



October 2023 Newsletter

New Mexico Pilots Association

NMPA operates exclusively for charitable, educational, and scientific purposes for promoting general aviation, aviation safety and education, and pilot camaraderie; preserving airfields and airspace; and to engage in any activities permissible for nonprofit corporations, organized under the laws of the state of New Mexico.

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Telling the Red Tails Story at LOEFI

The Editor's Log

by Lanny Tanning



Living the dream in N 60 BF....

Interested in a Tour Through ATC Facilities?

Stopped by the ATC table at LOEFI. Glad I did because I remembered to ask about something that has been on my mind for quite awhile...tours.

Back in the mists of time, I was a USAF tactical controller. A real bonus for us was cross-training with the combat pilots who were our primary customers. They would visit a radar site and see the big picture on our scopes. And that gave them a chance to tell us how we might provide better service while they were on our frequency. We got to learn what went on in their cockpits after they checked in and we said, "Select Weapons Safe." After vectoring them to their refueling tankers - taking off with a full bomb load often necessitated taking off with a less than full fuel - we got them to the target area, and said, "Select Weapons Hot." Then we handed them off to a Forward Air or Ground Controller, while keeping an eye on them. They were very busy with all this while flying very fast airplanes.

At our site, they got to see how we tracked them along with many other aircraft while we worked refuelings, post-strike join-up vectoring (flights tend to get scattered when they encounter air defense fire), rescue and recovery work, etc. They listened to our constant communications with ground units, FACs, Recon flights, artillery units, naval gunfire coordinators, airborne command posts, AWACS and on and on. Everybody was busy. Comm efficiency was critical.

Controllers could visit flight lines and get first-hand looks into fighters and other mission aircraft and see the complexity of the cockpits. We'd learn to keep our squawk and frequency changes to a minimum. And sometimes we'd get a ride. My T-33 ride was a hoot!

Getting to the point...if any NMPA pilots would like tower or center tours, the ATC crew would be happy to schedule a tour. Drop me an email if you're interested and we'll start working on some dates. lannytonning@gmail.com works best.



Upcoming Events

NMPA Members can login and post any aviation events on the [Events calendar](#).
Or send announcements to nmpa@nmpilots.org
and we'll post for you!



Upcoming Events

October 3-9

[War Eagles Museum, Santa Teresa, NM \(KDNA\)](#)

Living History Flight Experiences, Oct 3-9 Wings and Wheels Fly-in, Cruise-in, Oct 7

October 21

Wide range of activities plus airshows and pylon racing.

<https://www.visitlascruces.com/events/annual-events-festivals/las-cruces-air-space-expo/>

October 22-24

[Fly Out To Bar 10 Ranch - 1Z1 Grand Canyon](#)

RESERVE NOW! A block of rooms is held through late April. You'll not want to miss this special weekend at the Bar 10 Ranch. The Bar 10 Fly-In is Sunday - Tuesday, Oct. 22-24, 2023 organized by NMPA's Perry Null. Optional Saturday outdoor amphitheater show at St George. Make lodging reservations online at www.Bar10.com.

October 28

Deming Fly In

Come on down! (Unless you live in Columbus...then Come On Up!) Playas, vineyards, rockhound heaven -

<https://www.airnav.com/airport/KDMN>

Be sure to check the NMPA Website (www.nmpilots.org) for updates to any and all events.

Click on links for more information.

Here is your NMPA

John Lorenz, President



John Lorenz is a 6000 hour CFII, MEII, glider, and sand-lot acrobatic pilot. He has given over 2000 hours of tailwheel instruction. During the day he is a consulting geologist.

Illegal Charters, Fly-ins, and Guadalcanal

Illegal Charters: The FAA is currently cracking down on “illegal charters”. Do you know the subtle difference between 1) “Hey Joe, I’m flying down to the game in Las Cruces this weekend, do you want to come along and share the cost of the fuel?” and 2) “Hey Joe, there’s a game in Las Cruces this weekend, we can fly down if you share the cost of the fuel.”? The kicker is in the word “if”: to legally share expenses a pilot *must* be planning to make the trip regardless of whether someone shares those expenses. Sharing expenses is not legal if the trip is contingent on finding someone to share them. Convolute, but there it is. The FAA will be happy to gig you if you don’t discriminate between the two scenarios.

Magdalena Fly-In: Mayor Richard Rumph and the community of Magdalena hosted a great fly-in at Magdalena, NM (population 850) last month. Breakfast and lunch were complimentary thanks to the Bohannon Huston construction company and were served with a smile by the citizenry. We probably had 12-14 airplanes come for breakfast, and five of us were ferried around town to see the sights Saturday afternoon including a tour of the ghost mining town of Kelly; thank you Floyd! The same gang of five braved the reported local wolf population to camp out overnight. Mayor Rumpf has great plans for the airport including a dedicated camping area and more hangars. He would be happy to have drop-in aviation visitors, offering transportation if you give him a heads-up beforehand. He is also planning a VLA fly-in, possibly with an opportunity to climb up to and *into* one of the satellite dishes: keep track of Events at www.nmpilots.org.



An envious youth from Magdalena watches Jim Covington depart the fly-in in his Twin Commander

Meanwhile, congratulations to the EAA 179 gang at Double Eagle for another great Land of Enchantment Fly-In, and thanks to Dave Jesurun and Cliff Chetwin for another successful NMPA Mountain Flying Clinic.

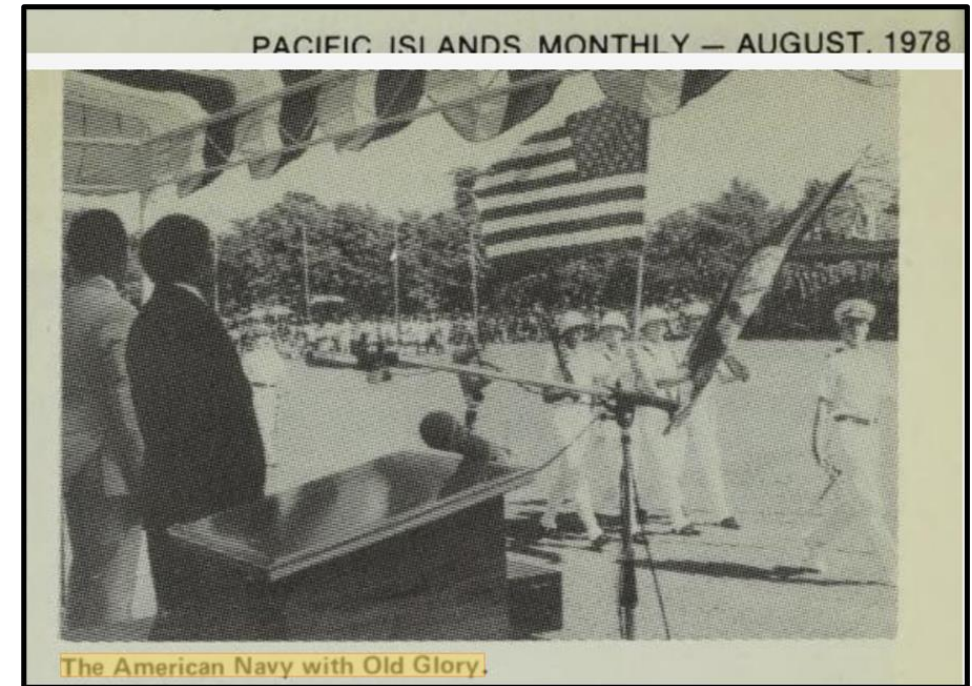
October Flying Opportunities: Perry Null is organizing one of his great fly-ins to Bar10 Ranch on the rim of the Grand Canyon Oct. 22-24. I must ruefully admit that this one is still on my bucket list, might even get Liz to come along with me and partake of the unique accommodations (have you ever slept in a Conestoga wagon?) Also, the War Eagles Museum in Santa Teresa is hosting a Wings and Wheels Fly-In, with rides in the C-47 *Band of Brothers*, in the southern part of the state October 7th. The museum will be hosting our quarterly NMPA board meeting in November, so you have two chances to visit. Get your flying done now, it'll get cold soon enough.

Rose Longmire: If you haven't met Rose Longmire, you've missed meeting a unique individual and one New Mexico's more dedicated aviation volunteers. Rose serves as the Young Eagles coordinator for EAA Chapter 530 in Los Lunas, but has made her operation portable, taking it to parts of the state where otherwise there wouldn't be YE programs: join her and fly the kids in Deming October 28th. Rose also organizes and sells our NMPA hats and T-shirts. She flies co-pilot for Jerry Donovan so you can buy the NMPA apparel from her at most of our fly-ins, or I can put you in touch with her to buy one at other times. Rose has a couple years on most of us and is rightly proud of it, but I do not know a more wonderful person.

Remembering Guadalcanal: Lawrence Cortesi, author of *Bloody Friday off Guadalcanal*, states that when the Solomon Islands gained independence in 1978, the population cheered the small delegation of American sailors for an hour when they passed the reviewing stand. Terrible sacrifices were made by American armed forces during the brutal 1942-43 battle for Guadalcanal island, staving off the planned invasion of Australia. The numbers of marines, soldiers, sailors, and airmen were small compared to other theaters of the war, but the stakes were high. The rag-tag Cactus Air Force, flying Wildcats, Dauntlesses, and P-39s, kept the Japanese from reinforcing their troops on the island while the American ground echelon kept the muddy American airfield from being over-run by those troops, in a vicious cycle that ground on for six months. America is not totally innocent, but we have been one of the few countries to send soldiers overseas without, generally, intending to stay.



Available from Rose Longmire, in blue or yellow. Unique format allows for customization with genuine aviation oil and grease stains.



The American delegation to the 1978 independence ceremonies in the Solomon Islands was small but warmly welcomed 36 years after the vicious battle for Guadalcanal. <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-335756159/view?sectionId=nla.obj-340868744&partId=nla.obj-335791312#page/n13/mode/1up>

TFR's and T or C

by Jim Covington, Chair,
Advocacy Committee

Federal Aviation
Administration

TFR List TFR Map Map Airports TFR Help NOTAM SEARCH SUA

NOTAM

Number : FDC 3/5865 Download shapefiles

Issue Date : September 05, 2023 at 1717 UTC

Location : LAS CRUCES, New Mexico

Beginning Date and Time : September 08, 2023 at 1400 UTC

Ending Date and Time : September 08, 2023 at 2300 UTC

Reason for NOTAM : Space Operations Area

Type : Space Operations

Replaced NOTAM(s) : N/A

Pilots May Contact : ALBUQUERQUE (ZAB) ARTCC, 505-856-4500

Jump To: Affected Areas
Operating Restrictions and Requirements
Other Information

Affected Area(s) Top

Airspace Definition:
Region bounded by:

	Latitude:	Longitude:	FRD:
From:	33°14'00"N	107°09'00"W	TCS101007.2
To:	33°00'00"N	107°13'00"W	TCS156017.2
To:	32°54'00"N	107°09'00"W	TCS151023.8
To:	32°54'00"N	107°16'00"W	TCS165022.9
To:	33°00'00"N	107°21'00"W	TCS179017.3
To:	33°07'00"N	107°18'00"W	TCS173010
To:	33°08'00"N	107°17'00"W	TCS168008.9
To:	33°14'00"N	107°09'00"W	TCS101007.2

Altitude: From the surface up to Unlimited

Effective Date(s):
From September 08, 2023 at 1400 UTC
To September 08, 2023 at 2300 UTC

Operating Restrictions and Requirements Top

No pilots may operate an aircraft in the areas covered by this NOTAM (except as described).

SPACE OPS AREA: ACFT OPS ARE PROHIBITED.

VIRGIN GALACTIC LAUNCHES AGAIN

Editor's Note: Jim Covington is the new chair for the NMPA Advocacy committee. When not checking into aviation issues he flies a twin Commander out of Santa Fe.

Background: For the first commercial Virgin Galactic launch few months ago, ATC had a TFR in place for several days when the whole launch and recovery cycle took less than an hour. Since this will be an ongoing issue, NMPA, trying to be proactive, asked ATC on behalf of the pilots of New Mexico, whether they could reduce the time the TFR will be in place.

This is Jim's report on his query to ABQ Center.

“After a few handoffs and transfers I reached Paulette at the Airspace and Procedures office. Here's the scoop on why the TFR is for 9 hours a day for three days.

“The scheduled launch time is near the beginning of the window on the first day. The TFR starts at 8AM, and the carrier aircraft is scheduled to liftoff at 8:30. That gives them enough time to try and clear the airspace for anyone who may be inside it when the TFR starts.

“If all goes according to schedule, both aircraft (the carrier and the space vehicle) will be on the ground by 9:15. The Space Ops office at the FAA, who are monitoring the launch live, will cancel all the remaining TFRs by 9:30 after getting an all-clear from personnel on site. ABQ center will not know when the TFR will end, but will be able to tell pilots in the air whether or not it is currently active.



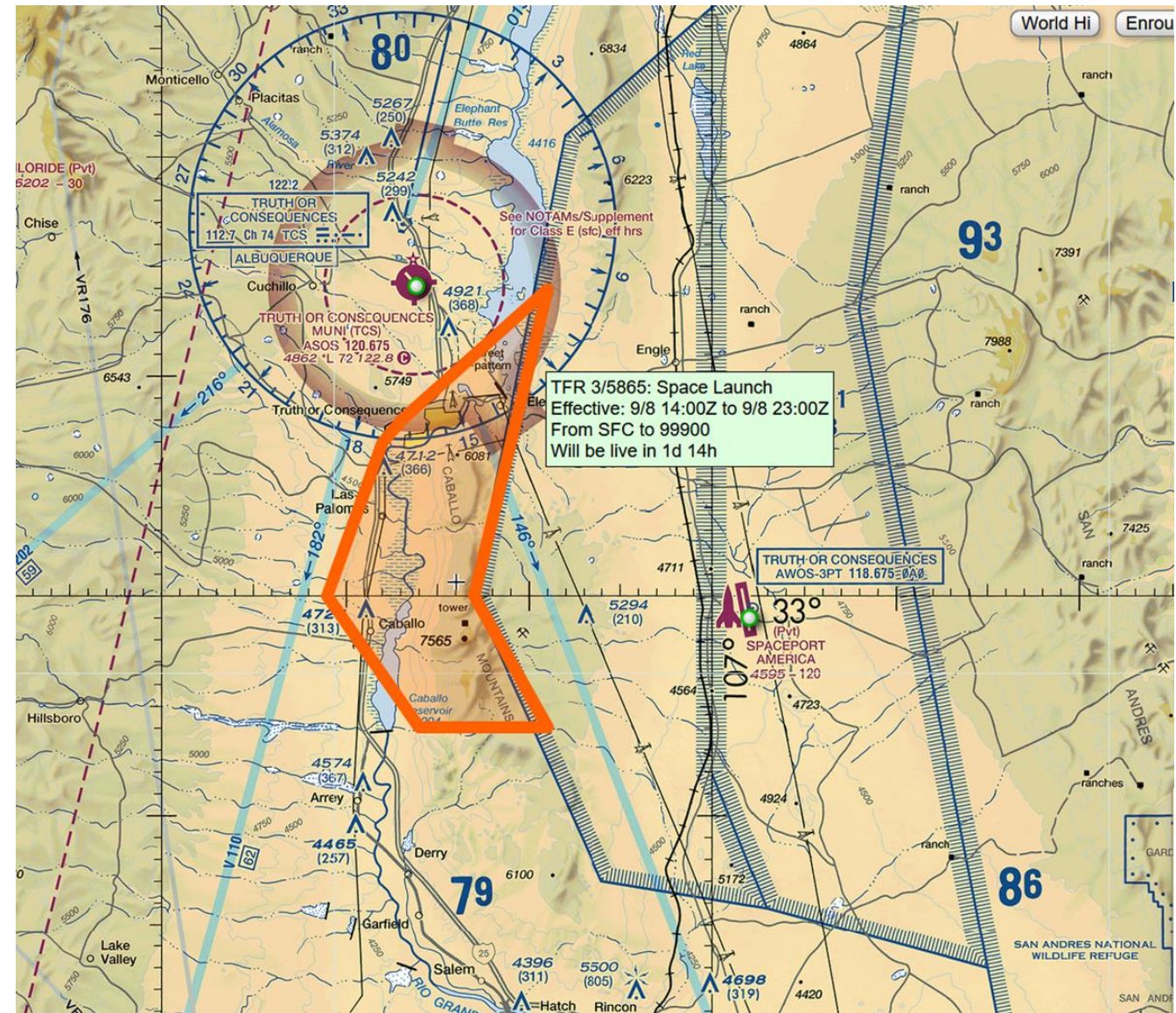
“If there is a delay in the launch for any reason, the active TFR will stay hot until the launch is scrubbed for the day. Delays can come from weather, technical issues, or aircraft in the hazard area. If the launch has been confirmed scrubbed for the day, SpaceOps will cancel the TFR for the remainder of the day but the next days' TFRs will still be on the schedule.

“Virgin Galactic has 3 days to launch. If they can't launch in 3 days, the process starts over.

“Why is it so big? Didn't they say they only needed the existing restricted airspaces?

“It's oversized because the launches are still a relatively new process. They have expanded what they call the "hazard area" to allow for unknown unknowns. As they get more experience launching, and more data from successful launches, the plan is to shrink the hazard area and thus reduce the TFR back to the original restricted areas. The rate at which the TFR shrinks depends on the success rate of the launches.

TRF for 9/8, as of 9/6/23



Backcountry Beat

by Ron Keller



Ron Keller flies a C-182 and has been involved in aviation for the better part of his life. Ron retired from FAA Technical Operations in 2011 and has stayed busy ever since, including working for the New Mexico Aviation Division, and currently serves on the NMPA Board of Directors and as Co-Chair of the NMPA Backcountry Committee. Ron is a Recreational Aviation Foundation Liaison and serves on the New Mexico Airstrip Network Steering Committee.

Autumn Activities...

Autumn has arrived, and with it, cooler temperatures and great flying weather.

The annual Gila Regional Fly-in was held over Labor Day weekend with good attendance and great flying weather, at least in the morning hours. The afternoons got pretty windy, of course not forecast, and some activities presented some challenges. Grilling the green chile brats on Friday evening required a group of attendees to stand around the grill and shield it from the wind. After dinner, the wind subsided and allowed for a campfire gathering.

Saturday morning breakfast was great as usual, thanks to Mark and Chris the master chefs, with Gregg assisting. Jeff led a hike into the Frisco Box and the group returned in time for pre-dinner activities. After Jeff drew the winning entries for the backcountry airstrip flying task, it was time to draw tickets for the RAF 20 year anniversary prizes. The grand prize winner was Ken Nebrig from Prescott, winning a RAF-branded and donated Bose Bluetooth speaker. Our catered dinner arrived right on schedule, including a very special RAF 20 Year carrot cake. I mean the cake was decorated to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the RAF, a NMPA partner organization. I don't want you to think the cake was 20 years old; it was delicious! After dinner we had another campfire gathering with Ike and Carol providing musical entertainment.

Sunday morning, after another great breakfast, it was time to pack up and head home. Many Thanks go out to the folks who helped clean up, pack up, and load up all the things it takes to put on a weekend event. For next year, we anticipate having a pilots' lounge at our disposal.

As of mid-September, construction has started on the foundation for the FEMA modular building that has been earmarked as the lounge for years. It would be interesting to see it being transported the 6 miles up to Reserve Airport from the county fairgrounds.



Mark, Chris and Gregg



Soon to be a pilots' lounge

Backcountry Beat, continued

As you read this, I should be at Sacaton Landing Strip, October 2-3, to oversee the installation of a brand new vault toilet at the Rain Creek Trailhead. It is one of the projects made possible by a challenge cost share agreement between the Gila National Forest and the RAF. Of course, the rehabilitation and reopening of the airstrip was also one of the agreement projects, with an assist from NMPA. I think NMPA provided the windsock pole and other logistical help, along with volunteers to get the rehabilitation completed. In fact, I flew; yes flew, to Sacaton on September 16 after stops at Magdalena for a great breakfast, and Reserve to look at the construction work. Sacaton is holding up well after some heavy monsoon rains.

As some of you know, I went straight from the Gila Fly-in to Negrito Airstrip to join my family on an elk archery hunt. It was another reminder that I am not 20 anymore. But I survived, and so did all the elk we saw. Not our best hunt to be sure, but I did have a pleasant surprise when 2 planes flew in. First was Dave doing some training with whom I assume was an employee, followed shortly by Paul and Vicki, a couple from Australia, who keep a plane in Arizona. They plan to fly and camp all over the Gila next summer. Negrito is a gem of a backcountry airstrip and we made use of the grill attached to the fire ring. Gregg and I each donated some steel a couple of years ago, and I built the grill top and installed it. It is very versatile. You can grill over a wood fire and not worry about hotdogs or hamburger patties falling through or off. You can set a Weber mini grill on top and use propane, or you can use a 12" Dutch oven within the grill top. There is a shade structure over one of the picnic tables to keep out of the hot mid-day sun. The vault toilet is a perfect distance away. Negrito is a great place to start your backcountry flying and camping. Please get with a backcountry flight instructor if you have no previous experience.

Until next month,
Fly Safe and Often!
Ron

Safety Briefings are available on the NMPA website for all the [Gila USFS Airstrips](#). Note that some require prior permission – just a phone call.

Another great resource, is www.Airfield.Guide, thanks to the Recreational Aviation Foundation (RAF)



Ready to pour a concrete foundation at Reserve



Negrito fire ring and grill top



Reserve's new pilot lounge arriving on site!

The Mountain Dream Machine



Mountain Flying

by Cliff Chetwin



Cliff is a retired National Park Service pilot and a Master/Gold Seal CFI with over 40 years experience flying in the Rockies, Sierras, and Alaska. He lives in Kremmling, Colorado and currently owns a Superhawk.

NMPA's Mountain Flying Committee often fields questions from flatlanders about whether or not their aircraft is acceptable for flying here in New Mexico and all mountains in general. As with any other aviation question the correct answer is almost always "it depends". Each of us has our own flight patterns and biases, often tied to whatever aircraft we happen to have right now or at least the next one that we're eying on *Trade A Plane* or *Barnstormers*.

In reality the answer really needs to consider if the pilot is talking about actually flying in the mountains or merely over the mountains. Going over the mountains usually requires operating in the flight levels and this is a whole different ballgame, generally not what we think about when we talk of general aviation mountain flying. I probably should also exclude those who mistakenly ask about flying into the mountains since that is usually a one time opportunity and will involve insurance companies, medical providers, the Civil Air Patrol, the NTSB, the FAA, the local sheriff, news media and a host of other entities exploring the unplanned and sudden stop.



Typical day for a Porter

As most of us know everything from trikes and ultralights to the heavy metal with multiple blowers somewhere on the Airframe are safely flown in the mountains if flight conditions and pilot skill levels are right. Thus the correct answer to the question needs to be based on how much the pilot intends to haul, where does the pilot intend to haul it to/from, pilot experience, and how much leeway does the pilot have in deferring a proposed flight due to weather or other pressures. There is also the "how much do you want to spend" question but for today I'll focus on the performance questions. If the intended use is in the "load 'er to the gills, gotta' go, and gotta' go now" category then a lot more capability will be needed than if we're talking about recreational flying with relatively small loads and the ability to defer the flight if conditions exceed personal minimums.

In almost all cases we are going to be looking at aircraft that weren't designed specifically for the mountain environment, such as my Superhawk, but which have capability suited to some mountain flight. This represents most of today's available fleet and is fine as long as we also understand and accept the capability that the aircraft doesn't have. Fly within the performance limits and the aircraft of your choice is a good steed. Exceed those limits and you risk having a bad day. Pilot capability is also a critical factor in the decision and we unfortunately continue to have mountain accidents where it was the pilot lacking, not the aircraft.

The good news is that there are a few aircraft that have been designed for the unique conditions of backcountry and mountain flying. One aircraft that was designed specifically for the mountainous backcountry environment (and that I would love to fly) is the Pilatus PC-6 Porter. Unless you’ve watched the movie *Air America*, done relief work in Africa, or perhaps were involved in a country where our government said we weren’t present (ie: Laos and Cambodia) doing things our government said we weren’t doing (ie: flying and shooting at things), you probably aren’t aware of this aircraft.

The Pilatus PC-6 Porter is a single engine utility aircraft designed by Pilatus Aircraft of Switzerland. First flown in 1959, the PC-6 was produced at Pilatus Flugzeugwerke in Stans, Switzerland and was built in both piston engine and turboprop versions. It was produced under license for a time by Fairchild Hiller in the United States. After around 600 deliveries Pilatus produced the last one in early 2019. Most of the aircraft that were not owned by the U.S. Government (almost all were at one time or another), and that we didn’t fly in Southeast Asia (OK, we did), were the turboprop version produced by Fairchild and found homes in third world missionary work.

The initial turbine powered models of the PC-6 were equipped with the Astazou II power plant. However its reliability was marginal and the Garrett Air Research TPE 331 was utilized by operators such as Air America, increasing reliability, gross payload, and top speed although at the cost of increased fuel consumption. In May 1996, the Garrett was replaced by the superior Pratt & Whitney Canada PT6A. Most of the Fairchild PC-6s were utilized during the Vietnam War, some even officially. Those which the government publically recognized were designated the AU-23A Peacemaker. The misnamed Peacemaker was fitted with a side-firing 20mm XM-197 Gatling cannon, four wing pylons and a center fuselage station for external ordnance. However, the AU-23A proved to be a poor performer in combat and all were returned to the continental U.S. and placed into storage after only a single year of operation. A few were later reconfigured for medical missions in Europe but otherwise official U.S. use of the aircraft ended. Unofficial use continued into the early 1980’s (and likely beyond) with Air America operating many of these for various clandestine missions including paradropping supplies to irregular troops, passenger transport, reconnaissance, prisoner transport, aerial radio repeaters, and other intelligence and paramilitary operations.

The PC-6’s real strengths relative to our mountain flying needs are the solid STOL performance and its high density altitude capability. It can easily take off within a distance of 640 feet and land in 427 feet (it can do even better with a skilled pilot), while carrying a payload of 2,646 lbs. Thanks to its high density altitude performance, the PC-6 holds the world record for highest landing by a fixed wing aircraft at 18,865 feet msl on the Dhaulagiri glacier in Nepal. A surprising negative is the 60mph/52 kt stall speed which seems a bit high for an aircraft with superior STOL performance. This notwithstanding, the PC-6 is certainly a most capable aircraft for flying in the mountains, and probably even into the mountains but who would want to do that to such a fine aircraft?

Other key numbers are:	Maximum speed: 144 mph/125 kt)	Crew: 1
	Cruise speed: 132 mph/115 kt)	Capacity: up to 10 pax / 1,130 kg (2,491 lb)
	Stall speed: 96 km/h (60 mph/52 kt)	Length: 11 m (36 ft 1 in)
	Range: 390 nm with maximum payload	Wingspan: 15.87 m (52 ft 1 in)
	Ferry range: 870 nm	Empty weight: 1,270 kg (2,800 lb)
	Service ceiling: 26,893 ft	Max takeoff weight: 2,800 kg (6,173 lb)
	Wing loading: 19 lb/sq ft	Airfoil: NACA 64-514
	Fuel flow: ~240pph (cruise), ~400pph (full throttle)	

(Data from Jane's All The World's Aircraft 1993–1994, Pilatus Aircraft, and Flying Magazine)

A few Porters are still utilized by various militaries in Europe and Asia, primarily in support roles, but for the most part today's remaining PC-6s are utilized by missionary and relief operation entities in the more remote areas of the world. It also has a home in Europe as a skydiving platform. Those still in operation today are the Pratt & Whitney Canada powered versions, using a fully reversible, constant-speed, three-bladed HC-B3TN-3D or a four-bladed HC-D4N-3P Hartzell aluminum propeller and a reduction gearbox. Pilatus claims that the PC-6's superior STOL capabilities make it capable of landing in places otherwise accessible only to far more expensive and less capable helicopters. Flying Magazine has called the PC-6 "one of the most helicopter-like airplanes in terms of takeoff performance." It is fully capable of being operated from undeveloped, rough airstrips, in remote areas, hot climates and at high altitudes and in all weather conditions. In addition to the STOL characteristics the high wing and considerable propeller clearances make it even more ideal for backcountry and mountain operations. Options for floats and skis add to its versatility. The PC-6 is probably overbuilt but according to actual operators it defines the concept of rugged and is superior to most other fixed wing or rotary wing aircraft when it comes to operating in the challenging mountain environment. I know Helio Courier fans likely would disagree and place it ahead of the Porter. While the H-295 is a fine machine and has a well deserved backcountry reputation it also has some annoying negatives for mountain flying that I will discuss in a future article.

An online search showed few Porters currently for sale with prices, mostly quoted in Euros, converted to dollars ranged from \$760,000USD to \$1,000,000USD. Without further research I have no idea how reasonable these numbers might be but finding a low time hangar queen isn't likely so pricing needs to be adjusted accordingly. However, if you're really looking for what is possibly the most capable mountain flying fixed wing aircraft in the world and you still have one of the COVID based stimulus checks left over then even at these prices a PC-6 might be just the thing for your next foray into the Rockies. Regrettably the Peacemaker version is no longer available so if your goal is to take on the bad guys or otherwise create mayhem in the mountains you're limited to one of the PC based flight simulator games currently on the market.

Until next month, enjoy the mountains and fly safely.

Obscure and Scenic New Mexico

by Jeff Gilkey



Jeff Gilkey has been flying his Aerotrike Cobra (ELSA, weight shift control) since 2004. He has logged over 2200 hours on cross country adventures into nearly every corner of New Mexico, with many extending into Colorado, Arizona, Utah and Texas. For more information, visit his YouTube Channel at

<https://www.youtube.com/user/jefftrike>

Rio Grande Gorge

The Taos Gorge Bridge crosses the Rio Grande northwest of Taos, NM. The bridge and gorge is about 3 miles northwest of the approach end of runway 13 at the Taos Airport (KSKX). After construction, the bridge received an award for the “Most Beautiful Long Span Bridge” of 1966. A ground level view from the center of the bridge is awe inspiring, only to be surpassed by a view from the air.

How deep is the Rio Grande Gorge? Wikipedia claims it is 800 feet deep “just south of the Rio Grande Gorge Bridge”, but most tables list the bridge height as 565 feet. The only place that approaches 800 feet of depth is near the Pilar crossing 15 miles to the south, where the gorge widens out.



Beginning of the Gorge



Where does the Rio Grande Gorge begin?

This is a bit ambiguous, but a shallow walled canyon starts about 8 river miles north of the Colorado/New Mexico state line.

Meandering Canyon



The flight south along the meandering canyon takes you across high desert plains with very few signs of man. This canyon gradually deepens as you approach Ute Mountain, a huge dome of volcanic rock. This mountain rises about 2500 feet above the sagebrush covered plains to a height of 10,093 feet. There 3 or 4 similar domes on both sides of the river in this area.

Bighorn Sheep



Last summer as I flew past Ute Mountain, I saw a pair of bighorn sheep standing at the canyon rim. My wingtip mounted GoPro camera captured this image of them calmly watching my trike as I flew by.

Red River – Rio Grande Confluence



A few miles further south, directly east of Grant Besley Airport (NM03) (private), the Red River flows into the Rio Grande from the Sangre de Cristo Mountains to the east.

Wow



A few miles south of the Taos Gorge Bridge, I had a nice surprise.

The Rio Grande Gorge is always a thrill to view from the air and in calm morning conditions, the experience can be quite mesmerizing. Be sure to visit next time you are in the neighborhood.

As the CFI sees it

by John Lorenz



John Lorenz is a 6000 hour CFII, MEII, glider, and sand-lot acrobatic pilot. He has given over 2000 hours of tailwheel instruction. During the day he is a consulting geologist.

Any Yahoo....

The FAA's model for becoming a pilot seems to assume that anyone can learn to fly, as it allows students* to take the written and practical tests as many times as they want to until they finally pass. When was the last time you heard of someone who failed a flight test and didn't take it again, ultimately succeeding and usually on the second try? The choices for a test result are pass or "fail with the option to try again"; the examiner is not given a box to check for "*You're not capable of flying, go away and don't come back.*"

Granted, most students without aptitude drop out before they ever take a practical/flight test, and most CFIs won't recommend such students for a test if only because failures go on their own record. (Telling a student that they are not cut out to be pilot has to be one of the hardest things a CFI does). But the point is that with enough perseverance, time, and money, almost anyone can get a license to fly.

Failed flight tests allow the FAA to claim that the nationwide 80%-20% average pass-fail ratio demonstrates a measure of quality control, and FAA Examiners and Designated Pilot Examiners with a pass rate of more than 90% find themselves subject to scrutiny from their local FSDO. But the system still lets marginal students slip through the cracks to become pilots and even instructors. In fact, given the high percentage of students who fail the first time but who eventually get their certificate, if you have progressed that far in your training you have almost a 100% chance of, ultimately, getting your certificate.



Otto Lilienthal and one of his later gliders. No-one assessed his piloting skills.

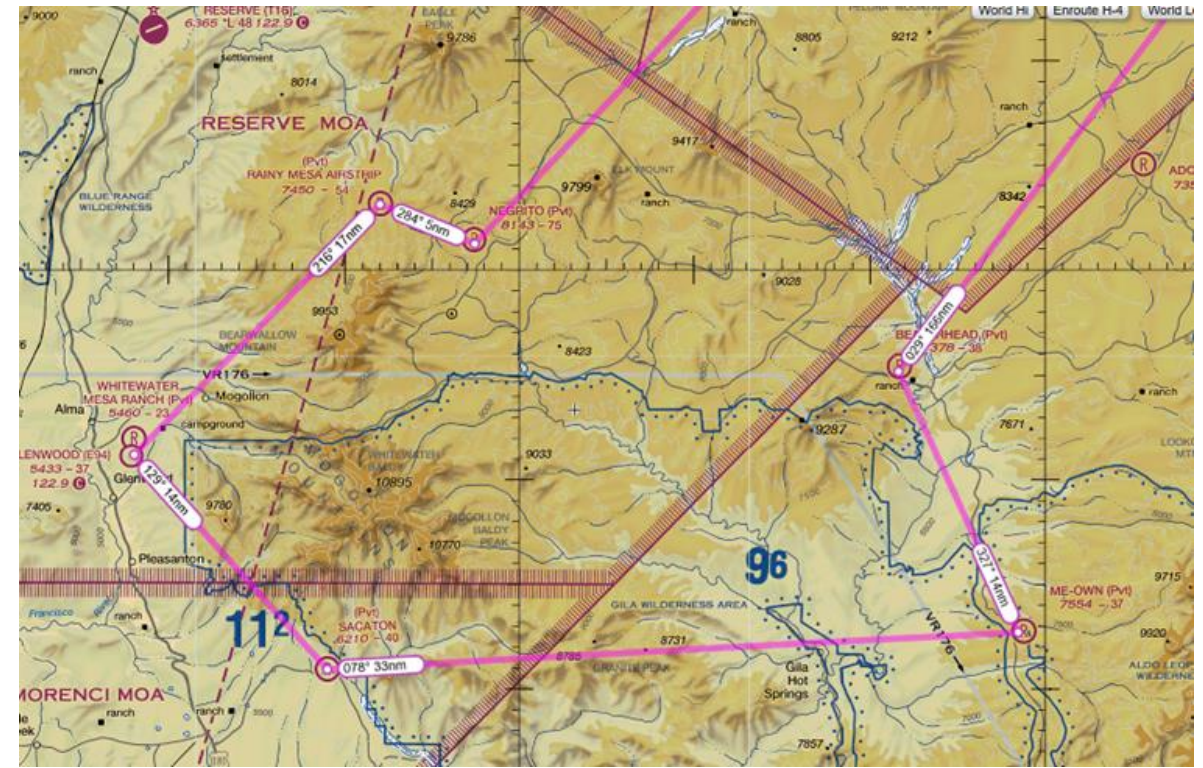
*The FAA now refers to students as "learners". I'm sorry, but that's awkward, pointless, and dumb.

Tests assess skill levels at one point in time, skills that can be artificially built to an unstable peak for the test and then allowed to deteriorate. Moreover, short flight tests cannot assess some of the more important aspects of flying such as judgement, attitude, decision making skills, maturity, and common sense. It tacitly is left to the CFI, who has a long-term association with a student, to assess these traits before recommending a student to an examiner, but not all CFIs do so.

Although the pass-fail ratio is somewhat lower for testing CFIs than for other certificates, instructor certifications follow the same process, and any pilot with a commercial certificate, 250 hours flight time, and some bookwork can eventually become an instructor. An instructor's certificate from the FAA would seem to offer some guarantee of competence, but in some cases it's a measure of perseverance rather than quality, and the two are not equivalent.

The FAA and the National Association of Flight Instructors both offer awards in attempts to quantify CFI ability (i.e., *Gold Seal Instructor*, and *Master CFI*, respectively), and although there is a minimum required student success rate, to some extent these are measures of volume, the number of students pushed through the system, rather than competence. Moreover, the FAA provides no ongoing CFI evaluation other than the required 2-year Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic, which is a measure of the instructor's online test-taking ability not the ability to teach. For real-world assessments of instructors' teaching abilities, ask their students.

We don't need to change the system, it's working for the most part and it's not obvious how to improve it without major heartbreak and sorrow, but we do need to recognize its limitations. We need to remember that not everyone with an FAA certificate is necessarily a competent or even terribly good pilot or instructor.



BACK-COUNTRY CLINIC?

NMPA would like to run another Back-Country Clinic next spring, taking pilots to airstrips in the Gila area of southwestern New Mexico. It would consist of half a day of class work, half a day of local practice, and a half day doing the Gila Round Robin depicted above. We have run this clinic successfully several times and several places, but the last two times we offered it there were no registrants. We hate to put effort into something that does not run, so to judge interest, if you would consider participating in such a clinic, please let me know.

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Tech Corner

by Will Fox



Pilot Incapacitation

My Dad got his pilot's license in a 1958 Cessna 172. I was 12 years old at the time and was really excited about it. After a few "interesting" cross country flights with the family, Dad informed me that he was going to teach me to be able to land the plane in an emergency should anything happen to him. Evidently Mom had refused the offer. So began a series of flights where Dad, who was very experienced, in my mind, with more than 100 hours of flight time, taught me how to fly an airplane. My training was very simple. All I needed to know was that pitch was airspeed and power was altitude. As far as landing the airplane went, all I had to do was maintain 80 mph, fly down close to the runway, and chop the power, easy peasy. We didn't actually practice the chopping the power and landing part, but I did learn how to fly around without stalling the airplane and make an approach to a runway. According to Dad, Mom would do the navigating and handle the radio so all I had to do was the flying. This was all very exciting to me and I can remember day dreaming about landing the plane and saving the day. We never discussed how I would get Dad out of the pilot seat and me into it, but I figured I could just crawl over the back of the seat and sit in his lap. That way if he somehow recovered he could take the controls back and land the airplane. In my youthful day dreams, Dad didn't recover until after I had landed the plane and saved the day. This was followed by the FAA giving me a pilot's license for this outstanding accomplishment. Fortunately for everyone involved, Dad never needed me as a backup:-)



A pilot slumped over the controls is bad news.

Pilot incapacitation is something we rarely think about when flying light aircraft. There is no training for it in a normal pilot curriculum nor is it in the Airman Certification Standards, and it is usually not covered in a Flight Review, so is it really a big deal? Probably not for younger pilots, but as you might imagine, it becomes more of a factor as you get older.

In-flight incapacitation means the pilot is not able to perform his or her duties and must be replaced by another pilot. There is also in-flight impairment, where a pilot is able to continue to do some of their duties, but I will focus on in-flight incapacitation here. Incapacitation may result from a number of problems, such as cardiac or cerebrovascular events, neurological problems, gastrointestinal problems, kidney stones, seizures, loss of consciousness, etc. In-flight incapacitation occurs at a rate of around 0.045 incidents per 100,000 hours for pilots

in their 40s. The rate can be up to 5 times higher for pilots in their 60s, according to one study I read, or about 0.23 incidents per 100,000 hours. In 2018 General Aviation (GA) accumulated 25,500,000 flight hours. If we apply the in-flight incapacitation numbers for commercial pilots to the flight hours for GA, we get something like 12-60 incidents per year in the US. Is this a reasonable estimate? Let's see.

As far as accidents go with regard to in-flight incapacitation, they are very rare on commercial flights because most commercial flights have two pilots on board. However the same can not be said about most private pilot operations, because they are usually flown by a single pilot, and incapacitation is almost assuredly going to lead to an accident. A quick search of the NTSB accident data base for accidents connected to pilot incapacitation over the last 10 years comes up with 108 accidents or about 11 accidents per year. This is close to the lower bound of the previous estimate made using the in-flight incapacitation rates above, so I think I'm in the ball park.

Is in-flight pilot incapacitation a serious problem? I don't think it is the most serious problem pilots face. Poor decision making ranks much higher on the list, but that doesn't mean we should ignore the problem. Can we do anything to reduce the accidents that result from it? I think so. Pilots are generally pretty good about monitoring their health and only flying when they feel well. However, as a pilot gets older it is even more important to do so. Sudden incapacitation is more prevalent as you age. Yearly visits to your doctor for a good medical exam if you are over 60 is a good idea. If you fly with your family you might consider having your spouse or another family member take a [Pinch Hitter](#) course, where they will be taught to fly and land the plane in an emergency. Consider flying an aircraft that has a [ballistic recovery system](#) in it. These systems are effective at saving lives in multiple scenarios besides pilot incapacitation. Affordable autopilots are coming out with the capability to [automatically level](#) the aircraft with the push of a button (the Blue Button) and that can assist not only a pilot but also a passenger with flying the plane in an emergency. Garmin has recently come out with an autopilot that that will [automatically land an aircraft](#) with a push of a button. It is currently aimed at higher end GA aircraft but I suspect it will become available for lighter aircraft in the not too distant future.

I'm reminded of another story. Many years ago I was taking a friend's young son for his first flight in a light aircraft. I went through the runup checklist with him, and before we taxied on to the runway I asked him if he had any questions. He looked at me and asked "What do I do if you faint?". I didn't really have a good answer for him, so I said, "Just keep shaking me until I wake up." There are much better answers to that question available today.



Effective ballistic recovery systems exist today for light aircraft and have proven to be life savers in an emergency over and over again.

CFI Resource List: A Member Benefit for Students and CFI's

NMPA Certificated Flight Instructor Resource List updated 3-28-2020
NMPA members who are CFI's and who would like to be listed here, or who need to modify their information, please contact John Lorenz at johnlorenz@geoflight.net



Instructor: Suzanne Azar

Contact: email suzanneschmeckazar@gmail.com

Primary areas of instruction: *Private, Commercial, Instrument, Multi-engine Instrument*

Airports you instruct at or will travel to: *El Paso, TX, Santa Teresa, NM, and Las Cruces, NM*

Do you have access to an airplane for instruction and if so what kind: *Cessna 172 and Cessna 182*

General summary of experience: *I have been a pilot since 1980 and a flight instructor since 1984. Among my many students I taught both of my daughters to fly. I have flown numerous air races through the US, Bahamas, Hawaii, and Canada. I hold a commercial pilot's license and am rated in single engine, multi-engine, glider, and seaplane, with an instrument rating. I fly a Lancair IVP a pressurized, retractable, high-performance composite experimental as my personal aircraft, and instruct in Piper and Cessna singles. As a Multi-engine Instructor, I have flown many aircraft from the 1956 Apache to a 690B Rockwell Commander turboprop. I also hold licenses as basic and advanced Ground Instructor and have earned the FAA's "Gold Seal" flight instructor license.*

Instructor: Mike Dellas

Contacts: (505) 699-7297, captrellas@aol.com

Located at Santa Fe (KSAF)

General summary of experience: *Currently flying for AAL, experience in Aeronca Champ to a Twin Beech D18/Douglas DC-3 and aerobatic planes such as Citabria and Decathlon, owned and operated a Luscombe, C-180, and C-310 including instruction over 45 year flying career.*

Instructor: Scott Burnett.

Contact: email ssburnettnm@gmail.com

Single and multi-engine CFI teaching in the student's aircraft. Specializes in tailwheel and Maule check-outs, private instruction, and ferry flights. Located at Mid Valley (E98)

Instructor: Peter D Murphy, contacts peterdenismurphy@gmail.com, 505-946-7777. CFII MEII LSP. Flight Design CT

Instructor: Diane de Souza - Taos - contact info is dyeingtoweave@gmail.com

"Information about these CFI resources is provided for the benefit of our CFI and student members. The NMPA and its officers do not endorse any of these resources. We urge all members, CFIs and students, to use good communication skills and show respect in all of our engagements with other members."

Meanwhile....

Fly In Fun!



Land of Enchantment and Magdalena Fly Ins
rounded out a great September for NM aviators!

