

# *The Mooney Flyer*

The Official Online Magazine for the Mooney Community

[www.TheMooneyFlyer.com](http://www.TheMooneyFlyer.com)

June 2026



## Editors

## Contributors

Phil Corman | Jim Price

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!*

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

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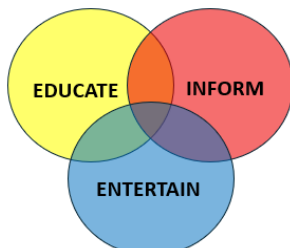
If you love **The Mooney Flyer** and want to keep it healthy,



and we will email you when we publish a new issue.



Find all the back issues from when we started in 2012.



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



## Donations

Our donations last month were just so so. So, we are going to try again. We think our magazine is at least as good as the old MAPA Log which folks paid \$70/year. Our magazine might be even better. Please consider donating to keep us afloat.

Thanks to everyone who already donated.

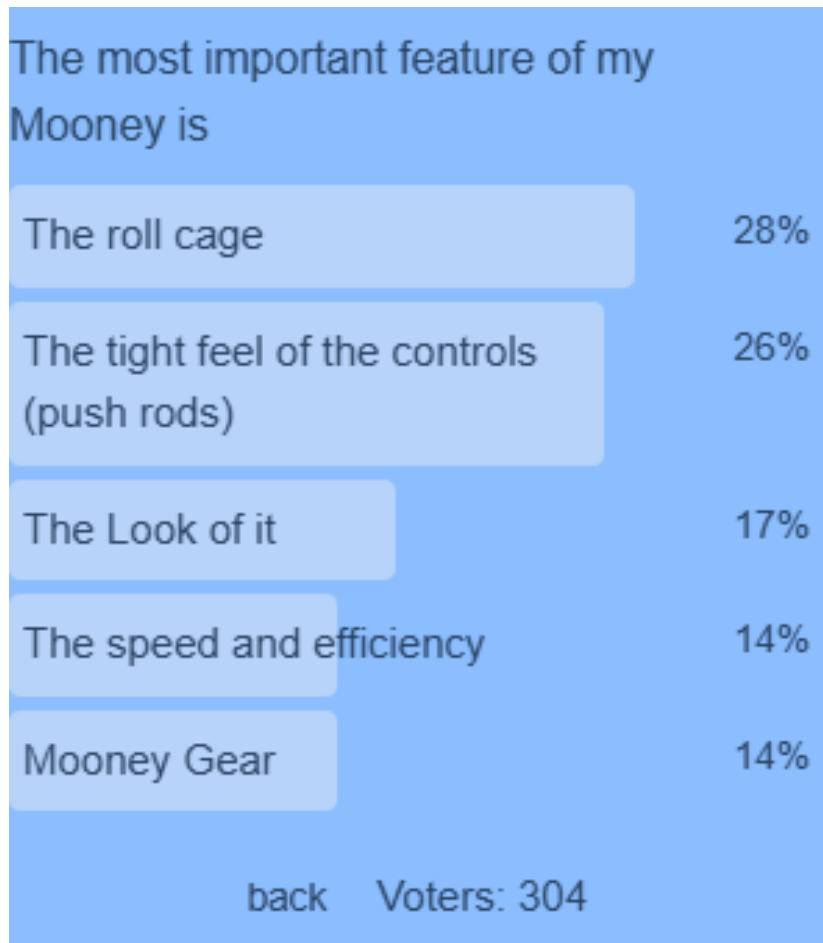
It's been almost 2 years since our last Donation Drive.

Please help to support the only Mooney Magazine still standing.

We are doing our best to bring you informative and entertaining information on owning and flying your Mooneys safely.

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Next month's poll: "Do you want an annual get together of Mooney Pilots?"

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Be sure to include your home base and state.



# E-mails to the Editor



**TheMooneyFlyer@gmail.com**

I enjoyed your piece on Secrets and Quirks of Our Mooneys but I have to question when it says the landing gear legs are flat steel springs. The spring damping is done with rubber donuts.

Another item that might be included in the construction quality and strength of the Mooney airframe is the single piece wing spar. I believe the only other general aviation aircraft with that feature is the PA-46 Piper Malibu and its derivatives. All others use a carry through that the wing spars bolt to. The last I knew there had never been a Mooney spar failure.

Thanks, Mark L

Dudes, what's with the pictures you are using in your most-excellent publication? The photo of the "Mooney's" appearing in the Pilot Proficiency Program ad on page 18 seem a bit off. I'm not sure if it's the luggage compartment window or the cruci-tail. Then on page 28 we see what appears to be another modern Mooney (on short final, sans landing gear) with six windows, an outline which may imply two doors on the right side with one antenna on top.

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# Transition Flights

*Complex Aircraft Require Thought and Training*



**Parvez Dara, MD, MBA, ATP, Master CFII**

“Please help us!” he cried, as they plunged 10,000 feet per minute into a permanence of silence. This story is heartbreaking, because of its many lessons of what not to do. It is a sad tale, worthy of relating, to prevent such an unfortunate event from happening again.

A pilot with limited experience transitions from a Piper Cherokee to a high performance, faster and more complex aircraft, Beechcraft Debonair and pays the ultimate price from inexperience and lack of skills.

It is a sad story of a 45-year-old who learns to fly. She learns, but unfortunately, the skills remain weak and tarnished over time. Various instructors warn her of undeveloped skills and underexposed experience. In her limited defense, she continues to fly, mostly with flight instructors who help correct her mistakes, but never let her see the potential of those mistakes. Her confidence grows and on that fateful day, she ventures out with her father for a short trip that she has experienced many times before. 20 minutes into the flight, the ancient autopilot in the Debonair, looking for the pilot’s proper input to trim the aircraft, haunts her attention. However, she is unable to quell its demand to maintain appropriate altitude. NTSB states: *“These kinds of pilot-induced oscillations can occur when manual yoke or pitch trim inputs are in*



By Parvez Dara

*conflict with the autopilot's pitch control inputs, leading to delayed, or out-of-sync, corrections, rather than a smooth, constant altitude hold.”* The excursions become worse over time from 500 feet to 1,000 feet up and down. Somewhere in those harrowing moments, it appears that she over-trims the aircraft into a descent that plunges the aircraft and its passengers into a 10,000 foot per minute rate of descent at 160 knots IAS, from whence few can recover. The unfortunate aftermath is a terrain littered with scattered remains. Shards of aluminum cover a patch of land surrounded by trees.

The NTSB has the final word as stated in the Flying magazine; *“The [National Transportation Safety Board](#) has cited a loss of aircraft control possibly attributed to the misuse of the autopilot as one of the causal factors in the crash of a [Beechcraft Debonair](#) that killed aviation vlogger Jenny Blalock and her father James in December 2023 near Pulaski, Tennessee.*

*Blalock, 45, began her aviation training in 2021 and used video cameras in the cockpit to document her experiences on her YouTube channel, TNFlygirl.”*

Data from the NTSB cite, *“Toxicology results indicated that the pilot had used a combination of medications that may be used to treat conditions such as anxiety and depression, which may have performance-impairing effects.”* The drugs noted on the toxicology report *“may cause psychomotor and cognitive impairment such as slowed reaction time, diminished situational awareness, and sedation,”* but were not determined to be causal in nature.

What goes through a person’s mind is theirs to keep, but the actions that manifest from those thoughts become their lonely stage. We can imagine all sorts of inclinations from this morbid past; the desire to fly, the desire to express her experience by capturing it on video to share with the large numbers of followers on her YouTube channel, the desire to be independent in her flying abilities in spite of the nagging lack of experience and skill sets, the lack of understanding of the functions of the autopilot (NTSB labeled as “misuse of the autopilot”) and perhaps most importantly, the lack of hand-flying skills. The truth remains in what we know and what we may never know, but are forced to conjecture.

In transitioning between various aircrafts, for instance moving from a Cessna 152/172 or a Piper Cherokee a to complex aircraft like a Debonair, Bonanza or a Baron, requires training that is in its essence “relearning to fly again.” These aircraft are faster, require more training and understanding than the training aircraft mentioned above. Even moving from a 6 dialed panel to a glass cockpit design requires full knowledge of the sequential button-pushing to get the appropriate response from the information displayed on the glass, as well as actions meted out of the autopilot. I have had my share of transition risks from changing over from a turbocharged Mooney M20M Bravo several years ago to a G36 TN Bonanza. From a 530/430 combo to a G1000Nxi, the hazards are clear. For instance, not sequentially pushing the correct buttons for autopilot engagement in IFR conditions leads to having to hand-fly the approaches. Chalk that to an “experience,” having done that 3 or 4 times. After accidentally double pressing the NAV or APR buttons in turbulence, hand-flying the aircraft always saved the day. Learning, then is an art

of repetition. Learning is Practice. Learning is Experience. Learning is a process from the first day through thousands of hours spent in the cockpit. Learning is a continuum, never complete, always in the pursuit of enhancing one's knowledge through practice and experience.

**Risk Mitigation Strategies we might consider on every flight:**

1. **AVOIDANCE:** Knowing the existing hazards in flight requires a pilot to plan against the hazard by either changing plans, deciding to fly at a different time, or not launching a flight at all. If the weather is marginal, and there has been little or no experience by the pilot in such weather over the past several months, avoidance is the best strategy, or choosing to fly with an experienced flight instructor.
2. **RISK REDUCTION:** Flying over terrain in mountainous areas and making sure the cloud ceilings are above the MEA, in case of icing. Not flying into a cold front with lowered icing levels, heavy head winds and changing fuel reserves. Determining the cloud ceilings, crosswinds, the runway width conditions and overall runway length at the destination airport before takeoff.
3. **RISK TRANSFERENCE:** Flying with an experienced flight instructor when the conditions require it. A pilot must be able to subjugate his/her feeling of overconfidence and ask for help when needed. For instance, a minor cold can block the Eustachian tubes and, in the clouds, can lend itself to a pilot's spatial disorientation. Similarly, over the counter medicines like Benadryl can have a deleterious effect on cognition. The FAA's IMSAFE is a good acronym to follow.
4. **RISK ACCEPTANCE:** Conscious decisions must be made with a full understanding of the known hazards that may potentially be encountered in the flight and preparation for the unknown hazards that require all flying skillsets to be at their maximum best.
5. **RISK MONITORING:** A pilot continues to monitor the flight from preflight to shut down for any deviations in his own ability, the mechanics of the aircraft and the engine function though the entire duration. Those actions that are required with an immediacy of action, such as engine failure on take-off, to be countered by a "memorized Emergency Checklist" and others that require a calm access to the POH. Such analysis is born of experience and learning.
6. **CREATING CHECKLIST:** It would behoove a pilot to create his own checklist items not mentioned in the POH, if an STC has been added to the airframe or engine, e.g., a Turbocharger.
7. Periodic evaluation of the Engine analytics would trigger a review if any parameters are out of their normal mode.

So, what exactly can we learn from this sad tale?

1. Learning is a process that can take many years of experience. Experience is gained by directly encountering risks that are not forecast and should always be done with a qualified and experienced flight instructor, especially for those who have limited experience and have not yet developed a skill set to overcome hazards safely. A student pilot's mistakes must never be glossed over, but should be exposed so that the student can learn to address and correct them. If learning is a change in knowledge, behavior, or

attitude acquired through experience, study, or observation, then when does it become permanent? That remains a study in progress.

2. Transitioning from a slow and more forgiving, less complex aircraft to a faster, less forgiving, heavier, and more complex aircraft, requires time and experience. It entails more than just the retractable gear. The time spent requires diligence and understanding, while becoming familiar with the location of the equipment on the panel, the autopilot function, manual trim settings, light switches, circuit-breakers, gear handle, flap handle, various speed limitations, etc. A Debonair is a whole different beast compared to a Cherokee. The Debonair is faster, more agile, heavier, and much less forgiving if mishandled.

As pilots we should never stop learning.

Every moment in the cockpit is a learning experience.

Transitioning to a different aircraft requires retraining and relearning.

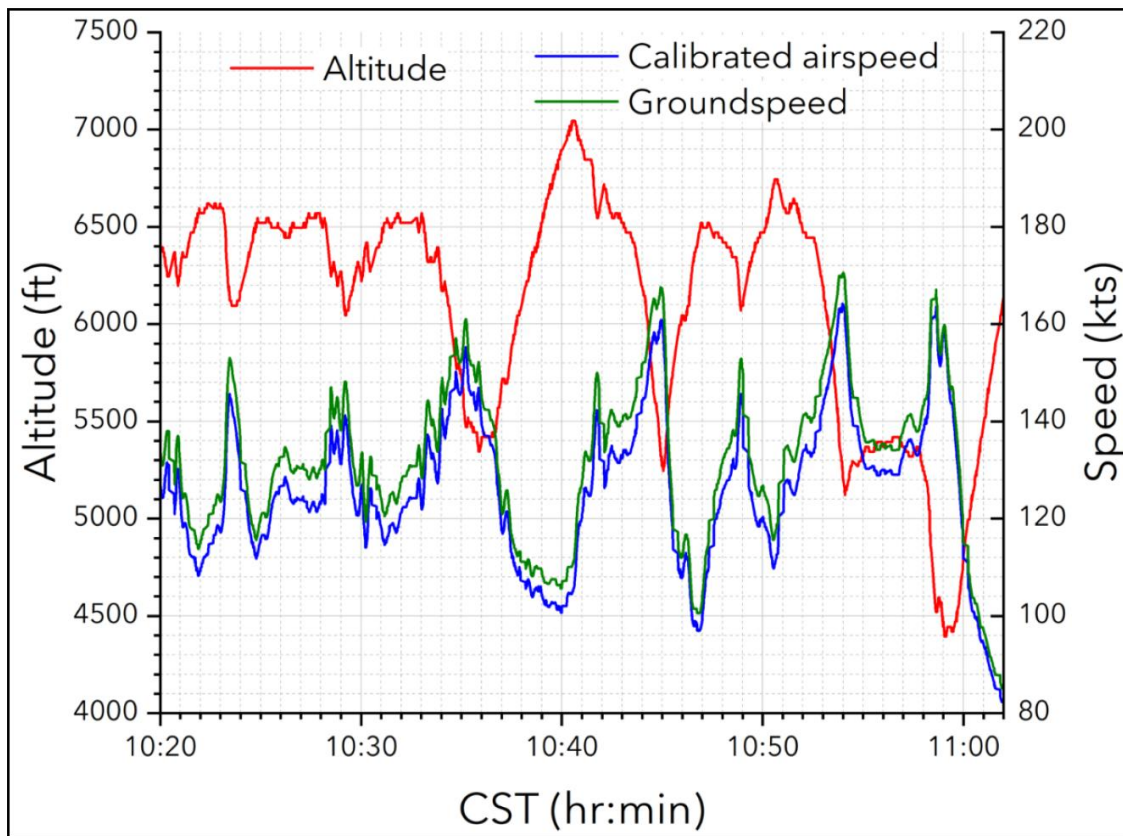
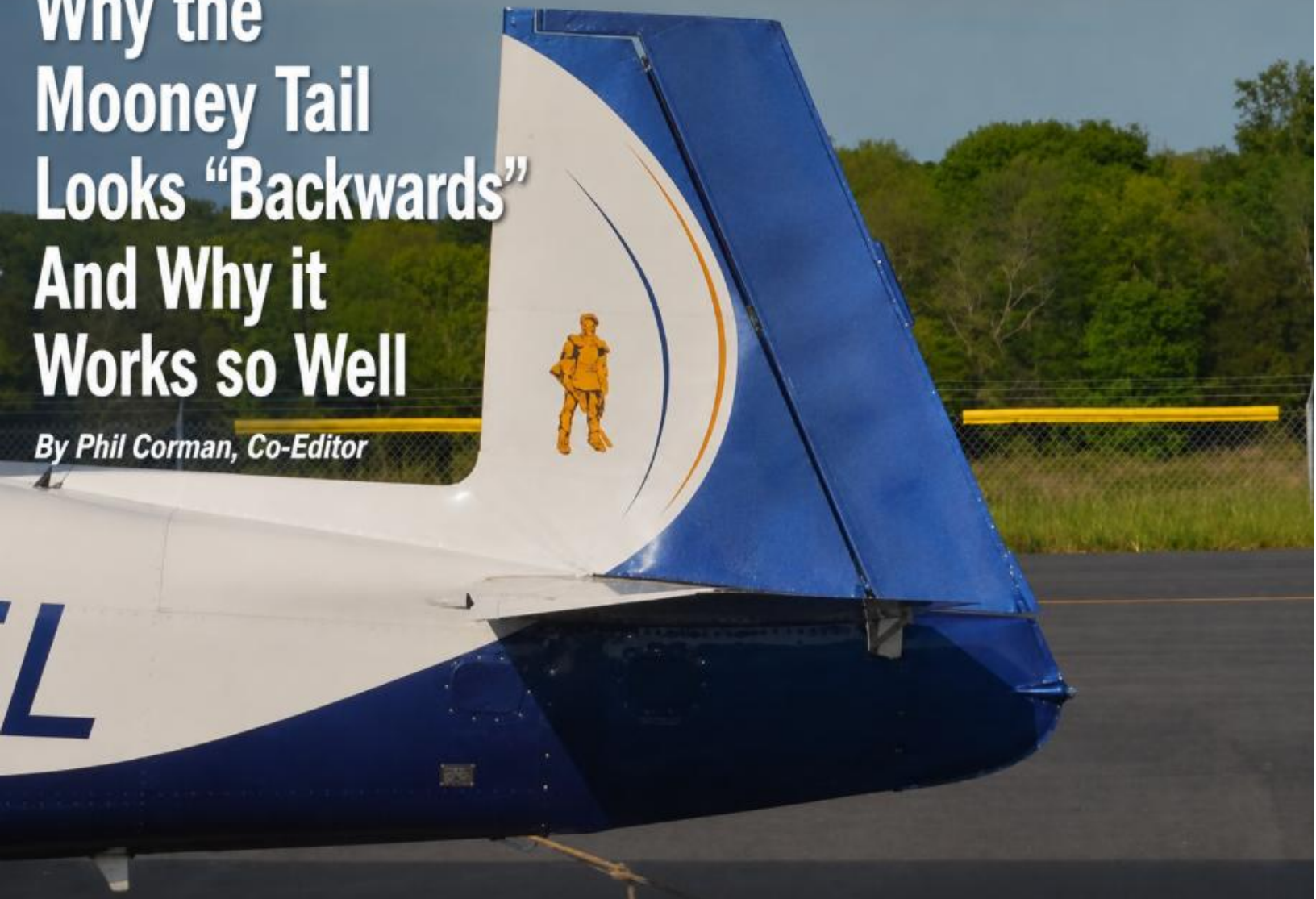


Figure 1. Airplane altitude, calculated airspeed, and groundspeed for the final 40 minutes of flight.

# Why the Mooney Tail Looks “Backwards” And Why it Works so Well

By Phil Corman, Co-Editor



In the pilot community, few general aviation airplanes are as recognizable as a [Mooney M20](#). Its sleek fuselage, efficient laminar-flow wing, and distinctive vertical tail set it apart on any ramp. But one feature often sparks curiosity—even among experienced aviators: the Mooney tail looks like it’s on backwards.

Of course, it isn’t. The design is intentional, and it reflects a philosophy that has defined Mooney aircraft since the beginning—efficiency through thoughtful engineering.

## The “Backwards” Vertical Stabilizer

On most airplanes, the vertical stabilizer sweeps aft, meaning the leading edge tilts backward. On the Mooney, however, the vertical stabilizer is forward swept—the leading edge tilts forward while the trailing edge slopes aft toward the rudder.

This configuration gives the tail its unmistakable profile, which was designed for better aerodynamics and structural practicality.



By Phil Corman, Co-Editor

**Directional Stability**

The vertical stabilizer's primary job is directional stability—keeping the airplane aligned with the airflow. A forward-swept fin can still provide excellent stability as long as the aerodynamic center of the vertical surface remains properly positioned behind the aircraft's center of gravity. Mooney engineers achieved this through careful sizing and placement of the vertical tail. The result is a tail that provides strong yaw stability without excessive surface area or drag.

**Rudder Effectiveness**

The Mooney tail also features a large rudder relative to the vertical fin. This gives pilots strong yaw authority during crosswind landings, engine-out situations in multi-engine aircraft (for those familiar with the design philosophy), and general maneuvering. Because the hinge line and airflow interact differently with the forward sweep, the rudder remains effective across a wide range of angles.

For pilots, the result is a crisp, responsive feel in yaw.

**Structural Efficiency**

The Mooney tail is not just about aerodynamics—it also reflects the structural thinking of [Al Mooney](#), the company's founder and chief designer.

Mooney aircraft use a steel-tube cabin frame, which is unusual in modern all-metal airplanes. The forward-swept vertical stabilizer integrates efficiently with the aircraft's fuselage structure and tailcone, helping keep the tail strong while minimizing weight.

The structure supports the rudder loads effectively without requiring a large or heavy vertical fin.

**Drag Reduction**

For decades, the [Mooney International](#) lineup has delivered some of the fastest cruise speeds per horsepower in general aviation.

The tail design contributes to that philosophy:

- Smaller vertical stabilizer area
- Efficient rudder design
- Smooth airflow over the tail

These elements help keep parasitic drag low, which is critical when the goal is maximizing cruise speed from modest engine power.

### **A Signature That Stuck**

Over time, the forward-swept tail became more than just an engineering solution, it became a brand signature. From early M20 models to modern variants, the Mooney tail remains instantly recognizable.

Pilots often say you can identify a Mooney from miles away simply by its tail profile.

What started as a practical engineering decision became one of the most iconic shapes in general aviation.

### **The Bottom Line**

The Mooney tail isn't backwards—it's purpose-built.

Its forward sweep supports:

- Strong directional stability
- Excellent rudder authority
- Structural efficiency
- Reduced drag

All of which align with the central Mooney philosophy: build an airplane that goes faster on less power.

And that distinctive tail? It's just one more reminder that sometimes the best engineering solutions are the ones that look a little different.





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# DON'T LET THE **OLD MAN IN**

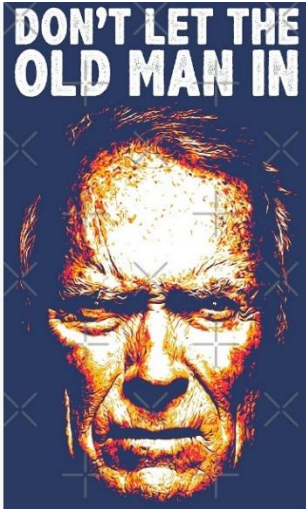
*Fly Your Mooney a Long, Long, time!*



**Jim Price, Co-Editor**



By Jim Price, Co-Editor



In 2018, singer and song writer Toby Keith met 88-year-old actor-director Clint Eastwood at a charity golf tournament in Pebble Beach, California. Toby was surprised by Clint’s energy, despite his age, so he asked Clint how he remained so active, to which he replied, "I don't let the old man in."

Toby was inspired by Clint’s remarks and immediately wrote, “[Don’t Let the Old Man In](#),” a song which has inspired many, encouraging them to stay productive and not let an advancing age dictate one’s limits.

Flying is such a wonderful part of our lives. That’s a truth most pilots feel but don’t always say out loud. Flying gives us freedom, purpose, and a sense of mastery that’s hard to replace. When one’s health steps in and quietly closes that door, it can feel less like giving up a hobby and more like losing a part of who you are.

In 2020, COVID-19 put the world in lockdown. It changed many lives, leaving many people who to this day are still inactive, housebound, and underutilized.

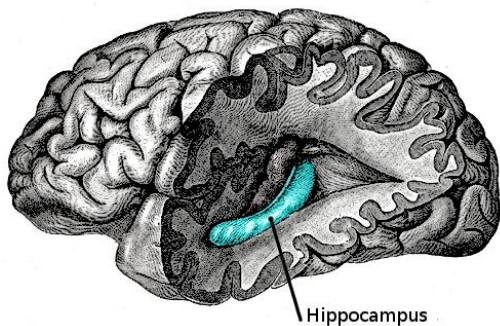


We can stop that “lockdown” with a simple daily ritual that can keep you healthy in so many ways. It’s called walking. You already know that walking burns calories, but did you know that simply moving your legs can increase the volume of your brain? Did you know that walking is more effective in preventing Diabetes than running? Well, that’s just a peek into the benefits.

## Brain Reboot

Today, over 35 million people suffer from dementia and Alzheimer’s. A study at the University of Kansas revealed that sedentary behavior accelerates the onset of dementia and Alzheimer’s.

The Hippocampus is the command center for memory and learning. When you walk, you aren’t

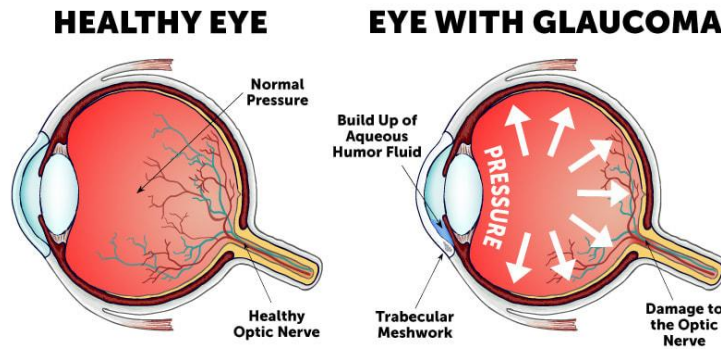


just burning calories, you are also forcing blood into the brain, triggering the release of neurotrophic factors. This stimulates the growth of new neural blood vessels and cells. Walkers reverse the clock on brain shrinkage, as they physically build a bigger, more resilient brain.



## Anti Glaucoma – Ocular Pressure Release

Walking saves your eyesight. You are probably wondering how moving your feet will fix your eyes. It’s all about pressure. Glaucoma is caused by a buildup of intraocular fluid. It’s like a dam about to burst, while crushing your optic nerve.



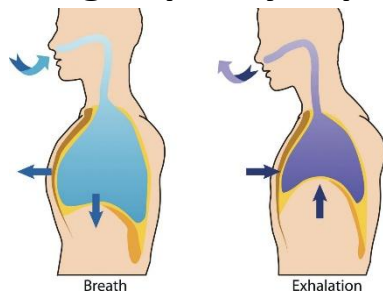
The Glaucoma Research Foundation confirmed that walking acts as secondary pump. It regulates blood flow and systematically lowers the pressure inside the eye. High intensity exercise can sometimes spike pressure. However, walking stabilizes it.

## Cardiac Shield

The American Heart Association has debunked the idea that if you're not running, your heart isn't working. When it comes to preventing coronary heart disease and stroke, walking is just as effective as running and extreme cardio. The mechanism is blood pressure modulation. Half hour daily walks function as a natural beta blocker, widening arteries, lowering bad cholesterol, and forcing oxygen rich blood through your system. You are scrubbing your arteries clean without the cortisol spike that comes with extreme cardio.



## Lung Capacity Expansion and Toxin Elimination



Your lungs are filters, and when you sit, they stagnate. Walking is an aerobic catalyst, forcing the diaphragm to work harder, increasing oxygen flow into the bloodstream. Deep rhythmic breathing during a walk expels waste gases that accumulate in the lower lungs. You are literally flushing out the respiratory system, boosting immune function, and increasing your health with every step.

The stress of lung disease weakens immunity, but walking strengthens the barrier.

Walking will help those who frequently become ill. As you no longer sit in stale air and start pumping your lungs, you will be healthier.

## Pancreatic Reset

Duke University conducted a six-month trial. They pitted runners against walkers, and the walkers won! The walkers demonstrated a six times greater improvement in glucose tolerance than the runners. It's because of Efficient Insulin Sensitivity. When you sprint, your body burns a lot of sugar. When you walk, you train your body to process sugar efficiently over time. This allows your pancreas to produce less insulin, giving it a desperate, needed rest. If you are pre-diabetic, running might burn you out, but walking will save your life.



## Digestive Engine Improvement

Your gut is muscle and if you don't move, your gut doesn't move. A study of over 150,000 people revealed that sedentary people die of colon cancer and active people survive.

Walking stimulates peristalsis, the wavelike muscle contractions that move food through your digestive track. Just a 30 minute walk every day regulates bowel movements and drastically lowers the risk of colon cancer. If the worst happens and you are diagnosed with colon cancer, walking increases your statistical chance of survival. You are mechanically aiding your body in waste removal.



## The Muscle Illusion



10,000 steps can rival a gym workout if done correctly. Many people destroy their bodies with high impact stress, tearing muscles and inflaming joints, which requires days of recovery. Walking is the Stealth Bomber of fitness. It has low impact and there is no recovery time. You can walk every day, but you must promise to keep your spine straight, elbows at 90° and stabilize your pelvis.



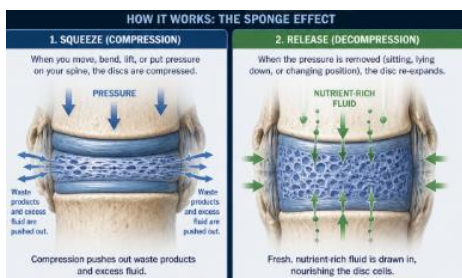
## Skeletal Fortification – Iron Man

Your bones are alive and they react to stress. If you don't use them, they dissolve and this is called osteoporosis. The Arthritis Foundation recommends 30 minutes of walking to reduce inflammation. The mechanism here is Piezoelectricity. When you walk, the impact causes a small electrical charge in the bone that signals osteoblasts to build new bone tissue. Walking electrically signals your skeleton put on the armor. Running can fracture bones, but walking makes them stronger.

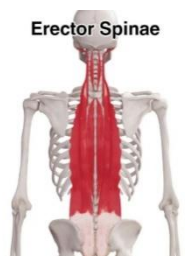
## Spinal Decompression

Back pain is today's plague. What makes it worse?

- High impact exercise
- Sitting



The cure is walking. Your spinal discs do not have a blood supply. Instead, they are like sponges, and these discs only get nutrients when they are squeezed and released. Walking provides this pumping action, circulating nutrients into the soft tissue of the spine. Walking improves posture and strengthens the erector spinae muscles that hold you upright. You aren't just walking. You are oiling the rusty hinges of your spine.



## Anti-Depression Chemical Exorcism



The Journal of Psychiatric Research studied 50 individuals with major depression. Walking 30 minutes a day destroyed their symptoms. The mechanism is a chemical flush. Walking burns off Cortisol, the stress hormone and releases endorphins and BDNF.

Iowa State University found that walking improved the students' mood without them even trying. It is a hard reset for your emotional state. You cannot remain in a state of depressive stagnation while your body is in forward motion. The two states are biologically incompatible.

### A Good Walker

Doesn't look at his or her phone. That is not walking. It is stumbling.

He or she doesn't wear flat shoes with no support. No support = destroyed arches.

Doesn't treat walking as a chore or an optional part of his or her life. If you walk sporadically, there is zero benefit. The power is in the repetition.

### The FIT Formula

*Every Day*

**FREQUENCY** – How often you walk is non-negotiable. You should walk 30 minutes every day. If you are weak, start walking three to five times a week. If you can only walk five minutes, do that. However, do it frequently. You are reprogramming your cells, and they need a daily signal.

**2-3  
MPH  
SPEED  
LIMIT**

**INTENSITY** – You should be walking at 2 to 3 miles per hour.

You should be able to talk, but you should not want to.

If you can sing a song, your pace is too slow.

If you are gasping for air, you are walking too fast.

Find a sweet spot where your heart is engaged.



**TIME** – Walk for 30 minutes because that is the threshold where the biological shifts kick in. Aim for 6,000 steps as your baseline. Start with what you can conquer and then expand.

## Prepare to Walk



**HYDRATION** – Drink water before walking because a dehydrated engine seizes up.

**MOVEMENT** – Swing your arms. This engages the upper body and increases calorie burn by up to 10%.

**HABIT** – Do it at the same time every day. Morning is the best time to reset your circadian rhythm.



Do not wait for tomorrow. You can choose to let the rust take over, let your brain shrink and your bones dissolve, or you can stand up with great resolve and courage. Just put on your shoes and take back your biology one step at a time.



Don't let that old man in. Stay moving devoted to daily walks. You'll be amazed at how sharp your mind will be. You can be healthier, keeping you active in aviation for a long time! I guarantee it, or your money back!



# Hybrid Flight Plans

## VFR to IFR

*Trust me, although it has been a long time since I  
Stayed in a Holiday Inn Express.*



RICHARD BROWN

Let me first preface this article with a few disclaimers. This is like the beginning of all the painful seminars and webinars I sit through, to learn how the state of California is making life even more miserable for businesses. The lawyer giving the presentation usually says, "This is not legal advice. We encourage you to contact your own legal counsel for specifics relating to your situation."

With that in mind, I am not a CFI. I don't have any professional experience in flight training or the regulations related to flying, and I encourage you to seek answers to your own personal situations from appropriate sources. For those of you who remember the commercials from 1998-2009, it has also been a long time since I stayed in a Holiday Inn Express. That being said, these are the things that work for me, and the reasons that I do them. Oh, and I have also been reminded that controllers in certain areas of the country are not as friendly and helpful as the ones we have here in Southern California, so your mileage may vary.



**By Richard Brown**

First of all, why file a VFR flight plan and depart if you know that you are going to need to be IFR at your destination? When it is VFR at my departure, but IFR or forecast IFR coming back into the LA Basin, I have different reasons why I don't want to fly the entire thing IFR. It could be that I'm departing an non-towered field and it is easier to pick it up in the air. It could be that I don't want to deal with the departure route that I know ATC is going to give, and I would rather just be VFR and stay outside of the different airspace on departure. Additionally, often out here in the mountainous southwest, where the MEAs are very high, I don't want to, or I may not be able to, fly at the required altitude.

There are also times that IFR would put me in clouds under icing conditions, so it is better to stay VFR below the clouds. For example, on a recent flight from St. George Regional Airport, Utah back to SoCal, ATC would have put me at 12,000 feet, right in the clouds below freezing temperatures. Instead, I cruised along at 10,500 feet below the overcast, picked up my IFR over the Hector (HEC) VOR, where they had me descend to 10,000 feet for the STAR.

You can always try to get a pop-up IFR. I still do that on occasion, and I got one on a recent return flight from Phoenix. The forecast was for the marine layer to burn off a few hours before our arrival. The flight was planned for a little more than 2 hours, and it hadn't burned off by the time we were leaving. However, if you know about the marine layer, once it starts to burn off, it doesn't take long to go from overcast to blue skies.



We were still about 80 miles east of Palm Springs when I could see a layer of clouds in the Banning Pass, between the San Jacinto and San Geronio peaks. That isn't really cause for concern, but I could also see the clouds spilling over the ridgeline south of San Jacinto, and ADS-B weather indicated that it was overcast in the Inland Empire and 4,000 broken at Fullerton Municipal Airport (KFUL). If you're not familiar with SoCal terms, the Inland Empire or "IE" is the area bordered by the coastal mountains in Orange County, the San Bernardino Mountains to the north and the San Jacinto mountains to the east. It includes the cities of Corona, Riverside, Ontario and San Bernardino, along with a multitude of smaller

cities.

The "IE" also usually has clear skies long before the coastal cities, due to the marine layer getting hung up on the coastal mountains and the higher temperatures. So, if it was still overcast, there wasn't much hope of it clearing in the next 45 minutes of flight.

I could drop down and stay under the overcast; the airports were all showing it around 4,000 feet, so it wouldn't be scud running. Alternatively, I could pick up an IFR clearance for an easy approach through 1,000 - 2,000-foot clouds, and I could easily make an early break out.

I chose to try and get a clearance, which left me with two more choices. I could wait until I passed Banning Pass and then talk to SoCal Approach, or try my luck with the SoCal Approach sector covering Palm Springs. I knew the closer I got to LA, the busier the controllers would be, so I called SoCal. It was an easy clearance to copy down and just like that, we were IFR.

However, this isn't an article about pop-up IFR clearances. It is about intentionally planning to pick up IFR in the air before taking off. However, it does bring up a point about where I plan to pick up my clearance. I always try to plan it when I am in an area controlled by Center and not Approach Control. Why Center Control? Well, if you've ever listened to the Opposing Bases podcast, they like to poke fun at the Center Controllers who have nothing to do all day except give out frequency changes.

That isn't entirely true, but my experience on the airwaves is that "Centerland" is much quieter on the radios than "Approach territory." Even though I'm also monitoring Guard and it has felt like an eternity since I last heard a radio call, I have on occasion keyed up the mic to make sure I hadn't missed a handoff.

First, I will file a VFR flight plan for the entire route of flight so that I can get a weather briefing for the entire flight. Then I look for an airport or VOR somewhere, well before the point that I will need to be IFR. If it is an airport, I look at the communications information to see if there are approach/departure frequencies listed. If there are none listed, then the remarks will show which facility provides approach/departure control services. If I am filing from a VOR, I check the airports close to the VOR to see who provides the services.

Here is the information for Victorville California Logistics Airport (KVCV) showing Joshua Approach providing services:

---

#### — Airport Communications —

ATIS: 135.475  
AWOS-3: 135.475 Tel. 760-246-3635  
VICTORVILLE TOWER: 118.35 282.225  
VICTORVILLE GROUND: 124.45  
JOSHUA APPROACH: 124.55 363.0  
JOSHUA DEPARTURE: 124.55 363.0  
EMERG: 121.5  
CTAF: 118.350  
ASOS at GXA (14.3 W): 413.2 760-315-0639  
AWOS-3 at SBD (30.9 S): 909-382-0067  
D-ATIS at SBD (30.9 S): 124.175

And here is the information for Barstow-Daggett Airport (KDAG), showing LA Center providing services.

— Airport Communications —

- ASOS: 132.175 Tel. 760-254-3630
  - CTAF: 123.000
  - UNICOM: 123.000
  - ASOS at 1AF (30.4 N):
  - AWOS-3 at VCV (33.1 SW): 135.475 760-246-3635
  - ATIS at VCV (33.2 SW): 135.475
- Remarks:
- APCH/DEP CTL SVC PRVDD BY LOS ANGELES ARTCC (ZLA) ON FREQS 132.5/284.7 (BARSTOW RCAG).

Now that I have decided the enroute point where I want to pick up IFR, I filed an IFR plan from there to my destination, setting my departure time to be the time that I anticipate being over the fix. This is another reason for the VFR flight plan that I filed. I can make sure to include the fix where I will pick up IFR in the VFR plan, so I can see the flight time from my departure and know what departure time to use when filing the IFR segment.

A helpful tool if you aren't sure what route to file is [www.fltplan.com](http://www.fltplan.com). If you let it create a flight plan, it will also list the most recent plans filed and used, but it must be from airport to airport. Putting in a VOR as the departure will cause an error.

Here's an example of recent routes between KFUL and KIWA from [www.fltplan.com](http://www.fltplan.com) from a flight we made a few weeks ago.

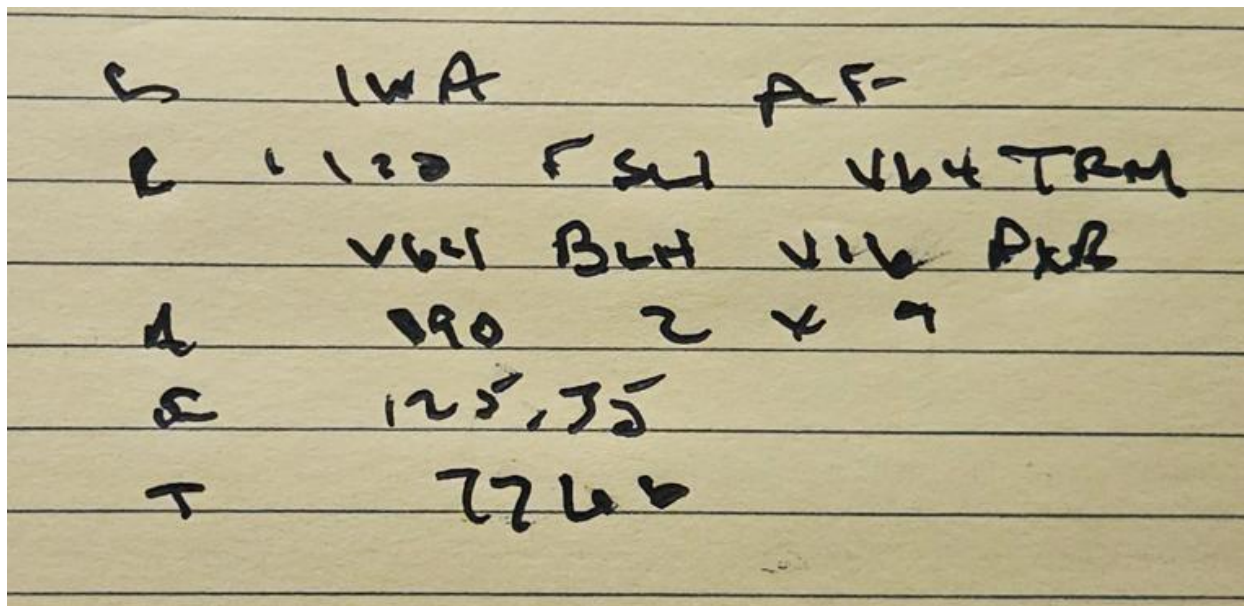
The 5 Most Recent Planned ATC Routes between KFUL - KIWA					Times issued	Date	Altitude	Type A/C	Display Route
<a href="#">Copy</a>	SLI V64 BLH V16 PXR	6	06/05/2025	9,000	C172(SE Piston)	<a href="#">Route Map</a>			
<a href="#">Copy</a>	SLI V64 BLH BXK	2	06/05/2025	9,000	C172(SE Piston)	<a href="#">Route Map</a>			
<a href="#">Copy</a>	SLI POM DAG KTNP	1	04/09/2025	21,000	B350(ME TurboProp)	<a href="#">Route Map</a>			
<a href="#">Copy</a>	SLI V64 BLH V16 SACAT	5	02/14/2025	11,000	M20P(SE Piston)	<a href="#">Route Map</a>			
<a href="#">Copy</a>	SLI V64 BLH V16 SACAT	5	02/07/2025	11,000	M20P(SE Piston)	<a href="#">Route Map</a>			

You could also just file DIRECT and see what ATC gives you.

There's one more step that I do after filing my flight plan and prior to getting my briefing. I go to [www.flightaware.com](http://www.flightaware.com) and look up my planned flight. In the Flight Data section, it will list the route. I then go to [www.1800wxbrief.com](http://www.1800wxbrief.com), log in, go to the flight, and amend my route to match what FlightAware is showing. At least 75% of the time, I hear those sweet words, "Cleared to xxx via **as filed.**"

Before taking off, I will copy down the CRAFT with a couple of lines for the route and the fixes spaced out, leaving room in between for changes. This way, when I get the clearance, I can quickly cross out any changes. It saves me a lot of fast writing. My handwriting is terrible and the faster I write, the worse it gets.

This is an example from our last flight from KFUL to KIWA. I wrote out SLI V64 TRM V64 BLH V16 PXR in the routing. I left room before the SLI because they always say "Left turn heading 120 radar vectors to Seal Beach" for a departure on 24 out of KFUL. When he gave me the clearance, it was "On departure, left turn heading 120, radar vectors to Seal Beach, then as filed." I scribbled "L 120 r" before the SLI and then "AF." The rest of the shorthand is "2 x 9" for the altitude. I had written down 090 as my filed altitude and the "2 x 9" for the "climb maintain 2,000 expect 9,000, one-zero minutes after departure."



Now that you have your VFR and IFR flight plans, just get your briefings and get in the air. When you are approaching or at the pre-planned fix where you are going to pick up your clearance, call ATC. You can give them the whole bit in the first call, i.e., "LA Center, Mooney 1015 Echo is 10,500', 5 miles north of Hector and would like to pick up my IFR." However, I have found that usually results in something like, "What was the last plane calling?" I have found better results with just "LA Center, Mooney 1015 Echo with a request." The typical response is "Mooney 1015 Echo, say request," at which point I give them my position along with, "I'd like to pick up my IFR, there should be a plan on file."

Hopefully, there is something helpful here, keeping in mind the disclaimer from the second paragraph, and the fact that I haven't stayed in a Holiday Inn Express for a few years.



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@intothsky.com](mailto:richard@intothsky.com). If you're ever in Southern California and want to meet up, let me know.

# Vne,

## THE OTHER END OF THE STORY



JERRY PROCTOR



By Jerry Proctor

The FAA defines Vne as the absolute maximum speed authorized for an aircraft, marked by a red line on the airspeed indicator. It acts as a critical safety boundary to prevent structural failure or severe flutter. Exceeding Vne is prohibited as it can lead to immediate structural failure.

How is an airplane tested to establish the Vne? Well, crazy people, called test pilots, fly the plane in a Designed Dive Speed, which is about 10% higher than Vne. During the dive, the plane must remain stable and free from flutter or excessive vibration. Sooo, if you want to be a test pilot, go ahead and exceed Vne. Make sure your insurance policy is active.



All of us are taught about flutter regarding getting close to Vne. Good to know this and avoid it, but this short story is about the other end of Vne. What else is subject to Vne speed? Look forward. What is that big thing that is covering the engine? Yes, the cowl. Does the cowl get opened up? Yes, for every oil change and when you're chasing squirrels out of there. In 1,000 hours, how many times has the cowl been taken off? Well, it's a lot.



Do giant high-tension straps hold it together?

Nope. Screws that are not any bigger than the screws that you have in the junk drawer in your garage. Let's consider the hurricane winds in Florida. Unfortunately, every year, a hurricane comes rolling in to ruin the day for Floridians. A Category 5 hurricane has a maximum sustained speed of 157 MPH, which is **136.4 knots**. A Category 5 causes lots of severe damage and maybe even loss of life. Now consider a Mooney, which has a Vne around 200kts, or a Cessna 182, with a Vne of 175kts. Wow, even a less than speedster Cessna can handle a speed that exceeds the wind speed of a Cat 5 hurricane.

Why this article? Do you really check all the countersink screws? Have you sort of ignored one or two that have popped out? Maybe that's not a good idea.

So, on your next preflight and every following preflight, look at those screws. Remember they may be going to experience a fictional CAT 7 hurricane, so make sure they are tight and secure.

Credit Mr. Jerry Johnson, founder of MAPA Safety Foundation for this article's subject.

*Fly Safe, Jerry*



## Thunderbird Aircraft Sales

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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](mailto:richard@thunderbirdaircraft.com). We look forward to being of service to you.

Thank you.

[richard@thunderbirdaircraft.com](mailto:richard@thunderbirdaircraft.com) or **602-884-2111**

<https://thunderbirdaircraft.com/>

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# HANGING UP THE SPURS

A LEGACY OF FLIGHT,  
FRIENDSHIP,  
AND FINAL  
GOODBYES

By  
**RICHARD A. SIMILE,**  
THUNDERBIRD AIRCRAFT SALES



ember 6

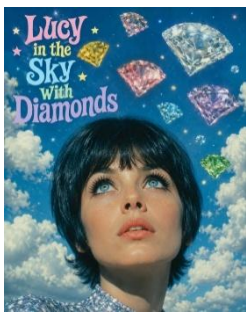
June 2026

We have all heard the saying that "There are Old Pilots and there are Bold Pilots, but NO OLD BOLD PILOTS." However, there does come a time when we all will need to make that dreaded decision to "Hang up the Flying Spurs." Unfortunately, in recent years, I have had to help a lot of good folks with this highly sensitive moment in their lives.



Adding to this, insurance companies are risk mitigating older pilots with Turbocharged aircraft, because their trend analysis of accidents indicates a clear correlation between age and risk. This is a big part of the reason there are several Mooney Acclaims on the market now. My

most recent brokerage is a Mooney M20R Ovation with TKS, affectionately named "Lucy." This beautiful aircraft is owned by an impressive guy named Bob Bowker. Bob is a very unique person with an impressive life story and amazing flying background. Bob's mind is sharp as a tack and his age starts with an "8," however, you couldn't tell by looking at him or talking to him. Unfortunately, due to the natural aging process, Bob had an issue with one of his eyes. He was unable to obtain a continuance of his FAA Medical, so he had to make that dreaded decision to say farewell to one of the loves of his life, "Lucy" (In the Sky with Diamonds). It was a well thought-through decision and once he made it, he committed without hesitation or regret. Two things here are important:



1.) Having the intelligence to be able to make that kind of hard, clear decision and the smarts to know it's really the time, is a very wise thing. We all know that many pilots do not make the decision to end things when it's time and unfortunately, some pay the ultimate price. ("No Old Bold Pilots).

2.) Staying plugged-in. Many of the people I have helped, after the very difficult decision to "Hang up the Spurs," stay very "PLUGGED-into the aviation world and still make major contributions to aviation safety. My hat is off to those that stay in the game, even if not flying anymore. I told Bob Bowker how I admired him for the thought he put forth in making the decision to "THROW IN THE TOWEL." He immediately came back, "I'm not throwing in the towel Richard, I am paying Great Honor to an Amazing flying career."

AMEN Bob! Absolutely AMEN, Buddy!!!

# Mooney Maintenance



**The Mooney Flyer**  
The Official Online Magazine for the Mooney Community  
[www.TheMooneyFlyer.com](http://www.TheMooneyFlyer.com)  
March 2018

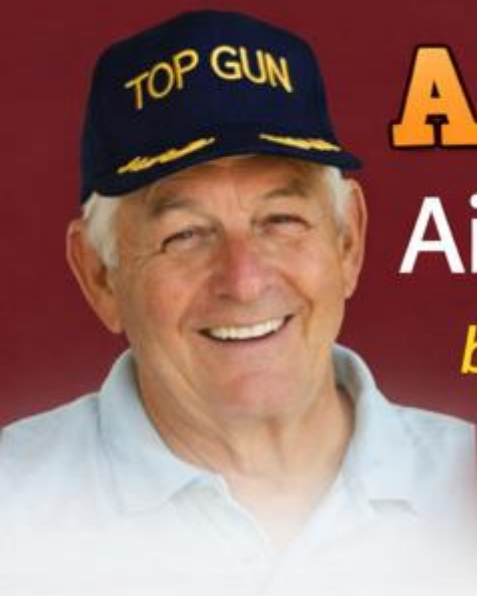
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# Ask the Top Gun

## Aircraft Maintenance Tips

by **Tom Rouch**

Founder of Top Gun Aviation, Stockton, CA



Send your questions for Tom to [TheMooneyFlyer@gmail.com](mailto:TheMooneyFlyer@gmail.com)

I have an Ovation with a TCM IO-550 (G). After landing, my idle speed is about 970 RPM, which seems kind of high. I'm riding the brakes while I taxi, and I have trouble landing on shorter runways. The idle adjust screw is backed all the way out to where it is not touching the stop. Is there another way to reduce idle?

### Tom's Answer

Idle should be about 700 RPM with about a 50 RPM rise on shutdown. Sounds like the idle mixture needs adjustment which is on the fuel pump. I suggest you follow procedures which you should be able to get online. This should be a simple adjustment, assuming everything is working properly.

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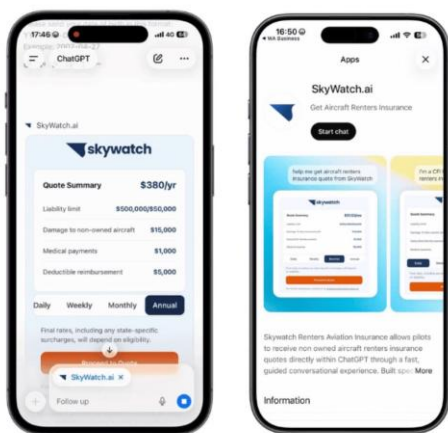
Avionics Repair and Installation Services now available on site thru J&R Electronics





# New App Uses AI to Help Pilots Get Aircraft Renters Insurance

By [General Aviation News Staff](#) · May 1, 2026



Skywatch, a digital aviation insurance platform, has launched its ChatGPT app, enabling pilots to get renters insurance quotes directly through ChatGPT.

Skywatch allows pilots to purchase renter's insurance for a day, a week, a month, or a full year. With the new launch, "Skywatch takes the experience one step further by bringing instant quoting directly into ChatGPT," company officials said.

Instead of navigating traditional insurance forms, pilots answer a few questions and receive a quote from Skywatch's renters insurance program in seconds.

"Pilots already rely on technology in the cockpit," said Ori Blumenthal, CTO of Skywatch. "Insurance should be just as intuitive. With our ChatGPT copilot, renters' coverage starts with a conversation and finishes in minutes."

The [app](#) is now available in the ChatGPT app directory. For more information: [ChatGPT.com](#), [Skywatch.ai](#)

# Bluebird Aero iPad Case



May 8, 2026, Sporty's IPAD Pilot News

## ***A Smart Way to Manage Heat on the Flight Deck***

If you've flown with an iPad for any length of time, you've probably seen it: the dreaded overheating warning, usually at the worst possible moment. The new *Bluebird Aero iPad Case* for iPad Mini 6/7 is designed to solve that exact problem, but it goes a step further. It combines active cooling, backup power, and mounting flexibility into a single, purpose-built

case for pilots using the iPad Mini.



## **Built for the Reality of the Cockpit**

Most iPad cases are designed for everyday use—office, home, maybe travel. This one is built for aviation. The standout feature is the integrated cooling system—a built-in fan pulls air through the case and across the back of the iPad, helping regulate temperature when passive cooling just isn't enough. In practice, this is a big deal. Overheating isn't just an inconvenience, it can mean losing your charts, weather data, or situational awareness tool right when you need it most.

Bluebird Aero rates the fan system at 6+ hours of runtime on the internal battery, which means you can run it through a day's worth of

flying without plugging in.



## **More Than Just Cooling**

The internal 6,000 mAh battery adds another layer of utility. It powers the fan, but it also doubles as a backup power source via a USB-C output. Of course, many pilots already carry external battery packs. However, integrating it into the case reduces cockpit clutter and eliminates one more cable. You can top off your iPad, phone, or any other device directly from the case.

## **Mounting Flexibility That Actually Matters**

One of the more thoughtful aspects of the design is its compatibility with multiple mounting systems. Out of the box, the case works with standard  $\frac{1}{4}$ " mounts, and it can be adapted to popular ecosystems like MyGoFlight, RAM Mounts, and PIVOT. For pilots who already have an established cockpit setup, that flexibility is key—you're not locked into a single system.



### Optional Accessories

The add-ons are simple but practical:

- **Leg Strap Kit (\$59):**

A solid option for pilots who want quick, hands-free access without committing to a yoke or suction mount. Especially useful in tighter cockpits or aircraft without ideal mounting points.

- **PIVOT Mount Adapter (\$39):**

A no-brainer if you're already invested in the PIVOT system. It keeps your setup consistent and avoids mixing mounting systems.

Neither accessory feels like filler—they both extend how and where you can use the case depending on your flying style.

### Build Quality and Design

The case uses a rugged carbon fiber construction that feels appropriate for the environment it's designed for. It's not the slimmest case on the market—and it doesn't claim to be. The added bulk comes with real capability: cooling hardware, battery, and mounting structure.

### Utility Comes at a Price

At \$499, the *Bluebird Aero iPad Case* is a premium product. By the time you add accessories, you're approaching the cost of another device.

That said, consider what it replaces:

- External cooling solutions (or improvised ones)
- Backup battery packs
- Some mounting hardware

And more importantly, it addresses a real operational risk—losing your iPad due to overheating.

The [Bluebird Aero iPad Case](#) and accessories are available at [Sportys.com](#).



	<p>Contact Mike Weir at (239) 572-3418, before coming to the restaurant, so they can have an accurate count. Events begin at 11:30</p>
	<p>Sep 11 – 13, Manchester, NH          Oct 2, San Antonio, TX          Jan 29, Lakeland, FL  <a href="#">CLICK HERE to Register</a></p>
	<p>Learn More at <a href="https://www.mooney.org.au/">https://www.mooney.org.au/</a></p>
	<p>Learn more at <a href="https://www.empoa.eu/index.php/en/">https://www.empoa.eu/index.php/en/</a></p>
	
<p><b>Other</b></p>	



# MOONEY *and* PILOT STUFF *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](mailto: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.

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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](mailto: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](mailto:leebern@msn.com) (562-865-2547)

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

This Part #75730, when installed on Lycoming IP360-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](mailto:rce.elliott@gmail.com) or 512-947-4037. (Prefer text messages vs. voice calls).



## FOR SALE

NEW Slick Mag for Shower of Sparks. \$1,200

Rebuilt original starter for IO360A1A. About 30 hours since purchase from Spruce. **\$300**

Email [Autotech@Flash.net](mailto:Autotech@Flash.net)



# 1966 MOONEY SUPER 21

- TT 6023 hours
- SMOH - 532 hours, LyCon of AZ
- STOH - 280 hours, Western Skyways
- Avionics: ADSB in/out Stratus ESGi
- KX155 Nav/com with glide slope
- TKM MX12 with VOR
- Texas II speed mod conversion
- Gap seals/wing tips/belly conv.
- Union Industries Elec. Ignition
- ECI engine monitor
- 2-blade Scimeter Prop
- PT/Interior - 7.5



**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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# FOR SALE - \$115,000

## Mooney M20E 1964 SN 347

Contact Don Peterson at  
[autotech@flash.net](mailto:autotech@flash.net)

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  
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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



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**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](mailto: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



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