed few clouds at 13,000' and scattered clouds at 25,000' for most of the day. There were increased winds of 15 gusting 30 with 5 miles visibility and blowing dust listed from 6-8 pm (courtesy of those storms east of the valley). However, I figured that if we were airborne for California by 5 pm, we'd be in good shape. I didn't need to be at work until Tuesday, so we could wait out a storm and fly home later.

We reluctantly said goodbye to our Colorado home and took off, heading southwest toward Gallup, New Mexico. Above the Chuska Mountains to the west, there were already some clouds developing with some good vertical movement. Pointing toward them, I told my wife, "Those baby clouds are going to grow into thunderstorms later this morning." Over 70 miles to the southeast, I could see the towering clouds of a massive thunderstorm over the White Mountains, but those were moving to the northwest and were not a factor for our flight or the Phoenix area later in the day.

The mountains east of the Salt River Lakes gave us one last section of bumps as a goodbye before we began our descent down the canyon and entered a left base for runway 12C at Mesa Gateway. After following the lineman's directions to a tie-down and shutting down, he came up and asked us our plans. I told him we're just there for the afternoon and planned to leave by 5 pm. He took our fuel order and said he'd chock all three tires, and if something popped up, he'd make sure we were tied down. I wasn't too worried because three different sources told me we should be good if we're in the air by 5 pm.

One of my sisters was waiting for us, and we made the drive over to Dad's house, where he was very surprised to see us. The afternoon was great, just sitting around visiting. I periodically checked the radar picture on my phone, and everything still looked clear in the valley. I knew if we were on our way by 4 pm, we could arrive, pre-flight, and be in the air by 5 pm. A little after 3 pm and again at 3:30, I checked the time for an Uber. Both times, it was about 10 minutes for a pickup.

I briefly considered leaving at 3:30 pm, because after all, Dad probably wouldn't remember what time we left, and he had been dozing off and on. However, I just couldn't get myself to commit to leaving. Last November, when I gave Mom a hug as we left, I didn't know it would be the last time I would see her, and as I watched him nap, I wanted that extra 30 minutes. At 3:45 pm, I pulled up the Uber app again, which was now showing 20 minutes to pick up. I checked Lyft, and it was the same time frame, but a little less expensive, so I scheduled it.

Just then, my phone rang—it was the FBO. Never before has the FBO called me, and my mind started racing as I answered the call.

FBO: "Hi, Mr. Brown?"
Me: "Hey, how are you?"
FBO: "Good, are you still planning to leave at 1700?" (I thought, "That's an odd phone call to make.") Me: "Yes, we're heading to the airport in a few minutes."
FBO: "Ok, well there's some storms popped up coming our way, and I wanted to know if we

needed to tie you down."
Me: "Thanks, we'll be there soon."
FBO: "Ok, we'll keep an eye on it and tie you down if it gets closer."

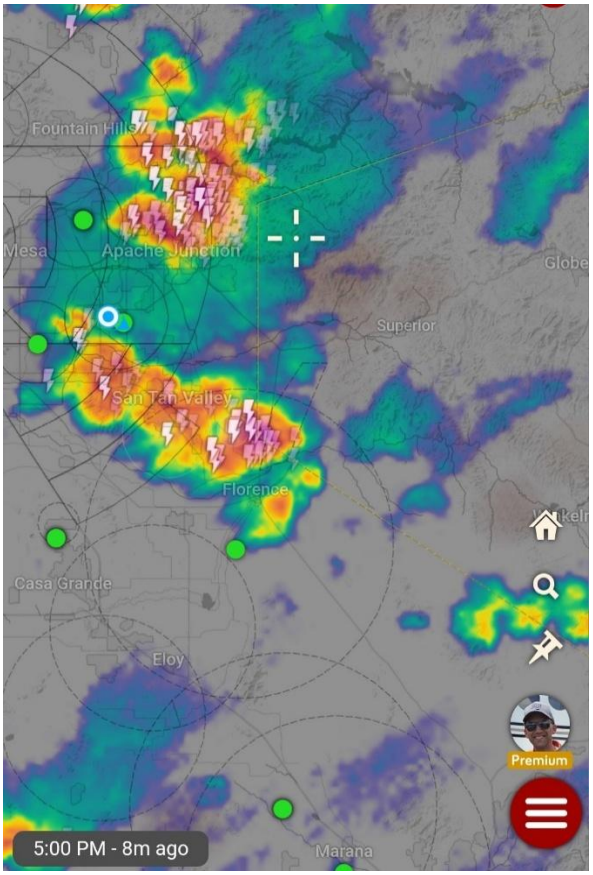
I hung up the phone and pulled up the radar picture. Sure enough, in less than an hour, it went from clear to a line of cells heading straight for the airport. I repeatedly watched the time lapse, trying to judge the speed, while at the same time trying to hope the Lyft ride would arrive sooner. I took a picture with Dad, we said our goodbyes, and he walked us out to the street as the ride pulled up.

There really aren't any hills in the valley, and you can see storms approaching from a distance. I didn't like what I saw. During the 15-minute ride to the airport, I watched the clouds rolling toward us along with a wall of dust that was kicking up. It was time to make the call.

FBO: "Gateway Aviation, can I help you?"
Me: "Yeah, it's Richard with 1015E. We're not going to get out in front of this—will you please tie it down?"
FBO: "We already have someone out there tying it down."
Me: "Thanks, see you in a few minutes."

We got to the airport and walked our stuff out to the plane before heading back in to wait it out. I pulled my ballcap a little tighter on my head as the winds kicked up and watched as the commercial airliners and control tower 2,500 feet away, started to disappear in the approaching dust. Inside the restaurant, we watched the rain pelting the window and a Cessna Citation landing on 12R. It was the last plane to get in before the storm hit. It taxied up in front of the FBO, and everyone got out and headed for the door as the rain became a little heavier.

I watched the weather outside the window and on my phone. I enjoyed a brat and some fries while my wife had some fish and chips. I made a mental note to get the fish and chips next time.



Less than an hour later, it had blown through, and there was a big break before the next cells would arrive. If we took off and headed southeast for about 20-30 miles before turning west, we could go around the storm that just blew through.

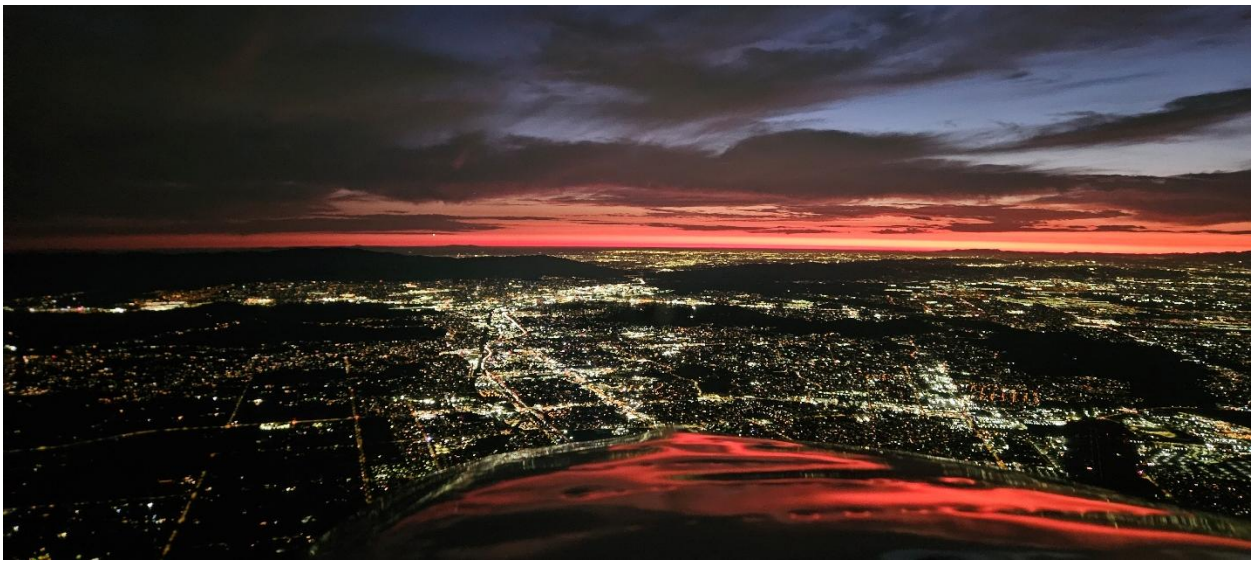
Not wanting to miss our window, I headed out to the plane to pre-flight while my wife settled the bill. Passing through the lobby, I saw the pilot of the Citation.

“You guys barely snuck in ahead of that,” I said.

He replied, “I don’t think we were ahead of it—I had full rudder in.”

I was finishing the pre-flight and ready to climb in as my wife walked up to the plane. When we flew over the desert, I could see just how much rain the storm dumped south of the airport. What hit the airport was mild in comparison — everything was saturated. Off our right wing was the storm that just passed, with an occasional bolt of lightning making an appearance. We were at 5,500’, and looking level at the wall of dust, and I was amazed at how high it went.

The storm was moving to the northwest, and as we passed the southern edge of it, we started turning west into the sun and California. The flight was smooth, and we eventually climbed up to cooler air at 10,500' for the remainder of the flight. We were still about 80 miles east of the Banning Pass when we watched the sun set twice. First, it disappeared completely behind a cloud layer before reappearing below it and finally, it dropped below the horizon. The things we see when we're flying are amazing. It was just another amazing weekend trip made possible by our Mooney Time Machine.



As always, thank you for taking the time to read. If there are things you would like me to write about (or not write about), or if you just want to say hello, drop me an email at richard@intothesky.com. If you're ever in Southern California and want to meet up let me know.

Quantum Aircraft

By Don Peterson

How do you handle a small private plane, an Alfa Romeo, and the love of a good woman?

With perpetual maintenance, patience, and a willingness to end up broke.

I have learned that all hobbies cost exactly the same – all you have. Therefore, these three affectations cannot be treated as hobbies, which would demand 3X your total net worth.

They must be lifetime core commitments. Then, you will end up broke but can rationalize the extravagance.

A failure to end up broke says you weren't really committed.

A private airplane, an Alfa Romeo, or a good woman will be the most expensive experiences in your life. Don't be cheap.

Top-quality, spare-no-cost maintenance is not an option. Neglect or carelessness will kill

you. This applies to airplanes, also.

When faced with the decision to buy something now or wait until later when you might have a little more money …. Buy now. It will motivate you to work harder, you will get to enjoy the new addition to your life sooner, and if you favor the right acquisitions, they will grow in value over time. Thus, it is both less expensive and more profitable to buy now, and the additional memories will enrich your life.

Airplanes are not additive. They function as multipliers. One airplane equals one quantum of "maintenance." Two airplanes do not add, they multiply, so two aircraft equal 2x2 quanta of "maintenance", or 4X the amount demanded by one aircraft. Similarly, 3 aircraft equal 3X3 quanta of maintenance, or 9X the amount of maintenance required by only one plane. Ignore this quantum reality at your peril. There is theoretically no critical mass, but I don't recommend testing that idea.

Tools are not expenses, they are assets. Unless your friends have unlimited access to your toolbox, then they become justifiable cause.

Anyone who enters your hangar and turns the prop without your express request, should be banned for life. Unexplained disappearances may be considered.

When flying an aerobatic aircraft, redlines are not limits, they are goals.

Find ways to keep your love of aviation and your Alfa Romeo alive and vibrant. If you become jaded and disinterested, your interest and attention will wander. The ignored will punish you for your neglect, and your life will suck.

The same goes for your loving wife.

Whirlybirds

By Jerry Proctor

I could start so many of my articles with the following phrase, "I just didn't know." My hope is, the phrase can more often be, "Yes I do!" Here is this article's background. A few months ago, I was in a pilot meeting, and the topic was about helicopters. Now for truth in lending, I was an Army helicopter pilot in my puppy days. I have about 400 hours and my commercial/instrument helo ratings.

I flew helicopters at Fort Rucker, Alabama in flight school and then a three-year tour in Hawaii. Hard duty; NOT! I have all sorts of crazy helicopter flying stories, as this was the late '70s and back then, there were a lot fewer rules. For example, I like guava fruit. I have picked guava fruit, but I never stood below or climbed a guava tree. You see we flew Jet Rangers (OH 58) without doors and all you needed to do is hover into the tree and pick your fruit. Ahhh, to be young again!

So back to whirlybirds. The video below is well worth your time to view. I saw a similar video where a small twin was landing near a hovering helicopter, and it flipped the twin on its back. Now, we all have had pounded into us to be aware of large jet wing tip vortices. We faithfully monitor their touch down point and land beyond that point. We also are held by ATC or hold ourselves on takeoff to let the heavy jet vortices dissipate. I have never, until recently, seen the same emphasis for helicopters. In Civil Air Patrol, our regulation dictates we don't taxi any closer than 500' to a helicopter. So, this presents a mindset to only be careful on the ground. Unfortunately, it says nothing about an airplane landing or taking off near a helicopter. After viewing the forementioned video, I can say, now I know. I will be much more aware of helicopters on the ground AND very much in the air.

Please take a moment and **Click Here** for the video. It will ensure our beautiful Mooneys won't get mixed up with those eggbeaters.

Fly even safer, Jerry

Deadly Doors

By Richard Simile and Lee Drumheller, Thunderbird Aircraft Sales

This topic keeps coming back around and I feel it might be worth another reintroduction. The last time I brought this up, I was politely countered by a very nice Mooney Flyer reader, when I mentioned there is really no effect of the aircraft, and that it was basically a non-event regarding a baggage or passenger door opening during take-off. While there may be some slight performance changes, it is *NOT* enough to alter the normal *"FLY THE PLANE, FLY THE PLANE"* take-off protocol. That was the entire premise of my thoughts in the original post regarding the overall BIG PICTURE.

Fly the aircraft to a *MIN of 1,500'* as if nothing has happened and work the problem from that altitude. In July of 2016, Vice President of Sales at Thunderbird Aircraft, Lee Drumheller and I personally witnessed the death of four people in the Kathryn's Report below. They were two lovely, relatively young couples whom we had just met while showing off two beautiful brand-new Mooney's at a big Aircraft Sales Expo Event at Houston Executive airport. We watched their take off in a 350HP Piper Lance and the horror that followed. We both saw the baggage door open on rotation, and we both said, "Fly it out of there, climb!!, climb!!" Unfortunately, the pilot allowed the opening of a baggage door to impact his normal flying protocol which unfortunately ended their lives.

Our advice after seeing this horrific accident is to practice distractions and you will never be surprised by one. Also, please lock your baggage door every time. Read and or Listen to the Flying Magazine Article called DEADLY DOORS linked below. Of particular interest is the Baron incident in which a non-event door issue interfered to the point of death. Do not react to these door issues as if they were issues and *"Don't Try to Save the Door."* Just climb the aircraft normally to 1,500' MIN and work the problem with some safety margin in the form of altitude.

HERE IS THE KATHRYN'S REPORT OF THE PIPER CRASH:

http://www.kathrynsreport.com/2016/07/piper-pa-32-fatal-accident-occurred.html

HERE IS THE "FLYING MAGAZINE" ARTICLE WITH THE BARON:

https://www.flyingmag.com/deadly-doors-distractions-still-posing-threats-to-pilots/?oly_enc_id=6800I1428178C9A

The Traveling Mooney – Mooney Summit, Tampa, FL

By Terry Carraway

I just returned from the Mooney Summit, an annual gathering of Mooneys in Florida. This was the tenth one and it was held in Tampa. It would have been the 11th, but last year did not happen due to back-to-back hurricanes.

It is 964 nm, straight line from my home field Hartford County Airport in Churchville, Maryland (0W3) to Peter O. Knight Airport (KTPF) in Tampa, Florida. Flight Aware says I did the trip in 5+04 from takeoff to touchdown, burning 10.1 GPH, 5.4 Hobbs. It is nice flying a fast airplane. I needed my instrument rating to make this trip, but only to get to cruising altitude. I took off into 5,000 overcast and filed for 12,000. I was cleared to 8,000 and leveled off right at the top of the clouds. About the time the clouds went higher, I was cleared to 10,000 and again, I was right in the tops. Finally, I was cleared to 12,000 and spent the rest of the trip in the clear. However, it was a solid undercast until Georgia, then it was broken to about Ocala, then clear into the Tampa area. Closer in, I cancelled and went in VFR. You can see in this chart how KTPF is sandwiched in between airspace. It is under the Tampa Class B (1,200-foot shelf) and VERY close to the MacDill AFB Class D. Atlas Aviation, the FBO, gave a 75 cent per gallon discount on fuel and waived the first night tie down fee. Overall, it's a nice FBO with nice people.

The event started on Friday, with most attendees arriving that morning. We had lunch, then some presentations, including a pilot who did a trip from Orlando to Alaska and back, covering over 9,300 nm. They also held a showcase so people could put their plane out for others to Ooh and Aah over. I put mine out to show off my panel. There were a number of envious pilots looking at my Mooney.

Saturday was held in the Tampa big airport (KTPA). The Tampa area airport commission was one of the sponsors and supplied the venue. It is a corner of the terminal, and you can see the people arriving and checking in to depart. A full day of presentations, with an emphasis on safety topics. We had a nice lunch to break things up. That evening was a social hour, then dinner at a restaurant right next to the main hotel used by attendees. After dinner, there was a raffle and silent auction to raise money for the Bill Gilliland Foundation. The full agenda is here. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mlpLPmTGgrhid1Co77r47uguZDhaH7kZTKl3xwVuUF8/edit?tab=t.0

Bill Gilliland was a Mooney pilot who attended the first Mooney Summit and was involved in making that event happen. He was killed in crash that year. The Foundation provides support to families of pilots who have been involved in a Mooney crash. Some support is monetary, some is

moral support, or whatever they need. The Mooney Summit is a major fund-raising event for this foundation, and 100% of the money collected, over the direct expenses, goes to the Foundation. Consider adding this charity to your giving. https://www.mooneysummit.com/bill-gilliland-foundation

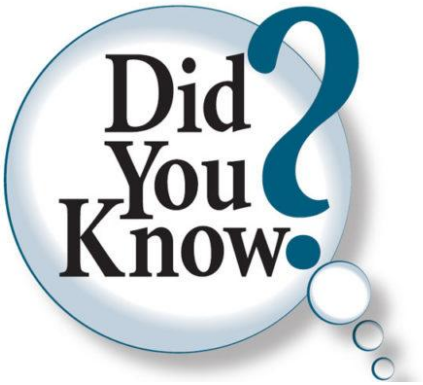
A big shoutout to the corporate sponsors who not only attended but also donated items for the raffle and the silent auction. Scott Ashton of Aerox flies a J Model. He did a presentation and donated some items. Garmin and AOPA were represented. Even my avionics shop, Smart Avionics donated a pitot/static check for the auction. Here is a complete list of sponsors. https://www.mooneysummit.com/sponsors

I got an early start coming home, just because I woke up early. I managed to share a ride with another Mooney pilot to the airport. Because it was early, there was not a mass of activity, but Mooneys were starting, taxiing, and departing. It was one of those horrible days for flying with light winds, no clouds, and great visibility. The strange thing was, the winds aloft decreased with altitude, so I filed for 17,000. I was cleared to 16,000 almost immediately. Florida does not do the normal East/West Odd/Even altitudes, they use North/South since most traffic is going North or South. (I learned this from one presentation on Saturday by two controllers). For IFR, you file the normal Odd East/Even West, but they will assign you based on North/South. I was Northeast bound, so I filed an odd altitude, but cleared for 16,000. When I got near the north part of Florida, I was cleared to 17,000 for the rest of the trip. The nice thing was, maybe 15 minutes into the flight, I was cleared to destination. I LOVE having a turbo charger and cruising in the teens. There is very little traffic, so long direct routings are common. About Georgia, there started to be a high overcast above me, but the ride was smooth.

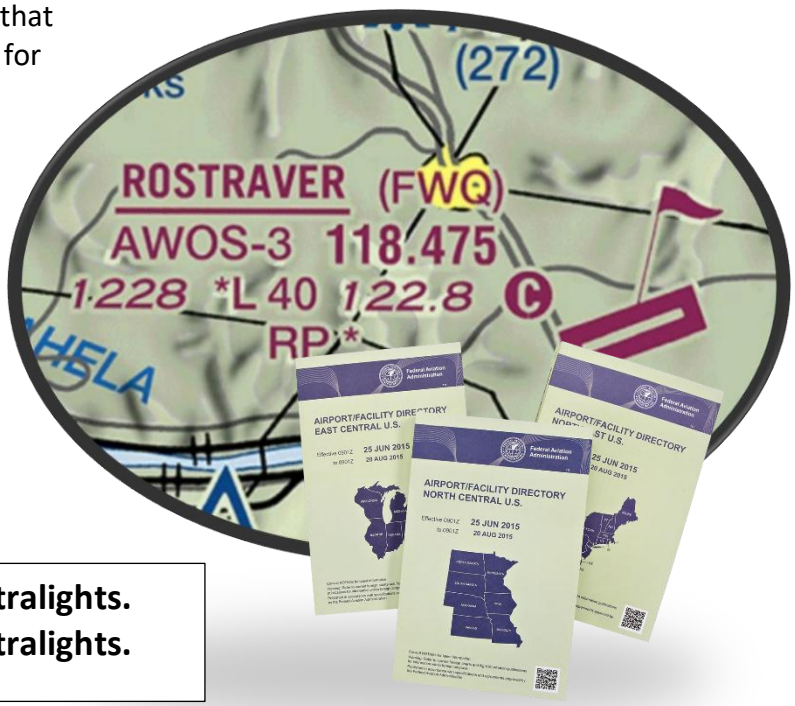
As expected, I got a reroute nearing Richmond to move me around the Tri Area Class B. If you ever fly in the area, T295 on the East side is what you will get. They kept me high until around Patuxent River Naval Air Station. Then, they wanted me to be at 13,000 crossing LOUIE. A few quick pushes of the buttons and I was set up for VNAV descent to make the crossing altitude. The navigator and autopilot (GTN-750Xi and GFC-500) kept me level until the proper Top of Descent, then pitched to a 3-degree angle to level off just before LOUIE. After crossing the Aberdeen Proving Ground Restricted airspace, I cancelled IFR and did a normal VFR pattern entry. According to Flight Aware, the trip home took 5+03, take off to touchdown. That is pretty consistent with a one-minute difference in flight times.

All in all, it was a great time. I learned a number of new things. I met some great people and saw a number of people that I had met previously. Mooney Summit 2026 is already scheduled for October 2 -3, 2026 in Tampa. Mark your calendar and attend a great event.

A funny thing. I just checked my electronic log for fun, and as of this trip, I have 252 hours in my Mooney 252.



While planning a flight to the Rostraver Airport (KFWQ) in Monongahela, PA, you see **RP*** on the Sectional. You've seen "RP" on a Sectional and you know it means "Right Pattern." However, "RP" is usually followed by the runway or runways that require a Right Pattern, for instance, "**RP 4R, 22R**". **So, what does the asterisk indicate?** It means that for clarification, you should consult the Chart Supplement, (formerly the A/FD or Airport/Facility Directory). NOTE: ForeFlight is "old school" and still refers to the Chart Supplement as "A/FD." You found Monongahela Rostraver (KFWQ) and checked the Chart Supplement. The mystery is solved! Under AIRPORT REMARKS, you find . . .



Rwy 08 Rgt tfc helicopter/ultralights.
Rwy 26 Rgt tfc helicopter/ultralights.

MONONGAHELA

ROSTRAVER (FWQ)(KFWQ) 5 E UTC–5(–4DT) N40°12.58′ W79°49.89′
1228 B NOTAM FILE AOO
RWY 08–26: H4002X75 (ASPH–GRVD) S–26, D–30 MIRL
RWY 08: REIL. VASI(V4R)—GA 3.0° TCH 51′. Trees.
RWY 26: REIL. VASI(V4L)—GA 3.0° TCH 48′. Trees.
SERVICE: S4 **FUEL** 100LL, JET A, A+ **LGT** ACTIVATE MIRL Rwy 08–26, REIL Rwy 08 and Rwy 26—CTAF.
AIRPORT REMARKS: Attended Mon–Fri 1200–2200Z‡. After hrs ctc 724–640–6349/2409. Deer and birds on and invof arpt. Rwy 08 rgt tfc helicopter/ultralights. Rwy 26 Rgt tfc helicopter/ultralights.

Thunderbird Aircraft Sales

Specializing in pre-owned Mooney Sales and Brokerage

Hello my fellow Mooniacs,
My name is Richard Simile, and I am the President of Thunderbird Aircraft Sales. Thunderbird Aircraft Sales Specializes in the Sale and Brokerage of late Model Mooney Aircraft. If you are considering the purchase of a newer Mooney, or thinking about selling your current Mooney, we hope you will consider using Thunderbird Aircraft Sales.
Our objective is always to provide a very pleasant transactional experience for all parties involved and that is a formula that works well. We have three offices, Auburn, AL, Chandler AZ, and Pensacola FL. Please give Thunderbird Aircraft Sales a call **602-884-2111**, or email richard@thunderbirdaircraft.com. We look forward to being of service to you. Thank you.

richard@thunderbirdaircraft.com or 602-884-2111
www.thunderbirdaircraft.com
334-332-2100 Auburn, AL Office
602-884-2111 Chandler, AZ Office
850-723-3644 Pensacola, FL Office

Risk Mitigation and Muscle Memory

by Richard Simile, Thunderbird Aircraft Sales

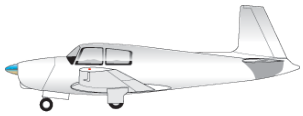
I would like to bring up two muscle memory items that could help mitigate risk and keep you safe.

1.) Ignition key removal. You should check your mags just prior to *every* shutdown (because things can change with every engine start), but after every shutdown, you should also remove the key and HOLD KEYS UP HIGH IN FRONT OF YOUR EYES AND JINGLE THEM. By doing this, you will build a muscle memory that will ensure that the key is not in the ignition and still active. It looks like you are doing it for the line guy who is about to chalk the nose gear, but this memory trick is for YOU – the next person to touch the prop to align it for the tow bar or tug to put it in YOUR hangar. It is very important to jingle the keys up high every single time for this concept to work well. Hold'em HIGH and JINGLE Baby, JINGLE;-).

2.) Locking the Baggage door. Always lock that baggage door every single time so that the muscle memory kicks in and never fades. Make sure you are the only person that locks it before you climb aboard. Doing this will keep you from second guessing yourself after everything is buttoned up and you are ready to go.

There are many more Aviation Risk Mitigation / Muscle Memory tricks to keep you safe, and I am quite certain that many of you have some really good ones!!!

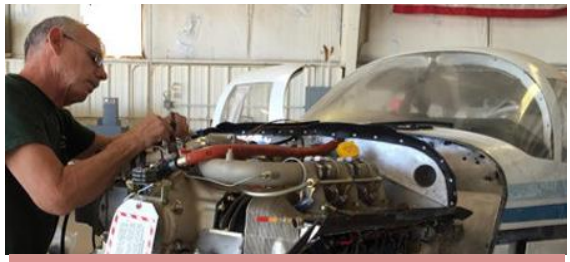
I would encourage you to respond to the Editor with your ideas in order that they can be shared with all.



Mooney Maintenance

CLICK HERE for the FAA's Airworthiness Directives (ADs) for all Mooneys.

CLICK HERE to download Mooney's 100 Hour Inspection Guide



CLICK HERE to find Parts and Maintenance Support

Ask the Top Gun

Tom Rouch

Founder of Top Gun Aviation, Stockton, California

Send your questions for Tom to TheMooneyFlyer@gmail.com

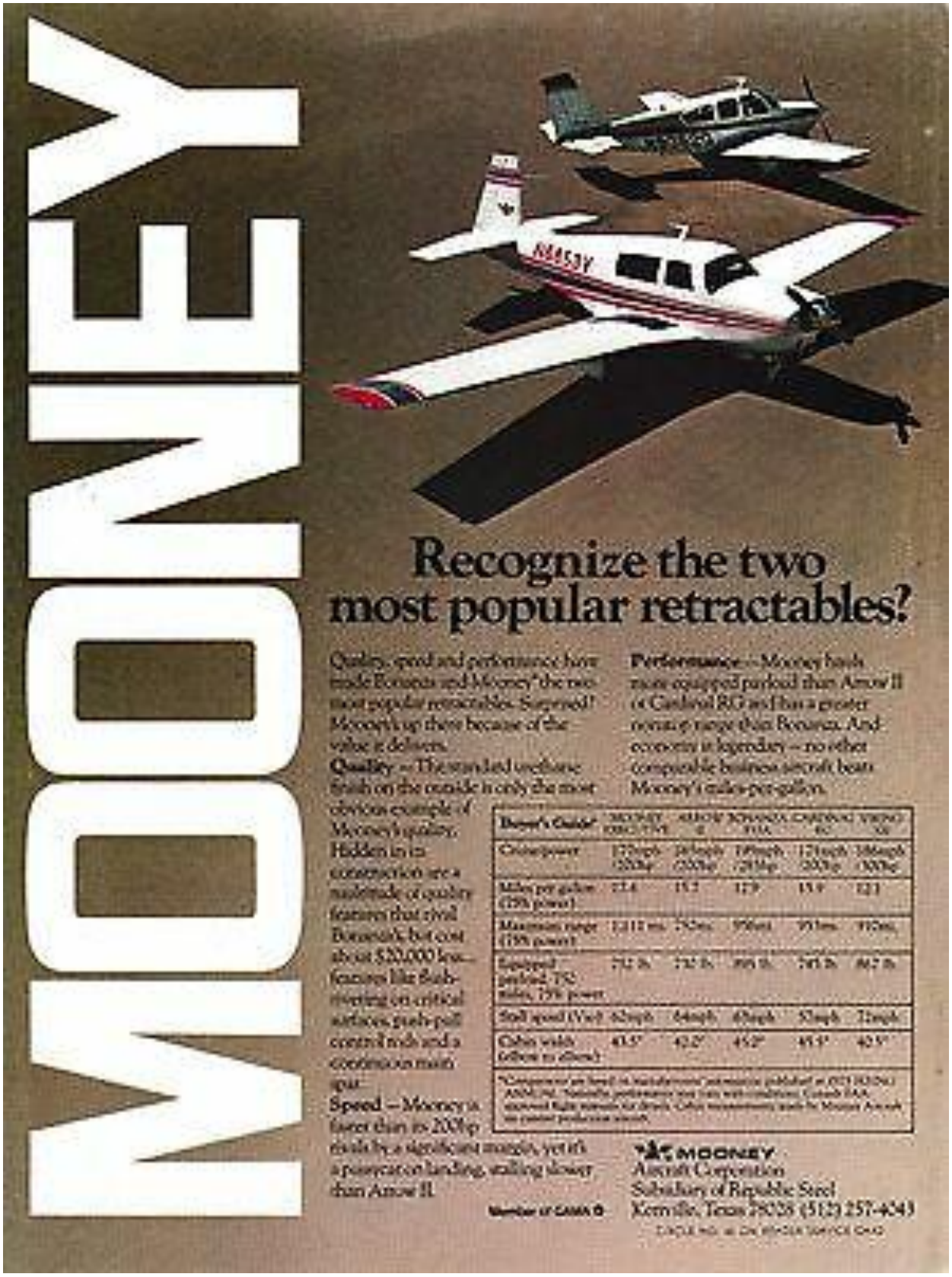
What things should Mooney owners check between annuals to ensure their Moonies are being maintained properly

Tom's Answer

This is a question that covers a broad area because I could write answers from a maintenance business point of view, but I will try to answer as an owner who flies occasionally during the year. It is really rather simple.

1. Before flight:
   a. Check fuel available for scheduled flight.
   b. Check engine oil level.
   c. Check tire pressures.
   d. During the Walk Around, check for general conditions, including moving the flight controls by hand for easy movement.
   e. Run engine for standard checks including mag drop, oil pressure, voltage output, proper engine instrument readings, etc.
2. Use some system that provides continued info on ADs, Service bulletins, or other info that might affect your aircraft.

Not much I can add, but these are really basic checks to ensure your aircraft is maintained properly.


MOONEY
Recognize the two most popular retractables?
Quality, speed and performance have made Bonanza and Mooney® the two most popular retractables. Surprised? Mooney's up there because of the value it delivers.
Quality – The standard one-piece finish on the outside is only the most obvious example of Mooney's quality. Hidden in its construction are a multitude of quality features that rival Bonanza's but cost about $20,000 less – features like flush-riveting on critical surfaces, push-pull control rods and a continuous main spar.
Speed – Mooney is faster than its 200 hp rivals by a significant margin, yet it's a pussycat on landing, stalling slower than Arrow II.
Performance – Mooney hauls more equipped payload than Arrow II (a Cardinal RG and has a greater cruising range than Bonanza. And economy is legendary – no other comparable business aircraft beats Mooney's miles-per-gallon.
Buyer's Guide*
Cruise power
Miles per gallon (75% power)
Maximum range (75% power)
Equipped payload (TO miles, 75% power
Stall speed (Vso)
Cabin width (elbow to elbow)
MOONEY
Aircraft Corporation
Subsidiary of Republic Steel
Kerrville, Texas 78028 (512) 257-4343

VA Disability and FAA Medicals: What Pilots Must Know in 2025 and Beyond

by Anthony Ison, aviation attorney

In 2022, pilots started feeling the ill-effects of the FAA's "VA special project." This "project" consisted of a taskforce within the FAA's Office of Aerospace Medicine whose duty was to reconcile perceived errors between information the FAA had received from the VA and the pilot's representations on his or her airman medical certificate applications regarding receipt of disability benefits. Specifically, question 18y. on the FAA's application for airman medical certification (Form 8500-8 or colloquially, MedXPress) asks whether the applicant has ever in his or her life received "medical disability benefits." If you are like the several thousand individuals who were ensnarled in the "special project," you will probably agree that your receipt of VA disability benefits does not immediately come to mind when you read that question. Unfortunately, no matter the rationale for not reporting VA disability benefits at question 18y., failing to do so had serious consequences under the "special project" and **still has major repercussions today**.

When the "special project" was in full force, our firm saw a wide range of FAA responses, from requiring minor corrections to revoking certificates from pilots. The most dire of consequences befell many seasoned pilots, who lost their airman certificates (to include those with ATP certificates) and airman medical certificates. Others were more fortunate and were able to salvage their airman certificates but had to re-establish their eligibility for airman medical certification by submitting medical records and evaluation(s) to the FAA. In these cases, the medical certification review itself often caused collateral damage, as pilots lost their jobs waiting for appointments and for the FAA to review their eligibility for continued medical certification. It was an unpleasant experience for all involved.

While only the FAA can speak to whether the "special project" is totally over, we can say from our perspective that the mission seems to have wound down. We are no longer seeing Letters of Investigation regularly being sent to pilots for failure to report their VA disability benefits (something that we were at one time seeing on a nearly daily basis in our practice). We are seeing Orders of Revocation for cases that were initiated during the full scope of the project. And we no longer see individuals receiving Letters of Correction or Letters of Reconciliation (the letters that were sent to individuals to provide an opportunity to fix their application(s) and re-establish their eligibility to hold a medical certificate).

While the "special project" seems to have slowed down, we are still seeing letters from the "special project" go out to certain airmen. The "current" letter being sent to airmen from the "special project" appears to be directed at individuals whose medical certificates have expired.

These could be pilots who may not be flying at all and have let their medical certificate lapse. This letter could also apply to pilots who are flying on BasicMed. It could also apply to pilots who intend to reapply for a new medical certificate in the future. Fortunately, these letters are relatively innocuous, but are still worthy of some action by recipients. To paraphrase, these letters state that the airman has been identified as not having appropriately reported his or her VA disability benefits on his or her application(s) for airman medical certification, but considering the pilot's last application has expired, the FAA does not require any immediate action. Instead, the FAA directs these pilots to "disclose all reasonably known medical information." on his or her next application for airman medical certification *or* application for BasicMed. In other words, the FAA isn't requiring immediate action – they aren't saying you *have* to submit a new application. But, if you do submit a new application for a medical certificate or BasicMed, you *must* report your medical history and receipt of VA disability benefits appropriately.

It is our opinion that individuals who receive this letter should seek counsel on how to remedy the FAA's concerns. In some cases, it may be best to avail yourself of the opportunity to apply for a medical certificate and "reconcile" the perceived error(s), so that you can get "right" with the FAA. Even if you don't intend on holding a medical certificate or following through with the necessary evaluations to establish your eligibility for a new medical certificate, the effort of submitting a new application and undergoing an examination with your Aviation Medical Examiner may be recommended. Otherwise, completing an "amendment" wherein you identify for the FAA that you wish to fix previous error(s) on your medical application(s) may also be a wise course of action to discuss with counsel. If you are flying on BasicMed, it is prudent to ensure that your underlying condition(s) for which you receive VA disability benefits do not prevent your eligibility for BasicMed.

Let me be clear: even though the "special project" seems to be largely completed (for now), this does not mean that the FAA can't still discover discrepancies on your medical application(s) or that you should misrepresent your medical history and receipt of VA disability benefits on your application(s) for airman medical certification.

For more information, see https://pilot-protection-services.aopa.org/news/2025/august/01/va-disability-medicals?utm_source=ebrief&utm_medium=email

Proposed new Drone Rules and Who Will Have the Right of Way

FAA Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) – Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Beyond Line of Sight (BVLOS) Operations – On August 5, 2025, the FAA released proposed rules to allow UAS weighing up to 1,320 lbs to fly beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) of the operator. The current Part

107 UAS rules do not allow BVLOS without a waiver. This is a complex set of rulemaking which covers 647 pages in the NPRM. Here are a few highlights:

- Enables a wide range of VLOS operations including package delivery, aerial survey/inspection, agriculture, public safety and flight testing.
- Operations will be restricted to altitudes at or below 400 feet (consistent with current Part 107 UAS rules)
- Airman certificates will not be required for Part 108 operations as the UAS systems covered by this NPRM will be autonomous with limited operator interface. This is different than Part 107 which requires the UAS operator to have an airman certificate.
- **BVLOS UAS will be required to have Detect and Avoid (DAA) capability that will enable them to automatically detect and avoid other "cooperating aircraft" which includes other UAS and manned aircraft reporting their position via ADS-B.**

- **However, the proposed rule grants the BVLOS UAS the right of way over FAR Part 91 aircraft that are not equipped with ADS-B out. This means that if you are flying an aircraft without ADS-B capability in the vicinity of a BVLOS operating area you are required to see and avoid UAS.** As you know this would be difficult if not impossible. The FAA does plan to define new requirements for portable low-cost electronic conspicuity (EC) device that can be used by manned aircraft to retain the right- of-way over a Part 108 UAS. However, until the EC or portable transponder technology is approved by the FAA this provision of the rulemaking presents an unacceptable risk to manned aircraft.

Misusing Mandated ADS-B Technology to Gather Landing Fees

Pilot and Aircraft Privacy Act – Sen. Ted Budd (R-NC) and Rep. Bob Onder (R-Mo) have introduced Bills S.2175 and H4146, titled the Pilot and Aircraft Privacy Act which is intended to address growing concerns about the misuse of FAA mandated ADS-B technology. This legislation, introduced in June 2025, would:

- Prohibit the use of ADS-B to identify any aircraft for the purpose of collecting fees from pilots or aircraft owners.
- Limit the use of ADS-B to its intended purposes of improving air traffic safety and efficiency.
- Expand to all federal, state and local entities, a provision in the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 preventing investigations from being initiated based solely on ADS-B data.

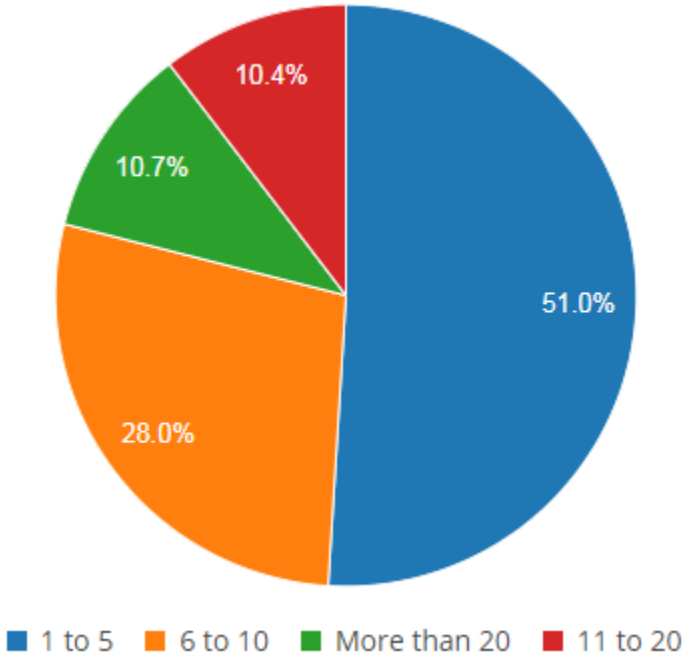
Require public-use airport owner/operators to disclose the impact of any new fees on general aviation and related businesses and require collected revenue to be used for airport airside safety improvements.

Medical updates reduce no-fly limits for eye surgeries and some medications

By General Aviation News Staff **· September 17, 2025**

One of the most notable changes is a reduction in the required observation period for cataract surgery, according to officials with the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA). Previously, pilots had to wait up to two years before medical recertification was allowed, but under the new rules, this wait time has been reduced to just three months.

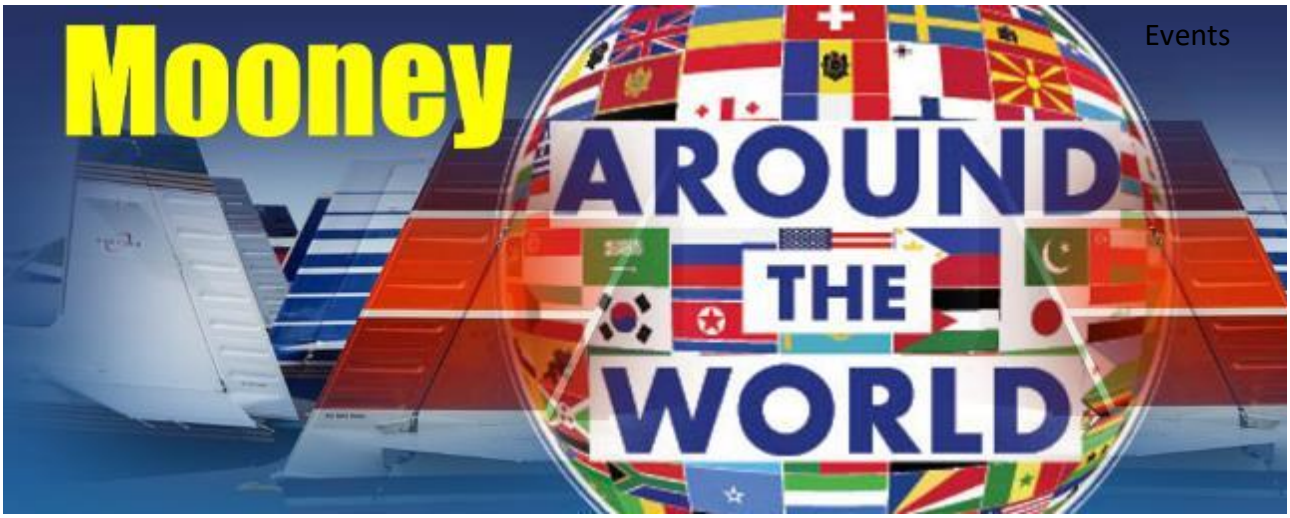
See https://www.generalaviationnews.com/2025/09/17/medical-updates-reduce-no-fly-limits-for-eye-surgeries-some-medications/?utm_source=TPOA&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20250918 for more information



AOPA
your freedom to *fly*

Monthly Flying

A recent AOPA poll found that most pilots fly 1 to 5 hours per month.
Where do you fit in this pie chart?



Events

Florida Mooney Lunch Group	Contact Mike Weir at (239) 572-3418, before coming to the restaurant, so they can have an accurate count. Events begin at 11:30 Oct 11: Sebring (KSEF) Nov 8: Lakeland (KLAL) Dec 13: Flagler (KFIN)
MooneySafety.com	Oct 17-19: Branson, MO **CLICK HERE to Register**
Australian Mooney Pilots Association LTD	
EMPOA	**Learn more at** https://www.empoa.eu/index.php/en/
The Mooney Flyer	
Other	Oct 16-19: **MooneyMax** (Branson, MO), Thousand Hills Resort Hotel and Convention. Arrive on the 15th, Seminars on 16 & 17th & Play on Saturday. **CLICK HERE to Register**

Parts for Sale

1959 Mooney 20A - Seeking Mooney Purist * $17,000

Hangar stored for years, now ready for overhaul(s) and refurbish. * Airframe and engine 1439.1 TT. McAuley prop. O360 engine. Wood-wing.

* Would consider selling only the engine and prop. However, sentimentally prefer to find a Mooney Lover seeking a great project. * Telephone: 419 591 6477 for further information.

This Cowling was removed from a M20E and replaced with a M20J (201) cowling. The cowling is located at Fullerton Airport (KFUL) and is in excellent condition. Offers accepted.

Contact: Bernard Lee – leebern@msn.com (562-865-2547)

P/N 310309-501
P/N 310309-502

These fairings are new and priced @ $280.00 each or $525.00 for both. Priced elsewhere @ $362.69 each.

Contact: Bernard Lee – leebern@msn.com (562-865-2547)

Bushing P/N 914007-003 - 2- Bushings in the original package @ $35.00 each. Priced elsewhere @ $45.00 each.

Bushing P/N 914007-005
1-Bushing in the original package @ $59.00
1-Bushing loose @ $50.00
Priced elsewhere @ $69.00 each

Contact: Bernard Lee – leebern@msn.com (562-865-2547)

Access Covers P/N 3000-901 (2-available) - 1-without nuts attached.
Make offer. Contact: Bernard Lee – leebern@msn.com (562-865-2547)

LASAR Cowl Fairing STC Kit for M20A - M20G (https://lasar.com/stc-kits/cowl-closure-fairing-stc-kit-laskit131)

$275.00 (includes US shipping),

Contact Klem Klemmensen (217) 245-2480 or Tom Alcott tjalcott@gmail.com

Sold my beloved ’65 E Model after 30+ years. I have a few items now looking for a home. See links for manufacturer info. Buyer to pay shipping. I will pack appropriately.

1.

For Sale

- Full set of Kennon sun shields with storage bag. $150
  https://shop.kennonproducts.com/collections/mooney-sun-shield/products/moom20-4010

- Aerox portable oxygen system; 13 cu. ft. (D size) tank with valve, gauge assembly, regulator, OxiSaver cannulas, seat back carrying case; two person set up. $300
  - https://www.aerox.com/build-my-aerox-portable-oxygen-system/

- Ram X-Grip universal holder with yoke mount for 9–11-inch iPads. $50
  https://rammount.com/products/ram-hol-un9u

Contact: email: stuartgw@aol.com, Phone: 541-788-7286

For Sale: Part #75730 LYCOMING TUBE ASSEMBLY PROP GOV LINE: $450.00

This Part #75730 when installed on Lycoming IO360-A3B6 provides clearance between the prop governor oil line and the Mooney M20J engine mount. This part is factory new and includes FAA Form 8130. The current online price for this part from Aircraft Spruce is $767.00. Contact Robert Elliott at rce.elliott@gmail.com or 512-947-4037 (prefer text messages vs. voice calls)

FOR SALE - $115,000

Mooney M20E 1964 SN 347

One owner since 1979
Factory Rebuilt IO360A1A
"Zero time", *NOT* overhauled
300 hrs on 2,200 hr TBO
Roller-tappet engine
6,850 Total hours AF
Surefly
Scimitar prop new 2007, no ADs
90-Gallon Fuel Tanks
PC wing leveler
New cabin cover

GTN650 GI275 GTX345 GMA340
MK12D w/GS, EDM730
WX500 Remote Stormscope
JPI Fuel Totalizer
Spare MK12D, VOR only
Plus tools, 4-person raft, manuals and much more

Contact Don Peterson at autotech@flash.net

Use QR code to access photos, more details, and contact

1997 MOONEY BRAVO FOR SALE
$298,000

This 1997 Mooney Bravo offers a rare combination of performance, reliability, and modern avionics. With a low total time and an upgraded avionics suite, it's ready to meet the needs of both experienced pilots and first-time owners. Equipped with FIKI certification and precise speed brakes, this aircraft is ideal for cross-country and all-weather flying.

Contact Information:

- **Email: aeroncadoc@comcast.net**
- **Phone: 425 780 9483**

Key Features

Engine and Airframe Time:

- **Total Time:** 1860 Hours
- **Engine Hours:** 1100 Hours (Since New)

Avionics:

- **Garmin GTN 750:** Primary Navigation/Communication System
- **Garmin 430:** Secondary Communication System (Comm2)
- **Garmin 500 GFC Autopilot:** Advanced Flight Control
- **Dual Garmin G5s:** Attitude Indicator (AI) and Horizontal Situation Indicator (HSI)
- **Garmin GTX 345:** ADS-B In/Out with Bluetooth Connectivity
- **JPI 730:** Advanced Engine Monitoring System

Additional Equipment:

- **FIKI Certified:** (Flight Into Known Icing)
- **Precise Flight Speed Brakes:** For Enhanced Control
- **LED Lights:** Modern, Efficient Lighting
- **Shadin Fuel Flow Monitor:** Secondary Fuel Monitoring
- **Built-In Oxygen System:** For High-Altitude Flights

Recent Updates:

- **New Paint:** Completed in 2023—Immaculate Condition
- **New Front Seats** – Interior is in great condition

Aircraft Location:

- Based at **KPAE (Paine Field)**


Rusty Pilot or Old Pro
INSTRUMENT PROFICIENCY CHECK
Study Guide
J D Price, CFII, MEI, ATP
FLIGHT REVIEW
Study Guide
J D Price, CFII, MEI, ATP
Prepare online
FREE
JDPriceCFI.com