

CASCADE FLYER



Website: <http://co-opa.com/>

August 2007, Vol. 07, Issue 8

President's Message:

We sure scored a hit speaker in July. Michael Honey dropped by to speak to us. Mike's current job is managing Redmond Air (<http://www.redmondair.com>) near the base of the RDM tower. But that was not what he came to talk about.

Mike regaled us with many tales about flying for Evergreen Air including first hand accounts of being in the center of many headline events while stationed in the Middle East. After a while the wear and tear on himself and his family was more than the rewards of the job so Mike took the quiet job in Redmond. Considering the number of cool projects he is working on their the pace of his life will soon be high again but he will be able to see his family everyday and live the CO lifestyle.

This month our meeting will be on the normal schedule. Ed Endsley will provide the details about this month's speaker. Meet at the Flight Services building at 6pm for some hanger flying, at 6:30pm our famous pot luck and then our formal meeting at 7pm.

Calendar:

16 August - Monthly Meeting
18 August - Monthly Flyout
25 August - OPA Convention & Northwest Art and Air Fair, Albany
25 August - Central Oregon Airshow, Madras

20 September- Monthly Meeting
22 September- Monthly Flyout

18 October- Monthly Meeting
20 October- Monthly Flyout

15 November- Monthly Meeting
17 November- Monthly Flyout

20 December- Monthly Meeting
22 December- Monthly Flyout

Web doings:

For chapter news and pointers to other aviation goodies check out our chapter website:

<http://co-opa.rellim.com/>

To access the members only areas the username is "BDN" and the password is "123.0".

My Inbox:

Prepaid attendance numbers for the Oregon Pilots Association in Albany on 25 August have not been up to expectations. The OPA board has been calling the chapters to remind their membership to sign up in advance if they are planning to go. There will be lots of great things on the schedule so sign up and go if you can. Further information is on the Convention page at:

<http://www.oregonpilot.org/Convention2007>

The OPA Convention is part of the larger Northwest Arts and Air Festival which runs Friday to Sunday. More information on that is available here:

<http://www.nwartandair.org/>

Mike Grindy, with the City of Bend passed on this note to us:

"Bend City Councilors have been receiving numerous complaints from homeowners living near the Deschutes River Canyon in the southwest area of Bend about aircraft flying low over their homes."

We all know that the City has no jurisdiction over such matters. Still, there are practical considerations. The Councilors are like anyone else and do not like to get complained at. Rightly or wrongly, they might eventually feel the need to pass that aggravation on to us as airport users whether we are the cause or not.

It always pays to be a good neighbor so let's be sensitive about that area. Let's fly friendly and remind other pilots to do the same.

***Sometimes it's the smoke* _____**

It is August; the weather is great; everyone else is taking it slow or already left town. So clearly my daughter figures it is time for Dad's Air Taxi service to get on the stick and ferry her to McCall Idaho to see one of her sorority sisters.

My mission statement is to fly 2 hours from Bend to McCall, drop her off, and then leave. Like a good taxi driver. Only I do not really feel like burning all that avgas to get there, then round trip gas to return to Bend until the pickup on Monday, without getting anything out of the trip for myself.

No problem I say to myself. The second weekend in August is the famed McCall Fly-In! I have been hearing rave reviews about this event for years from folks like the Bonds and the Leckliders and now I have the perfect excuse to attend. Sadly a quick google shows that the event has been canceled for this year, to return (hopefully) in 2008.



A Tri-Islander at McCall

No problem I say to myself. I have been hearing nothing but rave reviews about Lori MacNichol and her McCall Mountain/Canyon Flying Seminars. Lori is universally revered in Idaho for her instructional skills. Sadly a quick google shows they are sold out until 2008

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<http://www.mountaincanyonflying.com/>

No problem I say to myself. I have been to Johnson Creek before and there are other back country airstrips in the area with similar difficulty levels that I should have an easy time using. A quick refresher with the Fly Idaho book reminds me that Big Creek and Sulfur Creek airports suit my skill level and have just enough of civilization (hot food for sale) to suit my taste.

Then Don Wilfong points me to the Johnson Creek webcam at:

<http://www.ruralnetwork.net/~yellowpinecm/>.

Nothing but smoke. Johnson Creek is out, but that was not on my list anyway. (As I write this the camera is now completely dead).

No problem I say to myself. Idaho is a big place, how big can this fire be? So off we go to McCall with high expectations. The expectations dim a bit as we pass fly through the smoke from all the Oregon fires and then see smoke over the 8,000 foot ridges east of McCall.

The smoke is mostly due east, from a fire just beyond Johnson Creek.

No problem I say to myself. The smoke has been moving south for a few days and Big Creek is to the north. Chatting in the FBO with some helpful local pilots confirmed that my choice of destinations was a sound one given the current and forecast conditions. Then I saw the TFRs. Almost a solid wall of TFRs between myself and Big Creek.

No problem I say to myself. A local pilot points out two safe paths in to me. One is simply to climb to 11,000, above the TFRs. The second is to fly around the TFRs by heading over the ridge tops directly to Yellow Pine and then doglegging to the Big Creek drainage and following it to the Big Creek Airport.

So I head out early (at least for me) on Saturday. The plan works like a charm. A bit smoky, but the trip down the canyon is amazing. The river canyon is awesome in its beauty. In less than 45 minutes there is the 3,500 foot airstrip with several planes on the North end and a Seneca twin at the north end. As I circled down it was clear the river valley had a 1,500 foot ridge in the middle of it. The trick is to fly upwind over the runway, fly downwind (out of site of the airport) on the other side of the ridge, turn base around the north end of the ridge and land on the up-sloping ridge over the Seneca. Something funny about the Seneca, but time to check that out later. For the moment I can just enjoy the roll out on the magnificent canyon strip.



Guard-dog Max at Big Creek

It's the smoke -- continued

At the top of the runway I am met by the caretaker, Dan, and led to a hearty country lunch. Now this is living well. But Dan has to spoil it a bit for me by telling the tale of the Seneca.

The books says the strip is a one way strip, but the Seneca pilot thought landing downhill into a headwind was a better plan. Wrong.

Near the end of the landing roll the pilot locked up his brakes tight. The tires cut ruts to the end of the runway but still the cliff rapidly approached.

Fearing (rightly) that running off the cliff on the north end was a bad plan, the pilot intentionally ground looped his plane and stopped. Teetering over the edge. The plane was totalled, but the pilot was uninjured and hopefully much wiser for the experience.



Big Creek is an idyllic mountain retreat perfect for a meal, or a day, and I enjoyed wandering the grounds and chatting with other pilots.

All were describing how fun it was to land at these (to me) impossibly difficult canyon bottom airstrips and generally swapping bold plans and tall tales.

As the day wore on, the visibility got worse and worse. Maybe down to just a few miles.

No problem I say to myself. No one else is worried. A barbeque steak dinner awaits us, followed by a huge breakfast. Surely the smoke will lie down over night and the next morning will again be wonderfully clear. Only it wasn't, better but not clear. Even the hard cores started watching the sky and scaling back their plans for the day.

No problem I say to myself. There are reports that it is easy to climb out of the smoke over us, swing around to the east of the smoke, and head to Sulfur Creek which has recently been reported as fairly clear.

The wind that was now blowing the smoke to Big Creek should be blowing the smoke out of Sulfur Creek.

Climbing out was easy, but not exactly fun. Even in the usually gentle morning air there is some turbulence around the ridges. Visibility is not much more than 5 miles and flying is now work instead of fun. Swinging to the east did not bring the expected improvement and Sulfur Creek looked just as miserable as Big Creek. Smoke was horizon to horizon with some tops above 14,000.

Now I have a problem I say to myself. It seemed like, and fire charts later showed, that almost all the valley systems to the east of McCall are burned, burning or covered in smoke. Listening to the Forest Service pilots on Multicom told me that even they were bugging out. Time to call it quits and return to McCall.

McCall was crisply clear, but looking back at the hills it now seemed like the smoke was no big deal. Just a few wisps over the ridgeline.

Then over the course of the afternoon it got worse, and worse, and worse some more. The weather had unexpectedly turned much hotter and windier than forecast. The fire was boiling like crazy. Huge clouds of smoke along the eastern ridge from as far north, to as far south, as I could see. An immense swath of virgin wilderness consuming itself.

Later that evening I ran into some of the seasoned back country pilots that had elected to stay at Big Creek after I left. They did not look as cocky as the day before. The smoke had proceeded to get worse and worse throughout the day. After dinner they had spotted a small opening in the smoke and taken the chance to get out. The stress of the wild ride out showed in their now deflated attitudes.

In spite of the abrupt shortening of my back-country experience it really wet my appetite for more. All the hangar stories of the backcountry that I have endured do not seem like tall tales anymore.

Shangri-La might just exist. With luck I can go back in better weather and enjoy a bit more of this incredible place.

Gary Miller



CESSNA SKYCATCHER

There's no lack of interest in Cessna's new 162 Skycatcher. In just the first two days at Oshkosh alone, the company took 400 orders for the light sport aircraft.



The airplane was selling for an introductory price of \$109,500 at the show. It will go up to \$111,500 later on. Cessna had drummed up interest last year at Oshkosh by showing off a proof-of-concept version of the airplane.



So who's the typical buyer? According to Cessna officials, 80 percent of the buyers are flight schools/FBOs. The rest are private individuals who are downsizing from more expensive and complex aircraft, want to own their first new airplane, want to learn to fly, or want to inspire their children to take wing. In related news, Jack Pelton, chairman, president, and CEO of Cessna Aircraft, has joined the board of the Light Aircraft Manufacturers Association.

Or maybe a German sportplane? A Remos G3:



JULY FLY-OUT...



It is rumored that 2 planes from COOPA attended the Prospect Fly-in. Gary Miller, Steve Wright and Ed Endsley were there and possibly others?



A visitor to Bend Muni

I missed the final low pass as we were on downwind at the time, but hopefully Ed's photo will come out OK!



Sentimental Journey was on display (and providing \$425 rides), Monday to Friday last week.



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