



August 2026

The Plane Scoop

A publication of the Central Valley Aviation Association

Congratulations to everyone who made it out to Oshkosh! Photo credit: Leticia Council.

We want to see our members' AirVenture 2026 photos! Email your top pics to CVAA@centralvalleyaviation.org to be featured in next month's Plane Scoop newsletter.



IN THIS ISSUE

Upcoming Events

The Solo Corner

Ask a CFI

Ground School

Birthdays & FCH DVD

About FCH

About CVAA

FCH PIN Code

Membership Form

Central Valley Aviation Association

CVAA was formed by Central California pilots in 1968 to support aviators who utilize Fresno Chandler Executive Airport. Join us monthly for an educational guest speaker, and make lifelong friendships with fellow local pilots and aviation enthusiasts.

Upcoming General Meeting

Join us at **6:30pm on Wednesday, August 5th** at the Fresno County Sheriff's Air Squadron Hangar at FCH! See next page for details.

Upcoming Events



Notice to members about General Meetings

In response to overwhelming member feedback, we're moving our General Meetings to the first Wednesday of each month at 6:30 PM local time. We hope that this change will allow a greater portion of our membership to participate. For more info about this change, please see the President's Message in the July edition of The Plane Scoop at www.centralvalleyaviation.org



August 2026 General Meeting

Join us on Wednesday, August 5th, at 6:30 PM local time in the Fresno County Sheriff's Air Squadron hangar as our CVAA President and local FAA Safety Team representative, Isaiah Kaninya, reviews the accident history for FAA fiscal year 2026 in the Sacramento and Fresno FSDOs, and discusses the prevention of inadvertent gear-up landings. FAA WINGS credit will be provided to attendees; prior registration available but not required. Full details and registration are available at FAASafety.gov



September 2026 CVAA Annual Member BBQ

Save the date! Our annual BBQ will be held at Fresno Chandler Executive Airport (KFCH) on Saturday, September 12, 2026. Full details will be included in the next Plane Scoop and emailed to members.



THE SOLO CORNER

CELEBRATING STUDENT MILESTONES &
THE NEXT GENERATION OF PILOTS
AT HISTORIC FRESNO CHANDLER AIRPORT



Rodolfo Ramos-Guillén First Solo Flight

Earning my first solo flight at Fresno Chandler Executive Airport was a milestone that had been months in the making. While many people imagine a solo flight as a single day on the calendar, the journey to reach that point often requires patience. In my case, my solo was delayed several times due to weather, aircraft maintenance, scheduling issues, instructor changes, and other factors that are simply part of flight training. Although the delays could sometimes be frustrating, they taught me that progress in aviation does not always happen on your preferred timeline.

Going into the day, I expected that I would likely solo, so I felt more cautiously excited than nervous. After completing flights with my instructor, he stepped out of the Cessna 172, N733YK, and wished me well. Suddenly, the seat beside me was empty, and for the first time every decision in the airplane belonged to me alone.

During the solo, I completed three takeoffs and landings in the traffic pattern at Fresno Chandler Executive Airport. The winds were stronger than I would have preferred, which added some pressure during the flight. One landing was a little firmer than I wanted, but overall the flight went smoothly. Throughout the flight I remained focused and relied on the training that had prepared me for this moment.

What surprised me most was how normal the experience felt. Before soloing, many student pilots expect the experience to feel overwhelming or dramatically different. For me, it felt very much like another traffic pattern lesson, except I was the one making every decision. Looking back, that feeling was reassuring because it showed how well my instructor had prepared me.

After landing, my parents, brother, grandmother, aunt, and cousin were there to celebrate with me. Sharing the accomplishment with my family made the experience even more meaningful. My instructor and my dad also took part in the traditional shirt-cutting ceremony, making the day one I will always remember.

My first solo left me feeling proud, excited, and relieved. If there is one lesson I would share with future student pilots, it is to trust both the process and your training. Delays are common, and every student's journey is different. Sometimes weather, maintenance, scheduling, or other circumstances slow your progress, but patience is part of becoming a pilot. When the day finally arrives, you may discover, as I did, that the biggest surprise is how normal it feels.

Ask a CFI

The safest pilots are those who never stop asking questions. Often, students focus so much on passing a checkride that they miss the chance to understand the "why" behind the rules. Whether you are struggling with complex instrument procedures, curious about how aerodynamics affect your landing, or wondering about the best ways to study for your next rating, I want to hear from you. My goal is to provide clear, professional, and practical answers that help you become a more confident and informed pilot.



Q: What is the best way to accrue my solo hours as a student?

A: Solo hours for a student should be the most exciting time in their flight training. It's when they are able to take the training wheels off, fly around on their own, and make real-time decisions without an instructor on board. The students with the most solo hours arguably have the most confidence and PIC attitude going into a checkride. I think the best way for students to accrue solo time is practicing maneuvers and providing real feedback to themselves and their instructors. If I was a student pilot looking for a flight school, one question I would ask is how many solo hours do you get? Many flight schools offer the bare minimum to reduce liability but that doesn't equate into a better pilot.



Shawn McMinn is a Gold Seal CFI, CFII, MEI, Vice President of CVAA, and flight instructor at Reedley College with 6 students ranging from PPL to Commercial. He plans to join the airlines and is thrilled with where he's at in his career. Shawn looks forward to answering your questions!

Have a Question for Shawn?

Email CVAA@centralvalleyaviation.org and Shawn will answer in an upcoming newsletter!

FREE PRIVATE PILOT GROUND SCHOOL • FRESNO, CA • OPEN TO THE COMMUNITY!



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IN THE SKY**
AVIATION

FREE GROUND SCHOOL FRESNO, CA FALL 2026

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WHY CHOOSE OUR ACCELERATED COURSE?



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IN JUST 9 WEEKS



TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS
6:00 PM – 8:30 PM



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COVERS ALL 17 CHAPTERS



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PROFESSIONALS & STUDENTS

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FASTER PROGRESS.
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Aeronautical Decision Making

FREE GROUND SCHOOL FOR EVERYONE!

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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP: \$50

CLASS SCHEDULE – TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS AT 6:00 PM

SEP 1	Registration & Orientation	OCT 1	Ch. 9 Flight Manuals & Other Documents
SEP 3	Ch. 2 Aeronautical Decision Making / FARs	OCT 6	Ch. 10 Weight & Balance
SEP 8	Ch. 3 Aircraft Construction	OCT 8	Ch. 11 Aircraft Performance
SEP 10	Ch. 4 Principles of Flight	OCT 13	Ch. 12 Weather Theory
SEP 15	Ch. 5 Aerodynamics of Flight	OCT 15	Ch. 13 Aviation Weather Services
SEP 17	Ch. 6 Flight Controls	OCT 20	Ch. 14 Airport Operations
SEP 22	Ch. 7 Aircraft Systems	OCT 22	Ch. 15 Airspace
SEP 24	Basic ForeFlight	OCT 27	Ch. 16 Navigation
SEP 29	Ch. 8 Flight Instruments	OCT 29	Ch. 17 Aeromedical Factors, Review & Q&A



FRESNO WEATHER AT 6:00 PM

SEPTEMBER

85°F – 100°F

WARM EVENINGS

OCTOBER

70°F – 85°F

COMFORTABLE EVENINGS

Focus on learning.
Build confidence.
Achieve your goals.

Happy Birthday!

8/02 - Nicholas Briscoe

8/02 - Howard Ratzlaff

8/19 - Sharon Schweer

8/25 - Joseph Oldham

8/27 - Cleve Potter

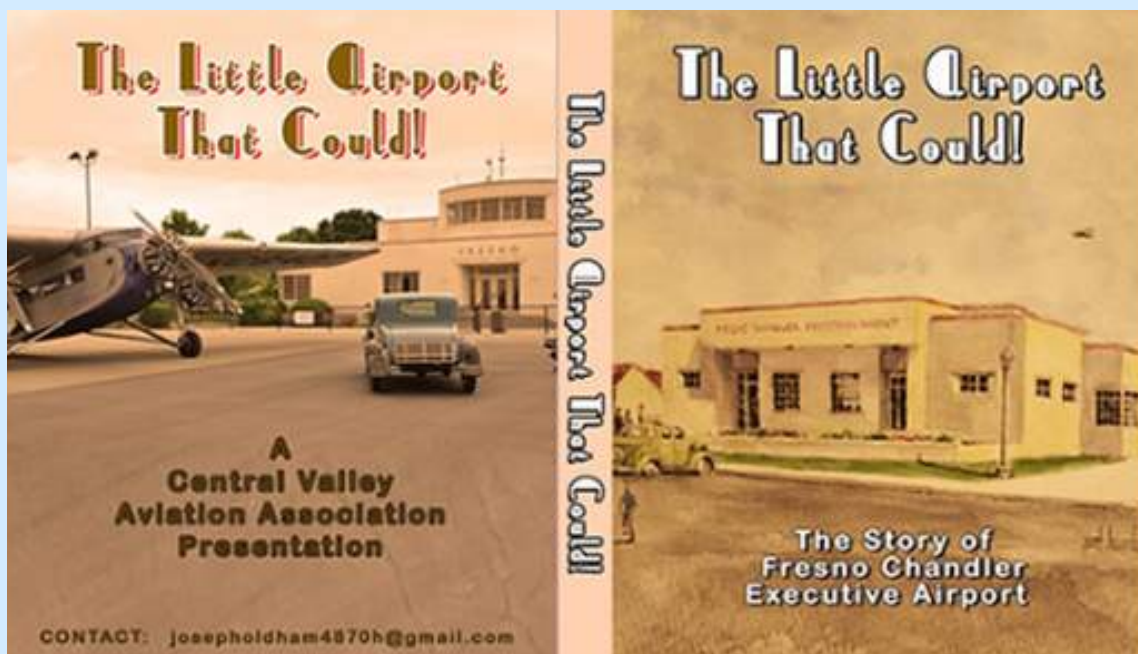
8/28 - Robert Glougie

8/29 - William Menyhay



The Little Airport That Could

For a donation of \$15, you can take home this great DVD at the next CVAA General Meeting!



Fresno Chandler Executive Airport

510 West Kearney Blvd, Fresno, CA 93706

Following World War I, there were no real facilities for aviation in the Fresno area. As a result, husband and wife Wilber F. Chandler and Edna Maria Goble allowed pilots to take off and land in their fields once the crops were harvested. Chandler Field was officially dedicated for public use as an air field in November 1929, on a one hundred-acre site donated by the Chandlers.



Notable Events

In 1923, local fliers organized the "World's Greatest Aerial Circus" to raise funds for a new aviation field. The event included races, parachute jumps and dual wing walking, and was held at "Chandler Field" in the afternoon on Thanksgiving Day.

On March 23, 1930, Charles A. Lindbergh and his wife landed briefly at the airport and were greeted by a crowd of 20,000.

In 1938, the runway was expanded 4,000 feet as part of a WPA project. However, in 1947, commercial airlines announced the new airfield was too small for the new commercial aircraft. Therefore, Fresno Air Terminal east of the city became the new municipal airport.

Services

Engine/airframe repair, avionics repair, helicopter instruction, charter services, hangar rentals.

Fresno Chandler Executive Airport

Airport Code: FCH
510 West Kearney Blvd
Fresno, CA 93706
559.621.4500

To Lease: 559.621.4511
FYIProperties@fresno.gov
For comments, questions, or concerns, please email
FCHAirport@fresno.gov

American Helicopters

612 W. Kearney Blvd
Fresno, CA 93706
(559) 233-4411

BCH Aviation Center

920 W. Chandler Ave
Fresno, California 93706

Flight Level Aviation

524 W. Kearney Blvd
Fresno, CA 93706
559-575-8199

Flight Line Cafe

510 West Kearney Blvd
Fresno, CA 93706
Open Daily 6:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Sunday 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Fresno Airports

520 W Kearney Blvd
Fresno, CA 93706
(559) 237-4863

Pacific Coast Avionics

668 W Kearney Blvd
Fresno, CA 93706
(559) 497-0957

TDF AirCrafting

Tamas Forgacs
(559) 790-7528



Learn more about **CVAA**

Central Valley Aviation Association (CVAA)

CVAA was formed by Central California pilots in 1968 to support aviators who utilize Fresno Chandler Executive Airport.

Advocacy

CVAA is an official chapter of CalPilots; a community of pilots, airport supporters, and aviation enthusiasts working to protect and promote general aviation across California. Learn more at calpilots.org.

Networking

Join us monthly for an educational guest speaker and network with local pilots. CVAA also hosts two educational Pilot's Clinics per year, plans group fly-outs, and organizes an annual fly-in BBQ.

Membership

Proceeds go towards two \$500 John Pugliese & Morris Garcia Memorial Scholarships, benefiting Reedley College Flight Science & AMT students. This would not be possible without your support! Become a member today for only \$25 per year and encourage others to join. Benefits include educational events, advocacy, networking and more.

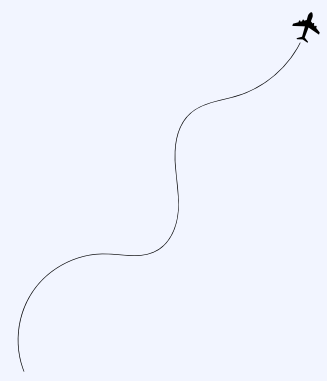
2026-2027 Board of Directors

President Isaiah Kaninya; Vice President Shawn McMinn;
Treasurer Nichole Kaninya; Secretary Leticia Council.
Directors Bob Crooks, Rubi Garrison, Carl Garrison

CVAA Newsletter - The Plane Scoop

Editor: Nichole Kaninya, CVAA@centralvalleyaviation.org

Contributors: Carl & Rubi Garrison, The Solo Corner
Shawn McMinn, Ask a CFI





Chandler Airport Access - PIN Code

Attend at least three CVAA General Meetings per calendar year to qualify for a PIN code.

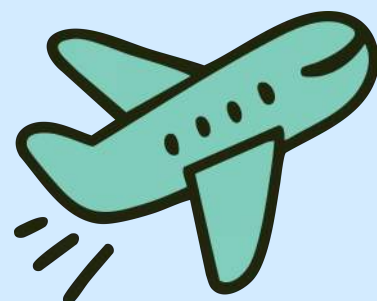
If you are unable to attend at least three CVAA General Meetings per year, you will be considered an inactive member and your PIN code will be discontinued.

You can still attend the General Meetings without a PIN code, but you will need to contact a Board Member to escort you onto the field.

How can CVAA members get a PIN Code?

Complete an in-person application at the City of Fresno Airports Department at 4995 E. Clinton Way, Fresno, CA 93727. Your PIN code will expire on your driver's license expiration date.

**When entering FCH
please make sure the
gate closes behind you.
Every vehicle must enter
their own PIN code.**





**Central Valley Aviation Association
Membership Application or Update**

Name: _____ **Membership: Single**____ **Family**____

Spouse's Name (If family membership): _____ (we encourage family membership)

Address:

Street _____, **City** _____, **State:** ____ **Zip:** _____

Telephone:

Home: _____, **Work:** _____, **Cellular:** _____

Email address: _____ (**Print carefully**)

I would like to receive the Plane Scoop via e-mail: Yes____, **No** _____

Airplane (you usually fly):

Type: _____, **N number:** _____, **Colors:** _____

Date of birth (just the month and day—not the year):

Primary member: _____, **Spouse:** _____.

How many years have you been a member of CVAA? _____ (estimates are OK)

CVAA Service:

Please list any offices or committee positions in which you are interested in serving:

Please list any talent or skills you have that you would be willing to use to serve CVAA:

This information will be printed in our Club roster and distributed to members only. Please omit any information you do not want to appear in the Club roster.

Please email your completed membership form to CVAA@centralvalleyaviation.org or hand it in at an upcoming General Meeting. Dues are \$25 per adult member (free for anyone 18 years or younger), payable by cash or check at any General Meeting. A schedule of upcoming meetings can be found in our monthly newsletter, The Plane Scoop, available at centralvalleyaviation.org.

Thank you for your interest in the Central Valley Aviation Association!

Comments or suggestions: