

Young Eagles to take flight on Saturday

By DK McDONALD The Daily News | Posted: Tuesday, March 21, 2017 1:20 am



FREE FLIGHTS:

The Laughlin/Bullhead International Airport presents a Young Eagles program Saturday, offering free flights to youth between the ages of 8 and 17. Registration for the free flights begins at 8:45 a.m. at Signature Flight Support FBO, 2550 Laughlin View Drive. A parent or guardian must be present to give signed permission for each child to take a flight.

BULLHEAD CITY — Young people are invited on a free airplane ride Saturday at the Laughlin/Bullhead International Airport.

In partnership with Signature Flight Support FBO, the airport and Kingman Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 765 are presenting a Young Eagles program Saturday, offering free flights to youth between the ages of 8 and 17. Registration for the free flights begins at 8:45 a.m. and flights begin at 9 a.m. A parent or guardian must be present to give signed permission for each child to take a flight.

“Our goal is to take at least 100 youngsters on a flight,” said Jeremy Keating, Laughlin/Bullhead International Airport director.

The flights depart from Signature Flight Support FBO, 2550 Laughlin View Drive, not the main terminal, Keating said. Turn south from the Parkway onto Laughlin View Drive and follow the event signage.

For more information about the event, call the airport at 928-754-2134 or visit the EAA’s website at www.youngeagles.org.

The event also features a display of Airport Fire Department equipment and commercial flights will continue to take off and land during the event.

Participating youth take part in a ground-school training session prior to their flight and once they land, receive a snack and a Young Eagles logbook with a unique code to activate a free online EAA student membership.

Once a young person becomes a part of the Young Eagles program through a free flight, he or she has opportunities to participate in other programs including online flight school, the EAA Air Academy or EAA scholarships, Keating said.

The fun has an underlying purpose.

Aviation is facing a pilot shortage, Keating said. The day is an opportunity to introduce youth to the possibilities of a career in aviation.

“Commercial pilots have a mandatory retirement age of 65,” Keating said. “With the rise of drones, the military is training fewer pilots. Young Eagles is the opportunity to introduce children to the idea of a career in aviation through the fun of an airplane ride.”

Even those not interested in becoming a pilot can have a great career in aviation, Keating said.

“When the kids come out to the airport for Young Eagles, they also get an idea of the scope of career possibilities,” he explained. “There are mechanics, air traffic controllers, flight attendants, ground handlers, helicopter pilots, airport firefighters, terminal vendors, the Transportation Security Administration and even airport directors.”

Since the EAA Young Eagles program was launched in 1992, more than 2 million Young Eagles have enjoyed a flight through the program.

The free flights are made possible through the generosity of EAA members who provide their time and their aircraft to the Young Eagles program, Keating said.

“We love doing this program,” he said. “It’s all about the kids — not only does it give young people an introduction to aviation, it’s a lot of fun for everyone involved.”