



The Flying Wire



September 2025

Volume 64 Issue 9

Chapter 124 Experimental Aircraft Association

Next Chapter Meeting: Wednesday, September 3

Dinner – 6:15 pm \$10
General Meeting – 7:00 pm

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Program: September 3 Meeting

SPEAKER: Dr Elaine Gee and her newly built NX Cub!

Please join us to welcome home Dr Elaine Gee and her newly built NX Cub! You may remember that last July, Elaine gave a presentation to the Chapter on her experience as a student pilot purchasing an NX Cub kit and going through the first part of the factory assisted build program. Well, she's finished her build and got to fly the Idaho backcountry before she brought it home! Now the plane is safe and sound here at KSTS - and what a beauty!

Come hear Elaine's presentation on the second half of her factory build and the finish of her NX Cub. She will highlight some of the key differences between the experimental and certified versions, and what it's like flying in the back country as a student pilot in such an incredible machine! She'll also give an update on her progress toward her pilot's license. Her CFI Barbara from North Coast Air is even rumored to be on hand!



Elaine Gee with husband Fred Romberg

Elaine is a dynamite presenter and always comes loaded with a great story and a spectacular power point! Look forward to seeing you there!

ADDED BONUS: Elaine's NX Cub will be onsite at the meeting out front of the Hangar so we can all check it out.

Dinner Menu:

The Spectacular September meal will be: EAA Chapter 124's **award-winning chili**, sausages, cornbread, and salad. Surprise dessert to follow!

All for an (almost) award-winning \$10!!

News and Updates

Seen Around the Hangar Lately...

Chapter president
Dominic Cerniglio and
Board officer **Jeremiah
James** taking the Piper
Arrow out for a flight
to Chico!

It's always a good day
to fly!



P51 Mustang cruising by on
taxiway Golf! Not a bad view
from the facility here either!

Never a bad day here at
EAA124!!

Bailey Caldwell on her first OshKosh
adventure, about to have some fun
in the XCub!

It's good work if you can get it!!



Also spotted this month...

Long-time Chapter members **Mark and Campbell Potter** were caught smiling during a debriefing session after father Mark's instrument lesson on RNAV 14 with his son Campbell in their Cessna 172.

Once taught about all things aviation by his father, Campbell is now the head flight instructor over at Mike Smith Aviation in Napa, where he was recently nominated for AOPA's Flight Instructor of the Year!



Campbell also teaches the Private Pilot free ground school that EAA 124 offers twice a year to aspiring pilots. If students attend all classes and demonstrate satisfactory performance on the practice test, they receive an instructor's sign-off to take the FAA's written knowledge exam! Campbell generously donates his time to the Chapter to allow us to do this and we are grateful to have him and his father as part of our community! Good to see you guys!!



*Newly minted Gyrocopter CFI **Paul Hollingworth** takes a moment to soak in the beautiful views we offer at EAA 124 and chat with the boys in the tower on a recent sunny Sunday!*

Chapter regular Paul flies at most of our Young Eagles events where he usually has a line of kids waiting to go for a ride. He's also our Ray Scholarship coordinator and a passionate aviator! A few minutes talking with Paul and it's obvious - this man has a deep love of the skies! He recently became a dealer for the Magni Gyrocopters as well! Like all dealers... the first ride is free - but be careful! It's addictive!! We're happy to have you around, Paul!



EAA Chapter 124's Ray Scholar Completes 1st Solo!

We're proud to announce that EAA Chapter 124's 2025 Ray Scholar candidate **Sam James** completed his first solo flight on Sunday August 24th at the Petaluma Airport!

Sam's original plan to solo at KSTS was unfortunately thwarted by the Lake County "Sky" fire and the heavy aerial activity of Cal Fire Aircraft working relentlessly to stem the spread. Quickly pivoting, Sam, his CFI **Colin Rennard** and his phase check CFI **Campbell Potter** decided that the Petaluma airport would be the alternate. Together, they flew down to O69 and after a few circuits around the pattern both CFIs exited the aircraft - leaving Sam to face his big moment alone!

Chapter President **Dominic Cerniglio**, Board Member (and proud dad) **Jeremiah James** and Ray Scholarship Coordinator **Paul Hollingworth** were all there to support Sam and witness the occasion. They joined Colin and Campbell on the taxiway sidelines while Sam took control of the 172 for his first time alone. It was getting toward sunset and there was a light crosswind with the fog moving in quickly. There's always a bit of nervousness for the bystanders during a solo and this time was no exception, but Sam's first radio call was filled with a calm confidence which immediately put everyone at ease. And he flew the same way! Three times solo around the un-towered pattern, pulling it off flawlessly!



Sam's been flying a few times a week now with Chapter member and CFI Colin Rennard, working hard and accumulating over 24 hours to get to this goal. By all accounts he's been progressing nicely, making significant strides in his efforts to join the ranks of his fellow aviators. By soloing the aircraft, he's passed a major milestone and is now well on his way to gaining his private pilot certificate.

Chapter 124 would like to congratulate Sam and express its gratitude to the many Chapter members who helped make this a reality. Thank you to the Ray Scholar selection committee - **Paul Hollingworth, Scott Holder, Marlon Young, Mike Cingari, Jeremiah James, Campbell Potter** and **Dominic Cerniglio**. Thank you to **Colin Rennard** for working so extensively with Sam and **Campbell Potter** for guiding the process and also working with Sam. Special thanks is due to Chapter Secretary **Dave Franco** who has graciously let Sam fly his aircraft, the "SkyWatch," for his training. And of course, many thanks to the **Sonoma Jet Center** for the generous donation of fuel and their continued unwavering support for the Chapter and our programs.

It really does take a village! While Sam's solo is a moment for him and him alone, it's the efforts of the above-mentioned people and you, our members of EAA Chapter 124, that bring this community and history together and create the space for special moments like these to happen! As Isaac Newton once wrote - "If I have seen further than others, it is by standing on upon the shoulders of giants!" Let's keep going!

We're proud of you, Sam! We all wish you the best in finishing your license and all your future endeavors.

Larry Rengstorf Receives Plaque for Nearly 50 Years of Service

Larry Rengstorf was presented with a plaque by Mike Tovani at the August Chapter meeting. For those who missed it, Mike's speech is written below the picture. Congratulations, Larry!



"Larry has been a fixture in aviation here at Sonoma County "Charles M. Schultz" Airport for some 50 years. He worked hard with the Pacific Coast Air Museum especially during the "Wings Over Wine Country" airshows. He helped with the planning and moving of many large aircraft before and after the shows.

Larry also spent many years crewing on Lloyd Hamilton's "Sea Fury" for the Reno Air Races and helped with Art and Dan Vance's P-51 "Speed Ball Alice." Larry was also tasked with towing some very rare, expensive, and unique aircraft that attended the races.

In 1974 Larry moved here to the EAA Chapter 124 site and was the Facilities monitor. In 1977 Larry became the Chapter Facility Director. During this time Larry watched over this site like a Pitbull. Not much happened here without his knowledge. He managed the site including assigning aircraft parking, maintenance of the buildings and grounds, mowing the weeds into submission, tracking the oil recycling for the used oil generated by members changing oil in their aircraft, changing out or replace lights and keeping the water in the pipes during winter freezes. Larry has been a man of many talents!

To observe his excellence and to honor Larry, who has signified dedication and hard work, it is a privilege to present this first ever EAA Chapter 124 award plaque to Larry Rengstorf."

~ Mike Tovani.

Young Eagles Update

On August 16, we held our third Young Eagles event of the season, flying 52 Young Eagles with the help of 15 wonderful pilots and of course our equally wonderful ground volunteers! Thank you to everyone who helped to make it a memorable day for our young passengers.

Our next event is on **September 20** – and it's our biggest, coinciding with Girls in Aviation Day. We anticipate flying up to 100 kids, and as in previous years there will be additional booths and aviation-related activities likely to draw in the crowds.

If you haven't signed up already to volunteer, but would like to, please reach out via email to Chapter President **Dominic Cerniglio** (dcerniglio@mac.com) or **Jenny Hollingworth**, our Young Eagles Coordinator (jennyhollingworth14@gmail.com).



Airplanes ready to take Young Eagles up on August 17

Aside from the 'official' Young Eagles event, a shout out to **Otis Holt** who very generously flew a Young Eagle whose family were visiting the area in August. 9-year-old Frankie is an avid aviation fan who was thrilled to be taken up in Otis's RV-7A. Indeed, his first words on getting out of the airplane, spoken with tremendous excitement, were "Mom, I blacked out twice!!"

His father quickly assured us that Frankie is prone to exaggeration! But either way, he had clearly loved being shown the moves in Otis's acrobatic plane!



John Houlgate and the Birth of Truckee Airport

John "Jack" Houlgate was the president of the Truckee regional board that worked in the 1950s to develop Truckee's airport. Until that time, the town had only had a simple dirt landing strip. On July 28, 1962, John was the first pilot to land on the new airport runway.

Through her friendship with John's daughter Nola, Chapter member **Sue Samir** got hold of an original photo of the airport, taken on the day of the Sonoma County Air Festival in 1962. As you can see below, it shows the original military tower (which is still there), the prototype lane on the left-hand side, and in the foreground a civilian French jet.

John, shown below with his family and the Cessna 195 in which he made the inaugural flight, also received a plaque to commemorate the airport's official opening on September 30, 1962.



More on MOSAIC...



Want to know more about the new MOSAIC rule – preferably without having to read all 717 pages of it?

Chapter member **Paul Hollingworth** recommends this 30-minute YouTube video to help break it down for you.

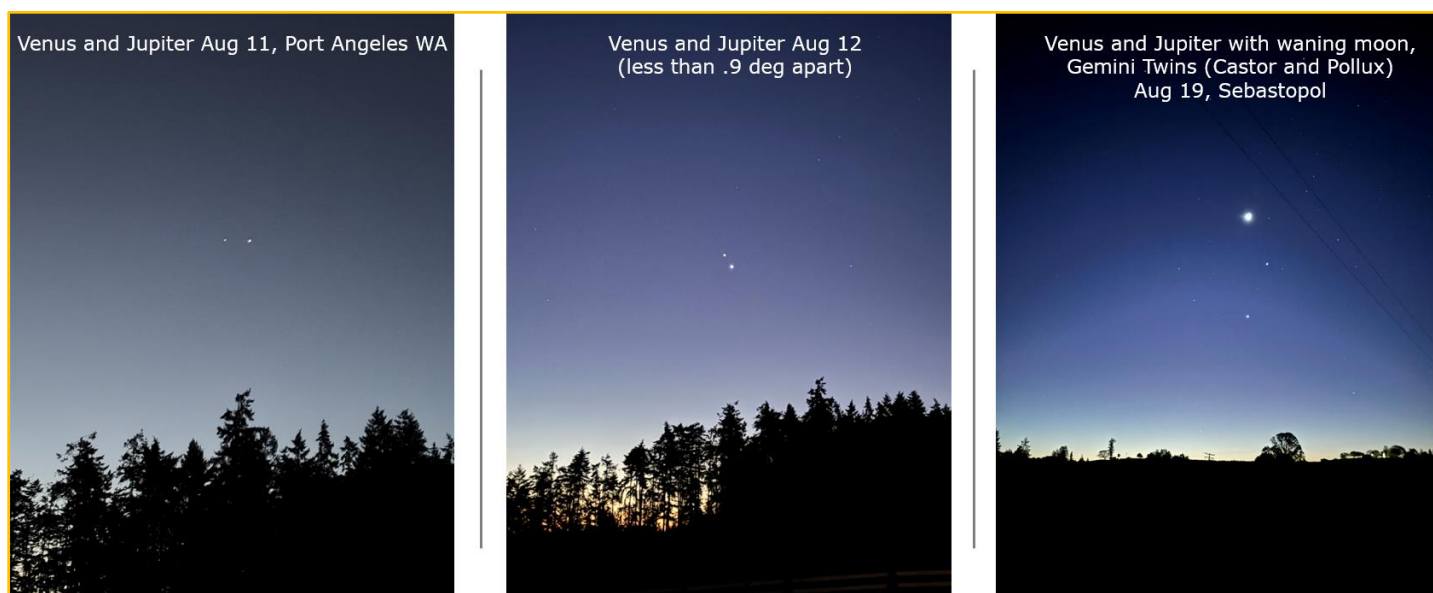
Click [HERE](#) to watch!

Venus and Jupiter

Perhaps you got up a little early in mid-August? Looked out to the east? Around 5 or 5:30 AM? Well, maybe you didn't, but the planets were still there. This year we had a very nice conjunction of Venus and Jupiter, with a little bit of waning moon thrown in.

I've been appreciating the morning and evening sight of Venus for many years, but have never really noticed Jupiter in the same field of view until this year. And this was a pretty good year for that. Of course, Venus passes Jupiter pretty regularly – about every 13 months. But that doesn't happen often for a good view in the morning sky, as Jupiter's orbit takes about 12 years.

And it has been pretty foggy here, but we were vacationing in Port Angeles, WA, at just the right time, and then had a change in the weather in Sebastopol that provided good views of the morning sky. ~ *Andy Werback*



People You Meet

By Andy Werback

William Hawley Bowlus was one of the key persons involved with Ryan Aircraft and Charles Lindbergh's *Spirit of St. Louis*.

He was a true aviation pioneer, especially in un-powered flight. Born in 1896 in Ohio, IL, his childhood coincided with the Wright Brothers and their early aircraft and flights, which kindled his interest. In 1910, he attended the Los Angeles International Air Meet at Dominguez Hills, and built his first glider the next year.

He joined the United States Air Service in 1919 and, after serving briefly in Europe, was stationed at the Army research and development facility at McCook Field as Chief Test Pilot and Inspector for two years.

During his army service, he learned to fly powered aircraft and got to know T. Claude Ryan, founder of Ryan Aircraft in San Diego.



William Hawley Bowlus

The Ryan friendship grew into a working relationship at Ryan Aircraft, where Hawley became the chief designer and supervisor of construction. The reputation of Ryan Aircraft for designing and building airplanes led to a special order in 1927 for an airplane capable of flying the Atlantic Ocean. This was the *Spirit of St. Louis* - a three-month rush job for Charles Lindbergh, documented in a video by the San Diego Air and Space Museum [here](#).

Hawley Bowlus went on to build many sail planes and gliders, one of which is displayed in the Smithsonian Museum, Udvar-Hazy annex (see below). Quite a few Bowlus sailplanes and gliders are still registered.



Bowlus-du Pont 1-S-21 Senior Albatross "Falcon" Sailplane

Hawley Bowlus was also the first American to break Orville Wright's 1911 soaring duration record in an American designed and built sailplane. The SP-1, Bowlus's glider, achieved this milestone by flying for one hour and 21 minutes over the cliffs at Point Loma, California, helping to popularize gliding as a sport.

He went on to design other vehicles, including the Bowlus travel trailer, a lightweight aerodynamic design which went on to inspire the Airstream family of trailers developed by Wally Byam. Today, you can still buy a "Bowlus" trailer by the new production company using the Bowlus name. You can also read more about the original trailer [here](#).



The Bowlus travel trailer



William Hawley Bowlus passed away in 1967 in Pacoima (Los Angeles County). But there is a local connection to this story...

During the time that Sam and I lived in San Jose, William's son Jack Bowlus was an active member of our local EAA62 Chapter, including as a member of the Chapter's Board of Directors in 2004.



Jack (far right) in 2009, accepting an award on behalf of his father at the International Air & Space Hall of Fame, part of the San Diego Air & Space Museum.

Many years ago, Jack presented to an EAA62 Chapter meeting, using home movies that he had carefully preserved. He was happy to show them to us (but absolutely would not give them to a museum), and I enjoyed seeing his father's gliders being used to give flying lessons to Charles Lindbergh and his wife, Ann Morrow Lindbergh (who also flew in a Bowlus sailplane and became the first woman in the United States to receive a "first class" glider license).

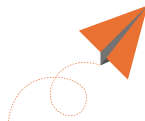
Like father, like son: Jack Bowlus was also an airplane builder. He and S. P. Parkins built N325BP, the BoPar Special, with an experimental V-6 automotive engine under its hood.



The BoPar Special at the 2015 Hollister airshow, photo courtesy of Mike Henniger

Errata: *See and Avoid* article

In last month's article *See and Avoid* I mistakenly identified the Cirrus as taking off in front of a landing RV. That was incorrect. The Cirrus was doing a straight-in RNAV approach and the RV-8 was just taking off, clipping the tail of the landing Cirrus. My apologies for this error ~ *Andy Werback*.



Chapter Business

EAA Chapter 124 General Meeting Minutes

August 6, 2025

Meeting convened 7.15pm.

The president called the meeting to order and thanked the culinary crew for another wonderful Tri-tip BBQ dinner. The president welcomed new members - a number of young visitors attended for the first time.

Mike Cingari came to the podium to announce he has a friend out of state who is about to receive a Lycoming IO360 Experimental class engine which he no longer needs to complete his build. Interested parties should contact the president.

Sam James, the Ray Scholarship awardee, shared details about how his training is progressing.

John Fritsch gave the group an update about his recent luncheon with a former well-loved member of the club who is living comfortably in Cultural.

The president urged people to become active in the Chapter's Young Eagles program.

Mike Tovani took to the microphone and gave a speech honoring **Larry Rengstorf** for his many years of service. His years of service to the Chapter are worthy of special recognition. The Chapter awarded him an EAA sponsored plaque, commemorating his tireless service as the Chapter's Facilities Manager.

Otis Holt then gave a very ringing endorsement of **Art Hayssen's** Mountain Flying Class. He described the experience as delightfully varied, informative and moderately challenging.

Presentation: Oshkosh Debrief. The president shared his once-in-a-lifetime experience flying to Oshkosh in a fellow Chapter member's Citation jet! He described the commanding views and showed pictures of towering thunderstorm clouds rising up thousands of feet. One of the most astounding exhibits he saw was the Beta electric airplane. He then invited several of the Chapter members to share their experiences.

Resident rotor-craft specialist **Paul Hollingworth** shared his experience in a Bell helicopter. Every year five-minute flights are given to attendees, affording them a bird's eye view of the entire exhibition grounds.

Next up were two of the Chapter's youngest and most enthusiastic members: **Bailey Caldwell** and **Luis Membrilla**. Bailey described her experience of getting to fly an X Cub on the grass runway. Luis described how captivated he was by the night exhibitions.

Antonia Cerniglio, the president's daughter, also described her thrilling remembrances of the trip. Her fresh-eyed perception of this aviation extravaganza reinforces the feeling many adults still experience.

The final speaker was **Campbell Potter**, CFI instructor and active Chapter member. He described how much planning it takes to fly a 1967 172 all the way across the country, including the skill and planning it takes to climb in warm weather at max gross over the Rockies in a low performance airplane.

Chapter Business

Chapter 124 Contact Information

President:	Dominic Cerniglio (24/25)	(310) 628-9008
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Treasurer:	John Whitehouse (24/25)	(707) 217-2687
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	George Marshall (23/24)	707 293 4583
	John Swanstrom (24/25)	707 758 9017
	John Fluno (23/24)	707 315 5524
	Jeremiah James (24)	707 291 8445
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	David Heal	(707) 953-5021
Young Eagles:	Jenny Hollingworth	(650) 483-5203
Chapter Roster:	Mike Tovani	(707) 321-2740

EAA Chapter 124
5550 Windsor Road
Windsor, CA 95492

Chapter meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm. FOOD (\$10) AND SOCIALIZING (free) from 6:15 to 7:00 pm. **EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**

Directions: The site is located on the west side of Sonoma County Airport. Take the Shiloh Road exit from Highway 101 in northern Santa Rosa. Turn left at the stop light (west) and continue to a "T" intersection. Turn left again and follow the road to the EAA sign on the left.

How to Submit an Article to the Newsletter

Members are invited to submit articles of interest. You will be notified whether or not an article will appear in the current issue.

Email your article to: jennyhollingworth14@gmail.com

Deadline for newsletter submissions is the 20th of each month. Articles submitted will be included in the newsletter at the discretion of the editor. All articles are copyrighted. To reproduce any article, please contact the editor.

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