Valley Flyers

"Just Plane Fun!"

885 Lancaster Dr SE
Salem, OR 97317

October 2025

Quarterly Member Meeting – Nov. 11
Guest speaker: Brendan O'Mara

The Quarterly Member Meeting will be hosted at Garmin at 7:00 PM on November 11th. We'll discuss the status of the club, our planes, and progress on this year's goals.

We'll also have a special guest speaker. Brendan O'Mara is the President and Founder of Got Your Six Aviation which provides simulator training. He and his team provide immersive and highly specific training scenarios for Emergency Proficiency Training, Insurance-Required Recurrent Training, and IFR Training Programs.

"Flight simulation presents a wealth of untapped potential for enhancing pilot emergency training beyond its traditional role in instrument training. Simulators, often relegated to dusty corners of a flight school, offer an immersive training environment unrivaled by real-world flying when used to its full potential. Simulation pushes pilots to their limits, revealing both strengths and areas for improvement, all without the inherent risks of training for actual in-flight emergency scenarios.

In this presentation, Brendan dissects the vast spectrum of opportunities nestled within this technology, exploring its near-limitless ability to tailor training scenarios to any proficiency level or situation. He will equip you with the knowledge and strategies to harness the power of simulation for your recurrent training needs, unlocking untapped skills and boosting confidence to new heights. Forget the traditional limitations of flight training – embrace the untapped power of simulation and let your piloting abilities reach their full potential."

N5174E paint update

Provided there are no weather delays, we expect to deliver N5174E to SunQuest Air Specialties at Paine Field (KPAE) on October 13th to be stripped and painted. The paint colors are planned to align with N70574.

SAVE THE DATE
Club Christmas Party – December 13th!

Joan and Vern have graciously agreed to host the party, starting at 6:00 PM on Saturday, December 13th. In order to have enough food for everyone, each member is asked to bring either a main dish, salad, or dessert to share. The club will provide meat (ham and BBQ ribs) and some fixings. We'll also do a gift exchange, so bring a fun gift in the $10-20 range (aviation gifts are always fun). Bring your family or friends for a fun evening together. This is a great time to see old friends and to meet some of our newer members.

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Club flyouts: October-December

Simon Hayes

There was no flyout in September because the date apparently didn't work for many people. Here are the dates and destinations for the next three months:

Date	Destination	Airport
10/18/2025	Night currency	TBD
11/15/2025	Florence	6S2
12/20/2025	Hood River	4S2

If you have questions, suggestions, or comments about the flyouts please contact Simon Hayes or Jon Eggert.

The Wisdom of Full Service Fueling

Frank de la Puente

At one time or another in the five years during which I have been a member of Valley Flyers, my choice of full service fueling has been questioned. A typical inquiry has been "Are the pumps not working?" So, after much reflection, and at the risk of being misunderstood, I thought I would explain my wisdom of full service fueling.

One day back in July 2014, having finished self-serve fueling my Piper Arrow (patting myself on the back for conserving capital), I reflected on the whole ritual of self-serve fueling—taxi to the pumps, shut down, egress the airplane, chock the wheels, fasten static grounding cable, swipe the credit card, punch in the codes, turn the pump ON, reel the hose out, place refueling wing mat on the wing, fuel the right tank, repeat for the left tank, reel the hose back in, turn the pump OFF, remove grounding cable, grab the receipt, unchock, ingress, start the engine, and taxi to the hangar. On my way home I reasoned as irrational the hassle of self-serve fueling which I had endured just to avoid the 50 cents per gallon charge for full-service, e.g., $10 dollars on a 20-gallon fill-up, for a machine which cost $150,000 to buy and $165/hour to operate, where I would have done better cleaning the airplane while someone else fueled it. That was the last time I chose self-serve, unless it was the only option as at an unattended airport.

So, since joining Valley Flyers my practice has been to obtain full-service fuel wherever I land, while claiming credit at the current KSLE self-serve rate or less as when offered at a nearby airport such as Lenhardt which at the time of this writing was $5.79 for self-serve, compared to KSLE's $5.95. My practice works for me by eliminating the inefficiencies of self-serve fueling while allowing me to devote my time and energy to post-flight care of the aircraft, such as cleaning, while Salem Air Center personnel provide fullservice fueling for an extra 60¢/gal—a steal at twice the price. With full-service I also avoid the risk of damaging the airplane from resting the fuel nozzle against the fuel tank's filler neck and the hose against the wing, an issue raised in our Newsletter of September 2025. I hasten to add that I insist on wing mats during fueling. Naturally, my practice benefits our club. I question the wisdom of diverting to another airport for cheaper fuel as unnecessary wear and tear on the airplane from landing, taxiing, running up the engine, and taking off for the return flight to KSLE.

I suppose I could be wrong in my assessment. The Hillsboro Flying Club touts "Many members will fuel at less expensive locations before heading back home and can save significant money on the cost of the flight." I don't know about that. Beyond wear and tear from diverting, there is the extra Hobbs time—say 30 minutes at $100 an hour, and you're spending $50 in flying time to save $12 on fuel. That math doesn't add up for me. Yet another consideration which weighs against diverting to a nearby airport just to obtain cheaper fuel before returning to KSLE is running the risk attendant to an extra landing and takeoff, the two most hazardous maneuvers of flying in the normal category configuration, particularly at uncontrolled fields and when fatigued at the end of a long flight.

For context, the Hillsboro Flying Club charges $128/hour for a C172, and $204 for a C182. Willamette Aviation charges $172/hour for a Piper

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140. Oregon State Flying Club charges $165/hour for its C172. By contrast, Valley Flyers charges $95/hour for the Piper 140, $104 for the C172 and $159 for the Skylane; that's a bargain I want to protect. Overall, full-service fueling makes my life easier and holds down the costs of operating Valley Flyers airplanes.

Ultimately, it's up to each of us to decide which wisdom works better. We all want to fly safely, while keeping the club affordable and financially healthy. My assessment is that full-service fueling, while claiming credit at the prevailing KSLE self-serve rate (or less) best supports the safety and financial sustainability of our club.

KSLE fuel discount

When submitting your fuel expenses for fuel purchased at Salem, please remember to do the following to help us with the fuel refund from Salem Aviation Fueling:

- **When purchasing fuel at KSLE:** Enter the full aircraft tail number in the pumps when you purchase fuel at KSLE (e.g., 5174E, 70574).
- **When checking your flight into Flight Circle:**
  - Enter each fuel expense separately and upload an image of each fuel slip. Flight Circle allows you to enter multiple fuel reimbursements for each flight. If you purchased fuel at multiple locations, please do not mix KSLE fuel reimbursements with those from other airports.
  - Enter KSLE as the fueling location for each fuel purchase made at Salem.

Local fuel prices update

The price of 100LL at Salem is currently $5.95/gal, and there will be no fuel surcharge for October.

PIREP: Winds, Wings, and Orcas

Jim Crowell

Since before I did my checkride (August 2024), Stuart Jantze has been trying to get me to go camping on KORS (Orcas Island, WA) with him. So now that I am (finally) officially a pilot, we planned to make the trip this summer, and the best fit for both of our schedules was the first weekend in August. We had meetings, we discussed what kind of gear to take, what kind of facilities were available on the airfield and in the nearby town of Eastsound, and what all we would do while we were up there. Then, mere weeks before the planned flight, Stuart had to bow out of the flight for family happenings. Instead of cancelling the trip outright, he arranged for Tristan Kramer to do the trip with me, and then proceeded to give us the lowdown on all the things he does to prep for the trip, the routes he likes to fly, and how best to talk to whom on the whole flight up and back (Example: ALWAYS explicitly ask Whidbey Approach for a hand-off. They don't have an agreement with Seattle Center, so it's on you).

So come the day of the flight, Tristan and I "knew" everything there was to know for our trip to Orcas, and after carefully going over the weather one last time (including recent PIREPs from club members that had just flown back from the Seattle area) and Tristan recalculating W&B one more time for the extra fuel we didn't expect onboard, the two of us took off in 5ED early Friday afternoon for a "three-hour tour" of Washington along the I-5 corridor. Climbing over 7000 feet, for most of the flight it looked like the weather would be beautiful. At that altitude, we did not even feel any turbulence. But shortly after we passed Olympia, we noticed walls of haze to our right, all along the Cascades, as well as a large clump to our left. Ahead did not seem too bad but had a bit of brown goop as well. Then we started smelling smoke (fortunately, it smelled like campfire, not oil) and the haze in front of us seemed to be getting denser. We contacted Seattle Center to ask them if we could descend below the haze, and they just said, "descend at your own discretion". So, we did. Down to 5500 feet. But even that altitude did not last long, and not 20 minutes later, we told them we were descending again to 3500 feet so we could keep seeing what we could see. Apparently, they were paying attention because we soon heard them asking pilots north of us for a PIREP on the visibility at various heights. The reports that came back gave us confidence that we could continue on with the flight at least as far as Port Townsend. However, at only about half our starting altitude, turbulence became more of a factor, and our "tiny (air)ship was tossed", making the rest of the flight quite an adventure.

As soon as we got over/near the water of the Sound, the haze cleared up (and so did the

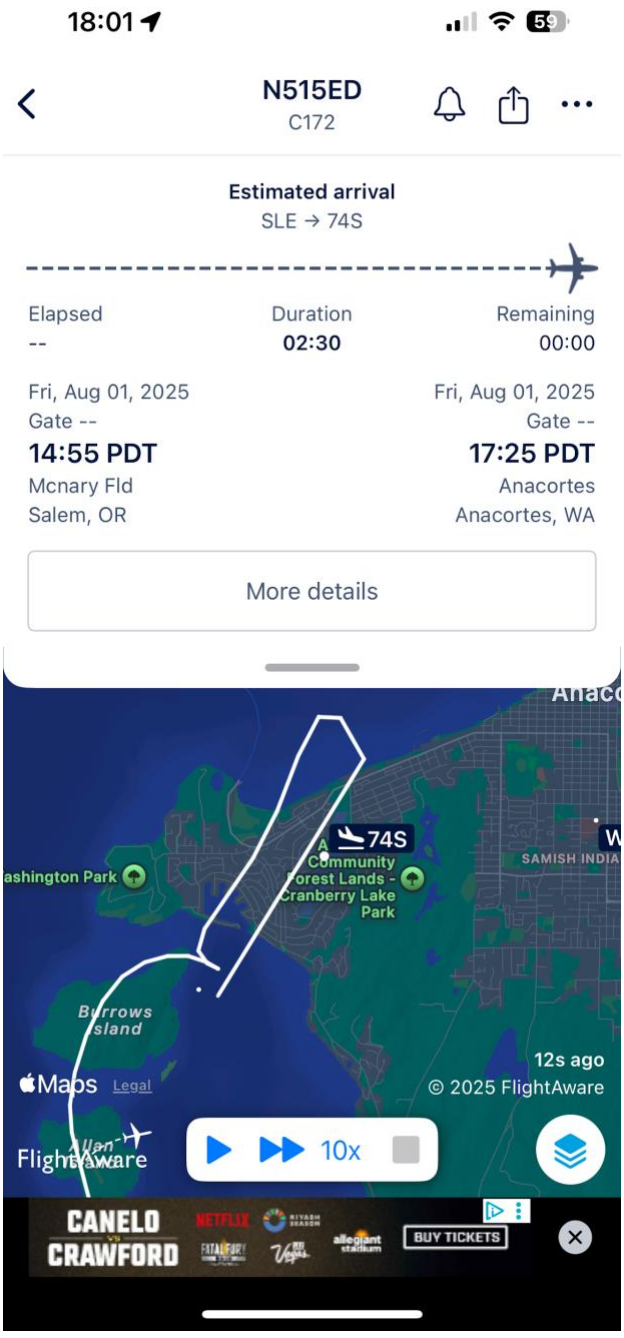
turbulence) and we got beautiful views of the islands, a super-secret-sub-base (that was just buildings and docks), a catamaran going right by the super-secret-sub-base, and a whole bunch of not-so-secret Navy/Marine planes sitting on aprons. Not long after that, with a quick pit-stop at Anacortes to fill up on the cheapest 100LL in the area (by more than $1/gallon), we hopped over to Orcas Island, turning to final over the water north of the runway.

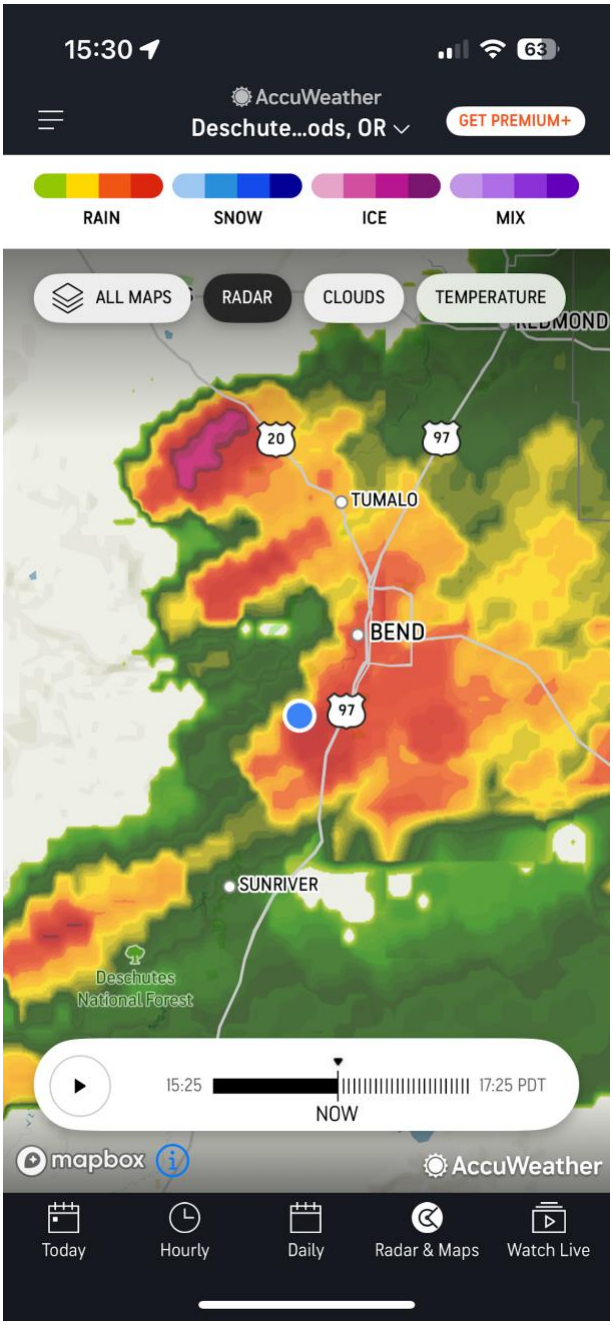
Taking a moment here to go back to the initial flight planning with Stuart, we were told to expect to see 6-8 planes parked on the grass at KORS.‡ Instead, when we landed at Orcas, we found 63 aircraft on the field, and very limited space to park, much less find a place to tie down. It turned out that the first weekend of August is the EAA fly-in at KORS every year and there were a LOT more planes and pilots around than we expected when we landed.‡

With all of the planes already lined up on the grass (and on the advice of Air Marshal Dwight), Tristan very carefully taxied 5ED all the way down the center aisle to the north end of the grassy field, where we manually hauled the plane around 180° and backed it up to the fence, setting up camp right between the lit windsock and the green/white airport beacon (making for weird displays on the tent walls at night. Thank God for eye masks).

‡

Before we could even really get camp set up, we found out Stuart was monitoring us, as we got snarky messages from him about our flight path on FlightAware (that's so Stuart 😆). He also sent us several examples of why he had to cancel his flight to Sunriver and drive up instead.





KORS turns out to be an amazing airport to camp at. I am definitely a glamper (no minimalism for me) and KORS has ALL the facilities. Just off the apron, behind a hangar there is a really nice building with two shower rooms, complete with temperature control, heat lamp/fans, flush toilets, sinks, and showers with what seemed to be unlimited hot water, plus plenty of space to dry off and change and tons of outlets for charging things. Near the gate to the outside world is an FBO that arranges local island flights. But they also have TWO club cars to borrow,

a car rental place (in case there are more than two transient pilots wanting to get around) and bicycles to check out as well. But better than all of that, because we chose to fly-camp on their fly-in weekend, there was so much more.

Friday night of the fly-in started with a free barbecue, with hamburgers, sausages, all the fixin's, drinks, and plenty of sides made by the local pilots to welcome everyone (can you say FREE DINNER?!?); and the local fire department schedules their fundraiser for the same weekend, so both Saturday and Sunday had $10 all-you-can-eat pancake breakfasts, with pancakes (obviously), sausages, eggs (scrambled or fried), orange juice, and coffee.‡ These options really simplified our food planning and made it easier for us to spend more of the weekend focused on other things.

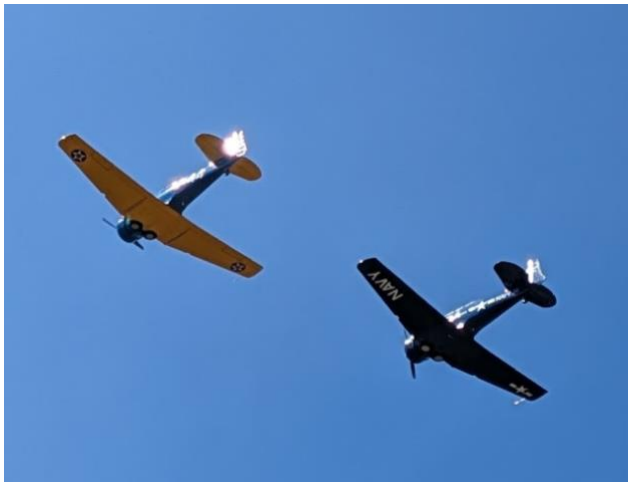
Saturday of the fly-in turned out to be a really busy day, with planes coming in and out all day long and more planes showing up to show off. All told, I heard there were about 95 planes that showed up for the fly-in, not counting the two or three shuttle planes that showed up every half hour or so. There were a lot of military trainers, a lot of Cessnas, a few formations buzzing the airfield, and plenty of Garmin displays replacing the old steam gauges (something that matters to me…so I checked every aircraft for it 😁).

Two of the locals from KORS also brought their own planes out for everyone to get a gander, the first being a Navy T-6 trainer flown by Craig (a friend of Stuart's), and the second being a restored 1927 TravelAir Biplane flown by Cap'n Mac of Cap'n Mac's Magic Air Biplane Tours (in case you want to try out open cockpit flight).

By far, my favorite plane of the fly-in was a 2019 Lockwood Aircam with amphibious floats. Everything about this plane was just cool, from fighter jet type canopy (with tons of visibility) to pusher props to storage in the floats (which looked like a pair of kayaks strapped to an ultralight by-the-by). This blue-and-white wonder flew in on Saturday afternoon, parking right in front of where I was standing, and I just started drooling.

Designed in the mid-90's for research and photography in the Congo, it's built to fly low and slow and provide a wide, unobstructed view, with the additional security of a second engine, with both engines positioned near the centerline for better single-engine handling. The pilot sits in front of absolutely everything (unless they configure it for

the passenger to be in front) with no engine, fuselage or wings obstructing your view. The primary control is a stick instead of a yoke with the throttle on the left armrest. It's almost like someone took a helicopter cockpit and slapped it onto a fixed-wing aircraft.



It can fly (and even climb) on just one of the two 100hp engines. The aircraft is an experimental kit plane (so you can throw whatever Garmin display you want in it) with options for traditional, fixed landing gear or amphibious floats, and the canopy shown in the pictures here or a bubble canopy (in either case, the canopy is open at the back, so don't expect any pressurization). It has a landing roll of 300 feet and T/O under 200 feet, carries one crew and one passenger, in tandem, cruises at 100mph, stalls at 39mph, has a range of 340mi, an endurance of 6 hours on 28 gallons, and a rate of climb of 1500fpm on both engines.

At aircam.com, you can order this thing brand new (as a kit) for just under $85k, but there are all sorts of juicy add-ons that would be hard to leave out. If you can't tell, I think I just found my dream plane. Now I need to go out and learn multi-engine and seaplane flying just so I can someday buy one and fly it (if I can ever afford such a thing).

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Back to the fly-in, just as things were starting to wind down a bit and early departures were starting to head out on Saturday, Tristan and I ran into Dan Kirkpatrick, who had just parked N70574 and was setting up camp. He had flown in with his wife and a couple of friends from Australia that all joined him for an overnighter at the fly-in. Turns out one of them was a professional rotorcraft pilot in Australia, and she wanted to get FAA certification so she could fly N-registered aircraft. I learned a new thing over breakfast Sunday chatting with them. It turns out that in order to fly in any registered aircraft, one must have a pilot registration from the same country as registered the aircraft. Oddly enough, there are a lot of N-registered aircraft all over the world (so, not just in the U.S.). So by getting her FAA registration, she wasn't here to get permission to fly in the United States so much as expanding the range of aircraft she could fly over Australia, Papua New Guinea, and SE Asia in general. Dan had been her instructor in that process, and I think they were taking a bit to sight-see the PNW now that she was done.

At dinner that night, Tristan and I started looking at the forecasted weather for our flight home the next day and quickly found a theory as to why everyone was bailing out from the fly-in on Saturday afternoon. It looked like for Sunday afternoon, everything south of Olympia, WA would be broken or scattered, and over Orcas would be fine; but the portion of our route between Whidbey Island and Olympia would be socked in with clouds as low as 2500 feet. After dinner, we hunted down Dan and asked him about it, but he just planned to go out IFR (or, as Stuart put it, "I Follow Roads"). Dan's recommendation for us was to head east over the Cascades before turning south if we could not find a hole and go over the top. But without going north into Canada (and all that crossing of borders entails), even heading east was going to be a bit tricky. So, Tristan and I noted the cloud tops were supposed to be at 6000' or below for the tricky portion and made plans to try for a hole just north of Port Townsend. If that would not work, we would divert and try east, or head back to KORS to try again another day. However, based on the TAF, the best chance we would get for VMC from Port Townsend to Olympia would be after 1400 (local time) on Sunday. So, there was no reason to rush out in the morning as we couldn't really leave KORS until about 1300. Instead, we settled down for a quiet evening and watched almost everyone else pack up and head out (hhmmmm…).

Sunday morning, we woke up to even stronger winds, and an even emptier field. The winds were ripping straight down the runway, but they were also strong enough I could hardly zip the tent closed after climbing out of it. But the skies were clear and with no rush expected, we took showers, charged phones, and casually went to a pleasant breakfast at the fire station and had a great time chatting with Dan and his friends. But by the time we got back to our camp around mid-morning, we were starting to see low clouds over KORS and a quick check of the local TAF showed clouds moving in and getting denser and lower for the early afternoon. Therefore, based on some good forethought from Tristan, we packed up camp into 5ED and pre-flighted the plane so that we could taxi and take-off at a moment's notice. By this

time, Dan et al. had already departed to explore some of the other islands nearby.

A little after noon, we decided we had the best mix of weather we were going to get in terms of still being able to get out of Orcas, while also hoping things further south were going to open up more soon. We knew from a lot of looking over the weather that even if we went up and over the cloud layer in central Washington, there would be plenty of room to come back down through scattered clouds anywhere south of the Columbia, just as long as we could find a hole at the north end to get above it first.

As it turned out, we kind of got out in the nick of time. We could not climb higher than 1500 feet without going into the clouds over the islands and ended up passing Whidbey NAS straight across their extended flightlines. Fortunately, they already had us on Flight Following, and when we asked if they preferred us in the way or over center field, they told us to just keep on trucking where we were. 申

Once we were south of Whidbey, we were well over open water but could still see just the edges of land below the clouds all around us. On the other hand, it also opened up to a bright, sunny day immediately above us. We could see a wall of clouds in front of us, but we could also clearly see their tops below 5000 feet. We wanted to circle higher over land, but that just wasn't an option with the cloud walls. So, getting as close as we dared (so land was nearby), we began our ascent and wove back and forth until we were well above the clouds. It was beautiful up there, but also a bit intimidating. It was bright and picturesque and sunny with the altitude cooling things off, but there was also a solid mattress of puffies below us and without the vibrant, precise, and beautiful Garmin glass cockpit displays in front of us, there was no way we could have told exactly where we were. Even timing, compass and dead reckoning would have only gone so far, because we had pretty much a 10-knot headwind most of the way south, with no visual indications from above to that effect (i.e. we couldn't see any smoke on the ground because there were clouds in the way, though we could still see the tops of Rainier, Adams, and St. Helens well off to our left, so there was that at least).

I also discovered that clouds can be disconcerting even when you are not in them. The whole time we were above the clouds with no openings to see through, I constantly felt like we should be flying more to the right, and yet both the GPS and the compass said we should be going more to the left. The ADS/B also kept us fully informed about a bunch of other aircraft in the area, but they were below us and if/when such traffic decided to climb, there was no way we would see them until they popped out, potentially right in front of us. So, while the sky outside was pristine, we kept a close eye on the traffic display and maneuvered a lot to make sure no one close was pointing at us horizontally, even if they were distant vertically. I think it worked, because Seattle Center never said a word to keep us separated (though they generally did a good job informing us of other traffic in our vicinity…usually after we had already spotted said traffic visually).

The rest of the trip was pretty uneventful. We did a little bit of cloud dodging when some occasional puffies stuck up a bit further out of the layer. Otherwise, by the time we reached the Columbia River, the clouds were breaking up and we had plenty of ways to get down. Once we saw KMMV, we dropped off Flight Following and descended through the scattered layer (between the clouds you animals) to put a few gallons in just to make sure we had plenty of reserve by the time we got to Salem. We then ran well below the layer to come into KSLE from the gap to west and landed at home base with nary a trouble.

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This was my first major cross-country with an actual planned destination where I was doing more than just landing (maybe getting lunch) and taking off again. Ironically, the flight planning and W&B calculations for it ended up being almost identical (except for destination) to the first cross-country trip that Simon Hayes had me plan during my PPL training. But the real-life experience of it, and the problem-solving to deal with different weather and visibility scenarios as the trip progressed, went a great deal towards boosting my confidence in any future such endeavors.

If I was to do it again (and I probably will next year), I think I would keep a closer eye on the TAFs for the whole weekend, and in a similar situation, I would have flown out the afternoon before. Even better, have at least one pilot in the plane that is night-current, and we could have flown out after dinner Saturday. Going up and over the solid cloud layer with two VFR-only pilots was a bit of a risk, but we mitigated that heavily by closely evaluating the odds of being able to get down somewhere and knowing that we had plenty of fuel to adjust early on if we needed to divert somewhere to find a way down. We also planned ahead of our fly-out with contingencies for different weather scenarios, including explicitly stating when we would just give up and head back if we could not find any better alternative.

Overall, I had a great trip. It was a wonderful learning experience, confidence booster, and all-around great time. And having Stuart keeping an eye on us from afar made for a "voice-of-God" (with snark) giving us the best advice and who to talk to, what to do, and where the trouble spots might be. I highly recommend KORS as a great summer camping flight, and doubly so on the first weekend of August for their EAA fly-in. Sadly, all the people that arrange it every year are starting to age out of it, and it's not looking like there are many volunteers stepping up to walk in their shoes. So, I do not know how many more years the fly-in will continue happening. Better make plans and get to one while the getting is still good.

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† I would like to point out here that, for this flight at least, Seattle Center really seemed to take care of us, even though we were just doing VFR flight following.ɬ

ɬ It was also a fun little adventure on the trip up to have Flight Following hand us off to a frequency for Seattle Center, then contact Seattle Center to tell them we were being handed off from Seattle Center. There are several zones of control around SeaTac, and it's something I don't generally think about much until I'm trying to tell somebody I got handed off to them from themselves.

‡ Wonder of wonders, KORS has a nice big grassy area north of the aprons with a helpful sign at the transition from apron to taxiway stating that transient aircraft are supposed to park on it for long-term parking and it includes a few tie-downs hidden in the grass.

ⱷ We later learned that most of the old hands to the fly-in fly in on Thursday so they can get all the good camping spots (i.e. closer to the shower house and all the shenanigans).

ǂ When that shot was taken of the windsock, we had just about the lowest winds we saw all weekend. Oddly, the winds at the airfield were just about constant (if a bit gusty), but when we walked into town they completely disappeared.

ǂ Island prices are such that you can almost get a $100-hamburger WITHOUT doing the fly-in part. So, $10 full breakfasts were absolutely amazing. I don't think you can get a coffee and scone at the local bakery for that little.

ⱶ Tristan and I actively wondered if Dan and friends were going to be able to get their two tents set up with all the wind, but when we returned from dinner, they seemed to have managed it just fine.

申 We quickly surmised that Whidbey did NOT want us flying over their airfield at 1500', maybe taking close-up pictures of everything. 😂

Have you had a memorable trip, flying experience, or words of wisdom that others in the club would benefit from, or that you would like to share? Please send your stories, tips, quotes, and pictures to **Simon Hayes** for inclusion in future newsletters.

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