

RECREATIONAL AVIATION FOUNDATION NEWS • ACTION

GROWING
IN
STRENGTH
SINCE 2003

SUMMER 2016

www.TheRAF.org

ISSUE 18

*The Recreational Aviation Foundation preserves, maintains
and creates airstrips for recreational access.*

North Fox Island users agree, "Nicest grass airstrip"

– Mike Purpura, RAF Illinois Liaison

The RAF sponsored a work party at the recently re-opened airstrip on North Fox Island in Lake Michigan June 17-19. RAF Michigan Liaison Brad Frederick organized volunteers that flew in for the weekend to make improvements to the airfield and have a good time. Seventeen aircraft showed up and two dozen people worked at what is surely a paradise in the lake.



North Fox Island (6Y3) is located near Charlevoix. Beaver Island (KSJX), few minutes north, has fuel.

The old airstrip was brought back to life thanks to the cooperation of the RAF, Friends of North Fox Island, and Michigan Dep't of Natural Resources (DNR).

The port-a-john arrived disassembled and stuffed into a 172. It was assembled over its hole, dug by volunteers. In the late afternoon the trail to the beach was busy with people enjoying the lake. Sitting around the campfire on this remote island couldn't get any better. The morning alarm was simply the soft morning light spilling into the tents and birds singing.

If you go to North Fox Island, read the safety briefing at www.TheRAF.org. Let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return. A Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) with a text feature would be good to have along. The land use rules are available in the mailbox at the southwest end of the runway. Please sign the register so Michigan DNR knows that people are enjoying the island. Leave it better than you found it and we will enjoy this island for years to come.

RAF eyes North Maine Woods destinations– Ragmuff opens for public use

Ragmuff is the first airstrip within the privately-held North Maine Woods to open for public use. "We're considering this a test case, the first step in working with North Maine Woods ownership as other owners are watching," said RAF Maine Liaison Andy Rowe.

The source of its singular name is murky, but the beauty and proximity to recreation are clear. The west branch of the Penobscot is just a mile and a half

hike and offers good fishing for brook trout and landlocked salmon. Fall is the premier time to be there – colors turn and it becomes bug-free and partridge and fishing seasons overlap.

Being private land, people typically buy season or multi-day recreation passes. Although pilots fly in, it's recommended to purchase a pass for the privilege of recreating on this land.

There are several airstrips, originally created by paper companies for ag planes spraying the timber for spruce budworm. "These strips could be critical in the future because the budworm is encroaching from Canada," Rowe pointed out.

"Steve Mason and I have our eyes on several other strips," Rowe added, "some with even better recreational offerings."

Volunteer Steve Mason mows beside Ragmuff in the North Maine Woods. Picnic tables, a pit toilet and camping spaces are now available.



New! RAF Grant Program

We are pleased to announce that a Grant Program has been established to help fund projects that advance the RAF mission. State Liaisons who identify appropriate projects may apply to the Grants Committee.

RAF funds are available for projects that meet RAF fiscal sustainability guiding principles.

Your airstrip project could qualify for a grant. Contact your State Liaison.

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President's Message –

Getting a good deal done

–John McKenna



*"You usually get out of something what you put in."
"Give a job to the busiest person if you really want it done."
"You are judged by the company you keep."*

These are all words that could easily apply to the RAF. Every now and then you get to witness the result of your handiwork. And nowhere else is this more evident in my life today than with the RAF. Keep in mind, I still enjoy a full professional life in the family financial and insurance practice. It now includes two of our daughters who bring me much in the way of job satisfaction. But it is the RAF where I witness just how well things work when a plan comes together.

At times, it may have appeared we were lucky; but when I think about it, that really isn't the case at all. This organization has gotten back for the greater aviation community a good deal; not because we were lucky, but because we have all put in a great deal of effort. That effort was put in, not by folks who had nothing better to do, but by the busiest folks in their communities. The same folks who likely raise their hand to volunteer for most every other project. Just good folks who want to make a difference.

Which brings me to being "judged by the company you keep." The RAF crew is simply the best there is. They're not only people you want to be around and get to know better; they're the people that most *everyone* wants to be around and get to know better.

So when I see new places like Trigger Gap and Sugar Creek in Arkansas; Michigan's re-opened North Fox Island and Arizona's Double Circle; Ryan Field in Montana and many more like them, I know it's because the RAF has a "get it done" attitude with a group of people anyone would be proud to be affiliated with.

Back to that day job I have. As you might imagine, my industry has no shortage of meetings and I have been to some good ones, but there was none better than the recent RAF Razorback Rendezvous in Bentonville, Arkansas. Our key volunteers came together to gain skills that will enable them to do an even better job of keeping these airstrips open and building a few new ones along the way. Again, it was a success because of the company we keep and the effort we all put in.

I can safely say the RAF has a pretty darn good track record of getting things done.

– John

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Wind Beneath Our Wings Awards

RAF Montana Liaison **Ron**

Normandeau was recently honored with the RAF “Wind Beneath Our Wings” award. Normandeau’s wide experience – from smokejumping to US Forest Service cartographer – is invaluable to the RAF mission.

His knowledge and stamina during the public lands planning process has helped establish aviation as a legitimate way to access the backcountry.

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Michigan Liaison **Brad Frederick** was honored with the RAF “Wind Beneath Our Wings” award for his dedication and diligent efforts reclaiming and successfully reopening North Fox island airstrip in Lake Michigan.

Keeping up his momentum, Brad is now working to re-open Two-Hearted airstrip, within walking distance of Lake Superior and the Two Hearted River.

This award was started by Founder-Directors Dan Prill and Chuck Jarecki. They make a significant contribution to the RAF in the winner’s name.

RAF signs FAA notice

On June 8, a letter was sent to House Speaker Paul Ryan and Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi urging the U.S. House of Representatives to pass the FAA Reauthorization Act. The Senate passed its FAA Reauthorization bill 95-3. The letter concludes with a strong request for House passage, “so that together we can address important issues and reduce the costly regulatory and certification processes that continue to stifle safety, job creation, and growth in the aviation industry.”

Signing along with the RAF:

Aerospace Industries Association
Aircraft Electronics Association
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association
Commemorative Air Force
Experimental Aircraft Association
General Aviation Manufacturers Association
Helicopter Association International
International Council of Air Shows
National Agricultural Aviation Association
National Air Transportation Association
National Association of State Aviation Officials
National Business Aviation Association
Small UAV Coalition

Hartzell hosts RAF at Oshkosh

The Recreational Aviation Foundation is pleased that our friends at Hartzell Propeller invited us to join them again this year for AirVenture at Oshkosh! Stop and see us Thursday, July 28 on the roof top patio in the [Hartzell Propeller](#) showroom, booths 296 and 297. We’ll be serving ice cream from 2:00 - 4:30 pm. Enjoy “the best ice cream in America” from Wisconsin’s own Kelley Country Creamery of Fond du Lac. Cool down with us and learn more about the RAF.

TEAM RAF will be wandering around Oshkosh throughout the week so be on the lookout for those

bright orange shirts. We’ve been called the “fun guys” (and gals) and would love to talk with you about backcountry recreational destinations.



Results of scientific noise study–

Aircraft don’t increase wildlife stress

In its mission to preserve and create airstrips for recreational access, the RAF strives to provide credible information for public land managers. In 2014, the RAF was awarded an AOPA Foundation grant toward the cost of a two-year study to determine aviation’s noise effect on wildlife around backcountry airstrips, and how these effects compare with other uses. Montana Department of Transportation provided substantial funds, matched by the RAF.

The study, released March 15, concludes that **there is no significant increase in stress levels among wildlife due to recreational aviation activity.**

Dr. Ric Hauer, chair of the University of Montana’s Institute on Ecosystems, oversaw the study. U of M post-graduate wildlife biologist Devin Landry selected a suite of six Montana and Idaho backcountry airstrips; and six control sites devoid of aircraft noise.

Volunteer RAF pilots flew the scientists and their equipment in to the airstrips to

collect feces samples, which indicate stress levels through hormone excretions. After laboratory analysis, Landry and Hauer published an 18-page document subjected to peer-review. Titled “Effects of Backcountry Aviation on Deer Stress Physiology,” it summarizes that there is no significant increase in stress levels among deer due to

recreational aviation activity at backcountry airstrips compared to that expressed by deer as a

result of similar, but non-aviation recreational activity such as camping, or motorized access to a campground or trailhead.

Dr. Hauer said, “**We believe that when ethically used, recreational aircraft is one of the lowest-impact means of backcountry access.**”

The study reinforces this position and goes a long way toward ensuring that backcountry airstrips remain an integral form of access.

The study concludes that **there is no significant increase in stress levels among wildlife due to recreational aviation activity.**

RAF partners on reopening Arizona airstrips

Grapevine reopens – Team effort between the RAF, Arizona Pilot's Assoc. and the USFS has resulted in the reopening of Grapevine. The Phoenix sectional showed it as closed for nearly 20 years. Work could not have progressed without the recent RAF/USFS MOU, that gave the Tonto Forest Supervisor the green light for the work.

The first volunteer weekend in 2011 reclaimed the airstrip of thorny shrubs and trees, and bloodied some hands. RAF Arizona/Public Lands Liaison Mark Spencer recalled District Ranger Kelly Jardine saying, 'I just cannot tell you what this does for me to see all these volunteers willing to do this.'

Countless hours of volunteer work, tens of thousands of dollars in donations and patience has led to Grapevine becoming the most visited backcountry airstrip in Arizona. Its location near Roosevelt Lake, its hard surface, and no automobiles make it a popular place, Spencer points out.

Maintenance is on-going and APA president Tommy Thomason has lined up a company to help volunteers seal the runway surface this summer.

Spencer explains that formal charting starts with the completion of FAA forms, USFS signature, and an

airspace study. Upon approval, the new identifier and appropriate info will replace the closed symbol.

"Grapevine airstrip will not be without some restrictions to secure long term safe access, and to keep the backcountry characteristics that draw folks there," Spencer said.

Double Circle (Z66) is open, and through cooperative agreements between the USFS and the aviation community, its remaining structures are being cared for. The airstrip was the first newly charted airstrip on USFS Region 3 in decades. "The old lodge is open to all, and comfortable if you have a cot and sleeping bag," Spencer said. Watch for APA and RAF fly-ins and work parties. "Locals have also taken on maintenance tasks with the aviation community," Spencer added.



Bentonville, AR Conference – RAF leadership plans projects

RAF State Liaisons, Board and key volunteers met for three jam-packed days for the "Razorback Rendezvous" leadership conference May 12–15. Hosted in Bentonville, AR, the Mayor warmly welcomed the group. A wide variety of professionals shared relevant information including AOPA's Mark Baker. Crystal Merica, USFS Nat'l Dispersed Recreation Program Manager spoke and Mike Van Abel, president of International Mountain Bike Assoc. shared their successes and setbacks gaining recreational access.

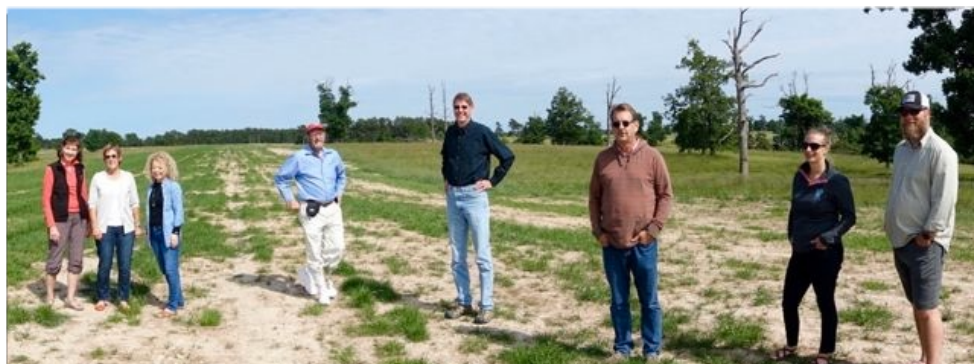
The group enjoyed a barbecue at a new pastoral airstrip not far from Bentonville's outskirts.

Volunteer Coordinator Sarah Chandler organized breakout sessions where each attendee addressed special challenges within small working groups.

An RAF delegation toured the new Trigger Gap airstrip, in progress. It will be opened for public recreational use once the turf is established. "The strip and the environment around it are superb," RAF president John McKenna said, adding, "it's a great anchor in the Ozarks. Tim Clifford spent a good deal of time and effort on this one and we have truly accomplished something here."

The RAF thanks the city of Bentonville for the warm reception. Thanks go to Visit Bentonville and the Walton Family Foundation for their sponsorships. The RAF appreciates corporate sponsors Cirrus, Aviat Husky and CubCrafters for their generous support. All RAF Liaisons and Directors serve on a volunteer basis.

Below: RAF tours Trigger Gap: Left to right: Carmine Mowbray, Tricia McKenna, Ann Clifford, Rol Murrow, local RAF supporter Harper Goodwin, Tim Clifford, Sarah and Josh Chandler.



Golden Pulaski Award

RAF Arizona and Public Lands Liaison **Mark Spencer** was awarded the "Golden Pulaski" from the RAF board during the Bentonville conference. His efforts building positive relations with public land managers has resulted in several new recreational airstrips now enjoyed by the aviation public. *He is shown, kneeling in front of volunteers at Double Circle Ranch.*

The Pulaski is a fitting symbol of the hard work and dedication of volunteers fulfilling the RAF mission.

Spencer joins these past recipients of the Golden Pulaski Award, honored for their exceptional dedication and hard work on behalf of the RAF: **Craig Fuller, Chuck Jarecki, Dan Prill, Gordon Rock, Century Companies, Inc. and John McKenna.**



When the backcountry gets busy

– Mike Hart, RAF Idaho Liaison



With the summer flying season, Idaho's mountains and canyons are full of planes. Large groups of pilots fly into airstrips like Cavanaugh Bay, Johnson Creek, Big Creek, Smiley Creek and Garden Valley. These are all beautiful recreational airstrips with camping amenities. Paraphrasing the RAF tagline, "they are one of the reasons we learned to fly." These amazing facilities are maintained by the Idaho Div. of Aeronautics with help from volunteers from the Idaho Aviation Association.

High summer visitation is both a blessing and a curse. The blessing is these facilities stay busy all summer, sometimes hosting hundreds of aircraft and large groups of pilots enjoying the camaraderie of flying in the mountains. The curse can come from accidents, near misses and bad behavior.

The Idaho Div. of Aeronautics has done its part preparing Airport Operating Procedures for the more popular public airports in Idaho's backcountry. These AOPs are designed to help keep traffic separated and assist pilots in knowing how best to arrive and set up for landing and departure in a constrained environment. If you are considering a trip to Idaho, do yourself a favor and pre-brief the trip by downloading the AOPs: http://itd.idaho.gov/aero/Safety-Ed/Safety_Ed.htm

Behavior that makes me cringe is the casual overuse of 122.9, the backcountry frequency. When you are flying in a canyon with all your buddies you do need to coordinate. It may seem like you are alone on the frequency, but when you are cruising across the wilderness at 10-12,000 feet, the collective chatter can be as bad as class Bravo. But in Bravo airspace, you don't hear, "Is that you Bill? Haven't seen you in awhile, how ya been? Goin' to breakfast at Sulphur Creek?"

The nearly constant banter results in about 20 percent unreadable transmissions because each seemingly isolated canyon conversation steps on other transmissions. If you are flying in a group, monitor 122.9 and make position reports, but please coordinate with other pilots on a different air-to-air frequency to take the load off of 122.9.

The last curse of Idaho's flying season — groups of pilots bagging Wilderness airstrips — rolling wheels on as many backcountry airstrips in a day as possible with a focus on

landing at the most difficult strips.

I recently climbed out of the Big Creek drainage and could hear a four-ship departure from Vines airstrip destined for Soldier Bar. Vines is one of the "Big Creek Four." It's short and difficult with great camping. Soldier Bar is further downstream and also has great campsites but also has its challenges — two big humps on the approach end and a dogleg in the middle. My hope is that the group had spent the night at Vines and was flying to Soldier Bar for a second night. My suspicion, however, is that they were simply out bagging airstrips. Wilderness airstrips are not places for casual landings. Many are tough and require some orientation to understand the safety nuances. That likely means going in with an instructor or more experienced pilot to learn how to land and take off safely. There is a fine line between learning how to land tough airstrips safely and bagging airstrips. The only thing worse than bagging airstrips, however, is crashing because you didn't know the nuances for a particular strip.

I want pilots to continue to have access to the Big Creek Four and other airstrips in Idaho. To preserve that privilege, we have to do our part

and use the resources wisely. Airstrips in the Wilderness are there for us to use, but rolling wheels and heading to the next one simply to add it to our logbook isn't the Recreation we had in mind when naming this organization.

If you visit a Wilderness strip, stay awhile and truly enjoy the roadless amenities you have the privilege of accessing. Pull out the fly rod, tent and hiking boots and get out and enjoy the place.

The RAF and the Idaho Aviation Association are working with the US Forest Service through the Idaho Airstrip Network (a cooperative interagency coordination group) to find common ground on the designation of the Big Creek Four. It is not an easy negotiation and the practice of bagging airstrips doesn't make our job any easier but I can assure you, recovering crashed airplanes would be even worse. Review the RAF's excellent code of conduct that balances safety and respect for others with the privilege of enjoying the resource: <http://theraf.org/content/raf-code-conduct>

The only thing worse than bagging airstrips is crashing because you didn't know the safety nuances

Ryan Fly-in 2016 features a pig roast

Rainy weather kept a few fliers away, but 45 folks enjoyed Dave and John Whitelaw's no-host roast pig at the 13th annual Ryan Fly-in. Ben and Butchie Ryan came from the Veteran's Home for Saturday's dinner. Caretakers Paul Ayott and Ande Laroche were on hand volunteering throughout the weekend. Ande prepared pork and egg burritos for a crowd that worked up their appetites waiting for the fog to lift on Sunday morning.

The RAF Store was a popular place keeping shoppers dry, and the rain stopped in time for all to enjoy a campfire in the new RAF Fire Hub, surrounded by the engraved bricks that will eventually be placed there permanently.

Photo by Jo Schumacher.



Team building – RAF adds State Liaisons

Scott Newpower, Montana

For 25 years, pilots flying into Montana's Logan International Airport in Billings heard Scott Newpower in the tower. He decided on an ATC career in Hudson, WI, during college. After four years in the tower in Grand Forks, ND, he transferred to Billings. Originally from St. Paul, MN, he planned to stay in Billings only a few years and move on, but grew to love Montana and decided to stay in Big Sky Country. Scott learned to fly in 1996 and he and his wife Mary began exploring the backcountry with

their Cessna 182. He regularly volunteers on airstrip work parties, and one day working at Schafer Meadows, a pilot landed in a Beech Bonanza. Scott noticed the "For Sale" sign in it. Within the hour, he decided to sell his 182 and buy the Bonanza. More than ten years and many mods later, the Bonanza has taken Scott and Mary to every backcountry strip they ever visited in the 182.

Along the way, Scott joined the board of directors of the Montana Pilots Assoc, serving as President from 2013-2016, and winning well-deserved "Pilot of the Year" honors in 2016. He is a long-time RAF supporter.

Scott retired from the FAA and Billings tower in May 2014. He and Mary built a hangar home at the Seeley Lake airport (23S), about 30 miles northeast of Missoula. Scott volunteers with his airport neighbors to help keep it maintained. Scott brings a wealth of experience and energy to the RAF in his "retirement."

John Meade, New Hampshire

John grew up in New York and had the Navy take him far away; eventually depositing him in Massachusetts. John's father-in-law flew, and in the late 80s, John got bitten by the flying bug as well.

Eventually a SuperCub on floats became his pride and joy. It became a convertible with Bushwheels, skis and floats. He credits his association with SuperCub.org for coast-

to-coast friendships and finding a cadre of other New England pilots, in search of the backcountry adventure.

John and His wife Jennifer split their work week between Massachusetts and New Hampshire. They have a home and airstrip in Wentworth, NH, affectionately known as the "WAD." It is home to the Columbus Weekend Fly In and Fly Out.

John has one son and three grandchildren along with the 1956 SuperCub and a 1953 Cessna 180.



they regularly explore the backcountry with their Cessna 182. He regularly volunteers on airstrip work parties, and one day working at Schafer Meadows, a pilot landed in a Beech Bonanza. Scott noticed the "For Sale" sign in it. Within the hour, he decided to sell his 182 and buy the Bonanza. More than ten years and many mods later, the Bonanza has taken Scott and Mary to every backcountry strip they ever visited in the 182.

Richard Mayes, Oregon

Richard grew up in Texas and earned his private pilot's certificate at age 18. His first airplane was a J3 Cub that cost him the princely sum of \$1,500. After finishing a couple of degrees in engineering, Richard decided – without much forethought– that his future lay in Alaska. For ten years, he flew a C-185 to remote locations throughout the state.

In the mid-1980s he was offered a 12-month employment contract with an engineering firm in Taiwan. This overseas adventure lasted almost 30 years, with opportunities for Richard and his wife Sarah to live and work in many locations in Asia, the Middle East, Australia and New Zealand.

Upon retiring, Richard and Sarah returned to the US and moved to Oregon to look for new adventures. Both are pleased to be back in the General Aviation arena, particularly backcountry flying. Richard is excited by the opportunities presented by the RAF liaison role and looks forward to working with Team RAF to further its mission.



Al Corden, Pennsylvania

Courtesy of a Royal Air Force (RAF) scholarship, 18-year-old Al Corden earned his private pilot's license in a Tiger Moth at Marshall's Airport, Cambridge. Naturally, this led to his joining the RAF where he spent an enthusiastic eleven years flying Chipmunks, Gnats, Vulcans, and Canberras in the far flung outposts of Her Majesty's Empire.

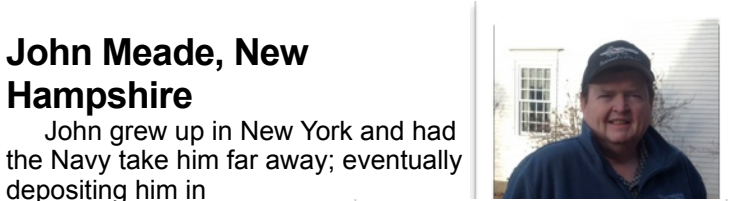
Retiring in 1974, Al worked offshore in the oil and gas business bringing him to Houston, and a whole new country. Falling oil prices saw another career change – back to aviation, and a move to the Northeast U.S.

A couple of decades and two airlines later, Al retired, having flown the Line, been a flight instructor, and finally Director of Training at an A320 operation in Pennsylvania.

Al is married to Sabrina Kipp, who flies a B-737 for Southwest Airlines, having flown everything from round motor Convair 440s, DC-6s to a B-25, her other part-time job.

Now Al is building his own "aeroplane" – a Zenith STOL CH-750 - a two-year project now going on four. Al and Sabrina also own a Stinson 108, what Al calls "a truly delightful vintage aeroplane, and a tailwheel classic."

"I see the "Recreational" RAF as an opportunity to



Complete roster of RAF State Liaisons is on RAF website

give back to aviation, a world that has provided so much for both Sabrina and me," Al says. "I look forward to spreading the word to fellow pilots in Pennsylvania."

Ray Jilek, South Dakota

Ray grew up on a family farm in southwestern North Dakota and moved to the Black Hills of South Dakota in the late 80s where he met Laura, the love of his life. Laura and Ray now live in Spearfish and have two daughters.

Ray learned to fly in a Cessna 150, then bought a C-172 in which he earned his instrument and commercial ratings. In 1996 Ray started an Aerial Application business based in Sturgis, SD and

expanded into banner towing, flight instruction, wildlife surveys, and aerial predator control. In 2001 Ray and Laura purchased Eagle Aviation, Inc. at Spearfish and offer flight instruction, charter, maintenance, and full FBO services. Ray currently owns and flies two C-172s, a 206, and a recently rebuilt SuperCub, and flies corporate turbo props.

Ray's passion for backcountry aviation began after several flights to Alaska and into the backcountry in the lower 48. Ray is a Life Member of the South Dakota Pilots Assoc. and understands the need for advocacy groups that support and foster aviation interests. Through Ray's involvement with SuperCub.org, "that bunch made flights into the Missouri Breaks strips," Ray said. "Pilots experienced firsthand the results of hard work and efforts by the RAF and MPA to re-gain access to this beautiful piece of paradise."

"Through these aviation activities, many friends have been made and campfires shared," he says. "I always have time to visit with like-minded individuals and look forward to meeting other RAF supporters as well as recruiting new interest to further the RAF mission."

Phil Whittemore, Texas

Since the age of five, Phil Whittemore has been interested in airplanes. He took his first flight with a test pilot for Aero Spacelines when he was 12. Phil got his pilot's license in 1981 and now flies throughout the western United States, Canada and Alaska as a recreational bush pilot, "always on the lookout for great fly fishing along the way," he says.

He is the founder and principal of the Texas STOL Roundup – the largest STOL competition in the Lower 48. He participates in STOL demonstrations at fly-ins and airshows, introducing both pilots and non-pilots to this unique and exciting type of flying.

An advocate for GA, Phil is a member of AOPA's philanthropic "Hat in the Ring Society," and supports a variety of aviation organizations. "My heart remains in backcountry and bush flying," he adds.



Lori Olson, Wyoming

Lori grew up the youngest (with a twin sister) in a large aviation family. Her father served as navigator on a B-29 during WWII, and later piloted his family around the country in a PA-11, a Skywagon, and a Piper Navajo. Her childhood was filled with Sunday afternoon flights in the PA-11, flying the C-180 to visit older siblings in college at the University of Wyoming, and accompanying her father on business trips and travels to many destinations.

Her brother became a CFI, and three brothers-in-law held private pilot certificates.

When Lori and her husband Joe welcomed twin daughters into their lives, she wanted to introduce her own family to flight. She earned her private pilot certificate in 2013 and became owner of her Citabria Explorer 7GCBC soon after.

Lori enjoys backcountry flying, occasional loops in her Citabria, and anything to do with aviation. A former teacher and archivist at the University of Wyoming, Lori now spends her time raising her daughters, working to reestablish her local airport in Upton,

serving on the school board, and scouting for grass airstrips to land her plane.

She looks forward to advancing the RAF mission and is excited to explore opportunities for more recreational strips in Wyoming.



RAF Propeller Banners – Help propel the RAF Mission!

\$30 each or two for \$50 plus \$5 for shipping.

Email tmckenna@theraf.org to order yours, or purchase at an RAF event.

Land at your favorite recreational destination, mount your "It's Why You Learned to Fly" prop banner and send us the picture with a short story. You'll be entered to win the popular RAF jacket, in your choice of color in men's or women's size!

State Reports

California – Rick Lach

As a result of the Washington, DC proclamation – and very exciting for the RAF – John Litton, USFS Chief pilot for USFS Region 5 understands our mission and is a terrific proponent.

Monache Meadows and Coyote Flat:

This spring the Inyo Forest Supervisor approved a survey of these overgrown airstrips. Litton is to survey Monache Meadows and Coyote Flat with me. The Survey will include elevation, length, width, headings and what physical work is needed to bring the strips back into safe operation. Hopefully the survey will be approved so the RAF can start work this summer.

Chicken strip, Death Valley: The Park Plan to manage the Saline Valley is still in process. The RAF met with new Park Superintendent Mike Reynolds in June for a healthy discussion covering upgrades and safety issues like overdue aircraft. The strip is in good condition and there will be a work party this fall.

Gravelly Valley, pictured – Rick Lach photo: The District ranger is very happy



with the support he gets from the RAF. He is now working with us to establish a camping area on the south end of the strip.

Goler Heights: A small desert mining strip just off the Garlock Hwy between Hwy 14 and 395, south of Ridgecrest. It's been out of use for years but working with the BLM, an RAF work party got it cleaned, leveled and back in safe operation this spring.

Minietta Mine: On the west side of the Panamint Valley about 20 miles north of Trona. The BLM has agreed to let the RAF bring this airstrip back into safe condition. Expect a work party this fall when the temperatures come down.

Georgia – Eric Davis

McIntosh Reserve is the textbook definition of what we look for. We have a

tentative fly-in date Sept. 10 that coincides with a park clean-up project.

Creighton Island – This abandoned airstrip off the Georgia coast <https://goo.gl/maps/A5GWayk5Qhk>. is owned by the Williams family who in the past allowed camping on the island.

I met Mitchell who owns 12 shrimp boats and wants to be able to use GA to expand his shrimping business. He knew Mr. Frank Williams and had lunch with him. I learned he is eager to host a fly-in. First, we need to fill in holes and clear trees, so the first engagement might be a boat-in work party. This will be a formidable project.

Idaho – Mike Hart

RAF's booth at the Idaho Aviation Expo in May was a hit. RedBird's simulator attracts a lot of attention and has proven to be an excellent way to entertain, intrigue and entice a younger generation of prospective aviators, but it is also a great way to share some of Idaho's airstrips and terrain. Thanks to the volunteers who carefully built and later de-rigged and packed the simulator to send off to the next RAF show.

Thanks to RedBird for the simulator too!

See Mike Hart's Essay on Idaho's busy backcountry concerns, page 5.

Illinois – Mike Purpura

I found a Porta-John donor for the Two Hearted airstrip and had the unit shipped to Michigan; and found a donor for a lawnmower/tractor to use there as well. I reached out to AOPA's Great Lakes Rep. for a meeting. This year's Nat'l Council of State Legislators takes place August in Chicago, so I'm exploring the possibility of an RAF booth.

Recreational possibilities at Havana

I flew to Havana, IL and met with Mayor Brenda Stadsholt, Economic Development Dir. Ron Hills, and Jerry Payne of the Port Authority to discuss the airport and possible recreational uses with RAF involvement. Our meeting centered on the 2,200' grass strip, hangars and facilities.

It's a very small city, population 3,200 by the Illinois River. The recreational possibilities include bird and deer hunting, camping, fishing, fly-ins, STOL contests and more. Havana actually had not thought of the airport as a resource to bring people to the city.

This introductory meeting led to lunch and an invitation to meet with the local aero club/EAA Chapter, and make a community wide presentation to the City,

Chamber of Commerce, Jaycees and other stakeholders.

While this may be a small start, it is a significant step for Illinois for a city to focus on the economic benefit of a recreational airstrip. The good news is that they are willing and actually enthusiastic about the possibilities.

It all started with one phone call to the mayor and a conversation about the recreational potential of aviation.

Below: Purpura with Mayor Stadsholt and Economic Development Dir. Hills at City Hall in Havana, IL.



Maine – Andy Rowe

Steve Mason and I made a trip to Ragmuff in June and dropped off the outhouse. The wind sock from Kevin Waters is up, thanks to friends from Millinocket. See related story, page 1. We'll return with picnic table and tractor with mower.

The strip is registered with the state and I'll work to get it registered with the FAA. The strip itself is pretty much ready, but it's still a work in progress as far as facilities go. There was a young black bear checking out the wild strawberries and blueberries next to the strip when we were there. A good reminder to pick up any food and garbage when visiting!

Be prepared for the black flies that will carry you off this time of year.

Michigan – Brad Frederick

Two Hearted Airstrip – We've worked out details with MI DNR and the Rainbow Lodge to lease land from both entities to create one longer, safer runway. I've staked out the runway. We are getting quotes on filling in the low spots and trucking in topsoil to create the 2,800' runway. This airstrip will be walking distance from Lake Superior and the Two Hearted River of Ernest Hemingway fame.

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Throw in a State Forest campground and facilities at the Rainbow Lodge and you've got a nice spot to fly into. Realistically look for the Two Hearted strip to be open Spring 2017 if all goes well.

North Fox Island – Diz and I flew to North Fox Island at 9 am June 17 to prepare for its very first RAF work party. For the story, see <http://theraf.org/news/2016/north-fox-island-work-weekend>.

A great thanks to all the RAF Team who helped. Photos of the N Fox Island work party by Diz Frederick: <http://www.sidnaw.org/North%20Fox%20Island/june2016/>

Plans for the sequel are underway. Don't miss the next one.

Missouri – Jim Dickerson

Missouri's Excelsior Springs (3EX), was facing closure as the city council

thought the airport had no real value to the community. After long and exhausting efforts by Sarah and myself, the airport was not only kept open, but received numerous upgrades and improvements including a new runway. Cost for the runway was mostly funded by the Missouri Dep't of Transportation with minor funds from the city. The airport will remain open for at least 10 more years. The airport is now operated by two co-managers and is enjoying growth and success.

Montana – Ron Normandeau

Montana is fully engaged in public land planning activities with three national forests and two BLM districts conducting public meetings and requesting comments on their efforts.

The Custer/Gallatin NF held startup meetings February-March and started a

second round of public meetings on forest assessment and need for change, June 14-30.

The Helena/Lewis and Clark NF held public meetings in March to present the forest assessment and solicit comment on the results.

The Missoula District of the BLM held kick-off meetings in March where they explained their approach to the planning process and welcomed the attendees to participate in the planning process.

The Flathead NF held a meeting June 20 in Kalispell and June 23 in Missoula to present their draft plan and DEIS. A quick evaluation shows **inclusion of aviation in the plan and EIS which assures consideration in future planning activities**. The quick review identified concerns for the wording of aviation statements and



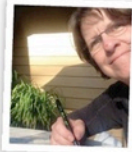
2016 RAF VOLUNTEERS BY THE NUMBERS

30 AIRSTRIPS WHERE THE RAF HAS MADE AN IMPACT
RAF Mission: preserves, maintains, and creates

11 AIRSTRIPS IN THE WORKS



350
THANK YOU NOTES WRITTEN
Handwritten by our all star team of 5 RAF Vice Presidents in Charge of Appreciation



32 EVENTS
Trade shows, fly-ins, conferences, work parties and meetings



ATTENDEES IN BENTONVILLE
110 MEMBERS
25 STATES
*Educational conference to learn more about the RAF
Traveled from all 4 corners of the US*

7 NEW STATE LIAISONS
MT, NH, OR, PA, SD, TX, WY

273 VOLUNTEERS
Have agreed to help the RAF across the country



497 NEW MEMBERS
Entered by our data entry volunteer

7,748 TOTAL MEMBERS

40 STATE LIASONS

State Reports

identified areas where aviation could be included to provide better guidance to future planning. Talking points will be distributed to the RAF membership to submit individual comments. The Draft Plan and DEIS were advertised in the Federal Register and **the comment period will be open until September 28, 2016.**



One of two fire bowls fabricated by RAF co-founder Chuck Jarecki, placed at Montana's Schafer Meadows.



When RT Adkins passed away, his family suggested memorials toward his beloved Montana airstrips. Thanks to the huge response, Scott Newpower ordered a new outhouse and two new picnic tables. Scott trucked the materials from Great Falls to Columbia Falls, where Two Bear Air helicoptered them in, requiring five trips. In June, volunteers including RT's son Trevert, dug the hole and began assembly – Scott Newpower photo.

New Hampshire – John Meade

I opened our Maine Camp, officially kicking off the season for our chartered seaplane base Teconnet (29ME) in China, Maine.

I am working with the RAF board and RAF member Bill Brine at Myricks Airfield (1M8) in Berkley, MA. RAF has accepted a voting seat on the Myricks Airfield Foundation board that is working to increase activity at Myricks such as camping. There is an annual fly-in day each September and I hope to work with

RAF member Rene Robillard to make this a major event for the RAF.

There are several small airstrips that used to have camping spots and I need to renew these areas. Working with Bob Burley RAF Vermont Liaison, we are researching Errol Airfield (KERR). Bob said, "Great ideas. Let the fun start! Glad to have help in New Hampshire now." Bob tells me there is great opportunity at Errol, in northern New Hampshire for potential for RAF pilot shelter, picnic tables and overnight camping. There are motels not far from the field and a restaurant and bordering lake. More to come in the future.

Bob has shared his knowledge and progress on Newport, NH, known as Parlin Field. I think this could be an Arcadia for us as this great strip has camping spots that have gone unused and neglected for years. This is a privately owned strip that I may make some headway with. Bob did a couple of "golden age" fly-ins there and is good friends with the airport manager who is a former Connie pilot and ran bush flying there for years, according to Bob.

Miller Quinn airstrip may take longer than expected. I am attempting to find Dartmouth Alumni to champion our cause.

I met with David DeVries, President of NH Pilots Assoc. He knows the RAF. He gave insight to what he thought would be best for New Hampshire. He would like to see fields such as Parlin and Errol see more activity from our membership. He would like a joint effort between NHPA and the RAF to go to the many private airfield owners and open up their airstrips. He follows the mantra of the Tailwind Foundation provided at the Razorback Rendezvous.

Private airstrip ownership is a hot topic here in the Northeast. Rene Robillard and I were very excited about what was presented at the Razorback Rendezvous and the upcoming RAF Private Airfield Guide. This is exactly what we need here in the land of many private restricted airports surrounded by privately owned land.

Ohio – Freeman Swank

Remember the saying, "Build It And They Will Come" from the movie *Field of Dreams*?

This slogan inspired me to tear up about 15 acres of our prime corn ground and build a grass airstrip. It was a dream that pilots would fly in and socialize.

Wow did they come! A typical Saturday morning one might find 15 to 20 airplanes lined up with 35 on the ground at times. The bike trail provides a short pathway to our little village restaurants, so breakfast time is a favorite.

The RAF focus on camping led me to believe our strip would provide a neat place for camping via airplane.

We are restoring a century old barn that has a 50' x 60' covered picnic area. We are also completing a restroom laundry building.

Our goal is to make these facilities available to RAF members for their use anytime at no charge. The greatest reward my family will receive will be the friendships created.

Our website has information about our August Fly-in: www.hotzog/swank

Oregon – Richard Mayes

I have been meeting with USFS representatives to discuss reopening several abandoned airstrips in the Deschutes and Ochoco National Forests. Everyone involved has been positive and open to the discussions.

Currently, USFS staff are researching land use restrictions and the history of the facilities.

I'm also encouraging pilots to contact their elected representatives on the proposed Owyhee Canyonlands Nat'l Monument proposal in Eastern Oregon, asking that aviation access be preserved.

Pennsylvania – Chris Groshel

This year the RAF was well represented at Sentimental Journey in Lock Haven, (KLHV). We had a good presence throughout the week. We signed up 25 new RAF members from nine states in a four day period.

North Carolina RAF member Tim Farris worked our booth for a day and gave approximately 30 rides and burned 88 gallons of avgas in his J-3 while at the event! That's a lot of flying at a little over 4 gallons an hour.

We gave an RAF powerpoint presentation at the Piper Museum which went well followed by Q&A. There was interest in the STOL training program which we hope might make it to the northeast someday.

Interest was split between access to public lands and collaborating with private airstrip owners. New PA Liaison Al Corden, Director Alan Metzler and I heard from folks about how they developed their strips and how they

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used them. There was a lot of discussion of the “2 mile rule” and how it hinders private strips from becoming licensed in the state. Pennsylvania prohibits airstrips whose property boundaries would be within two miles of another. There are many instances where an individual built an airstrip and licensed it. A friend or neighbor may have done the same, but the 2 mile rule doesn’t allow them to license their strip, severely limiting its usage. We feel this will be the first of many airstrip issues we will be dealing with in PA.

This year’s theme was the J-3 and there were 40 Cubs with many more Supers, TriPacers, Cruisers and Colts. Throw in some Taylorcrafts, Stinsons and a lavender Champ and the tie-down area was a sea of colors! Spot landings, flour bombing and a poker run occurred under fair skies.



The *Spirit of Freedom*, a Douglas C-54E, a flying museum and memorial to the Berlin Airlift, wedged its way onto the 3,800’ runway for a static display looming over the airport buildings. Mid-week, a black bear – probably attracted by all the “Cub” logos – made his way across the runway threshold during operations and was later seen scaling the chain link fence before he “went over the mountain”. Better weather than last year’s event resulted in many more folks stopping by our booth including RAF members from New York, New Jersey and Ohio.

If you’ve never been to Sentimental Journey, and you like the color yellow, put the 32nd annual fly-in on your schedule for June 2017!

“Operating Safely in Short Environments” training

The [Beechcraft Heritage Museum](#) in Tullahoma, TN hosted a two-day seminar June 18-19 that focused on operating aircraft in short environments. RAF Georgia Liaison Eric Davis organized the event “for anyone who desires to learn how to operate safely in short environments but believes they lack the right aircraft for the mission.”

Beginning with the [Backcountry Aviation’s STOL Tips Youtube series](#), produced independently by RAF Colorado Liaison Patrick Romano, the

seminar shifted focus to aircraft types that folks don’t usually consider STOL capable such as the Beech Bonanza or Cessna 182. Instructors Patrick Romano, Dave Dunteman, and Ken Wittekiend presented five hours of ground school on Saturday, then on Sunday flew with pilots as they put their new knowledge into practice.

RAF New Hampshire Liaison John Meade participated and said, “I got my turn in the air with Patrick and it was unbelievably great training.”

They’re planning to do it again next year, and it may fill quickly!

Washington RAF Supporter wins Wright Bros. Awards

Dennis Toepke of Port Angeles, WA was honored in October with both the prestigious Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award and the Charles Taylor Master Mechanic Award. Toepke was honored for his contribution to U.S. aviation by practicing and promoting safe aircraft operations for 50 consecutive years.

Toepke joined the RAF in 2010. He flew his beautiful Aeronca Sedan to the Ryan Field fly-in again this year with wife Trudy.

RAF weekend on “putting green” grass at Triple Tree, SC

Visitors to the RAF Triple Tree weekend (SC00) June 3-5 enjoyed South Carolina hospitality on 8,000’ of putting green grass. Thanks to Pat Hartness and his volunteers for making sure everything was perfect.

Folks set up camp along the tree-lined river banks or at the shady edge of what RAF VP Tim Clifford described as “Monet-styled ponds.”

Friday evening’s outdoor meal was followed by Eric Myers demonstrating his radio controlled aircraft. Local pilot Dale Ellis told of a hijacking that took his C-310 into the hands of Mexican

Federales.

Saturday, folks could enjoy a Biltmore Estate tour (courtesy of Signature Flight Support), or the Navigational Challenge Fly-out. Dinner was the trademark Triple Tree “grill your own steak.” Clifford gave an update on RAF progress and GA Liaison Eric Davis spoke on backcountry flying even if your plane is a Bonanza.

Attendees enjoyed daily exhibition flights of Triple Tree’s P-51, and late night fire-pit s’mores.





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North Fox Island volunteers take a break – Diz Frederick photo.

The Recreational Aviation Foundation was formed in 2003 by a group of pilots in response to diminishing backcountry aviation destinations. Supporters from all 50 states and the GA and commercial aviation industry have joined in. To become a supporter of this important effort, use the secure "Donate now" button at www.TheRAF.org or use the form below.

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