The Mooney Flyer

The Official Online Magazine for the Mooney Community

www.TheMooneyFlyer.com

March 2026

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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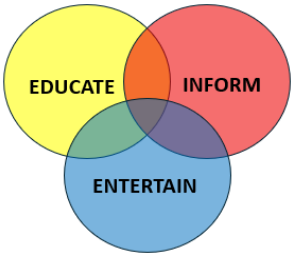


The views expressed in each author's article are their own.
The Mooney Flyer's goal is to educate, inform, and entertain Mooniacs.

My Partner

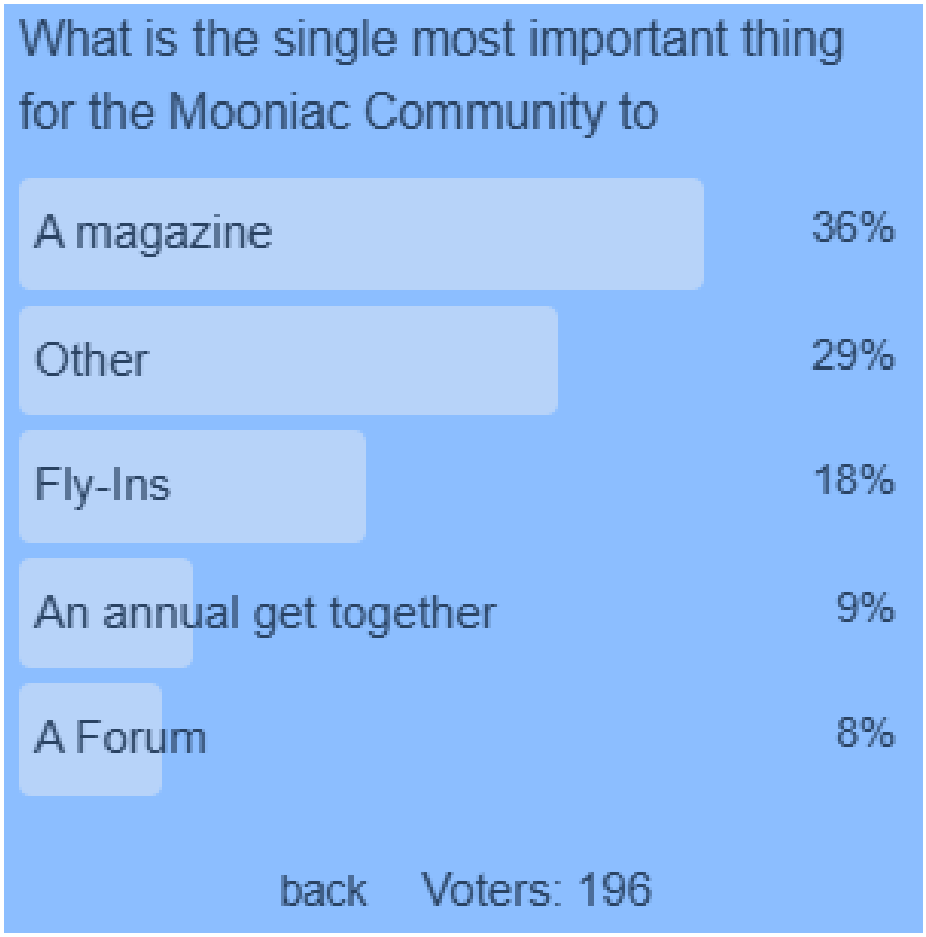
February 7th, at the Arizona Safety Advisory Group's annual awards banquet, Jim Price was chosen by the FAA's Scottsdale office, (serving most of Arizona), to be the FAASTeam Rep of the year. The trophy stays with him for a year. (Boy is that trophy heavy).

As of this writing, the FAA notified us that Jim has been chosen as the district FAAST Team Representative of the year.

I am so very proud of my partner who truly deserves these recognitions.

Jim has devoted much of his life to helping others. He has flown for Flights for Life, Partnered with me for 14 years on The Mooney Flyer, given countless FAA safety seminars and much more.

We are blessed to have him in the Mooney Community.

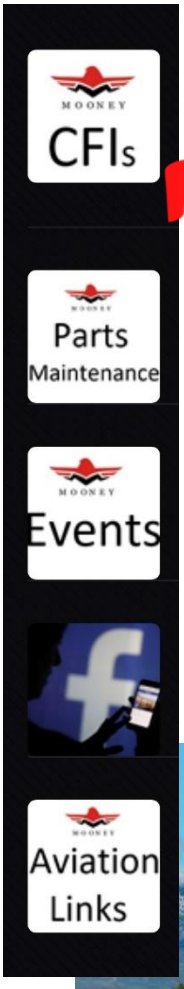


Next month's poll: "Have You Had a Fuel Leak"

CLICK HERE to vote

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

Need a Mooney CFI? 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.

Hi Phil & Jim,

Great, Excellent article on the crash of Ricky Nelson DC-3. A needless yet very unfortunate incident.

A side note that I did not see in your story, but the rudder to Ricky's DC-3 is mounted in the hanger at Air Salvage of Dallas (ASOD), 1361 Ferris Rd., Lancaster, TX 75146, 972-227-1111 and a picture of it is on their website.
I know this as I keep my Mooney and my Temco Twin Navion at Lancaster Regional Airport (KLNC) which is directly across the street from ASOD.

Thank You for your continued monthly magazine.

Kurtis K

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AviationPioneers

Jim Price
Co-Editor

Glenn L. Martin

After Orville and Wilbur Wright proved that powered flight was possible, they inspired young and gutsy aviation pioneers who changed the world with wooden sticks, bailing wire, canvas and aluminum. Their leadership, innovation, and enthusiasm advanced aviation and ushered in a new and exciting world.

Humble Beginnings

The aircraft industry had simple and modest beginnings. For instance, Douglas Aircraft began operations in the backroom of a barbershop on Los Angeles' Pico Boulevard. Lockheed built their first Vega aircraft in a small Hollywood building. Northrop's original location was an obscure Southern California hotel. Martin Marietta started in an abandoned California church. Boeing's first home was a former small shipyard nicknamed the Red Barn.

Glenn Martin

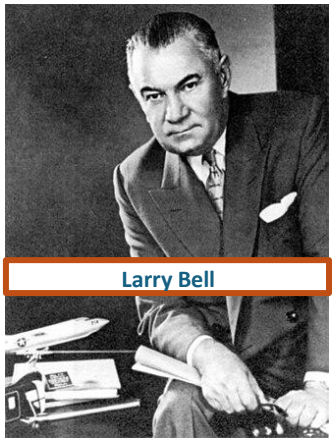

Glenn L. Martin & his Mother Minta

In 1909, Glenn L. Martin, his mother Minta and their mechanic Roy Beal, constructed a biplane using bamboo and silk. Then, in that fragile biplane, Glenn taught himself to fly. At the beginning of this article, you may have noticed the newspapers stacked on the lower right wing of Glenn Martin's biplane. That's because he delivered newspapers in order to fund his first plant.

Later, Martin moved his company to a vacant apricot cannery in Santa Ana. He was a showman and he traveled the county fair circuit as an exhibitionist aviator. From the money Glenn earned, he was able to pay his factory workers and purchase the necessary wood, linen and wire. His mother, Minta and two men ran the factory while Glenn risked his neck, 'barnstorming' about the country.


Donald Douglas

One of his workers was 22-year-old Donald Douglas. Douglas was the only person working in the engineering department. In 1921, he founded the Douglas Aircraft Company. The company later merged with McDonnell Aircraft to form McDonnell Douglas Corporation, which merged with Boeing in 1997.


Larry Bell

Douglas also hired a Santa Monica youngster named Larry Bell who ran the shop. In 1935, Bell founded Bell Aircraft Corporation.

Glenn Martin had a flying school with several planes based at Griffith Park, California, and a seaplane operation on the edge of Watts. There, Martin's instructors taught a rich young man named Bill Boeing to fly. Bill bought one of Glenn Martin's seaplanes and had it shipped back to his home in Seattle. Boeing also snatched Glenn Martin's personal mechanic.


Bill Boeing

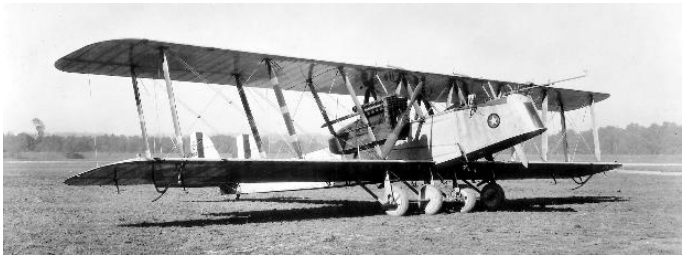
Later, after Boeing's seaplane crashed in Puget Sound, he contacted Martin and ordered replacement parts. Still chafing from having his best mechanic 'swiped,' Martin decided to take his sweet time and allowed Bill Boeing to 'stew' for a while. Boeing wasn't known to be a patient man, so he began fabricating his own aircraft parts. This activity morphed into constructing entire airplanes and eventually the Boeing Company we know today.

Soon a couple of airplanes were being built in Boeing's Red Barn. Each aircraft had a remarkable resemblance to Glenn Martin's airplanes that, interestingly, had a remarkable resemblance to Glenn Curtiss' airplanes.

A few years later, because of the Great depression, Bill Boeing couldn't sell enough airplanes to pay his bills. So, he diversified and built custom speed boats and furniture for his wealthy friends.

Glenn Martin & Martin Aircraft

In 1916, a group from Wall Street gained control of the Wright Brothers Company in Dayton and the Martin Company in Los Angeles, forming the Wright-Martin Company. With that, Glenn Martin departed the Wright-Martin Company, taking Larry Bell and other key employees with him. From the deep wallet of a wealthy baseball mogul, Martin was able to establish a new factory. Then his good luck continued, when the future aviation legend Donald Douglas was persuaded by Glenn to join his team. The Martin MB-1 quickly emerged from the team's efforts and became the Martin Bomber.



General Billy Mitchell

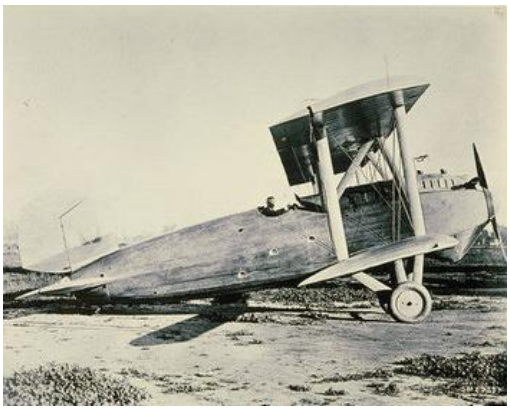
Although the Martin Bomber was developed too late for WWI, it played a vital part in another battle. Should we spend more of our tax dollars on aircraft or naval assets? General Billy Mitchell, who advocated for increased investment in air power, used the Martin Bomber in a series of bombing runs against stationary ships.

Claude Ryan

In 1922, Claude Ryan, a 24-year-old military reserve pilot, was getting his hair cut in San Diego, when the barber mentioned that the 'town's aviator' was in jail for smuggling Chinese illegals from Mexico. Claude learned that he could be the new town aviator and that he would be able to lease the town's airfield for $50 a month. However, he needed to agree to fly North and East, BUT not South!

Claude Ryan

The Douglas Cloudster & Ryan Airlines



Donald Douglas returned to Los Angeles and rented a rear room in a barbershop and a loft space in a nearby carpenter shop. By 1920, he had constructed a classic passenger airplane called the Douglas Cloudster. It was the first airplane to have a payload that was greater than its own weight.

With the Douglas Cloudster, Claude Ryan and B. Franklin Mahoney launched Ryan Airlines, the nation's first year-round regularly scheduled daily airline passenger service, which flew between San Diego and Los Angeles. Ryan Airlines charged $14.50 one-way and $22.50 round-trip. In 2026 dollars, that would be $235 and $365 ($1 = $16.21).

Claude Ryan – The Spirit of St. Louis

Claude Ryan later custom built 'The Spirit of St. Louis' for Charles Lindbergh and his 1927 solo flight across the Atlantic Ocean, from Long Island's Roosevelt Field to Paris, France.

Donald Douglas

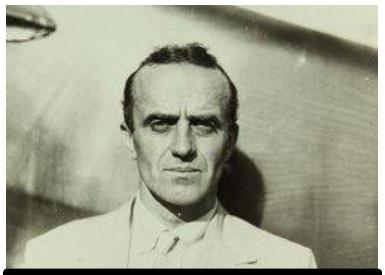
Donald Douglas

In 1922, Donald Douglas won a Navy contract to build several torpedo carrying aircraft.
While driving through Santa Monica's wilderness, Douglas noticed an abandoned, barn-like movie studio. This became Douglas Aircraft's first real factory. With the $120,000 Navy contract in hand, Donald Douglas could afford to hire engineers.


Jack Northrop

Working on Douglas Aircraft's world cruiser designs was Jack Northrop, who had come from Lockheed Aircraft. Jack later founded the Northrop Corporation in 1939.

Another Douglas employee was Jerry Vultee, who in 1939 co-founded Vultee Aircraft.


Jerry Vultee

Lockheed, Vultee & Northrop

Jack Northrop and Gerald Vultee designed the Vega. Northrop linked up with Allan Loughead who, to avoid spelling confusion, changed his name to Lockheed. Together, Lockheed and Northrop leased a Hollywood workshop where they constructed the Lockheed Vega. With a cruise speed of 185 – 190 mph, it was a high-performance sensation.


The Lockheed 5B Vega that Amelia Earhart flew across the Atlantic

Aviation World Records

Soon Amelia Earhart, Wiley Post and others flew the Vega and broke many of aviation's world records, such as flight time around the world (7 days), altitude (50,000'), which led to the discovery of the jet stream.

The Spirit of St. Louis (May 1927)

Because Charles Lindberg's solo trans-Atlantic flight would require a special, flying gas tank, Claude Ryan, working with Lindberg, was able to custom build The Spirit of St. Louis.

Our Aviation Pioneers truly generated great enthusiasm for flight. Soon, it would seem that everyone was flying and the modern-day acceptance of aviation had arrived.

We are so grateful for our aviation pioneers.

Short, Medium and Long Body Mooneys

This article is ideal if you want:

- A clear timeline of Mooney's evolution
- Context on why Mooney aircraft look and perform the way they do
- Insight into the company's recurring financial cycles and relaunches

A buyer-focused deep dive

If you're more interested in *what makes each Mooney model different* and how to evaluate them, the **Mooney Buyers Guide** is one of the best practical articles ever written on the brand. It explains:

- Differences between short- and long-body Mooneys
- How the M20 line evolved from wood-and-fabric to all-metal
- Performance and reliability considerations across engines and airframes
- Why Mooneys earned a reputation for speed and efficiency

It's especially useful if you're thinking about ownership or comparing Mooney models to Cessna or Piper alternatives.

A business-side perspective

For a look at Mooney's corporate turbulence, the article on **Advanced Aerodynamics & Structures, Inc. acquiring Mooney** gives a snapshot of one of the company's major reorganizations. It covers:

- Bankruptcy proceedings
- Plans for the Mooney XP (JetCruzer 500 derivative)
- Production expectations and market strategy

This is helpful if you're curious about how Mooney's business decisions shaped the aircraft lineup. aviation.tti.tamu.edu

If you tell me what angle you're most interested in—history, performance, ownership, or model comparisons—I can point you to the single best article for that purpose or summarize the key takeaways for you.

Short-, mid-, and long-body Mooneys all share the same basic DNA—speed, efficiency, and that unmistakable Mooney look—but the **fuselage length changes the mission profile, cabin space, and useful load** in meaningful ways. The distinctions come through clearly when you look at how Mooney evolved the M20 line over time.

What "short," "mid," and "long" body actually mean

Mooney never used these terms officially; they're community shorthand for the three fuselage lengths in the M20 family.

Short-body (M20C, M20D, M20E, M20F early variants)

- **Original fuselage length** from the early M20s.
- **Tightest cabin**, especially in the rear seats.
- **Lightest and most efficient**—great speed per gallon.
- Typically powered by **180–200 hp** engines.
- Best for **1–2 people** or occasional short trips with 3–4.
- Front seat space is the same as all other Mooneys.
- Known for excellent performance on modest horsepower. LASAR

Mid-body (M20F, M20J "201")

- Fuselage stretched slightly compared to short-body.
- **More rear-seat legroom** and a bit more baggage flexibility.
- Same front-seat dimensions as short-body.
- Often chosen because the **airframes are newer** (1970s–80s) and more likely to have modern panels.
- The M20J is widely regarded as the **sweet spot** for efficiency vs. speed. Mooneyspace.com

Long-body (M20S, M20M "Bravo," M20R "Ovation," M20TN "Acclaim")

- Fuselage stretched again—**significantly more cabin volume**.
- Noticeably more **rear-seat comfort** and **fuel capacity**.
- Supports **bigger engines** (turbocharged or high-horsepower).
- Heavier empty weight but also higher useful load.
- Best for **long-range travel**, families, or carrying gear.

How they differ in real-world use

Cabin space

- **Front seats:** identical across all body lengths.
- **Rear seats:** short-body is tight; mid-body improves it; long-body is genuinely comfortable.

Performance

- **Short-body:** fastest per horsepower, lowest fuel burn.
- **Mid-body:** balanced—excellent efficiency with more comfort.
- **Long-body:** fastest overall (especially turbo models), best for high-altitude and long-range missions.

Useful load & fuel

- Long-body models often carry more fuel and payload, enabling true cross-country capability.

Purchase considerations

- Short-body: best value, simplest systems, lowest operating cost.
- Mid-body: modern avionics more common, great all-arounder.
- Long-body: premium performance, higher acquisition and maintenance cost.

Quick comparison table

Feature	Short-Body	Mid-Body	Long-Body
Rear-seat space	Tight	Improved	Spacious
Typical engines	180–200 hp	200 hp	220–310+ hp
Best for	2 people & economy	Balanced missions	Long-range, family travel
Fuel capacity	Lowest	Moderate	Highest
Purchase cost	Lowest	Mid	Highest

If you want, I can map these differences to specific models (C, E, F, J, K, M, R, TN) or help you figure out which body style best fits your kind of flying.

Now you know everything you need to know about our Mooneys! 😊

Plan Now to Become a Safer Pilot in 2026

Learn more about attending a Mooney Pilot Proficiency Program (PPP) at MooneySafety.com

You can also email WT Camp, wtcamp@hotmail.com or call Lela Hughes, 210-289-6939.

Her at 830-315-8008

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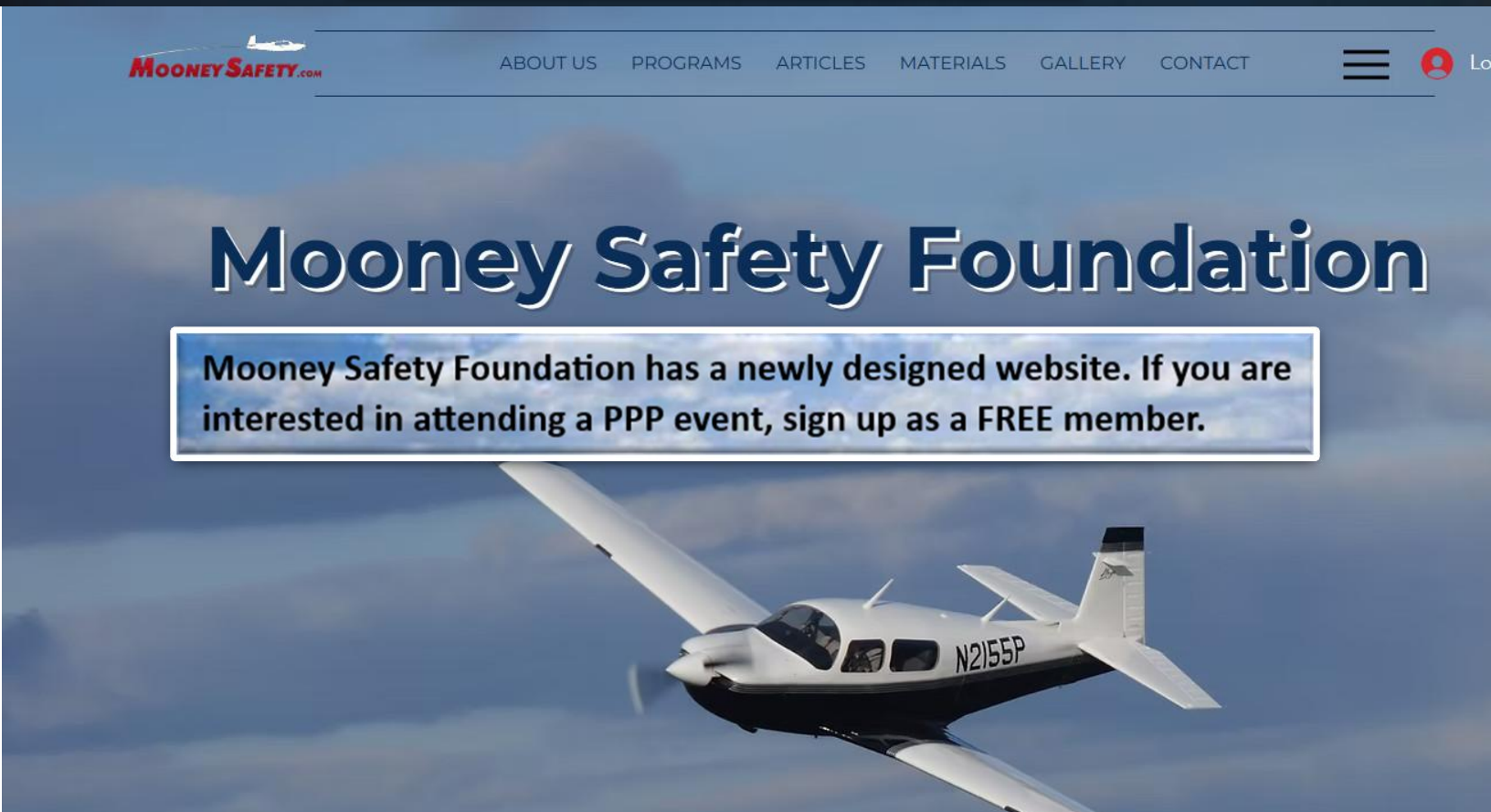
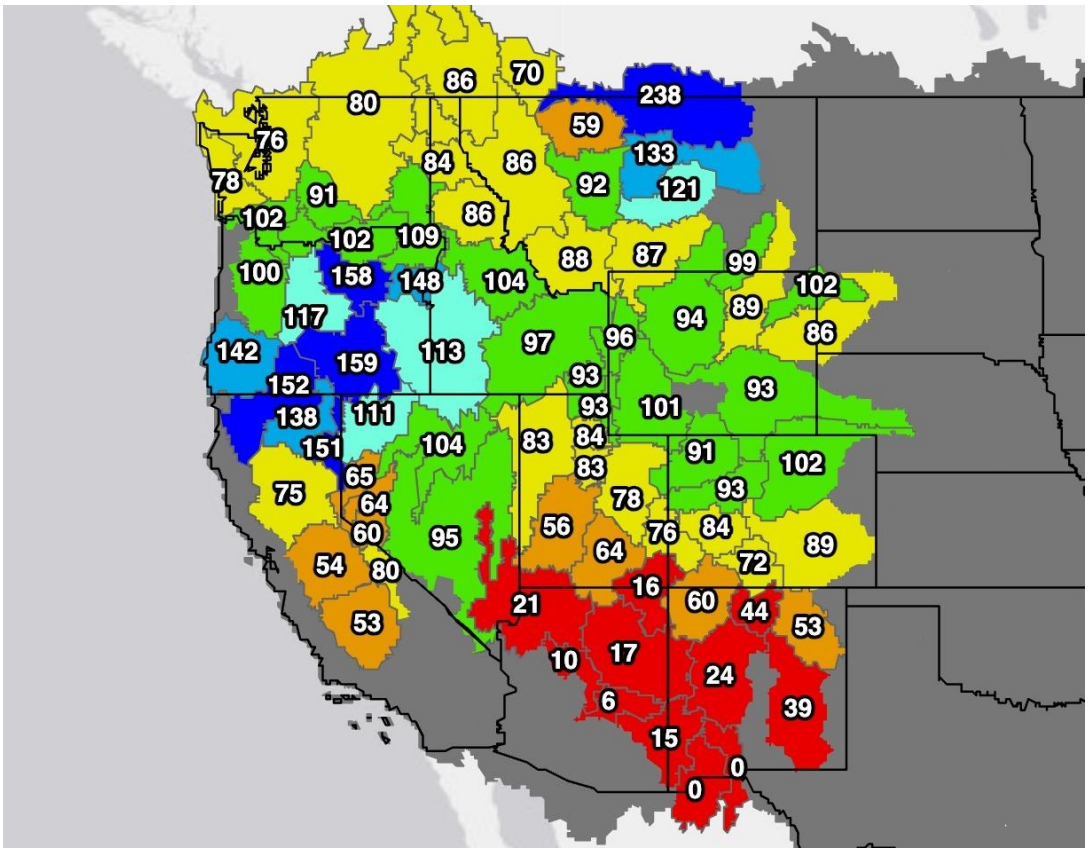


Chasing Snow

by Richard Brown

If you ski—or even if you don't—you've probably seen the reports on the lack of snowpack throughout most of the West. Pictures and videos of ski resorts with little to no snow have made their way around social media. After a less-than-ideal ski trip in December, with afternoon temps in the 40s at Wolf Creek, we got ready for our second trip of the season to Colorado.



About six years ago when we were looking for a vacation home, we felt it needed to meet a few qualifications. It had to be within a four-hour Mooney flight from Southern California, have an airport (obviously), be in the mountains, and offer skiing in the winter, plus other year-round activities. We settled on Pagosa Springs, Colorado, and we have loved it!

Pagosa Springs is right on the edge of that four-hour range, and there have only been a handful of times we've made the trip without a fuel stop. Fortunately, the winds for this trip were forecast to be perfect. With full fuel tanks we climbed out to the east through the Banning Pass, and then turned northeast, staying at 9,500 feet until we were past the Turtle MOA with its floor of 11,000 feet.

Once clear of the MOA, we climbed to 11,500 feet where the winds were forecast to be even better heading eastbound, and they didn't disappoint. Approaching eastern Arizona and crossing into New Mexico, our groundspeeds jumped from the 180–190 mph range and just cracked 200 mph.

After flying 672 miles in 3:53, we were taxiing to transient parking when the FBO called us on Unicom to confirm parking and services.

FBO: "Mooney on Unicom, do you have transportation setup?"
Me: "No ma'am. We were hoping to borrow your car and run over to our house to get ours."
FBO: "Sounds good, as long as you're back by 5pm, I'm good with that."
Me: "Yep, we're close, just over on Handicap."

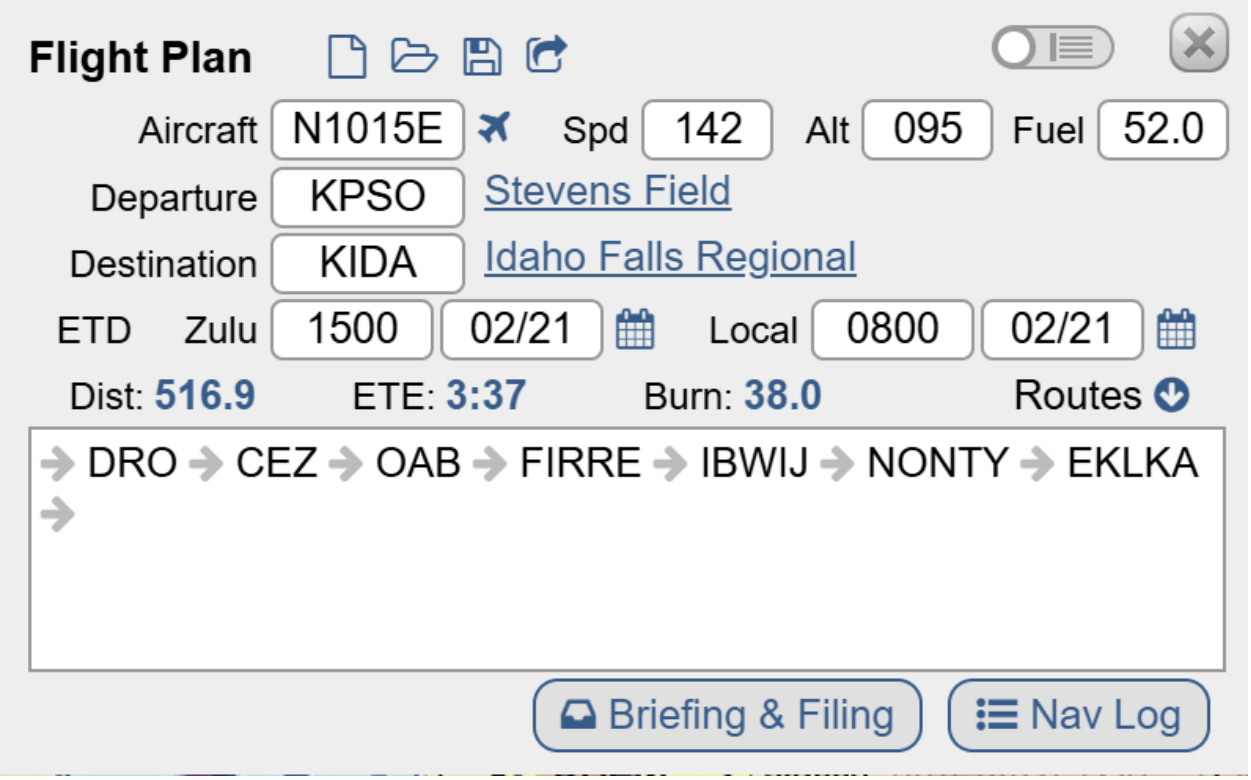
I tied down the plane and because their self-serve was offline, the fuel truck came by to top us off. Kathy walked over to the FBO, got the keys to the crew car, and we made the short drive to our house. We picked up our car and had the crew car back before they closed for the day.

The skiing was better than December, but the snow was still pretty thin. We made the decision to ski one day at Wolf Creek and finish up our trip in Idaho, with a day at Grand Targhee. Our son and daughter-in-law live in Idaho Falls, a short drive from the ski resort, so we would be able to visit them and get in some skiing—a win/win!

After years of flying the same routes, this one would be completely new. I sat down at my computer to plan it out. I could do it on my tablet in iFly GPS, but for planning long-distance cross-country routes, I like to use SkyVector.com. It's easier to see the big picture, zoom in, drag the route to different waypoints, and—for multi-leg trips—click on the fuel prices.

First, I put in the departure and destination airports, which draws the shortest distance. Then I start looking at airspace and obstacles. Flying out here in the West in a normally aspirated plane with mountains in the 10–14,000-foot range, it's not often that you can fly direct. I select VORs or if I need to fly off airways, I will switch over to the IFR Low charts. Then, I will drag the route to a point that fits where I want to go.

For a VFR flight, it doesn't need to be perfect—just the general idea of the route so I can get the information I need from my weather briefing. For example, on this route, between OAB and IBWIJ, we flew over the canyon, cut by the Green River before cutting the corner above the West Tavaputs Plateau, and headed towards Strawberry Reservoir. After the reservoir, we didn't go all the way to NONTY, but flew through Daniels Pass, which is the lowest point to cross the mountains. If you put the routing in you get the idea. The final route that was filed was KPSO DRO CEZ OAB FIRRE IBWIJ NONTY EKLKA KIDA.



We didn't bring the skis, but with boot bags and ski gear along with regular stuff, the luggage and backseat were full. Weight wasn't an issue, but all the space was taken up. I had plugged in the engine heater the day before our departure, and there wasn't too much frost to clear from the plane. After brushing off the frost and pre-flighting the plane, I turned it around so the wings were directly facing the sun. Then, we took our car back to the house. By the time we returned the plane was clean and we were ready to depart.

The flight was beautiful. I love flying routes I've never flown before and seeing new scenery. The rocks around Moab were stunning and the snow in patches along the route added some variety.

Flying past Park City, you could see just how little snow they had at that point. The mountains were mostly brown with just a dusting of snow and white ribbons coming down where they had made enough snow just to cover some of the ski runs. As always, Bear Lake was beautiful and the farther north we went, the more snow there was until all of the hills and mountains were white.

I'm pretty sure the tower at Idaho Falls doesn't have radar, because the tower was instructing pilots to notify him when they left the Delta airspace. When I checked in, I was instructed to make a straight in to runway 3 and report a three-mile final. The winds weren't as favorable as our flight to Colorado two days earlier, but it wasn't as far and we were able to make the 574-mile trip in 3:50.

We had a great time visiting our son and his wife, and the day with them at Targhee was perfect. A high overcast gave way to bluebird skies and the view of the Tetons was breathtaking.

Sunday morning, I sat down at my computer for what I thought would be a "check the box" weather briefing and was quickly reminded why we are supposed to always get a weather briefing. We have flown from Idaho Falls back to California a number of times, so the route wasn't anything new. I filed to our typical fuel stop at Delta, Utah (KDTA), and from there home to Fullerton.

I pulled up the briefing on 1800wxbrief.com and started scrolling through. I saw that there was a NOTAM for no fuel at Delta—ruling that out as a fuel stop. I amended the plan, stopping at Fillmore, Utah (KFOM), and pulled the briefing again. When I got to the NOTAMs, I saw Fillmore had no fuel available. That's weird, I thought, and at the same time, I was glad I had paid attention to the NOTAMs.

Next on the route was Milford, Utah (KMLF), working my way down the valley. We've never used Milford as a fuel stop because it's the most expensive of the three airports, but with DTA and FOM having NOTAMs for no fuel, it was the next option.

The briefing showed that there "should be" fuel available at MLF. I say "should be" because at these small airports, there's always a chance there could be issues. The safety plan was that if MLF didn't have fuel when we arrived, I would still have enough fuel to go to Cedar City or St. George with reserves.

We had breakfast Sunday with Kathy's oldest brother and his wife before getting dropped off at the airport. I had asked the price to have the plane put in their hangar for one night and it wasn't exorbitant, so when we got there Sunday it was sitting in the middle of a huge, heated hangar along with a few other planes.

Yes, I realize that earlier I was searching for airports to save money on fuel and on the same trip, I paid to put the plane in a heated hangar. No, that is not ironic—let's just say that saving money on fuel helps justify spending it on the heated hangar. 😊

The gentleman behind the desk at the FBO asked, "Did you want to pre-flight in the hangar?"

Given the option of doing pre-flight outside in 19°F temps or inside a 50°F hangar I replied, "I'd love to!"

If you have never done your preflight inside a heated hangar when it is 19° outside, you haven't lived. Would I pay and do it again? Absolutely!

The flight home was uneventful, (the best kind of flight), and again, the scenery was gorgeous. The stop at Milford for fuel was an easy in and out, and after 800+ miles of flying in about 5:15, we were back at our hangar at Fullerton.

Kathy jokes about our "whirlwind trips" and this was no exception. I think we clocked in around 36 hours at each stop on the trip. But we skied in Colorado and Wyoming. (Targhee is just across the border from Idaho and often referred to as Wydaho). Also, we made some incredible memories with family. As we say, just another trip in 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.

AVERTING Tragedies…

By Parvez Dara, MD FACP ATP MCFII

When we were still innocent, the world revolved slowly, eking out time, respect, and generosity. It was simpler times, happier and more joyous times. During that era, I was boarding an aircraft with a father and his son, who appeared to be 5 or 6 years old. The Airliner's cockpit was still open, and the Pilot and copilot were busy going through their checklist. The curious child poked his head in the cockpit and was greeted with a smile. He lingered, mesmerized at all the knobs and dials as the passengers behind grew a little restless. He tugged on his father's jacket, looked up and said, "Are those pilots still learning, how to fly?" That brought in a chuckle from the pilot and outright laughter from the copilot. The child was invited to stay in the cockpit, and I went to look for my seat. After a while, the captain brought the child back to his seat. He had a beaming smile on that little face that still lingers in my head. "Learning how to fly?" Indeed! Learning isn't simply a catalog of information, but an apprenticeship in reasoning and uncertainty. It is in the detection of anomalies and finding patterns that bring in cognition about the surrounding world. In aviation, a short passage to understanding aerodynamics is fraught with a spectacular collapse in bent metal and spilled blood. A deep learned system based on fragmented, disjointed content will execute the same way in the cockpit. Convenience cannot supplant cognition, and neither can fluency become a surrogate for understanding. Learning needs its own depth and expression.

There is a certain learning that goes on before each flight. Checking the "Checklist" item by item is ingrained in most of us when we seek our pilot training and then our certificates. Why is it important? Why must it be followed? The answers are simple as you might guess, but there are those sinews of human frailty that wind themselves around the brain cells and prevent them from expression. For example, a repetitive statement to oneself about what to do if the engine quits on takeoff, either said aloud or quietly to oneself, is the first item to come to memory when the oil hits the fan. It is called a "Memorized Emergency Checklist" and comes in handy when it is needed the most.

I was watching the news on TV a while ago and there was a short video of a boat exploding on the dock as the owner ducked for cover! The owner had forgotten to vent the fumes from the engine compartment before the ignition, and lo and behold the violent conflagration. A one liner on the checklist on all boats is to vent the engine compartment before ignition. The trapped atomized fuel has a predilection for rapid combustion. It's the age-old rule that sparks and fuel with plenty of oxygen around, makes for a bad day, if not managed properly.

On a not too dissimilar happenstance, I was on a commercial flight and, as the aircraft taxied to the "hold short" position, I had my headset wired to the aviation transceiver, listening to the tower communications. "Continental-xxx at hold short, check your flaps." The voice was a low rumbling, all business, baritone that rang through crystal clear.

I was in a window seat and looked out to confirm it was us the voice of authority had mentioned. Sure enough, the wings were clean and no flaps or slats were deployed. Moments later the Pilot of the aircraft I was on said, “Tower, Continental xxx, requests a short delay to go over the checklist.” 5 minutes later the aircraft was reconfigured for flight, and we took off. Another horrific tragedy was staved-off by that observant, experienced pilot of a different airline behind our aircraft. Looking after one another is a good trait to possess.

A reminder about the Delta Flight 1141 that crashed on August 31, 1988 during takeoff from Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport (DFW), because the flight crew failed to properly set the aircraft's flaps and slats, resulting in a loss of lift. The Boeing 727-232, which was not properly configured for departure, crashed shortly after lifting off the runway, laying waste 14 lives and 78 injuries of the 108 on board. That was not on my mind then, but now every time my eyes sneak a peek at the flaps and slats on takeoff. We are, after all, humans, frail, and error prone and we desperately need the structure of preventative measures, such as a checklist to keep us safe in our pursuit of flight.

What other things can go wrong? Many, it seems.

In a Mooney, as in most retractable aircraft, we deploy the approach flaps for takeoff to increase the wing efficiency. Both the gear and the flaps must be stowed after takeoff, or our IAS struggles to go past the white arc. For instance, in a Turbo-normalized aircraft, the low/hi boost fuel pump must be turned off upon reaching cruising altitude or we waste a lot of fuel. The pitot-heat must be turned on at altitude to avoid icing in the clouds. The cautionary tales of the Piper Malibu aircraft breaking apart because of such pitot-heat misadventures is well archived. Additionally, flying a pressurized aircraft into flight-levels, without the requisite training and experience can have deleterious consequences for your health and longevity during transition phases, or when you stop using the checklist.

We create preventative measures to protect ourselves and yet, with each turn of the screw, misguide ourselves into not believing in those measures. The hubris within takes hold and scatters the hard-won lessons in life. For instance, “We are too good for this,” whatever “this” is?” Our, we are “better than that” pilots. “That,” being some other pilot’s misfortune? Especially as instructors we should never feel superior to the student who achingly and slowly reads each line and then touches the appropriate dial, lever, or knob, as he/she has been instructed. Sometimes our hands wish to firewall the throttle. Be patient, the future cries out with “alarm.” Be patient! Your life is at stake and so is the passenger’s life! Listen to that voice of reason. Haste does indeed make waste of a human life. Be Patient!

Each line on the Checklist has a defined purpose to keep the flight from becoming a catastrophe. Use the checklist each time, no matter how many hours or years of experience you have. Each line is a preventative action from becoming a statistic.

Always have the checklist and follow it diligently as that 5-year-old commented, “Are those pilots still learning how to fly?” Indeed, we are!

Reflection, I'm Thinking, it's a Good Thing

By Jerry Proctor

With all the data input, the pace of life these days can overwhelm anyone and leave little room for individual and introspective thoughts. Even though I have been retired from full time heavy data work for 11 years, my days are still plenty full. Like most readers, even before coffee, I read the news, then I watch the news and stocks, followed by working on my computer, looking at my cell phone, etc. That's a lot and it's probably normal for most of us.

Unfortunately, I suspect all of us are in a deficit regarding reflection time. I used to work on a farm as a youth, and some of the jobs were monotonous, but they did leave time to reflect on things. I suspect some of humankind's greatest inventions came from those undisturbed moments.

So how did this month's topic come up? Well, two pilots I flew with as an instructor ended up doing something that was not very good. First, there were no issues with basic safety, no one could have been injured, and only one ended up putting a small scratch on a plane.

Pilot one was giving an authorized ride to a youngster along the lines of EAA Young Eagles. The young person I will call Ken, had experienced several Young Eagle flights. The pilot (not a CFI) was showing Ken more advanced maneuvers like steeper turns. He also had Ken do climbs while learning the basic flight instruments. To support this, the pilot had the G1000 switch the PDF data onto the MFD, thus having duplicate PDF views. My subject pilot was likely focused on pointing out items on the PDF.

While going at a moderate speed, no one was looking outside. There was no map display on the G1000, and the pilot's tablet was likely ignored. After several miles, the pilot realized he had violated a significant airspace and he did a 180. He was several miles and minutes in the wrong

airspace. I won't discuss further as to the type of airspace. While causing no physical harm, it was noted and acknowledged by others that this was a significant lapse of airmanship.

As I was the one that gave him his orientation flights, I wondered (reflected) if I should have provided more instruction concerning this area. He is a very experienced and proficient pilot, and he knows that he should not enter this airspace.

The bottom line here is, what he did was totally his error, one that I simply could not have anticipated. He should not have been flying anywhere near this airspace with Ken, and by his focus on the inside of the plane, he completely lost situation awareness. He later admitted his error and took full responsibility, as he should have. Did I fail this pilot? No.

The second pilot was another new arrival and, again, I was his orientation pilot. He came to us as a current CFII from a very highly rated flight school. I gave him some initial ground instruction and then a two-hour orientation flight where we did touch and goes at multiple airports and also showed him the ins and outs of our location. I also specifically showed and talked him through how to put the plane in the T-hanger. About two months after, he ended up putting a scratch on the stabilizer plastic tip while parking the plane in the hanger.

This is in a T hanger with yellow lines for the main and nose wheels plus a bright orange stripe to align the tail. If the nose tire is lined up, as is the tail, you are good to go. We have welded chocks to stop rear travel. Well, he had to have the empennage offset by over two feet to put a scratch on the tip. I am not sure if he lined the nose on the right main tire yellow line or he only looked at the nose while the tail went sideways. I don't know, nor did he say.

He was very lucky as he heard a noise and stopped. It was a 4'' scratch on the plastic with no impact on airworthiness. Again, I reflected on this event and unlike the first pilot, I probably could have done better in training him.

I mistakenly assumed, since he was a CFII and did fly at a highly rated flight school, he didn't need multiple demonstrations on how to park the plane. I bet they didn't put planes in T hangers, because they had line guys or gals do that. I'd say my assumption was incorrect. So, from now on, regardless of experience, I am going to not only show, but have the new pilot conduct the parking process until they are safe and comfortable doing it.

Reflection is a good thing. Do take time to reflect as you will be better at not only flying, but life as well.

Fly safer, Jerry Proctor

One Pilot's Journey

by Paul Darbo

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

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

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

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

The search stretched on for two years. Nothing seemed quite right—always a compromise between mission, experience, and what I could reasonably afford. In early December, 2017, when my end-of-month January 2018 retirement date was set, I still hadn't found an airplane and had begun to accept that perhaps it wasn't meant to happen. Then, at the EAA 1541 Christmas party later that month, I learned another member, Ernie Brock, was selling a Mooney M20G at a fair price. It didn't feel dramatic or impulsive. It simply felt right.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Afterward, Marty sent me an Email:

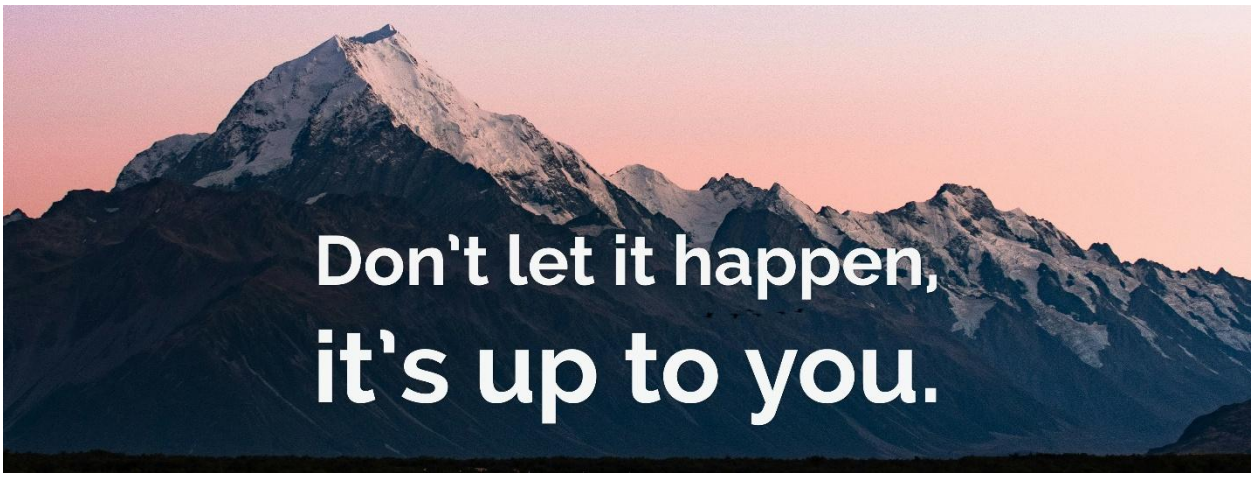
"I also want to report that I was a little on the fence about the sensibility of owning an airplane. I already had access to plenty of other airplanes for rent, with no obligation or expense unless a tach was turning.

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

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

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

https://www.mooneysafety.com/event-details/tucson-arizona



During a youth demonstration flight, the pilot became distracted looking for another airplane in the traffic pattern at the airport in Abingdon, Virginia. The pilot was also sharing information with the young passengers.

He subsequently forgot to lower the Cessna 182's landing gear, and the airplane landed gear up, resulting in substantial damage to the fuselage.

The pilot reported that there were no pre-accident anomalies or malfunctions with the airplane that would have precluded normal operation and added that he heard no cockpit warnings since he was wearing a noise-cancelling headset.

Probable Cause: The pilot's failure to lower the airplane's landing gear prior to landing, which resulted in abnormal runway contact.

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.

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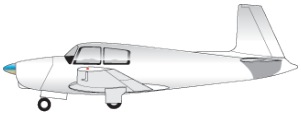
WHAT AIRCRAFT CHECKLISTS "DON'T DO"

by Richard Simile, Thunderbird Aircraft Sales

Many of us have been flying Mooney Aircraft for a very long time, and it would not be a far stretch to think that some of us are conducting flights without the use of a checklist. This is because you're so familiar with your personal airliners and have very good flows. But Good Flows are only as good as the checklist that validates them. All Airlines have flows that must be backed up with a checklist. Let's talk for a moment about what checklists DON'T DO.

Checklists don't have late nights out, they don't suffer from lack of sleep, they don't get hangovers, they don't catch colds, or acquire viruses, they don't get in arguments with the wife or husband, etc. In general, inanimate Checklists are impervious to any outside influence whatsoever. That makes aircraft checklists rock solid!!! On the other hand, the human body is WILDLY DYNAMIC in its ability to become altered, and it often does. This, in turn, has an effect, (typically detrimental), on dynamic cockpit thinking. My 2 cents here is that not using the unalterable checklist each time may be handing an invitation to complacency to come along for the ride, and the result can be fatal. I am reminded of an amazing F-14 Naval Aviator Dale "Snort" Snodgrass, whose very long aviation life ended by taking off in a taildragger with a gust lock in. Using checklists provides a very crisp alignment between the Pilot and his flying machine. A Pilot's level of Situational Awareness (and other human factors) can vary wildly while sitting in the cockpit, based on many outside factors. However, that beautiful, lonely, laminated checklist never Alters and never Falters. I would like to suggest reacquainting yourself with your old Checklist on every future flight. Your checklist only has one desire and that is to keep you safe.



Mooney Maintenance

CLICK HERE to download Mooney's 100 Hour Inspection Guide

CLICK HERE to find Parts and Maintenance Support

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

https://mooneymover.com/

Ask the Top Gun

Tom Rouch

Founder of Top Gun Aviation, Stockton, California

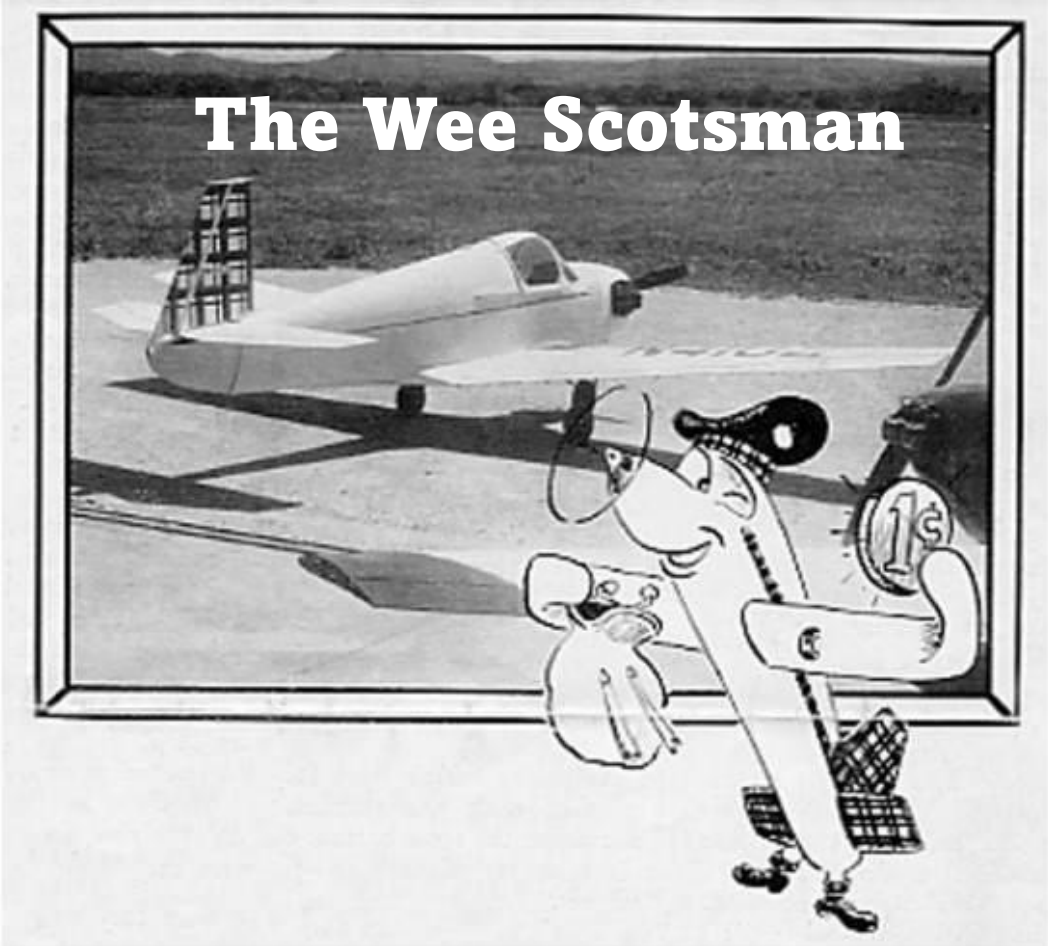
Send your questions for Tom to TheMooneyFlyer@gmail.com

QUESTION

Why do so few places have the ability to patch or seal our fuel tanks?

Tom's Answer

To repair or reseal Mooney fuel tanks is the most labor-intensive job there is. First, there's the problem of finding the location of the leak. It could be anywhere and only exit in the rear spar and run down until it shows somewhere near the belly of the plane. Therefore, trying to isolate the leak and just repair it is next to impossible. The only way to check the work is to let the sealant cure, add fuel and then find that you didn't stop the leak. To ensure a positive fix, you need to strip the entire tank and recoat. It is all done through small access panels where the work is done when you can't even see what you are doing. Depending on the model, you can spend up to 100 man-hours on one side. Based on how much you can charge; it's really a money-losing job. Therefore, most shops quit trying to repair fuel leaks. A few shops have developed a system that uses a mechanical and chemical system that runs a chemical remover through the tank much like a dishwasher does. This is effective, but you still must manually apply the sealant. It's a good method but the equipment is costly and still uses a lot of manpower. That is why the bladder installation system was developed. However, it is still costly and reduces some fuel capacity. In all my years working on Mooney's, I don't think I ever even broke even working fuel leaks. I had the same problem trying to paint damaged aircraft that I had repaired. I always could do the repair, but I finally decided to let the painting go to a paint shop.


The Wee Scotsman


coming in 1955 . . .
the Mooney Model Twenty, newest four-place private-executive-personal aircraft with design features years ahead of its field. A plane to set new standards of performance in relation to power, featuring the same simplicity of design and the same rugged characteristics of the smaller Model Eighteen. The Mooney Model Twenty offers the highest efficiency of any personal plane. The first light aircraft with a laminar flow wing, designed for maximum performance from the least power (over 150 m.p.h. on 140 h.p.) designed to "get upstairs" and cruise where the air is cool and smooth. A plane in the medium-priced field with the advantages and comforts of the top-performers. A plane you will be proud to own.
mooney
model
twenty

Dynon Expands Mooney Autopilot Approvals

By General Aviation News Staff · February 5, 2026

Dynon Certified autopilot — already available for Mooney M20J/K models equipped with SkyView HDX — is now approved for Mooney M20C, M20D, M20E, and M20F aircraft.

The three-axis autopilot system, including the yaw damper is approach capable when paired with a compatible third-party IFR navigation device.

Pricing for a complete system starts at a list price of $6,755 for all available Mooney M20 series aircraft. This includes all required brackets, hardware, and servo harnesses. Options include the SkyView Autopilot Control Panel ($697), which provides dedicated autopilot controls for the pilot, and the Knob Control Panel ($352), which has dedicated knobs to adjust the values that pilots modify the most when they fly under autopilot (altitude, heading/track, and altimeter setting).

For more information: DynonCertified.com

Garmin GHA 15 Height Advisor Approved For Certified Aircraft

AVweb Matt Ryan, Thursday, February 05, 2026 **Edited By:** Zach Vasile

Garmin has received Federal Aviation Administration supplemental type certificate approval for its GHA 15 height advisor for installation in certified Class I and II aircraft. Previously limited to experimental aircraft, the unit uses radar technology to provide height above ground level information and can display data on compatible GI 275 electronic flight instruments.

The GHA 15 integrates its electronics into a single module mounted on the underside of the aircraft. Garmin said the unit is a bit larger than a deck of cards and weighs less than one pound, requiring limited space and modification for installation. The company said the device is now available for certified aircraft.

Pilots Win Court Fight Over Housing Near California Airport

AVweb Matt Ryan, Monday, February 23, 2026

After more than a decade of legal battles over development work near a California municipal airport, a pilot advocacy group has prevailed in court, securing a ruling that local officials must follow state aviation land-use laws before approving housing near airport operations.

On Feb. 3, a Santa Cruz County Superior Court judge ruled that the City of Watsonville violated state law when it approved a 21-unit residential development within a designated safety zone near Watsonville Municipal Airport. Judge Timothy Schmal granted petitions for writ of mandate and declaratory

relief filed by the Watsonville Pilots Association (WPA), finding the city failed to comply with the State Aeronautics Act and the California Environmental Quality Act.

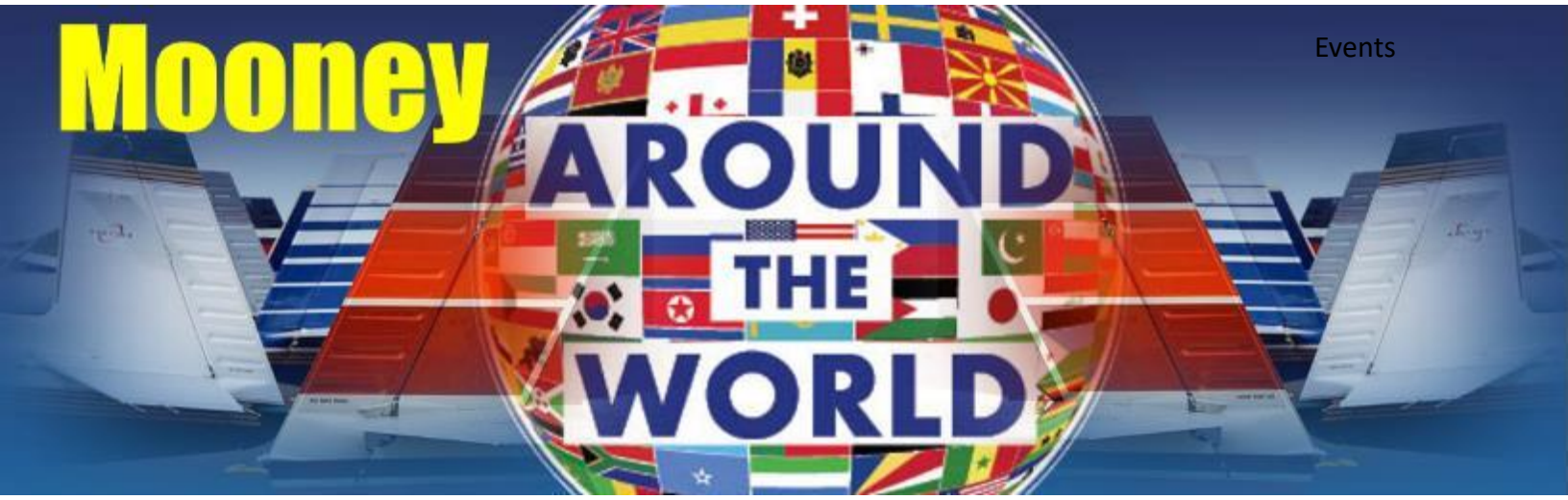
Court: City Must Adopt State Standards

The most recent case stems from a 2021 approval for townhomes at a site adjacent to the California airport. The court found that Watsonville—located in a county without an Airport Land Use Commission—was required under state law to incorporate airport compatibility standards into its General Plan before approving development in areas affected by airport operations.

“This case is not about discretion,” the court wrote, explaining that cities in such circumstances must adopt state compatibility criteria into their planning documents before permitting development near airports.

The ruling requires the city to set aside approvals tied to the project and prohibits further activity unless environmental review and planning documents meet state requirements.

READ MORE HERE



Events

	Contact Mike Weir at (239) 572-3418, before coming to the restaurant, so they can have an accurate count. Events begin at 11:30
	Apr 24 – 26, Tucson, AZ Sep 11 – 13, Manchester, NH Oct TBD, Kerrville, TX (with MooneyMax) CLICK HERE to Register
	Learn More at https://www.mooney.org.au/
	Learn more at https://www.empoa.eu/index.php/en/
Other	

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)

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 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

1966 MOONEY SUPER 21

- TT 6023 hours
- SMOH – 532 hours, LyCon of AZ
- STOH – 280 hours, Western Skyways
- Avionics: ADSB in/outStratus 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

(480) 802-8520 | tarundus@juno.com

FOR SALE - $115,000

Mooney M20E 1964 SN 347

Contact Don Peterson at
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
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

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)**