

# CPA FLIGHT LINES

## August 2026



Picture Courtesy of SkyWatch



Picture Courtesy of EAA



Picture Courtesy of Camden Thrasher- Cessna Flyer Association



## President's Corner

By Andy Holmes



Happy August to all Members and Happy 150<sup>th</sup> Birthday to Colorado! This month, I want to recognize the incredible volunteers who make the Colorado Pilots Association a strong and effective voice for general aviation.

Thank you to everyone who volunteered at the Colorado Department of Transportation Aeronautics booth during EAA AirVenture, Oshkosh. Whether you spent a few hours or several hours welcoming visitors and representing Colorado aviation, your time and enthusiasm helped showcase our state's vibrant aviation community. We are sincerely appreciative of the Colorado Department of Transportation-Division of Aeronautics for once again inviting the Colorado Pilots Association to be part of its Oshkosh presence. The partnership not only strengthens our shared efforts to promote aviation throughout Colorado but also reflects the credibility and meaningful role CPA has earned in advocating for and serving Colorado's aviation community. Thank you to everyone who helped make this year's AirVenture a success.

I want to carve out some space in this month's message to recognize two outstanding volunteers as they conclude their service on the Colorado Pilots Association Board of Directors. Please join me in thanking **Michael Mayfield**, who has served as Chair of the Education Committee, and **Gabbie Bogolin**, who has served as Chair of the Membership Committee. Both Michael and Gabbie dedicated more than three years of service on the Board, helping deliver meaningful programs and value to both our members and the broader aviation community. As they move on to new priorities, we thank them for their commitment and contributions to the CPA.

I would like to extend an especially heartfelt thank you to Mike for his tireless efforts to expand CPA's educational outreach and for reimagining and redeveloping CPA's scholarship program that will undoubtedly create opportunities for aviators for many years to come. His commitment left a lasting impact on our organization, and we are sincerely grateful for his leadership.

Lastly, even during our busy summer fly-in season being flawlessly managed by Fly-In Chair, Bill Marvel – a big thank you to Bill for his time and effort devoted to CPA fly-ins – this month's message would not be complete without mentioning another of CPA's main



priorities, advocacy. I encourage every member to visit the CPA website regularly for updates on important developments affecting **Boulder Airport, Longmont Airport, and Centennial Airport**. The resolution of the issues at these airports and others will have implications far beyond their local communities, including the potential to shape the future of general aviation across Colorado and beyond. Be always on the lookout for CPA Call to Action emails.

Thank you to every member who has written letters, attended public meetings, contacted elected officials, or simply stayed informed. Your engagement makes a difference. Time and again, we have seen that grassroots advocacy works, and together we are helping to ensure that Colorado remains a great place to live and fly.

Blue Skies and Tailwinds,

Andy Holmes

*President*

*Colorado Pilots Association*

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**NOTICE:**

Submission deadline for the September 2026 issue is  
August 20.

Format all articles with 0.5" margins

**Email your article to**  
**[newsletter@coloradopilots.org](mailto:newsletter@coloradopilots.org)**.

HAVE AVIATION RELATED INFORMATION FOR GA  
PILOTS?

Contact the CPA Newsletter Editor at  
[newsletter@coloradopilots.org](mailto:newsletter@coloradopilots.org) to have the  
information featured in the monthly Flight  
Lines CPA NOTAMs.

## CPA NOTAMs

### **Scheduled ATC ZERO at Colorado Air & Space Port (KCFO)**

Due to short staffing, only two controllers available, and requirements to meet certain legal requirements, the Tower at Colorado Air and Space Port will operate under ATC Zero status. The ATZ Zero Operational Status will, for now, occur according to the following schedule:

- ATC Zero every Saturday and Sunday beginning June 6 & until further notice.
- ATC Zero beginning at 6:00 PM Monday through Friday, starting June 1

Starting June 1, KCFO Tower is open and operational from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM Monday through Friday only. According to KCFO Tower officials, this schedule will remain until at least August 29, 2026.



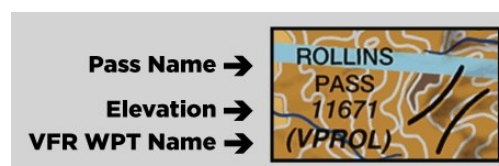
## CPA Membership Directory Opt-In Visibility

The Colorado Pilots Association values the protection of your personal information. At the January 2025 board meeting, the board decided to change to an **opt-in** membership directory. This means that if you would like any of your information shared and accessible to other members of the Colorado Pilots Association via a membership directory, you **MUST** opt-in to participate and have your information made available to other members.

If you want to OPT-IN, it is a simple process that takes about 1-2 minutes of your time, where you can choose which items of personal information you'd like accessible in the membership directory. You must be logged in and follow the instructions [here](#).

## Colorado Mountain Flying Passes

It's the time of year where more pilots will find their way to Colorado to enjoy mountain flying. As a reminder Colorado Mountain Passes have been charted, now 20 in total, and a 'Special Notice' is now published in the Chart Supplement. For more information about flying in Colorado mountains and landing at high altitude airports, check out 'Mountain Flying' on CPA's website and get your free [2026 Colorado Chart and Airport Directory](#) from CDOT – Division of Aeronautics.



## CPA Mountain Flying & High-Elevation Airport Operations Course

Originally developed by the Colorado Pilots Association in 1986, this course taught by Colorado pilots who live and fly the mountains for business and recreation, has evolved into one of the premier safety training courses of its kind. Accident statistics demonstrate that pilots without the knowledge and skills needed for safe flight over mountainous terrain find themselves in situations beyond their capability. This course is designed to improve your knowledge, skills, and capability.

Register for the August 15, 2026, Mountain Flying course [here](#).

Register for the September 19, 2026, Mountain Flying course [here](#).

## AOPA Highlights Centennial Hangar Rent Dispute

AOPA published an updated article covering the ongoing legal challenge involving the significant hangar rent increases at Centennial Airport. The story highlights the efforts of affected tenants, and AOPA to ensure that rates at publicly funded airports remain fair and reasonable under FAA grant assurances. We encourage members to read the latest update and stay informed as this important advocacy effort continues. Here is the [article](#). More [details](#).

## Colorado Aviation Events – July 2026

### **Aviation Summer Camps sponsored by Arapahoe Flight Club @ KCOS**

Multiple dates throughout Summer 2026. Ages 10-15. Mon-Fri 0900 to 1500.

Arapahoe Flight Club, 1430 Aviation Way, Colorado Springs, CO 80916

Registration is required. Details, available dates, and cost [here](#).



## Support our Corporate Members



Become a Corporate Member for \$100,  
[click here](#)





The Division of Aeronautics is happy to announce the release of the 2026 Colorado aviation publications, including the Colorado Airport Directory, Colorado Aeronautical Chart, and the 2025 Division of Aeronautics Annual Report.

## 2026 Colorado Airport Directory & Aeronautical Chart

Hard copies of the Colorado Airport Directory and Aeronautical Chart will be available at airports around the state very soon.



Here are some other ways to get your hands on a copy:

- Order your copy on the [Division's website](#).
- Free copies are available at our office located at the [Colorado Air & Space Port](#).
- Request an electronic copy of the 2026 Colorado Airport

Directory by emailing [Shahn.Sederberg@state.co.us](mailto:Shahn.Sederberg@state.co.us). Please include "**REQUEST: PDF Version of 2026 CO Airport Directory**" in the subject line



The 2026 Colorado Aeronautical Chart introduces the second phase of ten Colorado Mountain Pass VFR GPS waypoints. The Colorado Airport Directory now features 25 updated aerial images, along with revised noise abatement procedures and expanded information on alternative aviation fuel availability—updates that are also reflected in the Aeronautical Chart.

## 2025 Annual Report

The 2025 Division of Aeronautics Annual Report highlights a year of strong aviation activity across Colorado and the resulting investments in airport infrastructure, safety, education, and emerging technologies. Covering January 1 through December 31, 2025, the report details funding distributions, statewide aviation initiatives, and major programs, including the Colorado Discretionary Aviation Grant Program, Airport Capital Improvement Program, and efforts to transition to unleaded aviation fuels. It also explores advancements in sustainability, workforce development, and next-generation aircraft technologies, showcasing the Division's continued commitment to a safe, efficient, and innovative statewide aviation system.



**Download:** [2025 Aeronautics](#)



[Division Annual Report](#)

## **2026 Colorado Legislative Districts & Airport Maps**

Explore another valuable information source from the Colorado Division of Aeronautics. Get the most recent list of Colorado Legislators and the Colorado airports situated within their respective districts.

**Download:** [2026 Colorado Legislative Districts & Airport Maps](#)

# FROM THE LINE



## CPA MEMBER ARTICLES

**Flying the Colorado Rockies: Practical Tips and Tricks by Don Dubin**  
**Lincoln Wrap-Up by Bill Marvel**



## **Flying the Colorado Rockies: Practical Tips and Tricks**

### **Lessons from the cockpit for pilots operating airport to airport in the Rocky Mountains**

**By Don Dubin**

This article is not intended as formal instruction. I am not a flight instructor or CFII, and I still consider myself a student every time I get in my airplane. But after more than two decades of flying in Colorado, and after encouragement from other pilot friends, I wanted to share a few practical lessons learned along the way.

Flying in the Colorado Rockies is not the same as simply flying over them. There is a big difference between cruising high across the state on an airway and operating from one Colorado mountain airport to another—departing from valley floors, climbing between ridgelines, choosing passes, reading wind against terrain, and planning descents into confined valleys where options can disappear quickly.

#### **Preflight Planning- IFR or VFR?**

Many cross-country flights out of state are flown IFR, often at higher altitudes. But when operating within the Rocky Mountains, many flights are 150 nautical miles or less. The MEAs across the Rockies are generally around 16,000 feet MSL, and by the time a piston aircraft climbs that high, an IFR flight may not be practical. Add in the fact that it can be difficult to communicate with ATC below about 14,000 feet in many areas, the IFR environment simply does not fit many mountain missions.

Whether the flight is VFR or IFR, the pilot still must climb out, deal with terrain, and manage the winds. In many cases, VFR routing can keep the airplane over safer terrain than the available IFR routing would. In the end, many mountain flights are scenic, hands-on, pilot-oriented experiences rather than automated flights at high altitude.

A great flight-planning tool is the Colorado Aeronautical Chart. It can be downloaded into ForeFlight and brought up as a map layer. It shows mountain passes, mountain pass AWOS frequencies, and commonly used VFR routes marked with black diamonds. The mountain passes also have five-letter VFR waypoints. These are useful tools during preflight planning and in the air.

The AWOS stations can help pilots keep up with altimeter settings and wind conditions as they move through the mountains. Airport notes are also important. Many mountain runways are sloped, and when wind and terrain allow, the preferred technique is often to land uphill and depart downhill.

Most mountain airports are in valleys surrounded by high terrain, generally 13,000-to-14,000-foot peaks. Getting into and out of these valleys can vary considerably depending on wind, temperature, time of day, aircraft weight, and the route chosen. One mistake pilots make in mountain flying is treating the airport as the main event. The airport is only one part of the equation. The real questions are: How are you going to get there? How and where are you going



to lose altitude when you arrive? And how are you going to climb away after departure? Those questions need to be answered on the ground.

Even on perfect VFR days you must have an alternate planned and briefed. If by chance you arrive and cannot land due to winds, a disabled aircraft on the runway, whatever the reason, you need to know exactly where you're going next, what the winds are at your alternate and whether you have the fuel. The closest airport may not be the safest. Don't make that decision in the air while you are flying over unfamiliar mountainous terrain. On-the-fly decisions for the unfamiliar pilot are drastically different in the Rockies than over the flatlands.

## Density Altitude

Density altitude affects engine, wing, and propeller performance. Whether normally aspirated or turbocharged you need to know how to operate your aircraft at high density altitude.

Turbocharged aircraft may provide more power at altitude, but density altitude still matters. One of the biggest things pilots notice is that true airspeed and groundspeed are higher than they are used to for the same indicated airspeed. That can increase landing distance and make the airplane feel faster on touchdown and rollout, which can catch pilots off guard.

## Wind Is Often the Real Story

If density altitude is the background condition, wind is often the main character.

Mountain wind is rarely simple. The wind at airport elevation may be light while the wind over the ridge is strong. A windsock may show one thing on the field while the pass just crossed is producing turbulence, downdrafts, or rotors. A forecast wind at 12,000 feet may matter more to a safe arrival than the surface wind reported at the airport.

A helpful way to think about wind in the mountains is to picture water flowing over rocks in a river. Water accelerates around rocks, curls behind them, creates eddies, and forms areas of smooth flow, turbulence, and backwash. Air moving over mountains behaves in a similar way. It rises, sinks, accelerates through gaps, tumbles over ridgelines, and creates turbulence and downdrafts where a pilot might not expect them.

A common rule of thumb among many Colorado pilots is that winds greater than 30 knots across the ridges may mean a no-go decision.

Air flowing over ridges will create lift on one side and sink on the other. Wind forced through passes can accelerate. Lee-side downdrafts can be very strong, and it is important to understand and visualize where they might exist. If the wind is creating 1,000 feet per minute of sink and the airplane is climbing at 700 feet per minute, the math is not in the pilot's favor.

That is why winds aloft matter so much. The pilot needs to know not just the surface wind, but the direction and speed of the wind at ridge height, where the air is likely to be rising or sinking, and where mountain wave or rotor may develop.



It is good practice to cross ridges at a 45-degree angle, leaving an easier turn out if sinking air or uncomfortable turbulence is encountered. With a headwind, rotor or mountain wave may develop while approaching the ridgeline, so pilots should be prepared for sink on the way in. With a tailwind, the sink may be on the other side of the ridge after crossing.

In the Rockies, flying the safest path often means using pilotage and visual judgment rather than simply following the magenta line. Heading mode on the autopilot may be more useful than locking onto a course line, because the safest route may not be the straightest one.

Time of day matters too. In the Rockies, mornings are your friend. By afternoon, heat, turbulence, gusty winds, and convective activity can turn a reasonable plan into a poor one. Flying early and being on the ground by noon during the summer months is a conservative habit.

### **Always Leave Yourself an Out**

One of the most important mountain-flying habits is to always ask: “Where is my out?”

When flying up a valley, is there room to turn around? Is the airplane positioned on the side of the valley that provides the best turn radius and escape path? Is the airplane climbing toward terrain with no ability to reverse course? Is the pass being crossed with enough altitude, speed, and room to retreat if the ride or performance is not what was expected?

A good rule of thumb is to avoid flying up the middle of a narrow valley. If the airplane is in the middle, there may not be enough room to turn around. By positioning on one side, the pilot preserves a larger turning radius toward the open part of the valley.

Wind direction also matters. If the wind is blowing perpendicular across a valley, one side will have rising air and the other will likely have sinking air. The windward side, where air is being pushed up the terrain, will often provide lift. The leeward side, where air is spilling down the terrain, can produce sink, turbulence, or rotor.

So, the “best” side of the valley is not just about turn radius. It is also about wind. If the airplane can be positioned on the side with better lift while still preserving room to turn away from terrain, the pilot has improved the available options. If the airplane is on the sinking side, close to rising terrain, with little room to reverse course, several risks have been allowed to stack up at once.

### **Descent Planning**

Most mountain airports sit in valleys, which means the arrival often begins over higher terrain and then requires a carefully planned descent. Instrument approaches may help, or at least offer clues, but there may be only one approach, and it may start miles away from the direction of arrival. Some airports work well using the approach in VFR conditions, but not always. That needs to be figured out during preflight planning.



At my home airport in Salida KANK as an example, an aircraft arriving from the south may cross a pass and, as soon as it is safe to descend, still be at 12,500 to 13,000 feet MSL—roughly 4,000 feet above pattern altitude and only about four miles from the airport. How and where will the airplane lose 4,000 feet and still arrive stabilized? That should not be solved for the first time over the airport.

A pilot cannot simply dive at the runway and hope for a good approach. The descent plan should include where the airplane will go to lose altitude. Will the pilot extend away from the airport? Circle in a safe area of the valley? Is there traffic? Is there terrain or rising ground in the maneuvering area? What is the wind doing? Will the descent path place the airplane in turbulence or sink?

Modern avionics can help. Many pilots use the projected descent arc, often called the “blue banana,” to see where the descent will end. Along-track offsets can also help manage the descent profile.

Another trap that catches unprepared VFR pilots is the trip to Denver from the west or southwest. An aircraft may come out of the mountains at a safe altitude and then, within just a few miles, need to be below the 10,000-foot MSL Class B shelf. That descent needs to be planned well in advance.

A stabilized approach is still the goal. If the airplane is high, fast, and close in while the pilot tries to force it down, the approach is already becoming unstable. That is when pilots land long, float, or make poor go-around decisions.

Speed management is also important. In many mountain arrivals, slowing early is better than waiting until the bumps begin. If the airplane is descending into a valley and winds across the ridges are greater than 20 knots, turbulence may be likely. In that case, it may be better to keep indicated airspeed no faster than maneuvering speed. It is much better to be slow before hitting the bumps than to hit the bumps first and then try to slow down.

A go-around at a mountain airport also requires thought. Terrain, density altitude, and climb performance can make it complicated. The go-around path should be understood before the airplane ever turns final. In the mountains, a gust of wind, wildlife on the runway, or unexpected traffic can all force a go-around.

### **Climb Planning May Require Patience**

Departing a mountain airport is not always a simple matter of lining up, adding power, and pointing toward the destination. Sometimes the airplane needs time and space to climb before it can safely leave the valley. That may mean circling for altitude.

In much of the country, if the airplane climbs after takeoff and the course line points toward the destination, the pilot simply goes. In the mountains, the course line may point directly toward terrain the airplane cannot outclimb.



The first question is not, “Which way is my destination?” The first question is, “Where can I safely climb?”

At some airports, the safest departure may involve climbing in a valley, circling over lower terrain, or following a route that initially takes the airplane away from the destination. That can feel inefficient, but efficiency is not the priority. Terrain clearance and options are.

One useful trick is to look at the published obstacle departure procedure for the airport. Even when departing VFR, the ODP may provide clues about where the obstacles are and how the procedure designers expect an aircraft to gain altitude safely. It may suggest headings, climb gradients, or routing that reveals a lot about the terrain surrounding the airport.

Keep in mind that neither an ODP nor an instrument approach procedure takes the wind into consideration. That is another reason VFR may sometimes provide better options for a mountain pilot who understands the terrain, weather, and escape routes.

### **The Bottom Line**

Mountain flying in Colorado is one of the most rewarding kinds of flying. It is also one of the least forgiving. The airplane may be capable, the avionics may be excellent, and the day may look beautiful, but the mountains still require planning, patience, and respect.

The goal is never just to get from one airport to another. The goal is to understand the terrain, the wind, the altitude, and the options before they are needed. Good mountain flying is not about being bold. It is about staying ahead of the airplane, staying ahead of the terrain, and leaving yourself choices.

A student mindset serves mountain pilots well. The Rockies will teach something on every flight, but they are far better teachers when the pilot arrives prepared.

I am 2500-hour instrument rated pilot with over 25 years of flying in the Rockies. I am based in Salida CO at KANK and I fly a Mirage M 350 PA-46

Don Dubin

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# Lincoln Wrap-Up

Bill Marvel, event host

In part because I positioned this trip right between the big 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebrations and Oshkosh, attendance was a bit smaller than usual with 12 of us arriving during great weather in Lincoln, Nebraska. It was a first-time location for the CPA and the smaller crowd made for much less hectic logistics than some venues with more people.

Duncan Aviation was a super host FBO who gave us discounted fuel rates, discounted affiliated hotels and the same with rental cars. They gave us a private conference room for our arrival lunch, needed to fit in the afternoon's visit to the incredible Museum of American Speed. There's an old expression, "you have to see it to believe it" and that really applies here. The



number of drag racers, Indi racers, engines, rocket and jet vehicles, toy cars, pedal cars, "gravity" cars, production vehicles, go karts and the like is both mind boggling and historic. And the area involved is immense, but all in a single building.



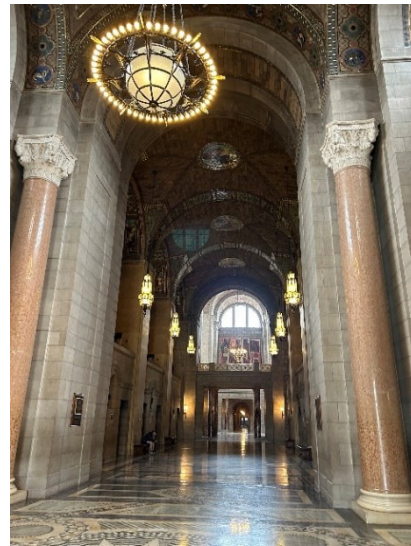
The next day's tour of Duncan itself was equally impressive. A family-owned world-wide operation of this magnitude is hard to imagine. They are specialists with almost every major business jet aircraft and several engine types, plus interiors, avionics, paint and everything else that can be modified or repaired. Their hangars are huge, probably a dozen in total, and each jam packed completely with multi-million-dollar jets undergoing maintenance or refurbishment.





Needless to say, they are a major employer in Lincoln. Plus, by design they're incredibly friendly to general aviation of all sizes and treat a Cessna 172 owner with the same attention as one flying a G5. What a tour that was!

Afterwards our lunch at Billy's, an older home of a former presidential candidate now restored and converted into a fascinating restaurant, offered a great chance to sit down and relax for a while. It was followed by another tour, this of the ornate Nebraska capitol building which has the second highest tower, over 400 feet, of state capitals anywhere in the country.



Our Dinners the first two nights were unique in that one area of Lincoln near the University of Nebraska, called the Haymarket District, is a restaurant and bar aficionado's dream. With ethnic restaurants of all stripes and bars galore, all within a walkable area, we split into groups and went wherever our taste buds took us for dinner those first two nights. And, of course, each evening's culinary events were preceded by the usual CPA happy hour and typically followed by a trip to an ice cream parlor, in this case Ivonna Cone.





Our final day started with a half-hour drive to the Strategic Air Command museum, where we spent several hours touring the site and the wide array of aircraft, some very rare, that exist there. A huge B-1 bomber sitting outside right next to the parking lot gives you an arrival hint of what exists inside those hallowed doors.

That was followed by a late lunch at a local BBQ establishment, which was in turn followed by a trip to Baker's Candy, the largest candy store in Nebraska. We got back in time to clean up, have yet another happy hour (!) and a bit of rest before the final group dinner.



We assembled at Show Stoppers, a new restaurant where the servers are entertainers and break from their duties to head up on stage and regale the crowd with their own choice of songs or requests from the audience while everyone dines. Our server, a young woman named Hattie, was a senior at the University of Nebraska majoring in theater and was a great singer in her own right. Even the owner of the business, Kevin Witcher, also performed with a wonderful voice.

And that wraps up this whirlwind trip that covered a lot of ground (literally!) and wore everyone out from walking, also literally. We were downright beat at the end of a couple of long, packed days.

All in all, it was another great CPA trip with super friendly members who had a fun time, saw things they had never seen before and got to fly there and back in the process. Now that's a good combination!



**Is your membership expiring soon?  
Support General Aviation in Colorado!**

**Renew Your  
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Online**

**<https://coloradopilots.org>**

**Questions or Having Trouble, please contact  
[membership@coloradopilots.org](mailto:membership@coloradopilots.org)**

## **ON THE HORIZON**



### **CPA FLY-IN NEWS & LISTINGS**

#### **REGISTER NOW:**

**LaJunta, Colorado- September 26 & 27, 2026**

- Host, Brett Pomainville

**Nucla, Colorado- October 2-4, 2026**

- Hosted by Aimee Tooker

**Spirit Engineering- October 10, 2026**

- Hosted by Bill Marvel





## **ATTENTION Fly-in Hosts!**

Bill Marvel, Fly-in Committee Chairman

As was announced in the last Flight Lines issue, starting with the 2027 Fly-in season, we're going to "spice up" the annual January Fly-in Rollout Meeting by not revealing either the year's hosts or their events until the meeting takes place.

In fact, not even I will know the event locations, but only the hosts and their chosen dates. By knowing dates, I can deconflict any schedule problems long before they would normally be discovered during presentations at the January meeting. This will avoid any last-minute changes necessitated by a previously unknown date conflict.

Aside from that change, my involvement in the planning stages will remain unchanged. I work with every host throughout the year to make sure all event information is complete and published on time, and to help with resolving any problems they may encounter.

If you plan to host an event next year, please contact me as soon as you have a date and location selected. I will need to know the date but not the location unless something unique about the event requires it. However, I won't be revealing that information to anyone, even if I know it. I promise!



# La Junta Tarantula Fest!

**(Note: For this event Venmo and Zelle can be used)**

La Junta, CO (KLHX)  
Friday, September 25 – Saturday, September 26  
Hosted by Brett Pomainville

Be a part of CPA history and join our first **Wildlife Safari!** The City of La Junta, Colorado, is rolling out the red carpet for our visit to their annual **Tarantula Fest!** No plane? **You can even drive to this Fly-in for day trip** if you want (but you still need to register so we can include you in the CPA activities)!

## What is Tarantula Fest?!

Imagine a small-town festival of everything arachnid celebrating the annual expedition of thousands of Brown Tarantulas across Colorado's southeastern grasslands. As featured in *National Geographic* and on national TV, wildlife scientists and visitors from around the world converge on La Junta each year in late September to witness this unique phenomena and study the Brown Tarantulas on the move in their native habitat.



Colorado Brown Tarantula



CPA Safari Rover

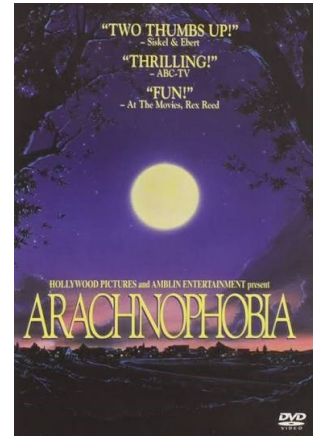
## A Wildlife Safari in Colorado?!

You bet! Africa's Serengeti boasts its Big 5, but on this Fly-in *you* will get to see up close something none of your globe-trotting friends have – **Colorado's Big 8** (legs, of course) roaming our own Comanche National Grasslands!



## Friday's Thread

Arrive at La Junta (KLHX) by 10:00 AM. A coach shuttle will take us to the hotel to drop our bags then onward to downtown La Junta for lunch at **Mexico City Café**. A three block walk takes us to Otero College for "**Tarantula Talk**" with **arachnid experts** Dr. Paula Cushing and Dr. Cara Shillington. Be sure to ask them why all the male tarantulas are on the prowl. Our coach shuttle then takes us to the historic Fox Theatre for a free showing of the **movie Arachnophobia** to get us in the right mood for when the **Big 8** emerge from their burrows.



Ranger with Big 8 Tracking Device

At twilight, our **CPA Tarantula Safari** begins. Accompanied by a Tarantula Ranger, we will travel by coach through Comanche National Grasslands to spot some of the **thousands of male Colorado Brown Tarantulas looking for love**. Then back to our hotel for check-in, followed by a **Pizza Dinner** and **Ice Cream Sundae Social**. And be ready for a tarantula-themed **Trivia Contest** with fabulous CPA prizes!

## Saturday's Tangle



Miss Tarantula Contest Winner

Enjoy a free hot breakfast, check-out, and leave your bags at the hotel. Our CPA coach will drop us at the center of La Junta's web of festival events, starting with the **Tarantula Parade**. Then, on your own, you can take a spin at the town's **Classic Car Show**; crawl through the **Tarantula Education Center**, snare a deal on unique gifts at the **Tarantula Arts Fair**, or even compete in the **Eight Legged Races** or the county commissioner's **Hairy Leg Contest** (be sure to show off your CPA socks for this one!). We then meet for a bite of lunch at **Dickey's Barbecue Pit**. At 2:00 PM, our coach picks us up to collect our luggage at the hotel and transfer to KLHX for afternoon departures.

## Hang Out For More (optional)

Although CPA-planned activities end after lunch Saturday, Tarantula Fest continues through Saturday night. Highlights include: Koshare Dancers Show, Chuckwagon Dinner, and a Tarantula-themed evening Drone Show. Those wishing to remain in La Junta after lunch on Saturday will be on their own for lodging and transportation arrangements.

## Accommodations and Fees

We have a special CPA rate of \$129 + tax per night with free breakfast and a 24-hour cancellation policy at the Hampton Inn (option to extend a second night on your own, if desired), but we have a limited number of rooms and La Junta hotels fill months in advance of this world-renowned event. The hotel will only release CPA rooms to individuals on the attendance list I send them, so **please DO NOT contact the hotel until you have heard from me**. Complete the registration form and submit payment and I will notify people based on the planning and priority list and the order the forms are returned. You can also make this Fly-in a day trip from most Front Range locations if you prefer not to fly or stay overnight (but you still need to register and pay the fee so we can include you in the CPA activities). **A fee of \$30 per person** covers the Pizza Dinner, Ice Cream Sundae Social, tips for the tarantula ranger and coach shuttle drivers, fabulous Tarantula Trivia Contest prizes, and other incidentals. You can pay by paper check made out to “Colorado Pilots Association”, Venmo to “@brettpomainville”, or Zelle to “Brett Pomainville” (Venmo/Zelle associated with phone number 720-378-3304; be sure to write your Full Name and “CPA La Junta Fly-in” in the notes/memo fields). Host Brett Pomainville (720) 378-3304, [brett.pomainville@gmail.com](mailto:brett.pomainville@gmail.com).

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# Dominguez- Escalante Expedition

October 2-4, 2026, [Hopkins Field Airport](#) (KAIB) Nucla, Colorado

*The expedition was conducted to find a way to link Santa Fe, New Mexico with the missions of California. The Journey spanned 159 days across 1700 miles which included New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, Arizona and back to New Mexico. Father Dominguez led the expedition, and Father Escalante kept the journal. On August 5, 1776 they entered Colorado from New Mexico and traveled through what is now called the western slope of Colorado, entering Utah on September 12, 1776. Dominguez and Escalante didn't make it to California, but they reported on what they saw and experienced. Escalante's journal writings are what DEEEP uses to keep their story alive. Miera's maps from the Dominguez-Escalante Journal were later used by other explorers, including Lewis and Clark.*



## Friday

Fly into Hopkin's Field Airport (KAIB), arriving mid-morning to early afternoon. A light lunch will welcome you at the airport lounge. Transportation for the weekend will be provided.

## Friday 6pm

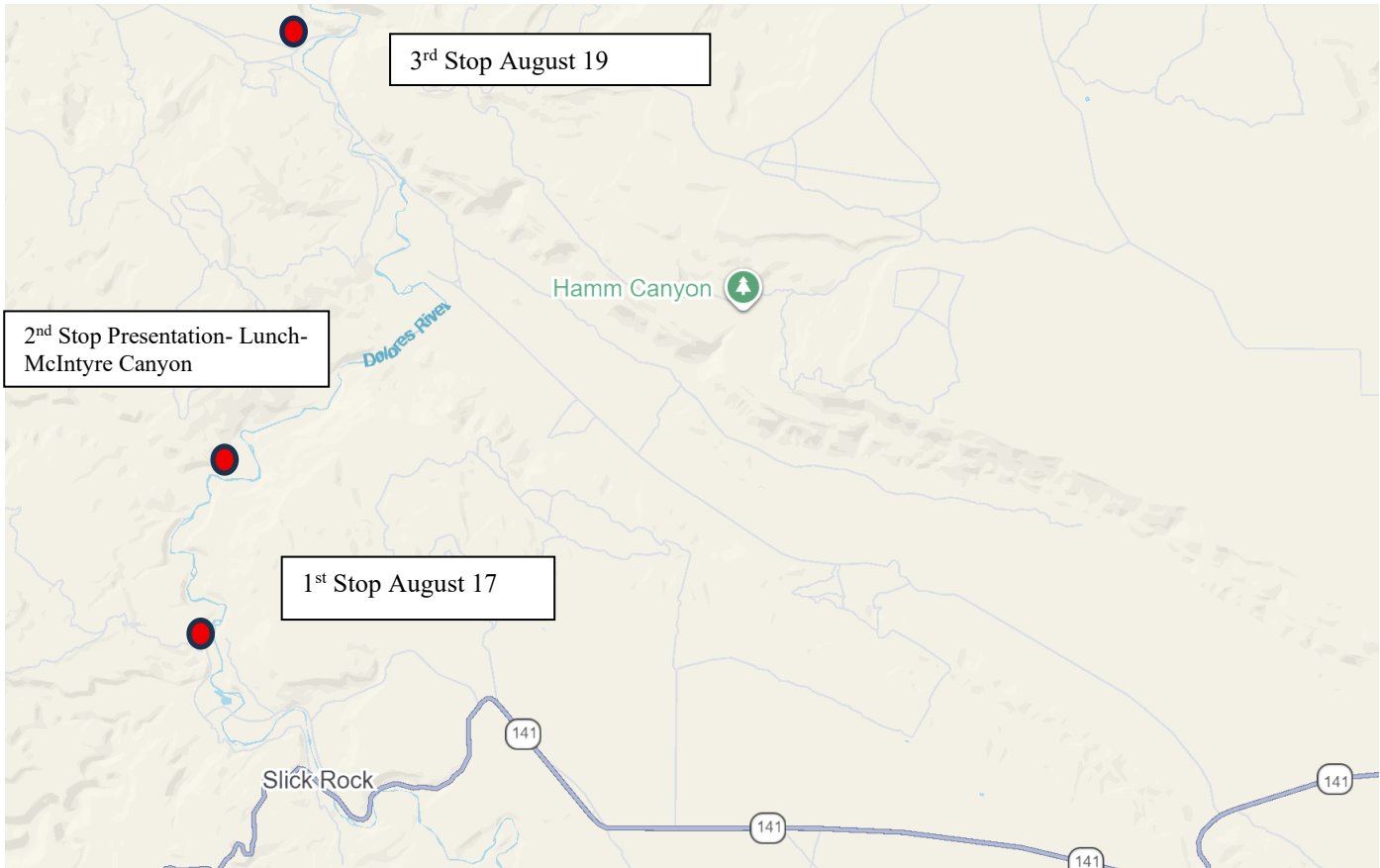
Head over to 470 Main Street in Nucla to the museum of the Rimrocker Historical Society for a presentation about the history of the Dominguez Escalante Expedition.

Spend the rest of the evening exploring and dining at your leisure. We suggest exploring the vast trails of the West End, shopping at our few local businesses or relaxing on the porch of Amy's Place at the Vestal House.

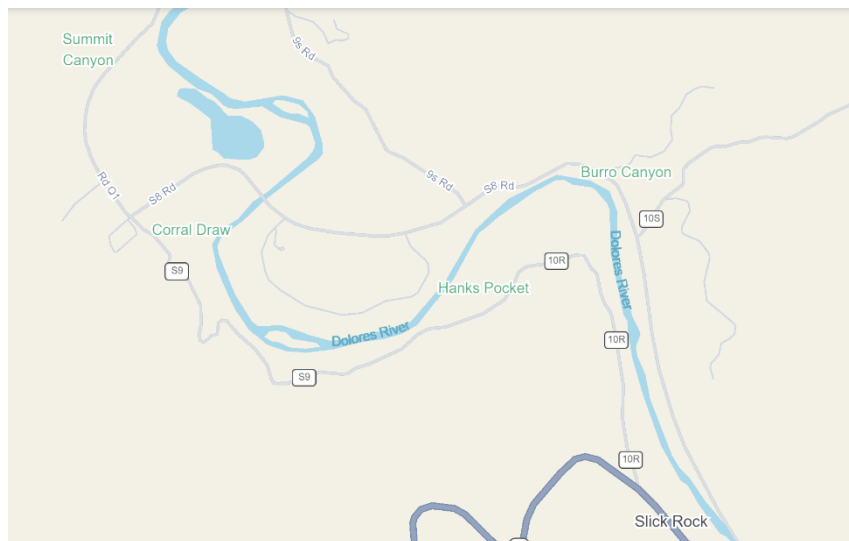


## Saturday Morning

- Meet your transportation tour in the Vestal House parking lot at 9am.
- Enjoy a scenic drive through Dry Creek Basin past Gypsum Valley and through Disappointment Valley.



### August 17<sup>th</sup> Camp El Laberinto de Miera (Miera's Labyrinth)

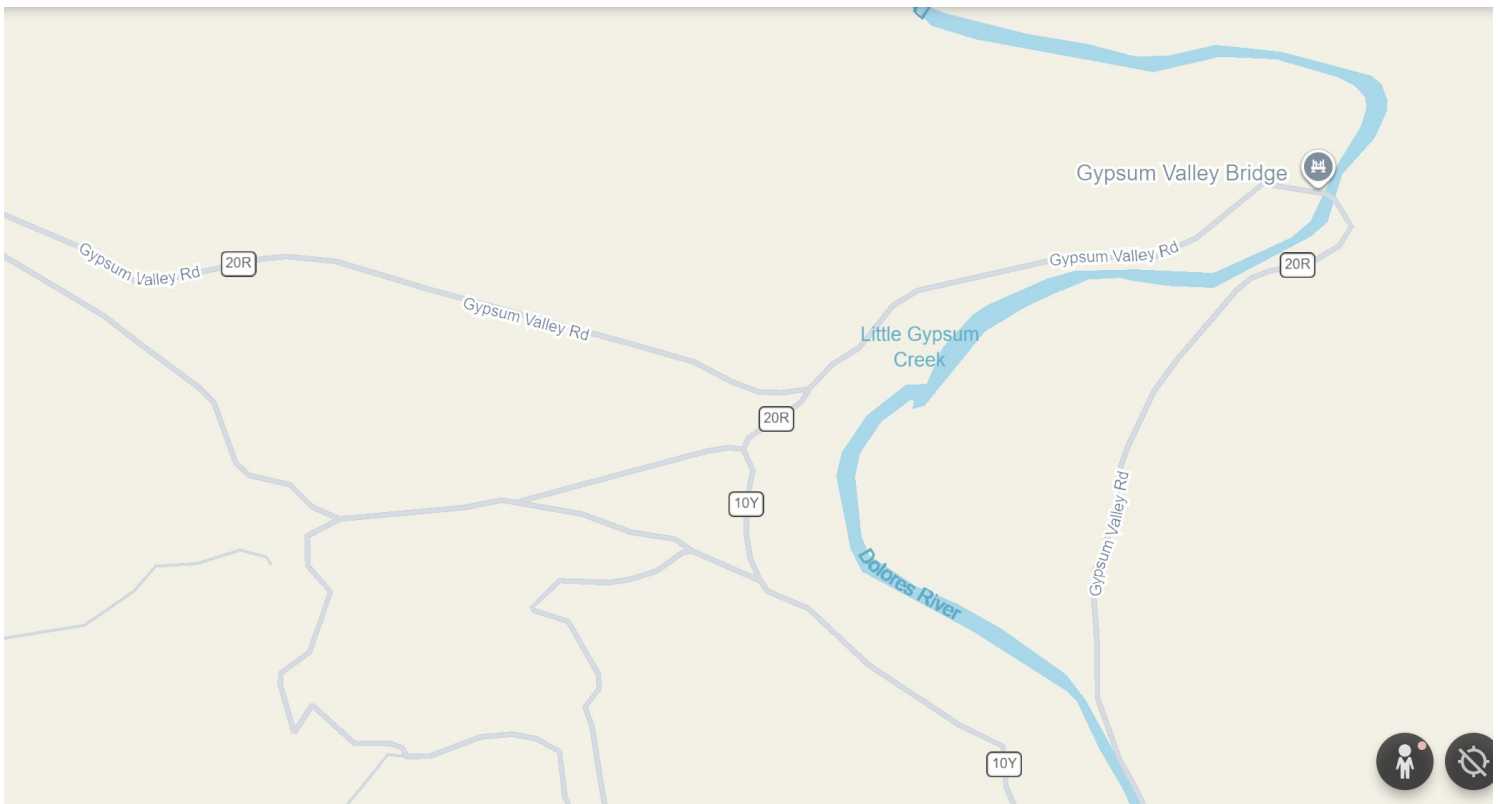


## Saturday Afternoon

- Drive to a picturesque overlook above McIntyre Canyon and the river's defile (gorge) that goes into Gypsum Valley. Here we'll have a presentation for you along with lunch.
- Leave the canyon back to Hwy 141 and head north to the Gypsum Valley turn off and west through the valley.

### August 19<sup>th</sup> camp El Cajon del Yeso after the nearby Gypsum hills

Gypsum Valley is where they put their faith in God and drew straws to decide which way to go. The route they did NOT take might have killed them for lack of water, and in any case, they would have been stopped by the deep cliffs of southern Canyonlands National Park and Bear Ears National Monument. Exit Gypsum Valley and head north on Hwy 141 back to Nucla.



## Saturday 6pm

- Dinner will be served on the patio at Amy's Place at the Vestal House and will feature local ingredients and fresh apple juice!

At Amy's Place enjoy a presentation from the Apple Core project about their efforts to preserve, locate and graft heirloom apple trees in the West End. Every October they host a Heritage Festival with vendors, food, live music and fresh local apple cider pressed on site.



## Sunday Morning

- You'll be driven back to Hopkin's Field Airport to embark on your flight home.



Aimee Tooker, [vestalhouseucla@gmail.com](mailto:vestalhouseucla@gmail.com) (We have Airbnb's in the area blocked off for this event!) \$75 per person. Includes lunch Friday, lunch and dinner Saturday and transportation. Limit 30 participants. The Vestal House provides breakfast daily for guests. Last day to register: September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026. Arrive at your leisure Friday mid-morning to early afternoon at Hopkins Field Airport in Nucla, Colorado (KAIB).

# CPA's Firsthand Look at G.A. Innovation in Western Colorado

## A tour of Grand Junction's Spirit Engineering Factory

Bill Marvel, Fly-in Committee Chairman

On Saturday October 10, CPA members will have Spirit Engineering's facilities all to themselves as President, CEO and aircraft designer Steve Wood leads us on a full factory tour. This is where the aircraft that shocked Oshkosh attendees in 2025 was designed and built. The single seat, all aluminum aircraft with folding wings for "take home" storage arrived unannounced at Oshkosh last year with four examples flown all the way across the Rockies from Colorado using 88 gallons of fuel – for all four combined. It was less than the amount used for their Cessna 180 chase plane. These remarkable airplanes fly about 100 miles an hour at a fuel burn of 2 GPH mogas or 100LL and have a service ceiling of 17,500 feet. And they look like the classic designs of the 1930s. These are real airplanes, not A.I. or vaporware, and they are being built and delivered to new owners as fast as they come off the assembly line.



Here the cockpit entry hatch and plexiglass windscreen are shown in the closed position



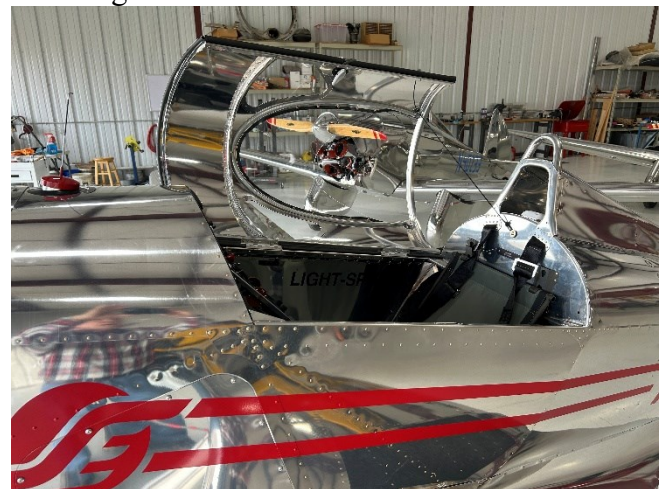
Engine with cowling removed for FAA inspection prior to customer delivery

Steve will be taking us through the entire factory showing and explaining the magic that takes place there. We'll see the equipment they use, the design innovations they developed and how they are able to efficiently manufacture and sell the aircraft for their current price of \$69,500, fly away.

Steve Wood started out in aeronautical engineering with Cessna and later, after many years of owning a defense contractor business here in town, sold it to make way for his real goal of building an affordable airplane. He had the skills and experience to not only design one but also to create the factory and tooling needed to manufacture it.

Serious cost containment is in

large part the result of extensive vertical integration – they make almost everything including the 42 HP engine that was specifically designed for this aircraft and has been extensively tested in their engine test cell to show compliance with ASTM standards. Their unique folding wing design was adopted from the WWII TBM Avenger torpedo bomber, a flying version of which operates here with the Commemorative Air Force. Wing folding is a single person operation that easily and ingeniously secures both wings in two minutes. Spirit is now designing an enclosed trailer for the aircraft so it can be safely stored out of the weather – not just in a costly and often unavailable



Opened cockpit entry

airport hangar. They are also working on a fully enclosed canopy as an option to the open cockpit design debuted at Oshkosh. This is a forward-thinking company, and we'll have an up close and personal visit with it in October.



**Yes, it has a strong wing!**

Given the distance from most members on the front range, driving or flying are options, as is spending the night. When I receive registrations from this Flight Lines issue, I'll determine how, where and when we'll meet. We may have a group dinner for those staying the night but those details will be determined by your future responses because of the different means of transportation and travel schedules members will have. Expect more information by email to attendees as details are worked out. But right now, just complete and return the registration form in this issue. This is a great opportunity for CPA members to see a Colorado general aviation manufacturing business from the ground floor up, presented by the one person who is behind all of it.

TV news link: [Local aeronautical engineers revolutionizing the aviation and aircraft manufacturing industry](#)



**A real factory full of real airplanes!**



## Fly-in Registration Form

**WANT TO GO BUT NO AIRPLANE AND JUST NEED A RIDE?**

Complete only this yellow section and mail the form to the Fly-in host address below

Name: Phone: ( ) Email: # Seats

**PILOTS FLYING OR MEMBERS DRIVING TO THIS EVENT, PLEASE  
COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING SECTION**

|                                                                             |           |                          |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|--|
| Which event are you registering for?                                        |           | La Junta September 25-26 |  |
| First Name                                                                  |           | Last Name                |  |
| Are you a CPA Member?                                                       | Yes       | No                       |  |
| Address:                                                                    |           |                          |  |
| Cell Phone:                                                                 |           |                          |  |
| Email:                                                                      |           |                          |  |
| Emergency contact name and phone of someone <b>not</b> traveling with you:  |           |                          |  |
| Aircraft type:                                                              | N number: |                          |  |
| Is anyone traveling with you?                                               | Yes       | No                       |  |
| If so, their first and last names                                           |           |                          |  |
| Do you have an available seat?                                              |           |                          |  |
| If so, how many?                                                            |           |                          |  |
| Cost per person: \$ ____ 30 ____ times total number in party ____ = \$ ____ |           |                          |  |
| Anyone on a first CPA Fly-in?                                               | Yes       | No                       |  |

Please use Venmo to “@brettpomainville”, or Zelle to “Brett Pomainville” (write your Full Name and “CPA La Junta Fly-in” in the notes/memo fields), or send a check for the above amount, **made out to the Colorado Pilots Association**, to the Fly-in host:

**Brett Pomainville (720) 378 3304 brett.pomainville@gmail.com**  
**5846 Grandville Ave Unit A, Longmont, CO 80503**



## Fly-in Registration Form

### WANT TO GO BUT NO AIRPLANE AND JUST NEED A RIDE?

Complete only this yellow section and mail the form to the Fly-in host address below

Name: Phone: (    ) Email: # Seats

### PILOTS FLYING OR MEMBERS DRIVING TO THIS EVENT, PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING SECTION

|                                                                                                |  |                                     |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|----|
| Which event are you registering for?                                                           |  | Spirit Engineering Tour, October 10 |    |
| First Name                                                                                     |  | Last Name                           |    |
| Are you a CPA Member?                                                                          |  | Yes                                 | No |
| Address:                                                                                       |  |                                     |    |
| Cell Phone:                                                                                    |  |                                     |    |
| Email:                                                                                         |  |                                     |    |
| Emergency contact name and phone of someone <b>not</b> traveling with you:                     |  |                                     |    |
| Aircraft type:                                                                                 |  | N number:                           |    |
| Is anyone traveling with you?                                                                  |  | Yes                                 | No |
| If so, their first and last names                                                              |  |                                     |    |
| Do you have an available seat?<br>If so, how many?                                             |  |                                     |    |
| Cost per person: \$ ___ zero ___ times total number in party ___ zero ___ =<br>\$ ___ zero ___ |  |                                     |    |
| Anyone on a first CPA Fly-in?                                                                  |  | Yes                                 | No |

Please send or email this completed form to the Fly-in host:

**Bill Marvel      (310) 293 2013    rv8tor@msn.com**

**492 Escondido Circle**

**Grand Junction, CO 81507**



## Fly-in Registration Form

|                                                                                                                                                                                        |               |        |         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|--------|---------|
| <p align="center"><b>WANT TO GO BUT NO AIRPLANE AND JUST NEED A RIDE?</b><br/>         Complete <u>only</u> this yellow section and mail the form to the Fly-in host address below</p> |               |        |         |
| Name:                                                                                                                                                                                  | Phone: (    ) | Email: | # Seats |

|                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>PILOTS FLYING OR MEMBERS DRIVING TO THIS EVENT, PLEASE<br/>COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING SECTION</b></p> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|                                                                            |  |                       |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|-----------------------|----|
| Which event are you registering for?                                       |  | Nucla, CO October 2-4 |    |
| First Name                                                                 |  | Last Name             |    |
| Are you a CPA Member?                                                      |  | Yes                   | No |
| Address:                                                                   |  |                       |    |
| Cell Phone:                                                                |  |                       |    |
| Email:                                                                     |  |                       |    |
| Emergency contact name and phone of someone <b>not</b> traveling with you: |  |                       |    |
| Aircraft type:                                                             |  | N number:             |    |
| Is anyone traveling with you?                                              |  | Yes                   | No |
| If so, their first and last names                                          |  |                       |    |
| Do you have an available seat?<br>If so, how many?                         |  |                       |    |
| Cost per person: \$__75__ times total number in party ____ = \$_____       |  |                       |    |
| Anyone on a first CPA Fly-in?                                              |  | Yes                   | No |

Please send this form and a check for the above amount, if any, **made out to the Colorado Pilots Association**, to the Fly-in host:

**Aimee Tooker                      (970) 428 7750    vestalhousesnucla@gmail.com**  
**P.O. Box 131**  
**Nucla, CO 81424**

Stay up to date with Colorado aviation events here:

<https://bit.ly/COAVevents>



Check Out the Latest Colorado Pilots Association Board Minutes

Log in to <https://www.coloradopilots.org>

select CPA Member Benefits, then select Meeting Minutes

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LinkedIn

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