



CPA FLIGHT LINES

Weatherford Wrap-up

The Weatherford, Oklahoma fly-in is now complete and it was a first in two respects. It was the first time CPA has traveled to that destination and was also the first fly-in I have sponsored. We were lucky to have a convenient weather window of beautiful VFR both directions. Our luck held while as although it was typical summer hot and humid in Oklahoma, neither the temperature nor humidity was oppressive. In fact, the sunset we watched from White Dog Hill restaurant the final night was in delightful conditions. But more helpful than good weather was that such a fun group of people attended. Sixteen people and 7 plane were right on time for each event and all enjoyed seeing some of the attractions this small town and surrounding area had to offer.



Arrival day began with lunch at the Stafford Air and Space museum, followed by a museum tour that highlighted much of what astronaut and retired USAF Lt. General Tom Stafford accomplished during his career. Stafford commanded the Apollo 10 mission that made a low approach to the moon only two months before the Apollo 11 landing. It is due to Stafford being from Weatherford that this museum has its many displays. Soon to arrive is an F-117 stealth fighter that will be featured in a new museum wing currently under construction. On a display donated from Neil Armstrong's personal collection is a

tiny piece of the propeller from the Wright Brother's powered aircraft plus a small square of fabric taken from a wing. Many aircraft, spacecraft and related displays (both U.S. and Russian) are all right there at the airport. This is definitely a stop you should put on your future schedule as the museum is free if you simply refuel.



That night we all opted to have dinner at the nearby (100-yard walk) Lucille’s Road House although with four rental cars, any of several restaurants in town were also available. Needless to say, Happy Hour preceded dinner and was held in the hotel breakfast room. It was during that first get together that I asked the attendees to tell us a little about themselves, where they lived, what they flew, what they did for a living and the like. That, along with name tags I had made for each attendee, allowed the group to get to know each other a little better in that many had never met one another previously.

Saturday began with all of us heading 45 minutes west to the town of Elk City to tour the Route 66 museum. This is a bit of a misnomer in that a diverse museum complex is located there, under that one name. Everything from Route 66 automobiles to blacksmithing to farm and ranch paraphernalia and more were on display, including a functioning malt shop that came in handy as the morning sun headed toward noontime temperatures. Lunch was in a local Mexican restaurant that served our needs well. The drive back was followed by a few hours on our own where some relaxed at the hotel, some drove around town and some returned to the Stafford museum to see displays of interest in greater detail.

After yet another Happy Hour with the group now knowing each other much better, we headed west again but only for 15 minutes this time. The destination was White Dog Hill in nearby Clinton. There we had a group dinner in a place that I think is just stunning and worth a visit in its own right. White Dog Hill consists of two buildings, one a restaurant and the other a bar, both built in 1925. Although this is rolling Oklahoma hill country, White Dog sits atop its own little mound that is high enough to afford a 180 degree horizon view to the west. Following dinner with a surprisingly wide array of food choices, we stayed long enough sitting outside in very pleasant weather to watch the sun set behind some low lying clouds. It was a “picture perfect” grand finale to the weekend flying event.

Sunday morning everyone got off early although I stayed longer to make sure everything was taken care of with the hotel, airport and museum. All was good and we left the area having had a great trip, making new flying friends and leaving behind a good image of the Colorado Pilots Association.

I’ll close with this sales pitch. Go fly! These trips are organized for you, our fellow CPA members. They have different destinations and at every location there is something of interest. Regardless of whether you own or rent an airplane, take advantage of your membership, pilot skills, the utility of light aircraft and the camaraderie of your fellow aviators. Pick an event and go!

By Bill Marvel, event sponsor





President's Transmission

During July Mary and I flew our plane to the Seattle/Tacoma area to visit friends and family. This gave me an opportunity to see what grass roots general aviation looked like in that area. Our home base was Pierce County-Thun Field (KPLU), an uncontrolled field with a single hard surface north/south runway located under one of the southern segments of the SEA/TAC class B.

This is quite a way south and east of Tacoma but still out in the semi-country although civilization is encroaching fast. There were three planes in the pattern as we approached the field. Later we learned there could be twice that number on a good day which gives you an idea of how busy the place is. The weather, at 1,800 broken, was low by our standards but terrific by theirs. The first thing that struck me was the large number of planes parked outside. No hail here! The next thing I observed was there were almost no high performance planes. Our old 170 looked right at home among the normally aspirated Cessna's, Pipers and Stinson's. Of course there were lots of RV's and the Cessna 120/140 series were much in evidence. Gas was self serve (\$6.00/gal) with four pumps on a circular island. SpanaFlight was the cordial and comfortable FBO/flight school/maintenance shop and seemed to be the center of activity. Their flight school was active enough to keep six old round gage 172's busy. They had a large picture window looking out on to the ramp and runway with the admonition "THIS IS NOT YOUR WEATHER BRIEFING" stenciled on top. There was a gate to the ramp but it was propped open so anyone could come and go as they pleased without intimidation. Tucked away back in the hangars there were all manner of interesting planes as we discovered when one of the locals took us to see his daily flyer, a beautiful Fairchild 24 with a 220 Continental radial conversion. Although it was closed for renovation there is a nice restaurant with a patio and picnic tables which invites you to relax and observe the activities. All in all Thun field is my kind of place and is proof that grass roots general aviation still lives.

Bart Jones, President CPA



Fly-in to Park City, Utah

August 2-4, 2019

Nineteen CPA members, family, and friends came out to beautiful Park City, Utah for a few days of fun to start off the month of August. We flew into nearby KHCR, Heber City, early on Friday, August 2nd, after getting out of and around low clouds for those coming from Denver area airports. The western half of the flights were smooth and scenic, enjoying views of canyons with rivers threading through them.

After a quick lunch, we caravanned out to the Winter Olympic Training center near Park City and were able to observe freestyle skiers practicing their somersaults and twists off ramps and landing in a million-gallon pool of what we were told was none-too-warm water. Very impressive what these young athletes can do as high as 60 feet in the air above the pool!

We toured the complex which was used for track events (Luge, Skeleton, Bobsled) for the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympics. Standing at the top of the Ski Jumping practice hill with ceramic tracks for skis and an Astroturf landing hill was impressive even for pilots accustomed to being high up in the air!



Green River canyon near Dinosaur National Monument in western Colorado



Attendees enjoying the view from the ski jumping practice area and what the jumpers see launching on the summer practice slope



The day concluded with our usual happy hour on a shady patio at our hotel.

Saturday, we got up and out early for a short hike, enjoying what a beautiful place we were in and the company of our friends. This was followed by an incredible freestyle skiing exhibition by the Aces Aerobatic team back at the Olympic site, including both veterans of the Olympic games and young hopefuls as young as 15 doing twisting somersaults off all the ramps in the



training pool, sometimes all at the same time!

During the afternoon, we relaxed or took in the Kimball Arts Festival downtown, with the whole of Main Street turned into a pedestrian mall with hundreds of artists from all over displaying their work.



We had a pleasant closing dinner together, though accented by torrential rain and thunder. Then came our usual early Sunday morning departure in time to get back home before any afternoon storms. This time everyone had clear skies and smooth flying back to make a pleasant finish to a very enjoyable weekend getaway.

Come join us for future CPA fly-ins! A good time is had by all!



Now open for the 11th Season!

Menu items include:

**Top Gun Burrito Weight & Balance
Full Flaps Crop Duster Red Baron
Slurry Bomber Float Whirly Bird
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**CPA members get a free cup of
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Finally Alaska

by Walt Bell

For a number of years I have been trying to get to Alaska. This year I finally got projects pushed out of the way so I could block 10 days for this bucket list trip. I did little planning for the trip on advise from Bart Jones who years ago was a resident of Anchorage and later in life has ferried several airplanes to Alaska. The non-plan plan I adopted was to land at an airport tie down, find a room and look around for things to do.

I used my Mooney TLS for the trip. An unconventional airplane for a trip to Alaska but immensely useful because of the TKS system. Crossing Canada both directions resulted some light to moderate rime over mountainous regions.

I kicked the trip off on June 19th by flying from FTG to Bonners Ferry, ID (746NM). A deep low pressure system was winding up in western Canada and it was putting out lots of clouds and headwinds. I stayed down to avoid the worst of the winds and several times I got sandwiched between lowering clouds and rising terrain. The leg took 5.5 hours much if it in light to moderate turbulence.

Bonnors Ferry is a well kept little airstrip that has an active flight school and fuel for \$4.21/gal. A \$20.00 donation to the FBO got me a van for the night. I went looking for a room and I ended up at Kootenani Casino and Lodge. It turned out be better than I imagined. After dinner I started an ICAO flight plan from Bonners Ferry to Ketchikan, Alaska. If I do this leg nonstop (694NM) IFR I do not need to check in with customs at Ketchikan. Also, I did not need to do an eAPIS since I was leaving from the US and arriving at same. I filed an eAPIS anyway as I thought the high winds might require me to stop in Canada for some \$8.00/gal fuel.

Getting the ICAO flight plan approved by the Canadians turned out to be a project and after two failures using Foreflight, I called WX Brief. The flight specialist knew what needed to be done and by 10 p.m. I had an approved plan.



In the morning the clouds hung low over the Kootenani River, but by the time I got the airplane fueled and the oxygen tank filled the valley had cleared out. Seattle Center issued me a void time clearance and off I went. The forecast winds at 12K were 30kt and 35kt but actually closer to 45kts. As I crossed the cloud enshrouded mountains north of Bonners Ferry I punched into heavy, dark clouds where I would remain until passing the Kamloups Airport. The ground speed was a dismal 130kt and a while later 125kt.

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Greetings from the Upper Arkansas River Valley!

Since moving up here full-time in 2016, I have been active in the aviation community, most recently becoming the Colorado Pilots Association airport liaison for the Central Colorado Regional Airport in Buena Vista (KAEJ), and Harriet Alexander Field in Salida (KANK).

These are two great airports each offering their own personality yet located within one of the most beautiful areas of Colorado. Many of you already make regular visits to the area, and I encourage you to come experience the beauty and sometimes challenging flying conditions.

KAEJ has been hosting high-altitude helicopter testing for many years, and this summer is no exception. Agusta Leonardo has been testing two models. The airport has also had visits from the Navy doing parachute drops.



The airport also recently installed a new credit card system on the self-service fuel island. This should make it a little easier for folks using this system

Over the Labor Day holiday, Buena Vista plays host to Seven Peaks, a country music festival entering its second year. Featured artists this year are Dierks Bentley (the host), Luke Bryan, Travis Tritt, Nitty Gritty Dirt Band and many others. We expect the ramp at KAEJ to be pretty full during this period.

Down in Salida, KANK hosted another "Air Fair" fly-in festival on June 22. Unfortunately the weather didn't cooperate so Joe Thibodeau and his P-51 were unable to make an appearance. However there were about 1,500 folks in attendance and they sold about 250 breakfasts. The Central Colorado UAS Club, which I am President, had a table there to talk with folks about drones.



The Salida airport will soon have new striping throughout, including all taxiways and the runway. They have also selected a new engineering company to help them with their projects over the next several years. KAEJ has done the same.

One thing lacking in the valley is aircraft available for rental or flight training. While there seems to be plenty of demand for training, there's no infrastructure.

With airport elevations of 7,523' MSL at KANK and 7,950' MSL at KAEJ, we are a great place for a stop on any mountain training expedition! Both airports offer crew vehicles to get you into town and have a satisfying meal at many of the great restaurants.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the area.

Taylor Albrecht, Airport Liaison - KAEJ, KANK



The volunteers of the Grand County Historical Association Emily Warner Field Aviation Museum are inviting all age groups to their free and family-friendly "Fly With An Airline Pilot Day," Friday, August 23, 2019, from 11am to 2pm to try our Flight Simulators. Our museum volunteer, Aaron Skinner, who is a real airline pilot, will help you soar. Take this opportunity to "fly," using one of the aviation museum's modern Flight Simulators donated by the Fantasy of Flight Foundation. The Emily Warner Field Aviation Museum is located in the former Rocky Mountain Airways airline terminal at 1023 CR 610 at Granby/Grand County Airport. Learn more about all the museums of the Grand County Historical Association at www.GrandCountyHistory.org

11TH ANNUAL
SPRIT OF FLIGHT DAY!

OUR BIGGEST CAR & PLANE SHOW OF THE YEAR!

- *BIG CAR SHOW!
- *MUSIC
- *DOOR PRIZES
- *TROPHIES FOR BEST CARS
- *SPIRIT OF FLIGHT GALLERY
- *FOOD/BEER
- *FLY-BYS
- *BENEFITS MUSEUM

August 10th, 2019 ~ 10AM - 4PM
\$5 Kids 11025 Dover Street, Suite 600 - Westminster, CO 80021 \$10 ADULTS
Spirit of Flight Center is a 501(c)(3) non profit.



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SEPTEMBER 27 - 30, 2018
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Join the fun at the 4th Annual Poker Run!
Saturday, September 14, 2019

How to Play

- ♣ Fly to the Poker Run airport stops below in any order between 9:00am and 12:30pm.
- ♥ Purchase a score sheet for \$20 at your first airport stop. Feel free to play multiple hands.
- ♠ Pick up playing cards at each airport stop to form your poker hand.
- ♦ No penalty if you skip a stop, just pick up extra cards at the terminus.
- ♠ Arrive by 1:00pm and turn in your hands at the terminus-KGXY.
- ♦ Get lunch at the café while hands are tallied.
- ♣ At 1:30pm the winning hands are announced and prizes awarded.
- ♥ Bring a friend and play for fun and great prizes!

Poker Run Stops

- KBDU (Journeys Aviation)
- KBJC (Terminal Building)
- KFMM (Scott Aviation)
- KFNL (JetCenter)
- KGXY (Terminal Building)

Sign up today at Colorado99s.org

All proceeds support the Colorado 99s Scholarship Fund

www.Colorado99s.org
Questions? chairman@colorado99s.org





CPA Needs your Help!

The associations annual meeting is set for Saturday, November 4th at Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport. Not only is there an outstanding speaker scheduled, the membership will elect the Board of Directors.



You may learn more about the positions in your 2019 Roster or visit the website. If you are interested in becoming a member of the Board of Directors or a Committee Chairperson, please email info@coloradopilots.org.

Red Arrows North American Tour 2019

- Great Britain's Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team, the Red Arrows, will be visiting Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport (RMMA) from September 16th through September 19th.
- With a combination of dynamic displays, iconic flypasts and inspiring ground activities, the Red Arrows are on a major tour of North America.
- It is the biggest-ever visit by the Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team to Canada and the United States and the first to the two countries in more than a decade.
- The tour aims to promote the best of British and deepen partnerships with close friends and allies.
- For more information visit <https://www.great.gov.uk/international/>
- To follow updates of the tour online, use **#redarrowstour** on [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#) and like the [Red Arrows' Facebook](#) page.





Upcoming Events

- ★ August 10 - Spirit of Flight Day
- ★ August 17 - Mountain/High Alt. Ground School
- ★ August 24 - Pancakes at SoCo
- ★ August 31 - Pancakes at KFTG
- ★ September 9th CPA Board Meeting at KAPA
- ★ September 13-15 - Pagosa Springs Fly-in
- ★ September 27-29 - Rapid City Fly-in
- ★ September 28 - Pancakes & More at KTEX
- ★ October 5 - Run for the Angels - 5K at KBJC

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BUSINESS OUTFITTERS



Pagosa Springs, Colorado - September 13th, 14th & 15th

Sitting at 7,126 feet on the Western Slope of the Continental Divide, Pagosa Springs was named for the sulfur springs located there, including the world’s deepest geothermal hot spring. The Ute Indians called the sulfur-rich mineral water *Pah gosah*, or “healing waters.” More loosely translated as “water (pah) that has a bad smell (gosah).” —*Wikipedia*

It is not just the stinky pools that draw us to Pagosa Springs. CPA flyers will enjoy lodging in a hot springs resort, local dining, taking in the Fall foliage via horseback in the San Juan National Forest, *AND* a performance by the local professional theater company. Come for the fun, stick around for the rustic charm that is - Pagosa Springs.

Fly to Stevens Field Airport (KPSO), approximately 182 miles from BJC; take note of the steep drop in altitude as you clear the mountain passes.

Schedule: Friday, September 13

– Arrive in PSO by 11 a.m. to attend lunch at the Malt Shoppe where burgers, fries and soft serve ice cream are a-plenty (read: greasy). If you wish to arrive a little later in the day, skipping the Malt Shoppe, arrive at PSO by 2 p.m. We’ll check into the Healing

Waters Resort & Spa, then relax and settle in, maybe even take a dip in the hot spring pools, before a combined Happy Hour/dinner. You may wish to culminate your day with an evening soak, but sleep well, Saturday is a full day.



Saturday, September 14 – Following breakfast on your own at one of many local cafes, restaurants or bakeries, we’ll saddle-up for Diamond Hitch Stables for a 2-hour horseback ride through the beautiful Colorado Fall colors. We are hoping to arrange for a BBQ lunch at the stables following the trail ride. For those wishing not to horse-around, other activities can be coordinated using one or more of the rental cars. Possible activities are hiking, fishing, shopping, Farmers Market, local museums, or visit the nearby wild animal sanctuary. Saturday afternoon you’ll have time to meander the streets and trails of Pagosa Springs, or soak-away any saddle soreness. Saturday evening festivities begins at Alley House Grille where an early, private dinner is planned. Alley House Grille is touted as “the” nicest restaurant in town. We then make our way to the Pagosa Springs Center for the Arts and the Thingamajig Theater <https://pagosacenter.org> to attend a performance of “Ring of Fire” which celebrates the music of “The Man in Black,” – Johnny Cash.

Sunday, September 15 – Following breakfast on your own we’ll coordinate rides to the airport to head back home.

Call the Healing Waters Resort & Spa www.pshotsprings.com at 800-832-5523 to book a room. Tell them you are with Colorado Pilots Association for a special rate.

More important information is to come, including pricing. Continue to watch the CPA website.



CPA Fly-in Rapid City Sept 27-29



Custer State Park
Buffalo Roundup 2019
(Optional)

Ellsworth AFB, 28th
Bomb Wing, Home of
the B1B Lancer

Mount Rushmore

Social Hour & Dinner

Fly to: Rapid City Regional Airport (KRAP)

Park at: Westjet Air Center www.westjetair.com/

Westjet is offering a discount on fuel and parking. We are reserving rental cars with Hertz, via the FBO.

We need drivers and riders (4 per car)

Stay at: Best Western Ramkota, 211 N. LaCrosse St, Rapid City SD 57701, 605-737-5656. Group rate of \$99.00. **Call to reserve your room no later than August 15th.**

To register, go to the "Fly-in Events" menu on the CPA website.



Don't Miss the 2019 Season Fly-in Finale!



Bob and Shawn Kinney are hosting the final, official CPA fly-in of the 2019 season October 11 - 13, 2019. Join us for a visit to the town that Buffalo Bill Cody made famous. Cody was founded by Colonel William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody, who passed through the region in the 1870s. He was so impressed by the many development possibilities that he returned in the mid-1890s to start a town.

Cody is located along the Shoshone River and is nestled at the foot of the Beartooth Mountains. Cody and the surrounding areas boast superb scenery and many areas fit for a variety of outdoor activities. As a popular tourist destination, Cody has many fantastic restaurants, shopping locations, art galleries, museums, and businesses.

Following our arrival on Friday afternoon October 11, and lunch & ice cream at Annie's Soda Saloon, our intrepid CPA fly-in group is slated to visit the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center/Museum. (Admission Adults \$9 & Seniors \$7). This world-class museum is dedicated to passing on the Heart Mountain story to future generations. Through photographs, artifacts, oral histories, and interactive exhibits, guests to the Center experience life at Heart Mountain



through the eyes of those Japanese and Japanese Americans who were confined here during WWII. The "Heart Mountain Relocation Center" opened in August 1942 and imprisoned more than 14,000 people during its three-year existence. The last of the imprisoned left Wyoming in November 1945. A late Friday afternoon return to Cody will allow time to relax or walk downtown Cody prior to the world famous CPA Happy Hour scheduled that evening at the hotel.

Saturday morning the Cody EAA has offered to play host to our Colorado CPA members for an airport pancake breakfast followed by its local members opening their hangars for a "show and tell" session. The rest of the day will be spent at the primary venue that drew us to Cody. . .The Buffalo Bill Center of the West. Admission Adults \$19.25 & Seniors \$18.25). This conglomeration of five wonderful museums under one roof is remarkable. Center stage is the renowned Cody Firearms Museum which re-opened in July following a two year renovation. Do the research, there's none finer. The Whitney Gallery of Western Art, the Plains Indian Museum, the Buffalo Bill Museum, and the Draper Museum of Natural History round out the offerings of the BBCW. There truly is



something for everyone at this remarkable facility. Happy hour back at the Holiday Inn will be so very welcome following this long day of exploring the West. A BYOB happy hour will be the prelude to our fine group dining experience at Buffalo Bill's "Irma Hotel Restaurant & Saloon". How do we follow that up? Bed time baby. . .bed time! After breakfast Sunday morning, we'll make the normal early CPA departure for home and say goodbye to another memorable CPA fly-in experience. It's a scenic flight back to "Colorful Colorado" but the memories will last a lifetime.

What great fly-in season we're having. Now, if we can just impose on the Wyoming and Colorado weather gods for one last bit of good aviation weather, it would be the topper for a great fly-in season. Join us, won't you? You'll never find better friends than those CPA members you share your flying destinations with.



Alaska (continued from page 6)

True airspeed was 170 on a fuel flow of 15gal/hr. The fuel flow meter estimated I would arrive at Ketchikan with a 5 gallon reserve.

I was on a heading taking me away from the center of the low pressure but not at any great rate. Hopefully, things would get better as the flight progressed. A little while later I noticed some rime forming on the wings; I turned the TKS system on. I asked

Vancouver Center about tops which were reachable but no question I would need to stop for fuel. I decided to sit tight and in a half hour or so the ice relented.

I got passed on to a new sector and the new altimeter setting was higher than I had seen since I left Denver. Ten minutes later the winds started to shift to a cross wind and the ground speed picked up. The fuel flow meter indicated I could make Ketchikan with a twenty gallon reserve. I got to Ketchikan in 4:40 and consumed 75 gallons.

The weather in Ketchikan was beautiful and it looked like I could see all the way to Juneau. One of my trip objectives was to fly the inside passage in good VFR. I bought gas, picked up a sandwich in the terminal and consumed it while looking across the channel at Ketchikan and the floatplanes that were coming and going. For those unfamiliar with the Ketchikan Airport, it is located on an island probably 3/8 of a mile offshore of the city. It has two runways one 10K feet long and made of concrete. The other is almost infinite in length and made out of water. Both runways are busy and informal control is provided by Ketchikan Radio. Position reports by aircraft and traffic information broadcast by Ketchikan keep the frequency buzzing.

I thought about spending a night in Ketchikan but wanted to fly the inside passage in VFR and the time was right excellent VFR. Ketchikan (see photo) gets 140" of rain a year so the next day of rain might be tomorrow. I took off and headed roughly for Juneau (204NM). I got an excellent view of the islands from 4500' and many pictures.

Juneau is a big airport with limited space for transit aircraft. Aero Services, the FBO, had to sandwich me between the business jets and the sightseeing helicopters. Next problem was to find a room. After lots of calls I found a room in the Travelodge. The motel was walking distance but a local pilot gave me a ride. \$170.00 plus tax per night does not buy much in Juneau. It did have a decent restaurant and bar. After a 900NM day of flying I was ready for Happy Hour.

Next morning after breakfast, I took a city bus downtown. I spent a little time looking at the government buildings then moved to the wharf. Two ships were in port so lots of folks were walking around. At the end of the wharf was a charter operator who has 4 Cessna Caravans on floats. He was offering sightseeing flights to the tourists. When two or more are ready to go they takeoff together and fly loose formation. While I was standing there a gaggle of three splashed down. One street behind the wharf was lined with souvenir shops. I spent an hour or so looking through the shops then checked the tram that went from the wharf up to the mountain top immediately behind the city. It looked like a worthwhile thing to do but I really wanted to visit the Mendenhall Glacier (pictured below) and there are only so many hours in a day. I got back on the city bus and rode out to the edge of town. From there it is a 1.5 mile hike to the Park Service Visitor Center. The time spent was well worth it. A very picturesque setting.



Next morning after breakfast I packed up and headed to the airport. The weather is down so I filed IFR to Anchorage (492NM). I got fueled up, added some oil and taxied out behind a 737. We had to sit on the taxiway for about 30 minutes to allow several inbounds to land. The ground controller then called and asked what SID I wanted. I had to stumble around as I am used to being assigned one. I chose the LOC. Lots of details to this but enough said and soon I was up to 10K and cleared direct to Anchorage. The flight was 3 hours, most of it on top over water. Around Cordova VOR I came back on shore and punched into the clouds. The mountain beneath rise to around 8K. I

could see the group and some glaciers occasionally which provides me some photo opportunities. As I closed in on Anchorage, the controller said to expect the following: "Descend to 8K. Descent to 6K and you will be over Merrill Field in VFR conditions. You spiral down to pattern altitude over the airport. Do not get close to Elmendorf AFB or Ted Stevens International." With the speed brakes up and the gear down, staying over Merrill was not a big deal so in a few minutes I was taxiing into the transit parking area. The easy part was over.

The Solstice Celebration was still on and most of the rooms and rental cars in Anchorage were spoken for. The transit parking area at Merrill has few services so I was glad I had an iPhone with Foreflight on it. I made a lot of calls to the rental car companies, most would not even answer the phone. Finally a guy answered and said I had reached Pay Less Car Rental and he was willing to bring a car to the airport.

With a car I started looking for a room. Lots of no vacancy signs but I finally found a room at the Aviator Hotel. I was sharing it with a lot of Solstice tourists and a contingent of NATO troops.

The Solstice street fair was concluding late in the afternoon but I got a chance to look over some of the booths and exhibits. All the regular shops on the street were also open so I got a good look at the normal souvenirs available to tourists.

The next morning I drove over to Ted Stevens and Lake Hood airports. This is a real complex of two entirely different airports existing literally on top of one another. I started watching floatplanes coming and going on Lake Spenard and Lake Hood. I did not realize just northwest of the lakes is a 2200' dirt strip. As I drove around the airport I was amazed at the massive development on this busy airport. First there are a lot of airplanes some on wheels and some on floats. The tie down areas are acres in size and mostly occupied not only with smaller sized Cessnas and Pipers but with Navajos, Barons and even two PC-12s. Looking south from Lake Hood you see 747 cargo planes and a regular flow of scheduled airlines streaming in and out of Ted Stevens. The class B airspace is designed to allow full use of both airports.



The next stop was Earthquake Park (*right*). The park is south of Lake Hood and is a chance to look across the water to the skyline of Anchorage and the harbor. I had planned to explore more of the Anchorage area but the rental car was giving me trouble and I really did



not want to deal with finding a tow truck if I were a ways out of town. Instead, I decided to look over a flea market that was setup in parking lots next to the hotel. The flea market was okay but did not hold my attention for long.

I walked back through the city heading for Humpy's Great Alaska Alehouse; Rich Barclay had recommended I have a meal there. Almost all the tourists were gone from Anchorage and the locals had reclaimed the street corners. Anchorage has a big problem with the homeless.

The Aviator Hotel served up a hearty breakfast in the morning and afterward I checked out, picked up the rental car owner and headed to Merrill Fields. It did not take long to load the airplane and start up. The ground controller wanted to know if I was familiar with the departure procedure. I checked my Garmin and Foreflight databases and no joy. Controller suggested I needed an Alaska Supplement. He wanted to keep me out of trouble so he read it to me. To understand the procedure completely I would need some local knowledge that I had no way of accessing. The ground controller realized that and got me a code and a frequency for Anchorage departure and told me to climb to not over 600' until I talked to Departure. When I told the departure controller I was headed for Fairbanks (223NM) with a detour past Denali, he sent me off to the northwest and in a few minutes I become a 1200 code and on my own.

Finding Denali was not a difficult navigation problem. I could see it from better than a hundred out. At first I was flying in a cloudless sky but as I got closer a cloud deck built underneath me. I kept climbing to stay on top. Near the mountain I was at 13K so I could only see about the top 7000'. Only a few days a month is it possible to see the whole mountain. After a few pictures I headed to Fairbanks.

The Fairbanks airport has an interesting mix of runways. The one in front of the terminal is almost 12,000' long. Lying along side of it is an artificial lake 5000' long for the float planes. Next to it is a 3000' gravel runway for ski planes. I landed on a 6500' paved runway which is next to the GA ramp. All the runways have the same alignment. Judging from the size of the ramp this airport must have been a military base during WWII. I tied down at the base of the tower and went into the pilot lounge. The lounge was being used by the tower controllers for a union meeting and I realized immediately that I it would be best to phone for a rental car from outside. Thrifty had a car but it was a long way from the tower to the terminal. After a long discussion the rental car gal said she would send the owner over to pick me up. When he showed up we drove around the west side of the airport where Evert Air has a bone yard for DC-6s. Evert flies DC-6s exclusively and serves many roadless Indian Villages above the Arctic Circle. Evert will buy a DC-6 anywhere in the world that is flyable, bring it to Fairbanks and use it for parts.

In a short time I had a car and a room so I decided to look around downtown. Since tourists can only arrive by bus or airplane there were far fewer of them. The downtown is less devoted to souvenir shops than Juneau or Anchorage. What really stuck out was the new courthouse and city hall and city park. Obviously oil money financed these buildings. Unlike Anchorage nobody was hanging around on the corners panhandling.

Next stop was a short drive out of town. The oil pipeline comes out of the ground in areas where the soil is unstable. It is supported by large pipes that have a cooling system that keeps the permafrost around the pipe frozen so it will not move. The system has been in use for years and appears to be a successful design. On the way back to the motel I drove around the University of Alaska at Fairbanks campus. I suppose most of the money came from oil companies but they and others have built a real show piece. One of the buildings housed The Museum of the North. I decided to come back in the morning and have a look.

I was thinking of driving down to Denali and spending a couple of nights but an evaluation of my Visa account and cash on hand made me conclude I would need to save Denali for the next trip.

The morning started with a checkout at the Extended Stay and a short drive to the Museum. I arrived right behind a bus load of tourists so the galleries were filled with people. The theme of the museum was the native Indians and the artifacts they left behind. It took about an hour and half to get a good look.

From the museum I went to the airport dropped the car, caught a ride back to the plane,

loaded and fueled up then decided to do a VFR trip back to Juneau. As soon as I took off, the controllers started vectoring me around operational areas of a huge MOA and restricted area that seemed to go on



forever. The military seems to keep enough airspace available so smaller airplanes are not overly impeded. I was well past Delta Junction before I was out of the MOAs. I had it in mind to at least overfly Haines on the way to Juneau but as I got near the Mentasta Mountains, the clouds were starting to build to my west. Not being a local I did not want to get into the Wrangell Mountains in marginal weather. The easy out was to climb up and file an IFR flight plan. It was a circuitous clearance but I got to Juneau without scratching the paint.

The last morning in Alaska was beautiful so I flew down the inside passage to Ketchikan snapping pictures all the way. I looked over the weather and since Bonners Ferry was forecasting thunderstorms most of the afternoon I opted to fly the Canadian Coastal Range and land in Bellingham, WA (519NM). I got as far south as Prince Rupert before I was back in the clouds and melting rime off the wings. The terrain below was the roughest I have flown over for many years. Would be a real bad place for an engine to quit! I got to Bellingham in under 4 hours and made the mistake of taxiing past the self-serve without stopping. I walked

over to the Holiday Inn and was glad to put my feet up.

Next morning it was raining hard and the Mooney was tied down a very long way from the FBO. I borrowed an umbrella walked out to the plane and moved it near the terminal. I called ground to see if they had my clearance which they did not. I called flight service and they asked if I had filed an ICAO plan. No I did not since I was back in the US. Flight service says you are almost in the U.S. except that Canada ATC controls Bellingham so you must refile on an ICAO form. While I was refiling, I asked the line crew to fuel the airplane, but nothing happened. They were all doing inside maintenance and no one wanted to get wet! Finally, I got the fuel, called for my clearance and after a long delay took off in a 300' ceiling and climbed out through the clouds headed for Driggs, Idaho (564NM). That turned out to be a 4.5





hour leg and included some ice, thunderstorms and turbulence.

The last and final leg to FTG (378NM) was VFR. It took 2.5 hours and was one of the roughest rides I have had over Wyoming that I can remember. I was glad to push the airplane back in the hangar at FTG. The whole trip was about 4700NM and took 30.5 hours. Considering all the headwinds an average speed of 154kts was not that bad. I had excellent luck with having friendly controllers who realized I had little local knowledge. Best of all I did not need to use my raft or PLB. For most who want fly to Alaska, flying the Alcan Highway is probably a better route than the coastal route. My Mooney has known ice certification so light to moderate icing is not an emergency. I enjoyed the trip but a little more thorough planning might have made the trip little more enjoyable.

If you have a flying story to share with the Colorado Pilots community, please forward it to: newsletter@coloradopilots.org

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