



Washington Seaplane Pilots Association Newsletter

Spring 2024



**Chuck Jarecki's Cessna 185 at Glacier Lake, NWT, Canada.
Photo by Penny Jarecki.**

Editor's Greeting

Crista V. Worthy, WSPA Newsletter Editor



Spring is here, and with it another fun flying season!

On behalf of the WSPA Board, I want to thank *you*, our WSPA members, for your support. You, our members, are the lifeblood of this organization. The WSPA was created not only to protect seaplane access in and around Washington, but also to facilitate lasting relationships, communications, and camaraderie among seaplane pilots across the Northwest.

The WSPA has prepared some fun events for you over the next few months, and you can read all about those, as well as catch up on our big Grounded Hogs Gala and NW Aviation Conference & Trade Show, with plenty of photos of both. I've added info about some other events you might want to put on your calendar as well.

We want this publication to be a nerve center of communications from the WSPA Board to you, the members. But we want to hear *from* you, too! To that end, our CFI Corner this issue comes from Mike Kincaid, who you might have met last year if you attended the Tanglefoot Splash-In at Priest Lake. Mike's got a feel-good story about a longstanding seaplane business, brought back from the ashes of tragedy.

We've also got AIS training news, spring maintenance, Don's Logbook Reveries from his trip to see the recent total solar eclipse, a safety story, some head-turning GA news including that the unique Gweduck we saw at Tanglefoot last year is being offered as a kit! Yes, you can have one too! Our history article covers the first around-the-world flight, which began and ended in Seattle—with wonderful photos. Part II of this story will come in the Summer issue, as a big celebration is being planned for the centennial of that amazing journey.

There's a big treat in store for you in our Destinations section: An adventure up the Rocky Mountain Trench into British Columbia, The Yukon, and Northwest Territories, co-written with Chuck Jarecki. In case you don't know Chuck, he is one of the six founders of the Recreational Aviation Foundation. A retired rancher, he lives in Montana and owned two Skywagons, one on Aerocet floats and one on wheels. **He has landed (on floats or wheels) at more than 260 different places in Canada, between 1977 and 2018. He has made 47 flying trips to that country: 36 of those up into Yukon Territory, and twice all the way to the northeast tip of Labrador. So, he knows what he is talking about, when he talks about flying in Canada!** We've



got a story for you that combines tent camping, staying in cabins, and luxurious fishing lodges, just to whet your appetite for exploring our neighbor to the north. And if you have questions, you can contact him; he's always happy to talk flying with people who are serious about exploring Canada. Chuck took the photo above at Little Doctor Lake in the Northwest Territories. The photos in this story are nothing short of spectacular!

Have you been thinking about flying somewhere new? Are you curious about a particular destination, or type of destination? Then send in your questions and/or suggestions! I'll investigate, and in future issues, we'll cover these fun places, so you can turn your ideas into unforgettable travel adventures. This is *your* magazine!

Send your thoughts, suggestions, and photos to Editor@WashingtonSeaplanePilots.org.

President's Column

Stephen Ratzlaff
WSPA President

It is Spring again and we are all looking forward to the float flying season. We had an amazing Grounded Hogs dinner and a record turnout. I want to thank everyone on our board who planned and worked on this effort. In fact, our entire board was able to be there, and I would like to thank them for a year of service. At Grounded Hogs we also recognized Chuck Perry, who retired from our board and Kenmore Air this year. And we welcomed our latest board member, Quinn Dillon, who is Assistant Chief Pilot at Kenmore and will serve as our industry representative. Our board members this year include:

- Jack Jacobson, Treasurer
- Don Goodman, Secretary
- Bruce Hinds, VP
- Amy Fenwick, Admin, Social Media & Events
- Stephen Ratzlaff, President
- Scott Cooper
- Quinn Dillon, Industry Representative
- Kevin Franklin
- Jamie Madonna
- Bayan Towfiq
- Kevin Wyman is now Idaho Liaison



We have two big events coming up and while we hope everyone can attend, space is limited. So please sign quickly so you are not disappointed. For more information, see the articles further below in our newsletter.

Rust Remover, Wednesday May 8 at Kenmore Air. Sign up [here](#).

Tanglefoot Splash-In at Priest Lake. June 21–23. Sign up [here](#).

Lastly, and probably most importantly, we need all members to complete the short (10 minute) online [Amphib Training](#) before the start of the season. The short link is <http://tiny.one/gearup>. This is the training we developed with the national Seaplane Pilots Association and are asking pilots to complete each year. (And you will receive WINGS credit every year you complete it). You might be saying, “I fly straight floats, so it doesn't apply to me.” Not so! We want the procedures presented in this training video to be broadly disseminated across our entire seaplane pilot community, and no doubt you will be riding right seat in a friend's amphib at some point in time.

Thank you for your support at Grounded Hogs. We look forward to seeing you at one of our fun events this season!

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Thank you for your support in 2024. We look forward to seeing you at one of our fun events this season!

Stephen Ratzlaff
Washington Seaplane Pilots Association



Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Update

AIS Training Can Save Access—Just Do It!

Bruce Hinds, WSPA Vice President

Take the test again? Please, it is that time of year again. Or, you can go to some boat inspection station and have someone that knows nothing about seaplanes inspect and clean it, right? All joking aside, at least for the moment. Without an approved program such as ours that is how some view the solution. We have been honored as the only user group to be able to inspect our own craft with 4 states signing onto the practice. We are being watched by other states as the example – call it a “pilot program” if you will.



Remember, our AIS certificate is only good for the calendar year, and if you're flying in WA waters, resident or not, you'll need the WDFW permit for about \$24, that's good for a year from when you get it. We thank all of you for your participation in the program and please spread the word, not AIS. The link to get started is: www.SeaplaneAIStraining.com.

The BIG NEWS on the AIS front is a nationwide survey we found recently put out by *General Aviation News*. They published the following article, [Calling All Seaplane Pilots](#), which is asking seaplane pilots to take a survey that will gather the pilot's knowledge, concerns, and practices regarding their operations in relation to AIS. I did not see this coming and initially was quite concerned. My perception of what most pilots' knowledge must be who have not participated in the program could put the program at risk.

BUT WAIT, this could actually be a good thing! The survey is being conducted, as you'll read in the article, by the US Department of Fish & Wildlife that approved our program, and Pacific States Marine Fisheries that developed our training. NW seaplane pilots who have participated in the program are much more knowledgeable on the topic than most other pilots around the country and would therefore paint a nice picture of how well our program is working.

As the world becomes more sensitive to the infestation of our waters, we can expect states to start making more restrictions and access to become more difficult. Several years ago, we were really close to the scenario above

regarding a mandatory roadside stop, or, if we were lucky, designated airports would be required where appointments would have to be made. Yes, we were that close to losing or severely restricting our access.

Can we help save our water access across the nation? Possibly. I encourage each of you to spend about 20 minutes to take the survey. You can skip the story and go direct to it [HERE](#) if you like. It will be available until May 31st.

Thank you everyone for your continued support.

Bruce Hinds



“CLEAN, DRAIN & DRY”
ARE THE WORDS WATER MANAGERS WANT TO HEAR!



STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!
Be A Good Steward.
Clean. Drain. Dry.



QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:

- 1: Watch the training video
- 2: Take the test (only accessible after the video)
- 3: Print your certificate – carry it with you or keep it on display in your aircraft.
- 4: Keep a log of waters visited within the last 30 days and include a record of cleaning and/or decontamination.
- 5: Check State Requirements Page to see if permits, stickers or registration may be required.

Upcoming Events

Every year we look forward to collaborating with our aviation partners and sponsors to bring together WSPA members and friends at our favorite locations across the Pacific Northwest. Pilots, nonpilots, members, and nonmembers are welcome to attend our events and share in the enjoyment of seaplane flying. See upcoming events and review past events on our website, www.WashingtonSeaplanePilots.org/events.

2024 Spring Rust Remover Safety Seminar

For several years now, we have had the honor of hosting our Rust Remover Safety Seminar in the spring as a way to prepare pilots for a new season of seaplane flying. During the event, we aim to help pilots enter a frame of mind that will prepare them to be vigilant when they get ready to take their first flight after a winter away from the water.

This year our Spring Rust Remover Safety Seminar will be held on **Wednesday, May 8, 2024!** Kenmore Air has once again offered the Otter hangar for use for the event and we couldn't be more appreciative.

[Registration is FREE and is now open!](#)

We appreciate your early registration, so we can ensure enough food for all!

Agenda

6:00 PM - Pizza & Beer

6:30 PM - Introduction & Welcome - Stephen

6:45 PM - Insurance Market Update

7:30 PM - Destination Operational Refresher

8:00 PM - Questions & Departure

Kenmore Air Harbor: 6321 Northeast 175th Street; Kenmore, WA, 98028 [\(map\)](#)

We wish to thank Dave Gudgel and his team at Kenmore Air for graciously providing the venue and various other resources that allow us to gather for this event. Additionally, thank you to WSPA Board Member Jamie Madonna for organizing this event. Thank you to our speakers for taking time away from their busy schedules to prepare the information you will receive, and finally, thank you once again for your attendance and support of our organization.

Questions?

[Contact us!](#)

[REGISTER HERE!](#)



WSPA Annual Tanglefoot Splash-In! June 21–23, 2024

Amy Fenwick, Admin, Social Media & Events

Photo courtesy Amy Fenwick.



Please join us for our 2024 Washington Seaplane Pilots Association (WSPA) annual splash-in at Tanglefoot Seaplane Base on Priest Lake! Members or not, all are welcome to join in on the weekend of fun in Aviation!

Photo: Beth Meines, 2023 Splash-In at Tanglefoot SPB



Situated in lovely Cavanaugh Bay, our annual gathering is held at Tanglefoot Seaplane Base (D28), home to Dr. Loel and Olson Fenwick. The seaplane base features docks, beach, and ramp space for straight floats and amphibious aircraft. Kevin Franklin's "pickup" float truck makes ramping easy for pilots on straight floats. For aviators on wheels, the Cavanaugh Bay Airstrip (66S) is located next door.

Accommodations at the airstrip and seaplane base include camping with restroom facilities. This year, thanks to the support of our sponsor, we are pleased to announce an upgrade in accommodations at Tanglefoot from the port-a-john toilets to The Royal Flush Portable Luxury Bathrooms! This year, we are also pleased to offer outdoor forest showers for guests - a truly

unique North Idaho experience! For those who are camping, we encourage you to bring warm clothes for the evening hours and a headlamp for traveling between venues and on site after dark.

Cost

The cost to attend is \$135 per person for members and their guests, and \$150 for non-members and their guests. The fee includes camping, an event t-shirt, and all meals freshly prepared throughout the weekend (Friday Dinner, Saturday Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, and Sunday breakfast).

We have historically had a great response to the event with last year our biggest turnout to date. We have already had a huge response to this year's event and anticipate this year to surpass previous numbers. As such, we may impose a cap on total attendees to ensure a safe and successful weekend. More information will be communicated as registrations start coming in.

Cancellations

If you are unable to attend after registering, cancellations received before 8:00 pm on Thursday, June 13 will be refunded, minus a \$25 cancellation fee. If you find you are unable to attend after this date has passed, you are welcome to send a substitute in your place; however, we will be committed to the caterer and unable to offer refunds. If you have any questions regarding this policy or to identify a substitute, please contact us.

(Continued on Page 7)

Event Sponsor

We are pleased to announce that Aerocet is our presenting event sponsor once again, and we couldn't be more appreciative for their support! Aerocet helps keep attendee costs low by helping to cover the cost of event t-shirts, ice, the event banner, and importantly, our event support staff. Many of Aerocet's team have helped out in previous years and should be familiar faces by now! As you come across their team during the weekend, please extend your thank-yous for their ongoing commitment to our organization and this event. We truly couldn't do this without them.

Event Details

This event brings seaplane pilots from all over the United States! Arrivals begin at noon on Friday and departures wrap up around noon on Sunday. Throughout the weekend, we have a dedicated air boss and volunteer wing walkers available to coordinate arrivals and ensure a safe and incident-free ramping experience.

Waivers

As an attendee, you will be required to execute two agreements pertaining to the event: The first is the "Agreement to Assume Risk of Injury and Release of Claims." The second includes the WSPA "Waiver of Liability." Both waivers are on one form, so only one signature is needed for both. Registrants will be provided a link to access these online the week before the event. We ask that you complete them before arriving at Tanglefoot. All pilots and their guests must have signed them in order to attend. If you incur any challenges accessing the documents, we will have iPads available on site to help you through the process.

Food

The Washington Seaplane Pilots Association (WSPA) will provide meals throughout the weekend. Dinner on Friday and Saturday nights will be catered by the Chimney Rock Cafe on Priest Lake. Friday evening will include pulled pork and chicken sandwiches with salads, sides, and desserts. Saturday we will have burgers and brats with all the fixings, sides, and dessert. Breakfast Saturday and Sunday will consist of several usual breakfast foods, including freshly cooked eggs, pancakes, and sausage!

Special Guests and VIPs

Saturday morning will feature a safety seminar, and a safety briefing regarding our splash-out to Mosquito Bay for lunch. Historically, we have had speakers with a wide breadth of experience, including representatives from the FAA Safety Team and Spokane FSDO, the Bonner County Water Sheriff's Department, and leaders in Aviation training, search, and rescue. This year's speakers will be announced soon, so look out for that in your inboxes as the event nears!

Keynote Presentation

We are excited to announce our keynote presentation Saturday evening will be delivered by WSPA Lifetime Member, Addison Pemberton of Pemberton & Sons Aviation! Addison will be presenting on his immaculately restored 1940 N3N-3. This project has been the feature of numerous aviation magazines over the past few months and for good reason! It is one of the most unique seaplanes you will ever encounter. Addison informs us that he plans to bring the Pemberton Fleet to Tanglefoot this year, so look out for the Goose, Super Cub, and the N3N, all of which you will find on the ramp this year!

*Moose Peterson photo.
(Continued on Page 8)*



Thank You to our Hosts

We wish to thank Olson and Loel Fenwick for the gracious opportunity to utilize their private residence and grounds once again for this fly-in. This is truly a unique spot on earth and to show our appreciation, we encourage you to practice "Leave No Trace" camping and respect for their personal property.

Photo courtesy Loel Fenwick.

Arriving and Departing

- Arrival and departure frequency: Cavanaugh Bay Area Traffic Unicom 122.9.
- Once on the water, 122.9 for mooring and ramping instructions.
- Please practice safe piloting.
- Please land outside the water buoys around Clipper Marina, which is just north of D28.
- Upon departure, please reduce RPMs for noise abatement.



Volunteers Needed

No doubt some of you will be drafted or may just be inclined to help with meals and cleanup, which will be sincerely appreciated. For information on how you can help out, please contact Don Goodman, (360) 303-7076 or DonaldJG56@gmail.com.

See you Soon!

This is sure to be a fun event and we look forward to seeing you. Please check back to our website for photos and updates and look out for emails from our event organizers as the time nears! For any questions, please reach out to us at Admin@WashingtonSeaplanePilots.org.

Agenda

Friday, June 21st

Noon–7:00 PM: Noon-to-sunset arrival (sunset is set for approximately 7:10 PM)

6:00 PM: Tiki Party on the Fenwick lawn!! Pulled chicken and pork with sides and desserts catered by Chimney Rock Cafe on Priest Lake. Wear your favorite tiki attire - this event is new and is sure to be a blast!

Saturday, June 22nd

8:00 AM: Breakfast at the hangar (provided)

8:30 AM: Safety Seminar - Presenters to be announced soon!

9:15 AM: Mandatory Pilot Safety Briefing – Splash-out to Mosquito Bay, review of ground operations and procedures for marshaling aircraft to launch.

11:00 AM: Build your own sandwich and snacks (we supply the fixings).

11:30 AM: Fly-out lunch at Mosquito Bay on NE Priest Lake. Please review safety handouts. Attendance at Saturday morning Safety Briefing mandatory for all PICs.

1:30 PM (est): Explore North Idaho. We've adjusted the agenda this year to allow pilots the time to explore the local lakes and rivers on Saturday afternoon!

6:00 PM: Loel & Olson Fenwick—Welcome to Tanglefoot at the Hangar.

6:30 PM: Dinner at the hangar.

7:00 PM: Keynote: Addison Pemberton, Pemberton & Sons Aviation. *"Making friends with the Yellow Peril, the Naval aircraft factory N3N."*

Sunday, June 23rd

8:00 AM–Noon: Continental breakfast will be provided at the hangar with sandwich fixings for your trip home. Departure at your convenience.

We hope you can join us!

Best regards,

[Washington Seaplane Pilots Association](http://WashingtonSeaplanePilots.org) 🛩️

More Photos from our Tanglefoot Keynote Speaker



The amazing N3N, about to launch from the water. Kathryn Foster photo.

Read more about Pemberton & Sons [here](#).

What was that about "shiny side up"?



At Beauty Bay on Coeur d'Alene Lake, Addison stopped for a Mountain Dew with friend Dave Holmes. Super Cub "Flash" on Edo straight floats is tied to Dave's boat.

Round Engine Roundup, June 27–29

By Crista Worthy, Editor; photos by Thomas Hoff

What is this event about? Well, round-engine airplanes, of course. But really, this event is about the *people*, the people who build, restore, own, and operate aircraft with radial engines. You don't need to own one of these airplanes to attend—you just need to love them! And what pilot doesn't? So, if you go to the Round Engine Roundup, you'll see airplanes that will make your eyes water. And the people who fly them are fascinating! When I attended two years ago, I met folks who'd flown into this event from as far away as Australia and New Zealand. People from all walks of life come together to share their love of historic airplanes. I met Hank Galpin of Kalispell, Montana, who restored one of the Beechcraft Travel Air 6000s that saw many years of service with the legendary Johnson Flying Service. It's one of the finest examples of this type anywhere on the planet. And I kibbitzed half the day with Bert Zimmerly, Jr., 90 years young, who finally retired from commercial aviation at age 80, and who has flown 858 different airplanes. And I swear, he remembers them all, down to the engines and tail numbers. Just get him going...the things he's seen...flying the Nike execs to China over 40 years ago, when nobody was flying bizjets into China—except Bert of course!

Below: Bert Zimmerly and Hank Galpin in the Travel Air 6000.



WANTED

Round Engines
for
Round Engine Round-Up

June 27-29, 2024 - Idaho Falls, Idaho

Registration by June 1, 2024 is mandatory. Meals are limited.
Contact Thomas Hoff at galactic@gmail.com if you plan on attending.



The event is hosted by Bob and Jane Hoff and their family: sons Thomas and James, spouses, and grandkids. The Hoff family owns Rainbow Ranch, a large farm south of Idaho Falls that's been in the family for over 100 years. Yes, they are potato farmers in Idaho. Four generations of their family (the women, too!) learned to fly in the same Cessna 120—with the same CFI! But the first airplane that stoked a fire in Bob's heart when he was a kid was a Beech 17 "Staggerwing." Little did he know that someday he would own that very airplane, once owned by backcountry legend Bill Woods (Woods' other Staggerwing can be seen at the [Evergreen Aviation & Space Museum](#) in Oregon).

(Continued on Page 11)



Bob & Jane Hoff in their Beech Staggerwing over Galena Pass, Idaho

Round Engine Roundup attendees first fly into Idaho Falls (KIDA). The Hoff's will host you at their FBO, [Aero Mark](#). On Friday you'll meet and dine in their XL hangar, where the various Staggerwings, Howards, Twin Beeches, and other gems that have arrived stand gleaming, safely tucked in for the night. After dinner, pilots get a mandatory flight safety briefing for the next day, and then on Saturday morning (weather permitting) a mass fly-out over the Galena Pass to [Smiley Creek \(U87\)](#), a long, beautifully manicured, high-elevation airstrip near the headwaters of the Salmon River, nestled below the jagged Sawtooth Mountains. The RAF typically brings breakfast for all. Then it's back to the private (and perfectly manicured) grass strip at Rainbow Ranch, where you'll have lots of time to mingle and enjoy lunch, dinner, and locally-crafted huckleberry ice cream. Thomas Hoff, by the way, is as good a photographer as any at *AOPA Pilot*, *FLYING*, or anywhere else. He even puts together a gorgeous magazine called [Staggerwing Club News](#), for members of the Staggerwing Club. If you want to attend, you need to [register](#) by June 1! Full schedule of events is [here](#)! Don't miss out!



At Smiley Creek.



50th International Seaplane Fly-In at Greenville, Maine September 5–8, 2024

Crista Worthy, Editor

[This event](#) isn't happening until September, so we'll bring you many more details in the Summer 2024 issue of the WSPA newsletter, but if you want to attend the "Oshkosh for Seaplanes" this year, you might want to plan ahead...it's going to be extra-big! This event is held each year, the weekend after Labor Day weekend, at Greenville on the huge, beautiful, Moosehead Lake. There are lots of festivities and contests (they were doing something like STOL Drag, except on the water, long before the High Sierra Fly-In ever started) and you don't even need a seaplane, because you can land at the adjacent [Greenville Municipal Airport \(3B1\)](#).



The event organizers tell me that: Fly-In [registration and tickets](#) will likely be available in early-mid summer. For straight float users, individual/personal wooden docks will be available to registrants who purchase a complete Fly-In package

on a first-come, first-served basis. Amphib users are welcome and encouraged to come up the ramp at [Stobie Seaplane Base \(52B\)](#) or [Moosehead Aero Marine \(Telford's new ramp/marina\)](#). For those on wheels, there is plenty of room at the airport. Even after all lodging in town or around the lake books up as we get close to the fly-in, camping under the wing of your aircraft on the field is free. And for those interested in attending but unwilling to make the vast journey by their own plane, there's always the option to fly into the Bangor (1hr 20 min drive to Moosehead) or Portland (2hr 40 min drive to Moosehead) airports typically with one layover if traveling from Seattle or Portland, OR.



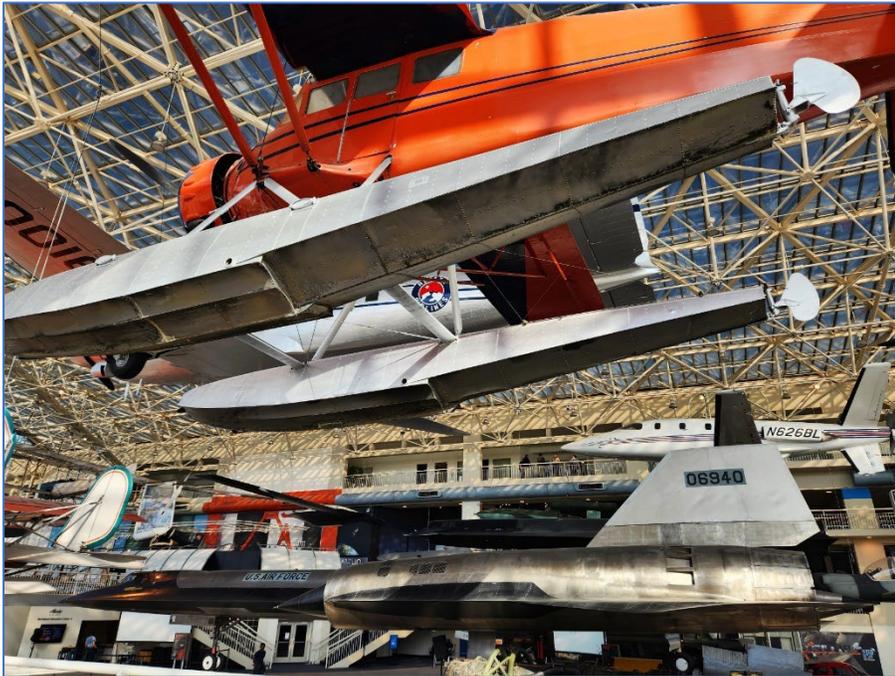
Here is my tip on where to stay: [The Birches](#); love this place! They have cabins and a restaurant right on Moosehead Lake. In fact, this is a year-round fly-in resort for pilots: land on floats in summer, skis when the lake is frozen in winter, or on their private dirt airstrip if you have wheels. So, reserve soon if you want to go! We will update you with information about plans for the 50th Anniversary, special guests, flying activities, and a schedule of events in our next issue!



Events Recap

Grounded Hogs Gala

Crista Worthy, Editor



A 1933 Stinson Reliant on floats, and the museum's 1963 Blackbird, which cruised faster than Mach 3 and higher than 85,000 feet.

There are only 30 years between these two airplanes.....Let that sink in.

What a party we had on Friday, February 23rd! We hope you were there for all the fun! This year we broke all past records, with 220 attendees. Plus, the entire event was held in the T. A. Wilson Great Gallery at the Museum of Flight. Tables were arranged under the Blackbird, with dozens of vintage aircraft floating overhead inside the 3 million-cubic-foot, six-story, glass-and-steel exhibit hall. After mingling during cocktail hour, attendees enjoyed a fine dinner, fun slideshow narrated by Kevin Franklin, and a presentation by Henny Jungemann, Chief Pilot for the U.S. Forest Service Beaver Program in Ely, Minnesota.

Photos by Crista Worthy



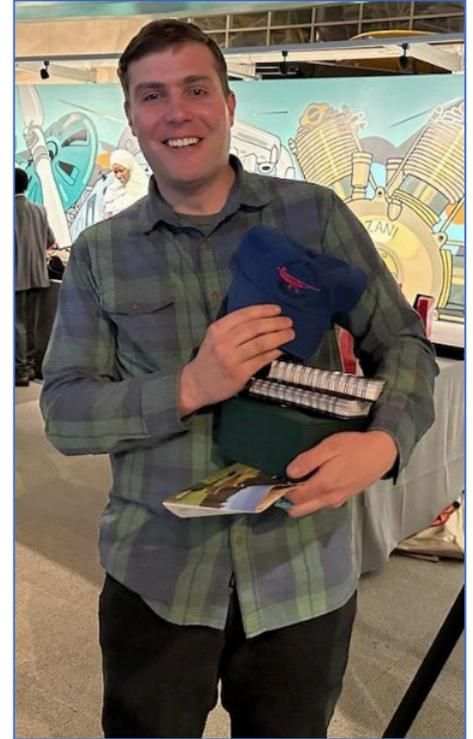
Dinner under the Blackbird.

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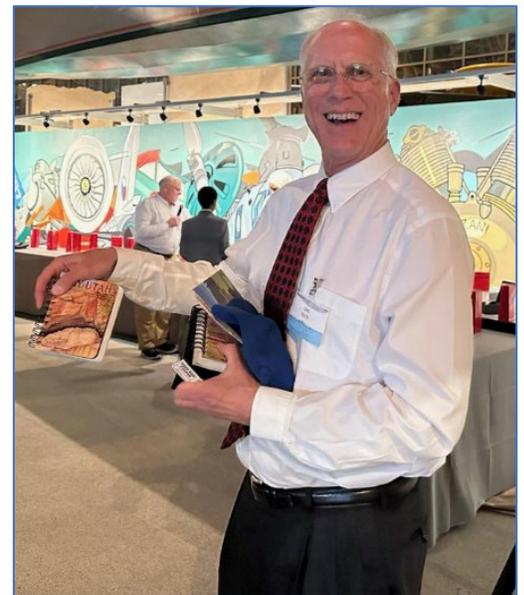
And then it was on to the big raffle giveaway! So many great items, from headphones and lifejackets to books, flight bags and other gear from [Flight Outfitters](#), cases of wine, unique flying experiences, and a beautiful wood propeller donated by [Hartzell](#). Special thanks to super-sponsors [Kenmore Air](#), [Aerocet](#), [Wipaire](#), and to Stephen and Kristie Ratzlaff and Bayan Towfiq for the use of the Great Gallery. All our sponsors, donors, and volunteers made this an unforgettable evening!



Above: Don Goodman helped organize the raffle prizes.
Below: Guests check out the goodies. Amy Fenwick photos.



Quinn Dillon, above, and Carl Buck, each won prizes. Andrew George photos.



Thanks to our raffle donors: Ace Aviation, Aerocet, Alderbrook Resort, AOPA, Amy Hoover, Bayan Towfiq, Cayuse Vineyard, Cloudbase Optics, Crista Worthy, CFI Dave Cowan, Don and Natala Goodman, Elder Law, Elkins Resort, Ellison-Mahon Aircraft, Inc., Flight Outfitters, Garmin, CFR George Johnson, Hartzell Propeller, Idaho Aviation Association, John Goodman, Kenmore Air, Lake and Air, Lightspeed Aviation, Martin Makela, Mike Kincaid, Modern Pilot, Museum of Flight, Mustang Survival, Nickel Boat Aviation, Northwest Seaplanes, Passing Time Winery, RAM Mounting Systems, Sage Fly Rods, Scott McGillivray, Seaplane Outfitters, Seaplane Pilots Association, Shawn Elston, Spencer Lake Bar and Grill, Sporty's Pilot Shop, Stephen and Kristie Ratzlaff, Tailwind Cellars, Vashon Aircraft, Vertex Aviation, and Wipaire!

NW Aviation Conference & Trade Show

Crista Worthy, Editor

Photos courtesy Northwest Aviation Conference & Trade Show unless otherwise noted

Saturday and Sunday brought the NW Aviation Conference & Trade Show at the Washington State Fairgrounds in Puyallup. The WSPA's booth was busy as volunteers and board members greeted WSPA members, signed up new members, sold WSPA t-shirts and caps, and talked seaplanes with the thousands of pilots in attendance. Your Editor was busy too, floating back and forth between the WSPA booth and Idaho Aviation Association booth, selling books and meeting friends old and new. Especially impressive were the number of kids and teens getting excited about, and involved with, aviation—the next generation!



WSPA Board Members Scott Cooper & Jamie Madonna with little Charlie Fenwick. Amy Fenwick photo.

Below: "So THAT'S how they do that!"



Trade shows are all about making connections.



Teen Flight Puyallup: High school students build a plane from start to finish and then learn to fly it!



Conference Coordinator
Rachel Hansen
with Keynote Speaker
Rod Machado.



Left, Above & Below: Start 'em young!



Left: Steve McCaughey greets a friend while wearing a PFD...
Below: Who can resist pulling that tab?



Logbook Reveries: Total Solar Eclipse Report – Spring 2024

Don Goodman, WSPA Secretary

Hello All!

We had a pretty good viewing at Maverick (5T9), Eagle Pass, Texas, where we flew in our 182 (on wheels this time) to see the total eclipse. Eagle Pass was close to the first place the eclipse appeared inside the United States on its path northeast across North America.

Due to clouds, it was “peek-a-boo” during the partial phase, but then the skies cleared well enough to see totality for about half of the 4-minute, 30-second duration at this location. We had three aircraft from Washington State. At peak, there were about 20 aircraft on-site.

The aircraft photos are by me. The totality shot was taken by a pilot next to us who used a telescope. With the naked eye you could see those solar flares. Starting back NW today. 🛩️

Cheers,
Don



Below: The sky darkens.



Right: The reddish dots around the sun are called prominences. Prominences are enormous loops of plasma, many times bigger than Earth, that can last several months. They often appear red because they contain hydrogen glowing at extremely high temperatures.



CFI Corner

Brooke's Seaplane Service

Mike Kincaid, CFII, M.Ed., SAG

Editor's Note: Mike Kincaid is the Idaho Field Director for the Seaplane Pilots Association. He is doing his best to retire from commercial flying and instructing to concentrate on having fun with his Super Cub on amphibians and working on bringing an Aircoupe museum piece back to life. After his retirement from the Alaska Department of Public Safety, Mike and his wife moved to Hayden Lake, Idaho, where they operated a seaplane instruction business for 15 years and Mike conducted pilot exams as an FAA Designated Pilot Examiner. His [books](#) include Alaska Justice, Alaska & Beyond, Alaska Pursuit, Seaplane Rating Basics, The Checklist Training System, and One Came Home.



22 years ago I authored an article for *Water Flying* about Brooks Seaplane, reporting that the family-owned-and-piloted business had maintained a perfect safety record for over 50 years. Father Bill and son Grant operated another 16 years after the article without an accident on Lake Coeur d' Alene, then sold to a retired airline pilot in 2018. Tragically, the new owner flew sightseeing tours for only two years before having a mid-air collision over the lake in the company's Beaver. He and seven others lost their lives. The horrible accident not only motivated my second article about seaplanes on Lake Coeur d' Alene, but was the driving force for local pilots and the Spokane FSDO to hold a safety seminar about safe operations in the KCOE area and when flying over the lake.

Fortunately for the many North Idaho residents who love the sounds and sights of seaplanes lifting off in front of picturesque downtown Coeur d' Alene, the gaggles of tourists looking to enjoy the lake from a different perspective, and those seeking seaplane ratings in unique aircraft, Shane Rogers happened on this part of the world a few years ago. Raised in an aviation family from Fairbanks, Alaska, Shane would hop rides with his pilot/grandfather on trips to his gold mine, and he grew to love aviation.

In 2021 Shane began the process of purchasing Brooks Seaplane from the widow of Neil Lunt, the pilot of their co-owned, ill-fated business. It would take most of the year for Shane to nail down the dock leasing and insurance coverage, and then the tourist season and favorable flying weather both came to an end. Although grounded for the rest of the year, there was plenty of work yet to do.

Rogers obviously needed to replace the fleet, as his predecessor's Beaver was a total loss and the company's Cessna 206 had been sold. Shane dedicated months to researching the perfect aircraft for his operation, considering the awesome Kodiak, Beavers, and others. All had their pros and cons. Then came into focus what Shane believes to be the perfect sightseeing aircraft for his business—a Beech 18, which he says has such great flying qualities, that, "When you fly it, you just understand."

Luckily for Shane, his wife Brooke also loves aviation, leading to tweaking the company's name to Brooke's by simply inserting an "e." Their kids have grown up in aviation and son Logan even convinced his dad to deliver him and his date to the prom this year with the Beech—the prom was held on the shores of Lake Coeur d' Alene. That had to be way cooler than those who paid big bucks for limo rides. Logan earned his Private Pilot Certificate last fall.



Amber Phillips made this photo of the Brooke's Beech 18 at their Lake Coeur d' Alene docks on January 13, 2024.

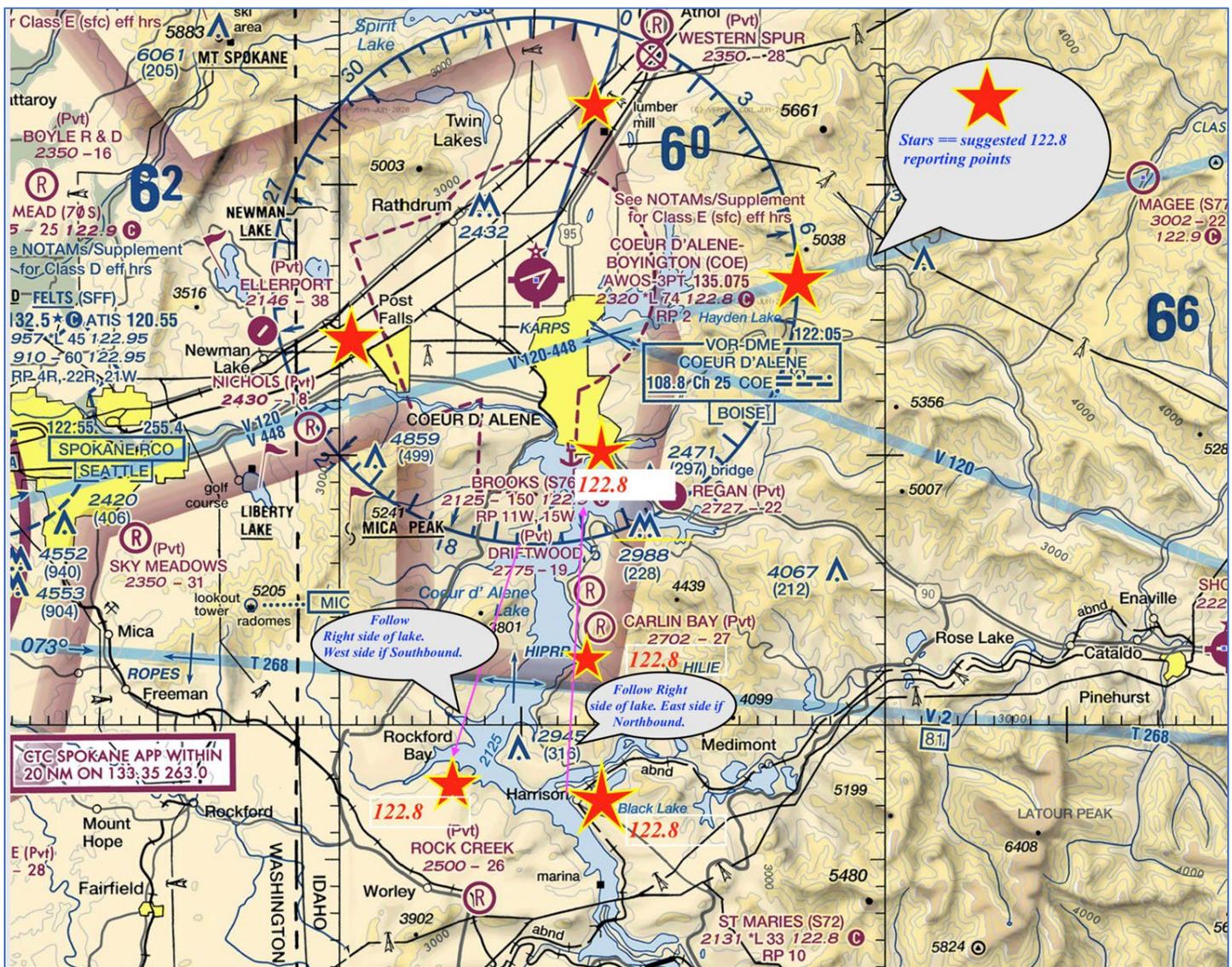
(Continued on Page 19)

The younger sons, Mason and Gavin, join Logan for what has to be the best summer jobs ever, doing everything from sweeping floors, pumping floats, fueling, docking assists, helping passengers load and debark, and other duties as assigned by Dad. In between work, the boys keep busy catching fish off the dock.

Shane says the best parts of his job are flying an amazingly beautiful Beech 18 in a spot like Coeur d' Alene and meeting new and returning customers, all while sporting the official uniform consisting of a Hawaiian shirt and shorts. Single Engine Sea Ratings are offered in a Citabria on EDO 2000s, and a DH-2 Beaver was added to the fleet mid-season last year.

Shane explains that he and his team have invested in safety measures, electronics, and airframe position lights to prevent another tragedy on the lake. His pilots have greatly stepped-up radio communications, passenger briefings, and the company follows a published route, flying counterclockwise around the perimeter of the lake to keep the shoreline to the right.

To tweak the "Fly Right" program on the lake, Shane also is working with the FAA and the FCC to remove the 122.9 MHz frequency markings from the local sectional (an exhausting government process). Point 9 was issued decades ago when Bill Brooks requested a channel to communicate from his base to his planes, but today only adds confusion to pilots using the Coeur d' Alene Airport airspace.



Note the reporting points (red stars). Use 122.8 to make regular position reports. To tour the lake, fly counterclockwise, keeping the shoreline on your right. (Continued on Page 20)



Mike made this photo of the Brooke's Twin Beech while flying overhead in his Super Cub.

Shane Rogers says he's proud to continue one of the oldest seaplane businesses in the world, and loves sharing safe and fun flying adventures in a gorgeous environment.

Brooke's Seaplane can be contacted through their website, brookesseaplane.com or call (208) 664-2824. 📞

Safety Ops Alert

Spokane River Drawdown

Addison Pemberton, WSPA Lifetime Member



To all,

Thanks to a heads-up from our dear friend Larry Krauter regarding the Spokane River drawdown in June, I did some homework. I talked to the upriver dam staff (509) 742-8141, and they told me the river would only draw down one foot, maybe two feet, which should not impede our seaplane ops or docks. Even the seaplane launch ramp will still work.

However, we need to be mindful of ops near the dam safety cables. Near the upriver dam at the west end of the seaplane waterway, there are tree stumps below the water level near the surface, and this area should be avoided—year-round. 📍

“Keep your nose down in the turns and the ball centered =(0)=”
Addison Pemberton

Maintenance Corner

De-Winterize Your Aircraft

Eric Ellison, A&P, IA
VP & Director of Maintenance, Kenmore Air Harbor

As the weather turns nice and we start thinking about outside recreation again, it is time to wake up those aircraft! Here is a partial list of items to check as you prepare for that first flight:

Crista Worthy photo.



- **Wash and wax to remove the accumulated dirt and grime** from the winter. Depending on where the aircraft is stored, there may be moss in the flight control gaps. Springtime brings with it a lot of insect hatches and a fresh coat of wax on the leading edges can help with cleanup.
- **A thorough interior cleaning is important.** Mold and mildew form easily in the PNW and if not treated, can break down upholstery materials. 303 Aerospace Mold & Mildew cleaner works well for this.
- **Check all the flight control systems for freedom of movement**, especially trim systems. Control cable pulleys and trim jacks can freeze up when not used regularly. Hinge and pivot points can be lubricated with a light oil such as CorrosionX or LPS 2.
- If any control locks were either not installed, or became dislodged, **check the flight control systems for damage related to over travel.**
- **Look around the aircraft for any bird or insect nests** especially in the tailcone, air vents, and cowlings. In the PNW Mud Dauber wasps like to nest in aircraft pitot tubes.
- **Inspect radio equipment for proper functionality.** Exposure to winter humidity can have a negative effect on electronics. We have found radios full of water due to an unfortunately placed windshield leak.
- **Check the ship's battery for proper charge.** Lead acid batteries will drift down in voltage over time, even with no load on them. Ideally, they should be kept on a trickle charger when not in use, but life does not always permit this. If the battery has been sitting without a charge applied for a long time, it should be top charged for 12–16 hours.
- If the interior of the aircraft was removed for winter storage, reinstallation is a good time to **look closely at the seat structures and safety belts** for wear or damage.
- **Sump all the tanks and the fuel strainer.** Rock the plane a little and sump the tanks again. A lot of water can accumulate just through condensation.
- **De-preserve the engine if it was winterized.** Remove de-humidifying (desiccant) plugs and install the spark plugs. Check intake and exhaust for any covers or silica gel desiccant that may have been placed there.
- **Run the engine** and check that temperatures and pressures are indicating normally. Exercise the propeller to get fresh oil flushed through and verify smooth operation. If a preservative oil such as 2F was used, the oil should be drained and replaced with normal engine oil.
- If you are looking for a **disinfectant for your aircraft interior**, there is an aviation-specific product from ZEP called "RTU Cleaner Disinfectant."

Gweduck, “The Modern Flying Boat” on *KITPLANES* Cover

Crista Worthy, Editor

Did you happen to see the March 2024 issue of *KITPLANES* magazine?

The cover story features the Serial Number 1 Gweduck, built, owned, and flown by Ben Ellison and Ross Mahon. The article’s headline says, “*The Gweduck is a hero-class Experimental three decades in the making.*” Congratulations, gentlemen!

Ellison and Mahon completed the flying boat 15 years ago, have been flying it ever since, and are [now offering it as a kit](#). Two are under construction at the program’s build facility, Composite Creations, in Prineville, Oregon. All Gweduck kits must be assembled there, because the parts are too large to ship and assembly requires large, heavy, equipment along with a lot of space. The big advantage, of course, is that owners get professional oversight, saving time and avoiding mistakes. With over 10,000 square feet of space, the facility can handle four Gweduck builds at once.

When designing the prototype, Mahon and Ellison consulted with numerous engineers from Boeing as well as professional flying boat operators from the Caribbean and Alaska. The team built a radio-controlled, quarter-scale model to test water handling characteristics. A major design goal, achieved by a deeper V-shaped hull and other features, was to avoid the tendency of smaller Grumman flying boats to porpoise on the water. A spray suppression slot controls water spray, directing it behind the prop arcs. And, to keep things watertight, the hull is designed with zero hull penetrations below the water line. In fact, the entire fuselage is constructed of only three enormous parts, while the wings are formed with a one-piece spar that extends tip to tip, saving weight. The Gweduck’s counter-rotating Lycoming IO-540s help with water handling. The tailwheel design keeps the aircraft stable on land while loading through the rear door.

Mahon and Ellison took their time testing the aircraft, making minor tweaks. After its first real flight, it was painted, flown to Oshkosh a week later, and has remained virtually unmodified since. The Gweduck has been flown to The Bahamas, Alaska, and so many points between. The 360-gallon fuel capacity allows for a 2,000-mile range, if you want to take it that far, with a 2,000-pound useful load. 120 knots is the Gweduck’s sweet spot. The kit aircraft will take advantage of new technology and experience, incorporating mostly carbon fiber rather than fiberglass, saving the glass mostly for the cockpit!



*The Gweduck at Tanglefoot,
June 2023.
Photo by Ramona Cox.*

Safety

What About Rain?

Crista Worthy

In our last issue (Winter 2024) we covered critical safety issues regarding icing in flight. Now let's move on to another weather phenomenon the Seattle area is famous for: Rain.

Most pilots are perfectly comfortable flying in the rain. None of us, hopefully, are crazy enough to fly into a convective cloud. We know the FAA recommends all pilots give thunderstorms at least a 20-nm-wide berth. It's common to be VFR and still fly in the rain. So, what's the risk, if any? What should you keep in mind about rain?

If your plane has been sitting out in the rain, take extra care when you sump the fuel to be sure water hasn't leaked in around the fuel caps. Sump, then walk to the end of one wing and give the aircraft a good rocking, then sump again. If you get water, keep rocking and sumping until your sample is pure. Every year, some pilots don't do this, and then their engine runs rough or even quits. If you have leaky fuel caps, have your mechanic examine them. Perhaps new caps or at least replacing the seals will solve the problem. With leaky fuel caps, there's not much you can do once you're up and flying in a downpour. If you have significant leaking problems and find yourself worrying about contamination while flying in heavy rain, you could always land and sump your tanks.

Other things to check after your aircraft has been sitting in the rain are the control surfaces. The ailerons may collect water, so move them up and down, allowing the water to drain out. If you take off with collected water and climb above the freezing level, you could end up with serious problems, such as stuck control surfaces, if the water freezes solid.

Interestingly, rain produces many of the same effects on your aircraft's performance that ice does. Water will "contaminate" a wing by disrupting air flow over the airfoil. It also slows the air down, which reduces your lift. The heavier the downpour, the greater the effect, as water piling up will also increase drag. Research recognized by the National Research Council's Transportation Research Board has shown that at high angles of attack and with flaps deployed, lift can be reduced by up to 18% with drag increased by up to 40%, leading to an increase in stall speed of as much as 17%. This means the wing will stall at a much lower angle of attack, so it's a good idea to keep a little extra airspeed, particularly if you're flying with a laminar flow wing.

Landing in heavy rain brings to mind a flight we took into Flagstaff, Arizona on a summer afternoon. Clouds were parked high over our destination, and it began to rain about 10 miles out from the airport. The ATIS reported rain but VFR conditions, and we continued in. Tower had cleared us to land, and we were on the downwind when the rain suddenly became so heavy you literally could see nothing straight ahead. I could see straight down, so my husband switched to instruments, I called the turn, and somehow, he found the runway. Wow—we should have been on an IFR flight plan, much safer. Just because rain is light or moderate doesn't mean it will stay that way!

Although the rainy end to our flight wasn't bumpy, most flights through rain do bring the added joy of turbulence for you and your passengers. While your plane is getting its free wash, you may experience downdrafts. Sometimes they just keep coming and now you're adding power, pitching up (watch that reduced angle of attack) and exposing the air intakes to even more rain. If you're worried about sucking up too much water, you can select alternate air or carb heat, both of which take air from inside the cowling.

(Continued on Page 24)



On approach, rain can distort your perception of the runway. Heavy rain on the windshield can make you think you're high on final, leading you to dive below your intended glidepath. Rain generally makes edges look fuzzy and indistinct, producing errors in judgment as you approach the ground. Daytime rain makes runway lights appear to be fainter, so you might think the runway is farther away than it really is and overshoot. On the other hand, nighttime rain dials up lighting intensity. Use extra caution, because if you think the runway is closer than it actually is, you could land short. Make sure your aim point is stationary against a point on the windshield, and use the VASI or other approach lights as a glideslope guide. Of course, if you're landing on water in conditions such as these, with limited ability to judge height above the water and no VASI or runway lights, use glassy water techniques.

Touchdown (on wheels) brings other potential problems. Water on the runway reduces the friction between the ground and your tires—just check your POH to see the difference in landing on a contaminated runway. It also reduces braking effectiveness. If you hydroplane, your brakes will be useless because there will be a layer of water between the tires and the ground, and your directional control will be determined primarily by inertia and the wind. Larger airports can have grooved runways to help drain the water, but most airports do not. If you know your tires' psi (because you checked your tire pressure at pre-flight!), you can calculate the speed above which you will be susceptible to dynamic hydroplaning. *Your minimum hydroplaning speed is the square root of the main gear tire pressure multiplied by nine*—wow—that was easy. So, if the mains of our old 210 were at 50 psi, the aircraft could begin hydroplaning at 63.6 knots. What amazes me is how that number generally parallels an aircraft's landing speed. Jets have higher tire pressures and land faster, while a Piper Cub with big tires at low psi will land slowly. At any rate, try to land slower than that magic number, if safe, so you don't slide off the end. Small aircraft may not even need brakes on a longer runway if you just land as slow as possible and roll out.

OK, you're down in one piece. Hopefully you brought your umbrella (we forgot ours) so you can avoid that final indignity: walking into the FBO soaking wet. 🐸

Member Requests, Photos, and Congrats

Crista Worthy, Editor

Help Needed with Flight

Tracie Szybnski is the owner of the [Elkins Resort](#) on lovely Priest Lake, Idaho. She also helped sponsor our Grounded Hogs Gala this year! As you can imagine, August is high season for any lakeside resort, and so, to save time, Tracie is looking to charter a flight for her family of 5 from the 4,400-foot turf [Priest Lake USFS airstrip \(67S\)](#) to [Bowers Field Airport \(ELN\)](#) in Ellensburg, Washington on Saturday, August 17, returning August 18.



They have a friend's wedding to attend, yet they cannot leave the resort until mid-afternoon on the 17th. If anyone can help out this friendly family, here is Tracie's contact information:
208.443.2432 work
208.770.7886 cell
tszybnski@me.com

Thank you!!! 🐸

Galen Hanselman photo.

Want Great Air-to-Air Photos of Your Airplane?

As we reported above, the NW Aviation Conference & Trade Show is all about making connections. One of those connections we made, [Mike Butorac](#), has a message for you and any other seaplane pilot based in the Northwest:

Dear WSPA members,

I'm looking to contact owners and/or pilots of seaplanes based in the Pacific Northwest. I represent Aviation Photocrew, an aviation photography team based in Belgium. Last year, they brought a Short Skyvan filled with over a dozen photographers out to the Abbotsford Airshow, and it was a huge success, based, in part, on the strong participation from the local GA and warbird community.

We had one floatplane but would love to add a few more of the iconic type that have made such a huge contribution to aviation in the Pacific Northwest. I would like to invite active members of your organization to see what aircraft would be available to fly with us in the days leading up to this year's [Abbotsford Airshow](#), held August 9–11 at [Abbotsford International Airport \(CYXX\)](#) in British Columbia, Canada. It is Canada's largest airshow.

To give you an idea of the work we did last year, have a look at the show report: [Abbotsford Airshow 2023](#). 🗨️

If you are interested, contact Mike through the link on his name in the top paragraph! Sample photo below:



Congratulations to John Dobson

Stephen Ratzlaff

President, Washington Seaplane Pilots Association

Congratulations to John Dobson! He won the AOPA Sharples Award for his work supporting GA in Washington State, and in particular, for leading the WSAA (The Alliance) of which we are founding members. Here is a video of his 15-second acceptance speech. <https://youtu.be/OjDc23vWREI?t=140>

Way to go John! This is well deserved. 🗨️

Icon Files for Chapter 11 Bankruptcy Protection

On December 26, 2023, Icon announced it had received FAA type certification in the primary category for its light sport A5 amphibious aircraft. To add to the good news, on February 27, 2024, the company announced it has [increased the maximum gross weight](#) of its A5 amphibian. This boosts the useful load by 60 pounds, to 490 pounds. All 2024 model A5s include the gross weight increase, as well as the previously optional four-blade E-Props lightweight propeller. The weight increase can also be retrofitted to existing A5s, according to Icon. The Vacaville, California-based manufacturer explained that the weight increase provides two hours' additional endurance (fuel burn is 5 gph) "or the ability to carry more baggage or heavier passengers." On top of the weight savings compared with the older three-blade prop, Icon claims that the new E-Props propeller improves ground takeoff performance by 21%.



But just a little over one month later, on April 4, 2024, Icon announced that, as part of "a strategic restructuring process," it has filed for Chapter 11 protection under the Bankruptcy Code. Icon CEO Jerry Meyer has pledged to continue to produce the aircraft and keep the entire bankruptcy process "transparent." The company said it seeks to sell the business to new owners using Section 363 of the bankruptcy code, which could enable the buyer to take ownership free and clear of any liens. The announcement included [contact information](#) on the company handling the sale, for "interested parties" who would like to reach out. Icon has requested an expedited sale process and arranged debtor-in-possession financing to fund operations and costs. Meyer also said, "We understand that this situation creates a hardship for everyone involved. However, without taking these steps, there is not a viable path forward for the business to do what we do best – build incredible airplanes and support our aircraft owners."

As part of the filing, Icon reported that it needs to sell 8–10 aircraft monthly to break even. However, in 2022 and 2023, Icon delivered 36 and 33 aircraft per year, respectively. Bankruptcy documents show the company's total debt at \$173.7 million. Of that, \$3.3 million is owed to vendors and suppliers, and \$170.4 million in unsecured notes issued since March 2020, 54.6% of which came from Pudong Science and Technology Investment (Cayman) Co. Ltd. (PDSTI), which, according to the affidavit, also owns "approximately" 50% of Icon's equity. \$65 million of the debt is owed to East West Bank of El Monte, California.

The affidavit states that, in 2021, Icon was investigated by the [Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States](#). In February 2022, the committee cleared the company, yet the affidavit says that "the investigation consumed significant portions of the Company's already limited resources, including management's time as well as professional expenses." In June 2021, some shareholders filed suit in Delaware against other shareholders, to try and force changes in company leadership and stop the alleged transfer of technology to China. That case is not concluded. For more on the bankruptcy process, including claims information, Icon provided the following contact information:

<https://cases.stretto.com/iconaircraft>, 866-993-1870, or 949-892-1896 for international callers. 📞

SeaRey Maker Shuts Down; Buyer Sought

More troubles in the Light Sport flying boat world.

Progressive Aerodyne, maker of the amphibious light sport SeaRey, is seeking new ownership. The company, based in Tavares, Florida, has shut down production while it negotiates the possible sale of the company to an investor group. This news is according to Progressive Aerodyne's former chief executive.

"The doors are closed until there is a new owner or other resolution," said Geoffrey Nicholson, Progressive Aerodyne's CEO from 2017 to 2023, although no further details were provided. Go to the website and you will see it is inoperative, simply displaying the message "Account Suspended." Phone calls were not returned.



SeaRey owners and operators are understandably concerned, but some are hopeful that the company will be returned to U.S. ownership. Reportedly, several unnamed U.S. investors have expressed interest. Since 2016, Progressive Aerodyne has been owned by Chinese investors.

Overseas ownership of formerly American aircraft companies has been a mixed bag.

Mooney sales never really caught on after a Chinese investor bought the company. Mooney's initial U.S. ad campaign seemed oddly out of step with U.S. tastes, and virtually no aircraft sold. Meanwhile, Glasair Aviation halted sales of its aircraft kits last year as it relocated operations to China. The move left customers unsure of the company's future plans.

On the other hand, after Chinese investment, Cirrus production and sales surged to new heights. GAMA reports that Cirrus SF50 Vision Jet sales rose to \$930 million in 2023, nearly a 22% increase from the previous year, with 708 aircraft delivered.

Progressive Aerodyne struggled during and after the COVID-19 pandemic with slow sales and supply chain problems. Legendary aviation author Richard Bach is a fan of the type and wrote *Travels with Puff: A gentle game of life and death* about a flight across America in his SeaRey. And Australian pilot Michael Smith flew around the world over 210 days in a SeaRey. He subsequently wrote *Voyage of the Southern Sun: An amazing solo journey around the world.* 🛩️

Sequim Wing-Walking Business Axed by FAA

In May 2022, at the Idaho Aviation Expo in Idaho Falls, I met a woman who told me she was a wing-walker. (That's her in the photo.) You don't meet one of those every day! It especially got my attention when she told me she didn't do it professionally, just when she felt like "getting away from it all." "It's so peaceful up there," she continued, "all I feel is pure joy." The FAA has now taken that opportunity away and squelched the livelihood of Mike and Marilyn Mason. The Masons began offering wing walking flights in 2012 and have flown hundreds of people without any mishaps. It was done in full view of the FAA, and last year Mason [told the Seattle Times](#) it had been fully approved by the local authorities. As a CFI, Mason said it was approved under rules that exempt certain flight school, aerobatic, and aerial photography missions from the standard regulations governing commercial air carriers. So, what happened?



Some 18 years ago, the Masons moved to the Blue Ribbon Farms airpark near Sequim. It has a lovely turf airstrip, although many older residents have given up flying. Mike started West Coast Spin Doctors and taught aerobatics. The wing walking business began about five years later, with Marilyn, an experienced wing walker, giving ground instruction in their home hangar. After several hours of training, people could go up with Mike for their wing walk. By 2021 Mike was flying over 500 such flights during the good weather months. Despite the fact that the airpark's covenants prohibit residents from complaining about aircraft noise, the homeowners board asked the Masons to stop the flights. They moved the flights to Sequim Valley Airport, about three miles away. But in May 2022, the board sued because the ground school was still being held in the Mason's hangar, and the airpark's covenants do prohibit commercial operations. The Clallam County Superior Court ruled that the Masons had violated the airpark's covenant and issued a summary judgment barring the Masons from using either the airstrip or their hangar for the wing walking business, thus forcing them to move the training as well. This has been more of a burden than you might expect, because their 10-year-old daughter is paralyzed with spina bifida and must accompany her mother to Sequim Valley Airport, rather than be able to stay at home.

Then the FAA got involved. First, they rescinded permission for Mason to continue using the offshore aerobatic box for his flights. So, he moved to Class G airspace inland. Then, he received a letter of investigation stating that the FAA would examine whether he was exempted from standard passenger-carrying regulations. Mason said this resulted in a finding of no violation and the case was closed. (His flights are training flights, not sight-seeing flights.) Next, he received a second letter of investigation, because Mason's customers don't wear parachutes, and FAA regs require them for all occupants of aerobatic flights. Mason said he had worked that out with the agency years ago, specifically asking for a waiver on this rule. At the time, he was told he didn't need one; an FAA official said that because his customers step out onto the wing before the aerobatic maneuvers begin, they are no longer "occupants" of the aircraft and so the parachute rule doesn't apply. But in a March 18 letter to Mason the FAA "Administrator has determined that an emergency exists related to safety in air commerce and that immediate action to revoke your Airline Transport Pilot certificate is required." "...you have advertised or offered passenger-carrying aircraft operations to the public without authorization," the FAA ruled. The FAA investigation determined that those flights "were careless or reckless so as to endanger the life or property of another." The letter states that in addition to operating his business without authorization, Mason violated air safety regulations by performing acrobatic flight maneuvers when the paying passenger had no parachute. This conduct "demonstrates you presently lack the degree of care, judgment and responsibility required," the letter concludes. Mason was ordered to surrender his revoked pilot certificate to the FAA immediately or face a fine of \$1,828 for each day he fails to surrender it. Mason is appealing the ruling but for now his ticket is pulled for a minimum of a year. The FAA has known about this business. Is this all a part of cracking down, after a series of embarrassing failures at nearby Boeing? 🛩️

Martin Mars Heading to Museum

If you visited Oshkosh in 2016, you remember the star attraction that year, *Hawaii Mars*, pictured at the bottom of this page in flight over Lake Winnebago and just below, when it was newly built.

Beginning in 1945, Martin built a total of six Mars aircraft, designed to serve as troop transports for the U.S. Navy. One crashed during testing; another was destroyed by fire. The remaining "Big Four" were deployed as freight aircraft, supplying Hawaii and other Pacific Islands until 1956. In 1959, a group of British Columbian forestry companies purchased them and converted them to water bombers. One crashed; another was wrecked in a storm. But the *Hawaii Mars* and *Philippine Mars* spent nearly 40 years drenching wildfires in western Canada and the U.S. Powered by four 2,400-hp Wright R-3350-24WA Cyclone engines turning 4-blade props with 16-foot diameters, the planes skimmed lakes, gathering 7,200 gallons of water in 22 seconds.



Coulson Flying Tankers bought both seaplanes in 2007 and hoped to sell *Hawaii Mars* at Oshkosh in 2016. Unfortunately, during the fly-in, the giant aircraft suffered a punctured hull when it struck the bottom of Lake Winnebago. Pumps kept it afloat until it was patched and then flown to Vancouver Island. Coulson has been looking for a buyer ever since. (See a video of *Hawaii Mars* in action [here](#).) Meanwhile, *Philippine Mars* has been beached for over a decade, pending a deal with the National Naval Aviation Museum in Pensacola, Florida.

But there's good news for *Hawaii Mars*: This fall, the British Columbia Aviation Museum near Victoria plans to take delivery of the massive seaplane after its final flight from its current base in Port Alberni, about 150 miles northwest. The B.C. government provided a \$250,000 grant to the museum, where *Hawaii Mars* will be the crown jewel of an aerial firefighting exhibit. 🛩️



Alaska USFS Lakeside Cabins Get Maintenance & Publicity

By Carmine Mowbray, RAF, and Crista Worthy



Have you visited any of the amazing public-use cabins in Alaska? We have, and think it's the ultimate luxury, to be able to fly a seaplane to a spectacular, remote location like this, enjoy the beauty outside, and yet be able to sleep comfortably indoors. (WSPA Secretary Don Goodman shared his experience in our [Winter 2024](#) issue.)

Now, you can easily find all these cabins via this website: <https://AlaskaPublicUseCabins.com>. Originally researched and created by Montana RAF supporter and pilot Tom Bass in his straight-float Cessna 180, pilot Bill Rusk called the directory “an incredible resource.” Rusk was concerned about its future when Mr. Bass retired from flying. The online directory is now managed by the [Seaplane Foundation](#), sponsored in part by the [Seaplane Pilots Association](#), and is administered by Mr. Rusk.

But some of the cabins themselves are under threat. RAF Alaska Liaison Jeff DeFreest says, “Loss of these fly-in, and marine access cabins would result in the loss of a very unique remote recreational experience.” Two fly-in public use cabins have fallen victim to deferred maintenance and seasonal damage, and, due to limited USFS funding, were in jeopardy of being decommissioned. They sit beside Heckman Lake, on Revillagigedo Island, in Tongass National Forest, within the Ketchikan Misty Fjords Ranger District. The one DeFreest refers to as “SE Heckman” is handicap-accessible, with a floating seaplane dock and ramps to get to the cabin and outhouse.

DeFreest was awarded an [RAF](#) grant for volunteers to clean, preserve, and improve the seaplane dock, ramps, and cabin. “Maintaining this backcountry forest access amenity provides shelter for recreational users, hunters, fisherman, *and* seaplane pilots, as well as emergency shelter for pilots and other backcountry users who may need shelter in survival circumstances,” he added.

DeFreest pointed out that the Heckman Lake cabins are relatively close to town, making them most affordable for people who charter a flight in, and the higher usage increases the likelihood that the USFS will be able to maintain the facility once damage and deferred maintenance are mitigated. DeFreest hopes this project leads to further RAF collaboration with the USFS. “A successful partnership on this entry level project can lead to future projects,” he said, in hopes of preventing the decommissioning of other public use cabins in the Tongass National Forest. DeFreest has scheduled other maintenance and has organized volunteers to help brush out around cabins and stairs, clean windows, refurbish the original cabin dedication sign, improve fire ring location, and install an RAF fire ring. Want to help out? Contact Jeff DeFreest at JDeFreest@theraf.org or 907-321-9800. 📧

History

100 Years Since the First World Flight, Seattle-to-Seattle

From the *Seattle Times*, excerpted by Crista Worthy

Below: Ten days before the April 6 takeoff of the First World Flight, Mildred Whitcomb, wife of Seattle Chamber of Commerce President David Whitcomb Jr., christens the Seattle biplane at Sand Point with a bottle filled with "Champagne" taken from the waters of Lake Washington. Photo by Webster & Stevens, courtesy Museum of History & Industry.



Ever heard of Army pilots Frederick Martin, Lowell Smith, Leigh Wade and Erik Nelson? Me either, until a few weeks ago! But they were the initial pilots of the very first around-the-world aviation voyage, a six-month U.S. journey initiated by the U.S. military that began and ended in Northeast Seattle 100 years ago.

The purposes, outlined by Major Gen. Mason Patrick, were lofty:

- Demonstrate aerial communication with "all countries of the world."
- Prove flight as practical "through regions where surface transportation does not exist or at least is slow, dangerous and uncertain."
- Show that aircraft could operate "under all climactical conditions."
- Prompt aircraft to adapt to "the needs of commerce."
- Showcase the "excellence" of American aircraft and byproducts.
- Honor America as "the first nation to finally circumnavigate the globe."

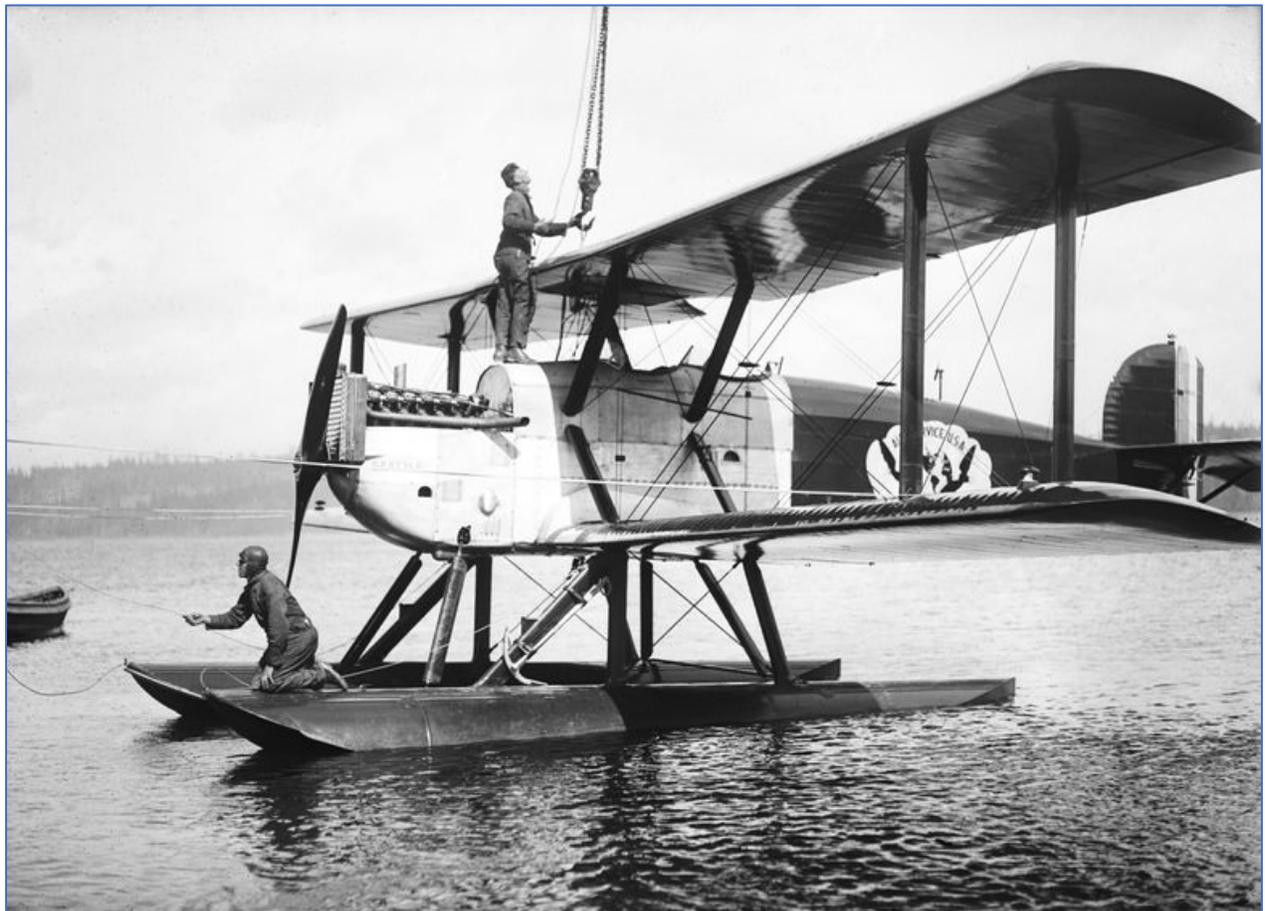
The planes landed in 22 countries over 175 days; in some, planes had never landed before.

(Continued on Page 32)



These were the World Fliers of 1924, the group of American aviators who set out from Seattle to circumnavigate the globe by air. Here, they're posing in their cold weather gear in front of one of the four Douglas World Cruisers that made the journey. USAF photo.

*One of the four pontoon-equipped biplanes is shown on Lake Washington.
Photo by Webster & Stevens, Courtesy Museum of History & Industry.*



On April 6, 1924, about 300 people witnessed four two-seat, open-cockpit Douglas biplanes named *Seattle*, *Chicago*, *New Orleans*, and *Boston* depart Sand Point Airfield and head northwest. The airplanes were equipped with interchangeable wheels and floats. Two aircraft never made it back. The *Seattle* impacted a mountain in Alaska. Its two-man crew hiked five days through snow, holed up in a trapper's cabin three days, and walked one more day before their rescue and return home. The *Boston* sank in the Atlantic Ocean and was replaced by a backup, the *Boston II*. The original *Boston* crew later joined the crews of the *Chicago* and *New Orleans*. The three planes eventually completed the circumnavigation and landed again at Sand Point on September 28, 1924, to the cheers of 40,000 spectators.



From left to right: Maj. John F. Curry, Lieut. Lowell Smith, Staff Sgt. Henry "Hank" Ogden, Lieut. Erik Nelson, Lieut. Leigh Wade, Lieut. John Harding, Lieut. Leslie Arnold. (Not pictured: Maj. Frederick Martin and Staff Sgt. Alva Harvey, crew of the *Seattle*.) USAF photo.



The flagship Douglas World Cruiser, the *Seattle*, departs Lake Washington on April 6, 1924, intent on circumnavigating the globe by air. The larger American effort was successful, but the *Seattle*'s mission ended when it crashed into a mountain in Alaska. USAF photo.

(Continued on Page 34)

The eight pilots and mechanics battled tumultuous weather, illness, fatigue, and mechanical malfunctions during their aerial circumnavigation of the globe. With no parachutes, no life preservers, no rafts, and no radios, the World Fliers helped change the future of aviation.

This feat was the “moonshot” of the early 20th century, involving coordination and teamwork across military, industry, political and diplomatic figures. The U.S. military reasoned: “America is the birthplace of powered flight and America is the place to do this. It’s our destiny.”

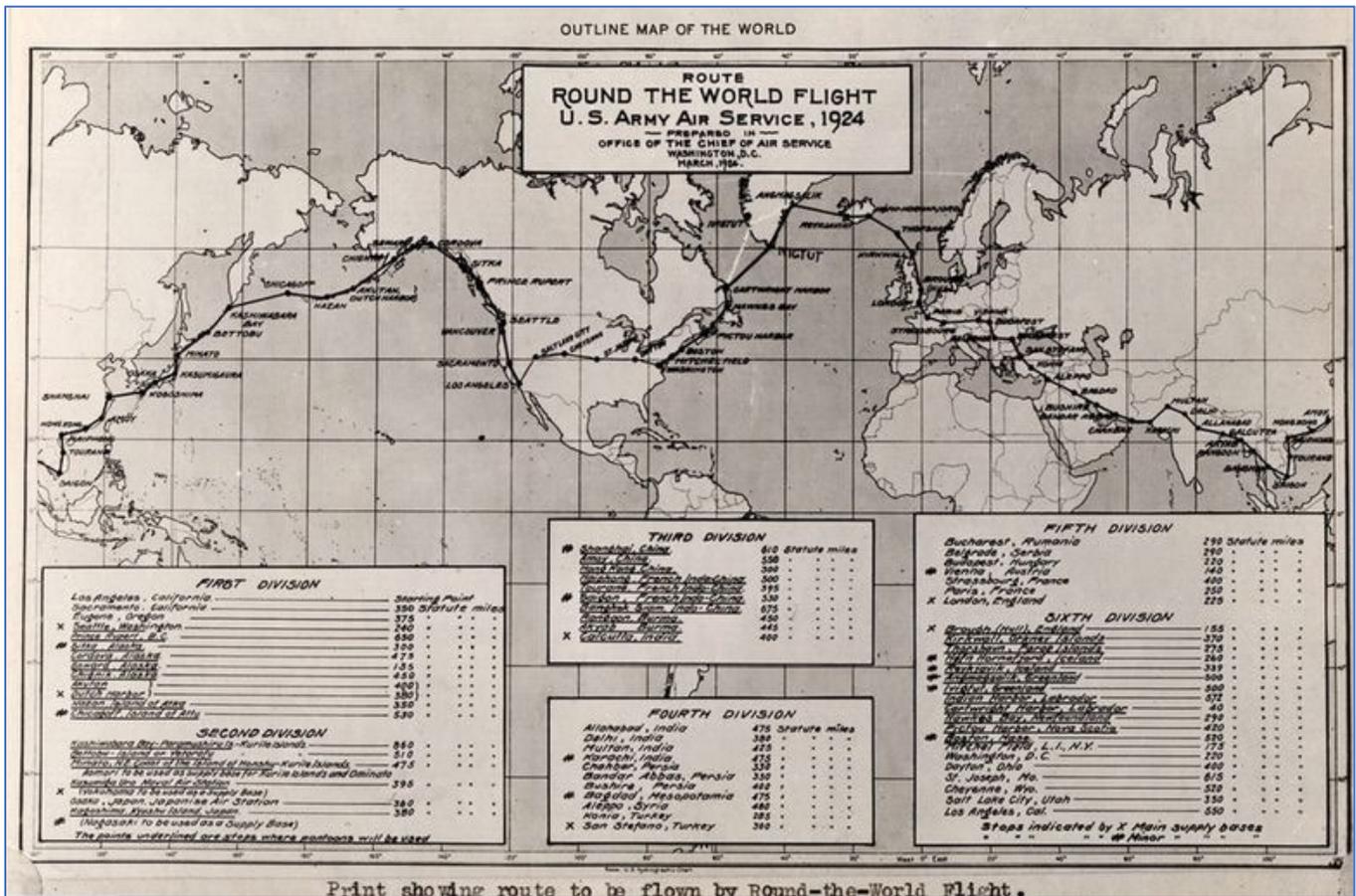
Designed by Donald Douglas, the Douglas World Cruisers were open-cockpit biplanes, built with Sitka spruce lumber from Northwest coastal forests. Before the trip began, the *Seattle* suffered mechanical issues and damage, and Bill Boeing had to repair it twice. In flight, the pilots were pelted by snow, freezing rain, and confronted by heavy fog. Visibility sometimes went no further than their propellers. Scud running a few feet above the ocean near Vancouver Island, the World Fliers suddenly found themselves flying toward the hull of a huge freighter that materialized out of the fog. They pulled up hard to avoid smashing into the ship.



The Douglas World Cruisers arrive at Resurrection Bay, Alaska, in the spring of 1924. USAF photo.

In later years, pilot Hank Ogden’s eyes would brim with tears as he recalled their arrival in Japan. A group of schoolchildren approached them, singing, “America the Beautiful.” He said that was something he would remember forever. There were many more difficult days, though. Ogden told his family he’d also never forget trudging through marshes, torrential rains, pushing to get to the next place where they could refuel, and replenishing broken parts on the planes in sweltering heat. Each plane went through an average of five engines. To repair a pontoon, they would jump into ice-filled water, first rubbing themselves down with engine oil for a tiny bit of insulation.

(Continued on Page 35)



This is the route that the World Fliers traveled in 1924 as they circumnavigated the globe. The route reflected international borders and relations post-World War I. Courtesy USAF.

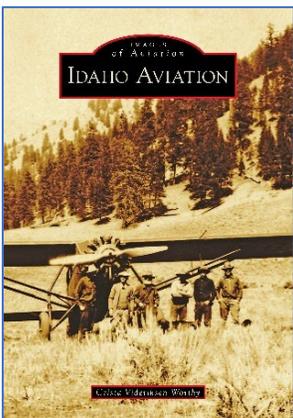
As the crews flew west toward Europe, 11-pound fur suits were exchanged for shorts, such that they arrived in Constantinople (now Istanbul) with burnt knees. But pressure to be first kept them pushing on. Five other countries were trying to make the around-the-world trip, too. Even though France and Germany had more airplanes at that time, the U.S. wanted to show the world they would lead the future in global aviation. Each time the U.S. crews landed, they just wanted a meal and a bed, but their strength was further sapped by the need to meet international dignitaries in their role as unofficial U.S. ambassadors.

In August, the *Boston* was crossing the Atlantic when its oil pressure suddenly dropped to zero. The crew ditched the plane and were rescued by a Navy cruiser. The plane was lost, but replaced by the *Boston II* in Nova Scotia. Flying from Greenland and two hours from Nova Scotia, the *Chicago's* fuel pump broke. To save their lives, Arnold, in the rear cockpit, used a hand pump to keep the plane going until they reached land.

The World Fliers arrived home on September 28 after flying a total of 363 hours and 7 minutes over 175 days, making 76 stops along the way. The grueling flight covered a total distance of 26,345 miles, averaging a highway driving pace of just 72 mph. The group then embarked on a nationwide barnstorming tour to show the country and President Calvin Coolidge that aviation was the future. Soon after the flight around the world, the Kelly Act (or Air Mail Act of 1925) was passed, allowing the postmaster general to contract private companies to carry mail. This seemingly inconsequential law had massive, lasting effects.

See how this law allowed the creation of our airlines, including United Airlines, born in Boise, Idaho, in 1926. Plus, 277 photos of amazing aviation feats, including backcountry heroics! It's all in my book, *Images of Aviation: Idaho Aviation*, autographed copies just \$24 with free shipping! To get yours, just email Editor@WashingtonSeaplanePilots.org!

In our next issue, we'll show you how Frank Goodell and others are planning a [Centennial Celebration](#) of the First World Flight!



Destinations

Welcome to the "Destinations" section, where we offer vacation destinations for adventurous aviators across the U.S. Share this section with your family members and plan your next adventure together today!

In upcoming issues, I have so many exciting adventures planned to share with you: spectacular float flying in Alaska, big splash-ins back East, even all the way to the Caribbean.

Yukon Float Fishing Extravaganza

By Chuck Jarecki with Crista V. Worthy

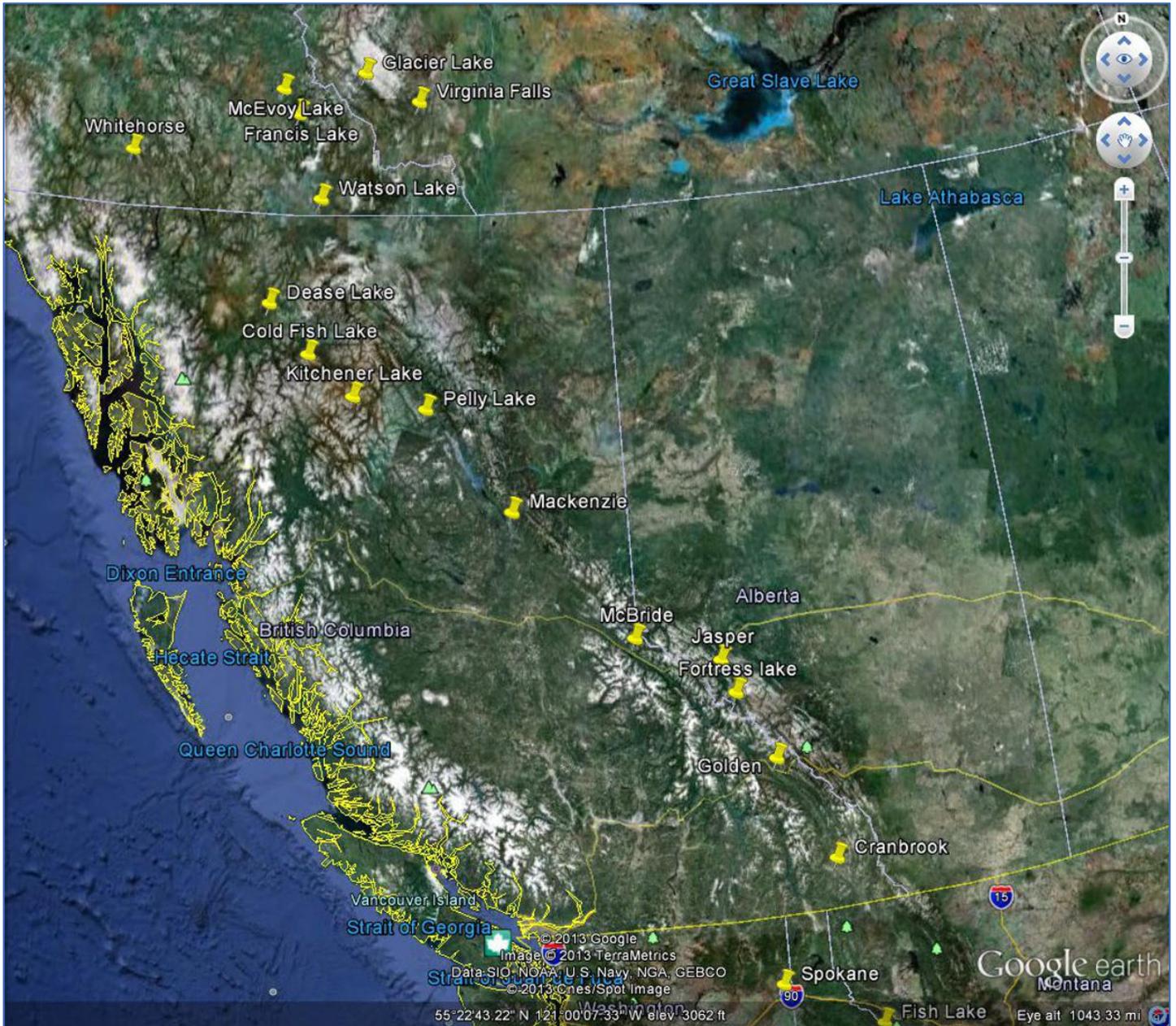
With few exceptions for the past 30 summers, my wife Penny and I have flown our Cessna 180 from our home in Polson, Montana, to Canada's Yukon Territory and beyond. Only once has another plane accompanied us. The Yukon is the size of California, and much of it is rugged terrain, studded with lakes and threaded with rivers. The total population of the Territory is only 34,000, two-thirds of whom live in Whitehorse. We fly by glaciers glistening in the sun, their meltwater tumbling down the mountain's flanks into turquoise lakes below. Moose feeding in shallow lakes seldom lift their heads as we pass over. Thus, we explore remote sections of the Yukon, fishing, canoeing, or hiking to alpine viewpoints. Except at the airports of Watson Lake and Whitehorse, we rarely see US-registered aircraft. It seems that most U.S. pilots just pass through the Yukon, following the Alaska Highway on their way to and from the forty-ninth state. They miss out on a truly fantastic wilderness flying experience without having to go so far. One year we chose to rent a home in Faro and make day trips from there. The following is a sample itinerary of highlights from other trips, stopping at remote lakes, fishing lodges, a waterfall, and the incomparable Glacier Lake.

Chuck Jarecki at Glacier Lake. Carmine Mowbray photo.



Planning Your Trip

Beginning in the Flathead Valley of northwestern Montana and stretching 950 nm to Canada's Yukon Territory is a scenic valley known as the Rocky Mountain Trench. The highest elevation of the valley floor is a mere 3,500 feet MSL and it's the most direct route from northwest Montana to the Yukon. Enroute, you'll find scenic lakes where you can camp, hike and fish, as well as experience the solitude.



From western Washington, you might think it faster to fly along the coastline, but the weather is often socked in, so you can't see anything. From the Seattle area, Nelson, British Columbia is a nice stop just north of Spokane.

In some northerly areas, precise navigation would be difficult without GPS, especially at low altitude. The size and shapes of lakes are accurately depicted on the aeronautical charts, generally not available enroute. Recommended charts in case of GPS failure include Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Prince George, Atlin, Fort Nelson, Whitehorse, Fort Simpson, and Kitimat. You can view an index of Canadian charts and acquire all your charts, \$19.95 each, [here](#). Don't forget the current *Canada Water Aerodrome Supplement*, available in hard copy or download from [NAVCanada](#) and *Canada Flight Supplement*, from [NAVCanada](#) or [FltPlan.com](#).

(Continued on Page 38)

What Should I Pack?



Doing your own planning is part of the challenge of the trip. Fuel burn must be taken into account. Weather can be fickle; before each leg, it's preferable to have enough fuel to turn back if weather ahead closes in, unless good weather to the next destination is assured. A few 5-gallon fuel jugs provide insurance; bring a strainer and hose. With charts in hand, you can select areas that may have appeal for your areas of interest. Using Google Earth, potential lakes can be examined for elevation, length, and general topography. Some lakes have outfitter's cabins; others may have a lodge or a private get-a-way cabin, while others have no facilities. The time of the season may well influence the availability of suitable beaches. Lake levels can vary considerably depending on the season and rainfall patterns. All lakes, especially those fed by major streams, are likely to have floating debris. Be prepared for generally moderate west winds in the afternoon, especially in June and July, occasional drifting logs, density altitude, and the likelihood of late afternoon thunderstorms.

Before beginning such a trip, part of which is over totally uninhabited, mountainous terrain, you should make lists of what you plan to bring. Weight and balance are critical. Bring lightweight layers of warm clothing, sunscreen, cap, lightweight gloves, and mosquito repellent. A few gifts, like well-wrapped bags of coffee, are appreciated by people in isolated areas who may assist you with fuel or camping sites. You must bring all requisite camping, fire starting, and emergency equipment. This should include a satellite phone, cell phone with service for Canada, and satellite tracker like Spot or Garmin inReach. Sporty's sells a pretty good [survival kit](#) for \$89.95.

Bear repellent should be considered mandatory. Never carry it inside the airplane unless it is inside a strong, airtight container like a military ammunition box. It's best carried inside one of your floats, in a waterproof, padded container. Like engine failures, dangerous bear encounters are very rare. But you should be prepared and know what to do. Fatal encounters involving bear spray: zero. Fatalities with gun defense: 17, and hundreds of dead bears. We used to bring firearms but now rely on bear spray. Nevertheless, pilots *may* import a rifle or shotgun into Canada; more info on firearm regulations is [here](#). Read about bear spray regulations [here](#).

(Continued on Page 39)

Customs & Regulations

Don't let this process intimidate you; it's not difficult. Valid passports are necessary for the pilot and all passengers. Flying either to or from Canada, pilots must clear customs at an airport of entry (AOE). Before you depart from the U.S., there is no need to contact U.S. customs on departure - [eAPIS filing](#) is sufficient. You do need to call Canadian Customs at (888) 226-7277 or (204) 983-3500 prior to takeoff in the U.S. and, again, by phone after landing, prior to exiting the aircraft. The first call must be made no less than two hours and no more than 48 hours before the border crossing. You will be given an ID number that must be provided upon arrival. Only rarely are pilots asked to await an official to provide an inspection in Canada. Customs officers are generally polite, so long as you are as well. We recall one in Bellingham, Wash., upon a return to the U.S., who pulled our children aside and asked them "where Daddy was hiding the Cuban cigars." One child retorted, "He already smoked 'em all!" (We don't smoke.) AOPA has an excellent, easy-to-digest page with all the details and appropriate links: <https://www.aopa.org/travel/international-travel/canada>.

Flying There

On one flight from our former southern California base to Calgary, we could have flown direct in our Cessna 210, but elected to stop just short of the border and spend the night in Missoula, Montana. That way we could give an accurate estimate of our arrival time and overfly spectacular mountains in the calm air of an early summer day. In Canada, flight plans need to be filed even when flying VFR, unless you remain within 25 nm of the departure airport, which certainly doesn't apply on a cross-country flight. It's helpful to file a master flight plan with a [Nav Canada Flight Information Center](#). Then, when you contact them to file a flight plan, giving your airplane number, they already have the usual repeatable information on the computer. Obtain a clearance to enter the control zone at controlled airports. Canadian Aviation Regulations are listed in the [civil aviation section of Transport Canada's website](#).

Consult the Google Map on Page 35 above for the locations described below:

Fortress Lake, Hamber Provincial Park, BC

52°22'09"N, 117°48'00"W

Elevation: 4,400 ft. MSL

Length: 5 nm

Width: average 3/8 mile

Fortress Lake is on the continental divide at the eastern border of British Columbia, adjoining Jasper National Park, Alberta. The lake is surrounded by rugged, snowcapped peaks, perhaps suggesting its name. This is a remote wilderness area with primitive camping, famous eastern brook trout fishing, and a delightful fishing lodge.

After stopping in Cranbrook, BC (CYXC) for customs, fly northwest up the Rocky Mountain Trench 115 nm to Golden, BC (CYGE) for fuel at the self-service pump. Leaving Golden, continue 74 nm up the Trench over McNaughton Lake to Wood Arm east of Mica Dam. Do not land on McNaughton Lake due to extensive floating debris. At Wood Arm turn eastward, following up the Wood River about 30 nm as it winds through ever-higher mountains that reach over 10,000 feet (see photo at right). By now you should have climbed to at least 6,000 ft MSL. Just before the lake comes into view ahead, you will pass a mountain buttress on your right—water gushes forth from its rocky face. Then, just when you think there can't ever be a lake in these rugged mountains, Fortress Lake comes into view.



(Continued on Page 40)

Fortress Lake lies in Hamber Provincial Park, a remote reach British Columbia, butted against Jasper National Park. The entire region is a [UNESCO World Heritage Site](#). There are no roads, no industrial activity, and no motorized ground access. The [Fortress Lake Lodge](#), a sport fishing lodge, is located on Chisel Creek Fan mid-way down the lake's south shore. There is a good beaching area on the east side of Chisel Creek Fan, sheltered from the prevailing westerly wind. The lodge has fishing boats, guides, canoes, and kayaks. Fishing generally needs to be done on the lake itself, not from shore. Catch and release is encouraged, and BC fishing licenses can be purchased at the lodge; bring fishing gear.



Staff can point you toward many good hikes that begin in the dense forest surrounding the lake and ascend above treeline for views of the pristine lake and mountains.



(Continued on Page 41)

Guest cabins resemble yurts but offer wood stoves and log beds with plush bedding. A cedar wood-fired hot tub soothes muscles tired from hiking or fishing. Meals are top-notch; see [website](#) for complete descriptions and photos. (Photos courtesy Fortress Lake Lodge except below, by Chuck Jarecki.)

If you want to camp on your own, two primitive campsites are on the north shore. The first is one mile west of the east end of the lake. The other is at Washout Creek, mid-way along the north shore. Both have gravel beaches for two to three planes and are sheltered from the prevailing west wind. High water levels may limit the amount of beach available. An old trail along the east third of the north shore of the lake is open for hikers' use. Washout Creek provides steep, rugged, but relatively open access to scenic alpine areas.



Departing Fortress Lake, expect glassy water first thing in the morning. You can retrace your route westward down the Wood River and continue up the Trench, or you can depart to the east over Jasper National Park, fly north over Jasper and then turn west-northwest following the railroad and highway back to the Trench. It's about 120 nm either way to the [small town of McBride \(CAV4\)](#) with self-

service fuel and just a 15-min walk into town to purchase supplies. Last we checked, fuel at McBride is by the honor system: you imprint your card, enter the amount owed, sign, and leave the slip. No fancy machines here! The airport at [Valemount \(CAH4\)](#), about halfway to McBride, has a shower in the pilot's lounge and fuel may be available.

As you fly up the Trench, you will be following the Fraser River, which flows to the Pacific Ocean. The Fraser eventually turns west, and you will continue northwest, cross a relatively low divide, and enter the drainage of the Peace River, which flows into the Arctic Ocean. About 120 nm northwest of McBride, [Mackenzie \(CZY\)](#), at the south end of Williston Lake, is your next fuel stop, the last fuel stop for some distance. You may be greeted by Vickie, who will get you started running the self-serve fuel pump as well as offer you fresh coffee or an ice cream cone. If she knows you, you also get a hug.



(Continued on Page 42)

Pelly Lake, BC

Pelly Lake beach photo by Chuck Jarecki

56°51'28" N, 125°24'52" W

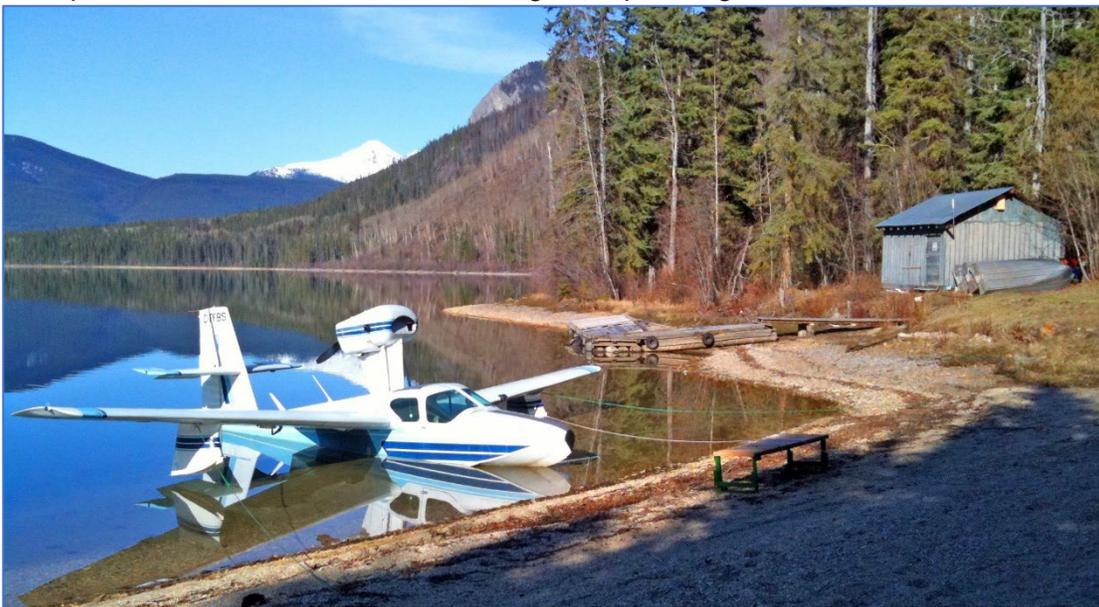
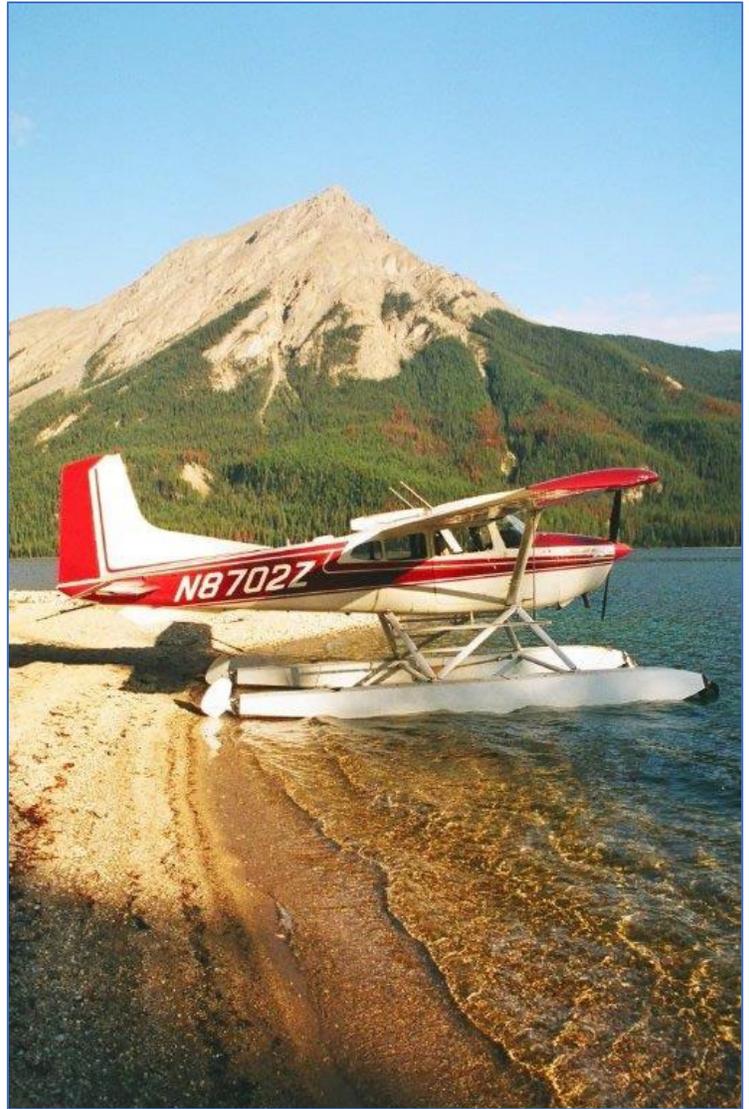
Elevation: 2,600 ft. MSL

Length: 3 ½ miles

Width: ½ mile

After refueling at Mackenzie (CYZY), continue 114 nm up the Trench the length of Williston Lake to the [Tsay Keh airstrip \(CBN4\)](#), then turn west and fly 15 nm, crossing a low pass, to Pelly Lake. The fly-in-only lodge sits on a timbered alluvial fan near the northwest corner of the lake, with a fine gravel beach. Do not confuse the Pelly Lake Wilderness Lodge with the hunting camp at the east end of the lake.

[Pelly Lake Wilderness Lodge](#) is a semi-rustic, self-catering operation. Several basic cabins are available, one with a complete kitchen. The rental cabins are not locked; their use is by e-transfer payment or cash on site. See the website for photos and more info. Use of the wood-fired hot tub and fishing boats is included with the cabin. Pilots normally bring their own meals, but if you've run out of provisions, the lodge owners may be able to feed you at a reasonable cost (with prior notice). The lodge hydro-power system provides lights, a hot shower, and a flush toilet when they're on-site in July and August, and for special trips in June. They enjoy taking guests on a boat trip down to Pelly Creek, the lake's beautiful and meandering outlet, for rainbow trout fishing or just sightseeing. The lake offers nice rainbows in the 2–3-pound range and bull trout in the early season; kokanee have recently found their way to the lake. The many hiking trails include level lake hikes and climbs to the alpine levels around 7,000 feet. Bring binoculars if you enjoy bird watching. Some pilots fly out for short day trips to even more remote lakes, though fuel planning is a consideration.



Departing Pelly Lake, you can either retrace your route back to the Trench and then up about 225 nm to Watson Lake, Yukon, or head northwest to Kitchener Lake and Cold Fish Lake, and then fuel at Dease Lake. Your choice usually depends on the weather. In marginal conditions, returning to the Trench is the prudent thing to do. Be aware that your next fuel availability is either at Watson Lake or Dease Lake.

(Continued on Page 43)

Kitchener Lake, [Tatlatui Provincial Park](#), BC

57°02'40"N, 127°35'27"W

Length: 9 miles

Width: ½ mile

Elevation: 4,300 ft. MSL



Kitchener Lake, 71 nm northwest of Pelly Lake, offers excellent rainbow trout fishing and numerous trail-less hiking opportunities. This lake is surrounded by rugged mountains. It is at the headwaters of the Peace River. Beach your airplane at the west end of the lake, where a public cabin with gravel beach is available on a first-come, first-served basis. The green-painted cabin sleeps four and was originally built by the Tompkins family from Fort St. John, BC. To prove a point with the BC Government, they nailed their tax notice to the door. There may be a small rowboat available. For a good fishing spot, hike a quarter mile north of the cabin to the mouth of a small stream, and cast into the lake. Trout have also been caught merely by casting out from the beached floatplane in front of the cabin. Ambitious hikers can climb up to the alpine area. No trails exist, so you will be bushwhacking part of the way.

(Continued on Page 44)

Cold Fish Lake, [Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness](#) Provincial Park, BC

Cold Fish Lake: 57° 41' 58" N, 128° 50' 48" W

Elevation: 4040 ft. MSL

Length: 5 ½ miles

Width: ½ mile (Regarding permission to land on *other* lakes in this area, click link above for more information.)

Cold Fish Lake is 56 nm northwest of Kitchener Lake; access to this area is only by float plane or back packing. An airstrip near the camp is unmaintained and not recommended except in an emergency. There is limited dock space at the Cold Fish Lake Camp, located at the northwest corner of the lake, but there is a gravel beach nearby. This camp is operated by BC Parks. There are six roomy cabins with wood stoves, each capable of sleeping six persons, all on a first-come, first-serve basis. The nearby cookhouse has running water, a propane stove, and rodent-proof storage boxes. All cooking and food storage must be done in the cookhouse. This is a pleasant place to overnight, especially in inclement weather. On-site park personnel can provide detailed local information. There are several hiking trails. East of the camp, a somewhat steep trail takes you up onto the alpine plateau 2,000 ft. above the lake. You'll have good views plus the opportunity to see a variety of wildflowers and perhaps a caribou. Allow at least 3 ½ hours round trip.



Photo courtesy Club Tread.

To continue toward the Yukon, follow river drainages north to the railroad grade of the never-completed Dease Lake railroad and then follow the grade to [Dease Lake \(CYDL\)](#), 59 nm northwest of Cold Fish Lake, for fuel. As you fly north over Dease Lake, there is an abandoned placer mining community halfway up the lake on the west shore. It is shown on the chart as Laketon. This is worth a stop to just walk around looking at the remains of the old cabins. From Dease Lake, continue 125 nm to Watson Lake, Yukon, mostly following the Cassiar Highway and Dease River. This is a portion of the route used in 1941 to transport construction equipment and material from the Alaska coast to Watson Lake to build the airport.

(Continued on Page 45)

Watson Lake, Yukon Territory

Watson Lake is a “mandatory frequency” airport, and communications must be established at least five miles out, 122.1 MHz. Self-serve fuel is just west of the terminal, which is open 24/7 with washrooms, a pilot’s lounge, and a community air radio station (CARS), 867-536-2905, where you can receive your [Nahanni National Park permits](#), which you will need if you want to visit Glacier Lake and other sites in the park (see Pg. 49). At the gas pump we met a 93-year-old fellow from Anchorage flying a Grumman Super Widgeon. There is a spacious pilot’s campground next to the lake, with potable water, a pilot shelter with wood stove and picnic tables, plus several outside BBQs. It’s a great spot to camp, relax, listen to loons on the lake, and watch bald eagles fishing.



*Left:
Watson Lake
Airport. Photo
by John Barco.*

*Below:
Todd
Ingbretsen
flies his
Cessna 182
up the
Rocky
Mountain
Trench.*

The [Watson Lake airport \(CYQH\)](#) was built in 1941, a year before the Alaska Highway, as an enroute stop for the Northwest Staging Route Program. This operation ferried lend-lease war planes from Great Falls, Montana, to Fairbanks, Alaska, where the Russian Air Force took delivery for the war on the Eastern Front in Europe. Two original buildings still stand: the log terminal/control tower and the huge, wooden maintenance hangar. This is the last of several similar hangars built during the war at various airports along the staging route. Inside the terminal, there is a fine display of photographs from the WWII years at Watson Lake.

After departing Watson Lake, you can fly west and follow the Alaska Highway some 200 nm to Whitehorse, where over half the people in the Yukon live the urban life (see Pg. 53). However, for some luxury in the wilderness, follow the Robert Campbell Highway 83 nm north, then follow the length of Francis Lake and then another 20 nm northwest to McEvoy Lake and Inconnu Lodge.



(Continued on Page 46)

McEvoy Lake and Inconnu Lodge

61°48'30"N, 130°11'42"W

Elevation: 3,315 ft. MSL

Length: 6 miles

Width: ¼ mile

The [Inconnu Lodge](#), on the north shore of McEvoy Lake, is a world-class fishing and outdoor activity destination. (Caveat: There was a fire at the lodge last year, but reconstruction is underway, and it will open again August 1, 2024.) Access is only by aircraft. In front of the lodge is a spacious dock as well as a gravel beach; a 2,800-ft. dirt airstrip is nearby. The lodge has its own DeHavilland Beaver on floats as well as a Hughes 500 helicopter. The Inconnu Lodge was constructed by Warren and Anita LaFave. Warren pilots both the Beaver and Hughes. They welcome guests who arrive in their own aircraft. Fuel is available; the price reflects the cost of flying it in.



Accommodations are in tastefully appointed cedar cabins that sleep two to three people and have private baths; lodge capacity is twelve guests. The 6,500 sq.ft. cedar-log main lodge offers a lounge with well-stocked bar, pool table and shuffleboard, lodge store, and dining room. Next to the lake shore is a hot tub and sauna. Meals are truly a gourmet delight. Breakfasts are cooked to order; dinners are four courses complete with wine. A sample dinner menu might include Thai salad, prime rib with glazed carrots and sautéed snow peas, and triple-chocolate mousse cake with raspberry coulis for dessert, all served with the appropriate wine.

(Continued on Page 47)



Unlike other trophy fishing destinations closer to the ocean, the area around Inconnu Lodge is subject to less rain, a major benefit not only for flying, but also outdoor activities. And you can get plenty of both here! Guests can enjoy guided lake and stream fishing, drift boat fishing, or canoeing. The lodge supplies high-quality rods, reels, lures, and flies at no charge; bring your own waders and buy your license at the lodge store. The local lakes are relatively small by comparison to other lake trout and pike fisheries, the largest lake only being about 12 miles long. From early season shallow water fishing on the fly, to chasing down big Lakers in deep water, to late season fishing, they are a diverse fishing operation. You can canoe from the lodge on McEvoy Lake for about 20 miles down a series of small lakes and streams. Or strap a canoe onto your plane and explore remote lakes; the lodge has fully-equipped outpost cabins on two nearby lakes, no charge.

Lake trout, Dolly Varden, arctic grayling, bull trout, inconnu (shee fish), and northern pike are all caught here. When hiking, look for moose, sheep, mountain goats, caribou, beavers, foxes, and 214 species of birds including loons, swans, and eagles. Possibilities really begin to expand when you throw in the capabilities of the Hughes helicopter: Heli-hiking, or heli-fishing, anyone? They can drop you off on a mountaintop for a private picnic or set you down beside an isolated lake. Perhaps the pinnacle (literally) is a trip to the Cirque of the Unclimbables, a stunning set of granite spires that rise above Glacier Lake, inside Nahanni National Park. The website, www.InconnuLodge.com, offers a wealth of detailed fishing and planning information, open this year August 1–September 6, although people generally reserve this type of trip up to a year in advance. Since you, unlike most guests, fly yourself in, phoning the office is the most efficient way to get your questions answered, 250-860-4187, info@inconnulodge.com. If you need more persuasion to visit, check out the [YouTube video](#)! More photos next page...





Picnic via helicopter.

Aurora Borealis above the Inconnu Lodge.





Inconnu Lodge helicopter at Cirque of the Unclimbables, Nahanni National Park

Glacier Lake and Virginia Falls, Nahanni National Park, NWT

Location: 62°05'33"N, 127°35'02"W

Elevation: 2,632 ft. MSL

Length: 2 ¼ nm

Width: ¼ mile

Not far from the eastern Yukon border is Glacier Lake, one of the most spectacular floatplane destinations in Canada. The backdrop for this location is comprised of the glacier-clad Selwyn Mountains, the highest mountains in the Northwest Territories. Near-vertical granite cliffs rise several thousand feet, forming what is known as the "Cirque of the Unclimbables." Mountain climbers come here from all over the world to test their skills and stamina.



*Glacier Lake.
See also photos
on Page 36
and Front Page
of this newsletter.*

(Continued on Page 50)

The Glacier Lake area has been included in an expansion of Nahanni National Park, so you must now obtain a (free) permit to land your aircraft in the park, as well as pay visitor fees of \$33.25 (Canadian) per person per day inside the park. Fishing permits are \$13.50 per day. Forms are available [online](#); contact the park office in Fort Simpson, NWT, with questions, 867-695-6558, nahanni.info@pc.gc.ca.

The process is rather cumbersome but worth the effort. You can apply from home before your trip, but weather or other issues may dictate changes in original plans. You can make your initial application from home, and then call again from the Watson Lake CARS office, where you can receive your permit electronically (recommend that you confirm this by calling the park headquarters, phone number above, before your trip). Your other choice is to land at [Fort Simpson \(CYFS\)](#) and obtain your permit in person from the park office.

When you get your permit, have it include a landing above Virginia Falls on the South Nahanni River. Only 24 people (12 private users and 12 commercial users) may arrive at Virginia Falls each day. There is just nothing to compare this landing to. The current is about five knots; taxiing here is not the place to lose your engine! It's about 3,000 ft. from the docks to the rapids above the falls. Allow a minimum of three hours to hike to the falls and down the portage trail to the bottom. You will not be disappointed; the falls are twice the height of Niagara. Virginia Falls is 127 nm east-southeast of the Inconnu Lodge.



*Above: South Nahanni River & Virginia Falls.
Photo by Hans Pfaff, courtesy NWT Tourism.*



*Left: Dall's sheep.
Next page: Virginia Falls Rainbow.
Photos by Terry Parker, courtesy NWT Tourism.*

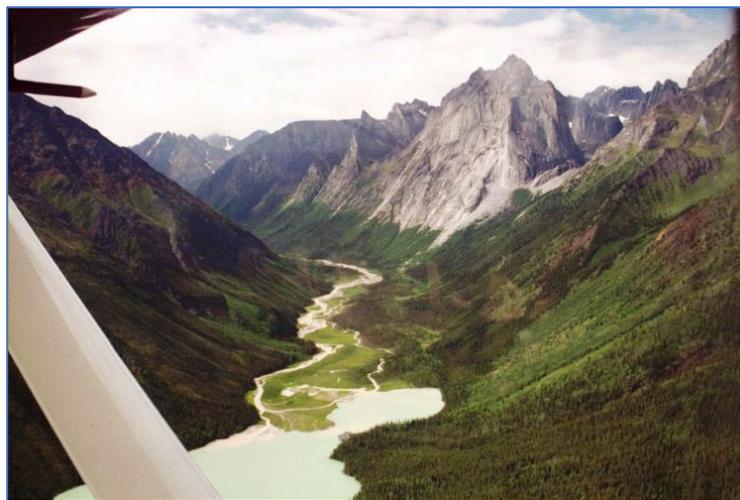
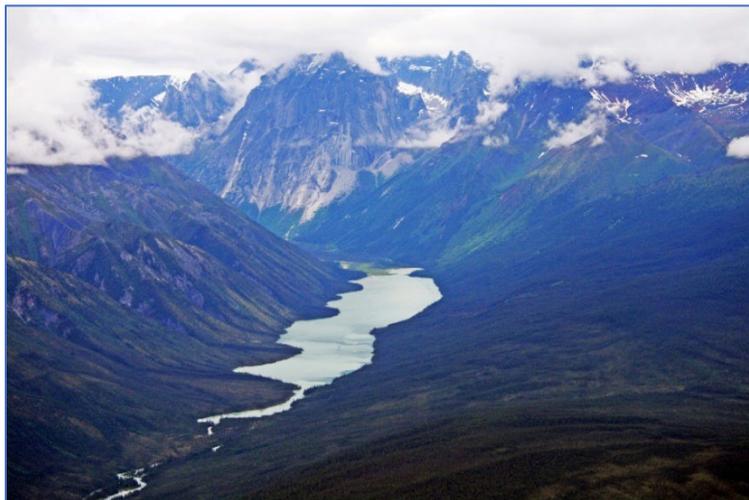
(Continued on Page 51)





Above the Cirque of the Unclimbables. Photo by Terry Parker, courtesy NWT Tourism.

If you fly to Glacier Lake from Virginia Falls, fly up the South Nahanni River to Brintnell Creek; it's about a 60-nm flight. If you fly to Glacier Lake direct from the Inconnu Lodge, some 80 nm, fly northeast over McPherson Lake, past Hyland Lake, across the Little Nahanni River and down Bologna Creek to the South Nahanni River. Turn right down the South Nahanni River to Brintnell Creek. At this point Glacier Lake will be on your right five miles up the creek. A gravel fan is located at the west end of Glacier Lake, near the mouth of a creek. This is a good place to camp. There is a small storage building where climbers store equipment. Sometimes there is a canoe that you can use for a short paddle around the area. There is a primitive trail up the valley for about five miles, used by climbers to reach the Cirque. Few have seen this landscape personally; those who do never forget it.



Both photos: Aerial of Glacier Lake, looking east to west. Photos courtesy Chuck Jarecki.

(Continued on Page 53)

Whitehorse

If you need civilization, you'll find that in Whitehorse, accessible either as a relatively straight 206 nm northwest of Dease Lake, or by following the Alaska Highway some 200 nm west from Watson Lake. Whitehorse offers an array of hotels, restaurants, festivals, and museums. Highlights include self-guided tours aboard the [S.S. Klondike sternwheeler](#), perched above the banks of the Yukon River. The [Yukon Transportation Museum](#) includes a [Bush Pilot Room](#). The [Yukon Beringia Interpretive Centre](#) showcases ice-age giant mammals. Get a fish-eye view of migrating Chinook salmon at the [Whitehorse Fish Ladder](#). Traditional [Can-Can Shows](#) offer still more entertainment; www.TravelYukon.com.



Whitehorse aerial, courtesy Yukon government.
Whitehorse RCMPs, courtesy Yukon government.



Beringia Interpretive Centre, courtesy Yukon government



Penny Jarecki at Glacier Lake camp. Photo by Chuck Jarecki.

If you have questions for Chuck Jarecki about flying in Canada, email him at: Skywagon49@outlook.com.

Take your amphibious float plane up through beautiful British Columbia and into Canada's magnificent Yukon to realize the full potential of your seaplane rating. You'll witness the raw beauty of nature at her best: emerald forests, pearly-white glaciers, and turquoise lakes, with more moose than people. 🐾

Membership Update

Welcome New Members, Feb–Apr 2024!

Pete Nickerson
Jim Schoeggl
Wyatt Cook
Bryce Witkowski
David Hale
Jeff Montgomery
Jared Stevenson
John Donaldson
Wayne McGee
Henny Jungemann
Thomas Thomas
Brian Calhoon
Doug Compton
Jay Pemberton
Mike Scalara



Mike Scalara's "Super Chub" on the Pend Oreille River below Boundary Dam.
Send YOUR airplane photos to: Editor@WashingtonSeaplanePilots.org

New Lifetime Member!

Jonathan Pebworth

To all our members and event attendees who provide lift to WSPA's efforts, THANK YOU for your support!

[Not a member? Join us today!](#) 🗝️

WSPA Board of Directors

The Washington Seaplane Pilots Association is managed by a board of volunteers, each with varying levels of aviation knowledge and experience. The actions of the board represent the interests of its members. It is the intent of the board to carry out meaningful actions that advance the mission and goals set forth by the organization. Click [here](#) to read more about each member, and don't hesitate to reach out with any questions.

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Washington Seaplane Pilots Association (WSPA)

Newsletter Content Submission Guidelines

Updated April 14, 2024

For general questions, send an email to Crista Worthy at: Editor@WashingtonSeaplanePilots.org. If you have questions, photos, or interesting stories you would like to share, we'd love to hear from you!

Review our Content Submission Guidelines below:

The types of articles appropriate for the WSPA newsletters range from the following:

- Short features on specific topics (e.g., safety, destinations, legislative changes, aircraft specifics), step-by-step how-tos, consumer product reviews, and practical advice. These are generally between 600 and 1,200 words in length.
- Long-form features supplemented with real-world experience, analysis, or research. Compelling first-person or personal stories and opinion pieces are also welcome. These pieces are generally between 1,500 to 2,500 words in length.

Recurring pieces sought for publication include destination-focused articles for our “Logbook Reveries” series, as well as our Flying Funnies, which include comics or humorous brief tales about seaplane (mis)adventures. Our members and readers are diverse in industry and aviation experience—but they all share a passion for seaplane flying!

Consider the following as you craft your piece:

- Readers seek content that is useful, important, and relevant. Does the article offer value in the form of information, best practices, tips, advice, analysis, or resources?
- First impressions count. People decide within seconds whether to continue reading something. Not sure how to start your article? Try beginning it with an interesting anecdote, statistic, or problem statement.
- Try to be clear and concise in your writing and use bullets, lists and short sentences and paragraphs where appropriate. Be sure to answer the five W's and H (who, what, where, when, why and how) in the opening paragraphs.
- Include any figures/pictures/images that will enhance your piece or illustrate complex ideas for your reader.
- Don't forget to include a conclusion. Wrap up your thoughts or reiterate the lessons you learned or the next steps.
- If the topic is complex, you might want to suggest additional resources or offer a contact for more information at the end.
- Cite sources and provide references to quotations and facts when used.

Submitting Your Article

- Please submit articles in Microsoft Word.
- Include a short bio about yourself, and a photo, if you like!
- Articles may be copyedited for clarity and style.
- Please send your article or any question to Editor@WashingtonSeaplanePilots.org.

We love to hear from our Members!

Would you like to see an article on a particular topic? Destination?

Got a question? Got a correction?

Email or call!

Crista Worthy

208-906-4471

Editor@WashingtonSeaplanePilots.org 