



Valley Flyers

"Just Plane Fun!"

885 Lancaster Dr SE
Salem, OR 97317

July 2026



Strawberry Shortcake Summer BBQ

We had a great turn-out for our annual Strawberry Shortcake Summer BBQ on June 27th. Not only did people bring side dishes to share, they even brought extra meat, including steaks! The club provided the toppings, condiments, buns, drinks, and strawberry shortcake. The strawberries were picked locally, and Joan spent time slicing them up in preparation for the event. The food and dessert were spectacularly tasty!



Although we were concerned about the weather, the thunderstorms and periodic torrential rains did not dampen the party. Nearly 50 people attended the event and had a fantastic time. While the adults gathered and visited in the hangar, the kids had a blast splashing and playing in the rain. It was a fun and relaxing time with friends and family. It was great to see the new and old members and their families connect and enjoy being together along with old friends. As several members pointed out, this is the type of activity that makes Valley Flyers so special.

Thank you to Chad Kerlegan, Nathan Schenk, and Stuart Jantze for helping set up by cleaning and blowing out the hangar, washing the grill, and getting everything set up. Thank you to Joan and

Isaac for shopping and getting the club-provided items ready. And thank you to everyone who helped with the cooking and clean-up after the event.



Club flyouts - July-September

Simon Hayes



Our bad luck with the weather continued in June, and we weren't able to fly to Westport as we'd hoped. Here are the dates and destinations for the next three months. Note that the August flyout to Orcas is planned to coincide with the [EAA Chapter 937 Fly-In](#) on August 7-9:

Date	Destination	Airport
07/18/2026	Hood River	4S2
08/08/2026	Orcas, WA	KORS
09/19/2026	Sisters	6K5

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

PIREP: 2026 Buckeye Air Fair & AOPA Fly-in Recap

Mikel Wynn

For the third year in a row, I found myself traveling commercially down to Arizona to spend time in the Phoenix/Mesa area for a much-needed vacation and to get away from the typical Pacific Northwest winter weather. On a personal disclaimer, this trip was a belated Christmas gift to myself after working 27 days straight for the holiday peak season at my job last December! This time, I spent a whole week in Arizona as part of a broader trip in addition to my main reason for spending Valentine's Day weekend in the area. More on that in some future, short articles!



The day after flying into Mesa, I was back at Buckeye Municipal Airport (KBXK/BXK) just outside of Buckeye, Arizona to attend the 2026 Buckeye Air Fair & AOPA Fly-in, which took place from February 12th to the 15th, kicking off my 2026 air show season! And compared to last year, 2026's event saw a vast improvement with the performer line-up, showing that event organizers have been listening to feedback from attendees! And because I was extending my stay in the Phoenix-area this year, I actually had the time and energy to attend both the Saturday and Sunday schedule of events. Like last year, Saturday's event featured both a daytime matinee air show as well as a night air show, complete with a fireworks display and a drone show.

And Sunday was the main day for all the daytime performances. Once again, my dad accompanied me on Saturday's daytime events and we elected to not stick around for the night air show (because it would've made for a long day!). And because of my membership in the Aircraft Owners & Pilot Association (AOPA), my dad joined me at the AOPA members' VIP chalet tent as my guest (after I RSVP'd online for the two of us!). And like last year, the AOPA chalet was stocked with ice cold beverages, snacks, and a catered lunch, which we both thoroughly enjoyed and were impressed with! Per the usual, there was also an interesting amount of static displays from various General Aviation manufacturers and companies, as well as aerospace firms showing off their latest products and services, with ample amounts of opportunity to network with likeminded industry professionals.



For the air show, the 2026 performer line-up was quite respectable and exciting for a smaller venue like Buckeye, as there was an increase of military performers as well as multiple jet performers! From the military, the line-up consisted of the United States Air Force Wings of Blue Parachute Team and their jump platform, the de Havilland Canada UV-18 Twin Otter, and the United States Air Force Academy's Glider Team and their DG Flugzeugbau TG-16A Sabre sailplane. Both performers were perfect additions for this air show as they were easily able to stage right there at Buckeye! In addition for Saturday's daytime air show only, two USAF F-35A Lightning IIs of the 56th Fighter Wing, 62nd Fighter Squadron from nearby Luke Air Force Base made a surprise and unannounced appearance for a series of close-up, high-speed fly-by passes, and that glorious sound of freedom!

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And for the first time in this air show's short history, the headline performer for the 2026 Buckeye Air Fair was the United States Marine Corps MV-22B Osprey Demo Team, with aircraft and crew coming from Marine Medium Tilt Rotor Squadron 165 (VMM-165), the "White Knights" and "Lady Aces" out of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, California! Again, a perfect addition to a venue like Buckeye as the MV-22 Osprey was easily able to stage right there at BXK, thanks to its versatility! And it was my understanding that this particular MV-22 crew was actually scheduled to take part in some required training exercises at a nearby Military Operating Area (MOA) at the same time this air show was taking place.



With incredible coordination between the Marine Corps and show organizers, they were able to justify and make this air show appearance possible. VMM-165 brought two MV-22s to Buckeye; one to go on static display for most of the weekend and the other to serve as the primary demo aircraft. However, for Sunday's closing performance and as

part of their training exercise before going directly back to their home base, both MV-22s took flight, providing a rare and unique opportunity to see two of the type in formation. This was also apparently the first time two V-22s flew in formation in front of an air show crowd!

Returning from previous years, additional performers included Nathan Hammond of GhostWriter AirShows and his de Havilland Canada DHC-1 Super Chipmunk, as well as the NextGen Eagles Aerobatic Team and their two Christen Eagles flown by team lead Leland Kracher and wingman Stephen Covington. In addition to flying as number two for the NextGen Eagles, Stephen Covington also performed his intense solo aerobatic routine, debuting his new Game Composites GB-1 GameBird nicknamed "Fury 2.0" (which included a sick pyrotechnic finale!) after his original "Fury," a Pitts Special he flew until last year was sadly written off in a landing accident. New to Buckeye this year was the same husband and wife duo I saw at Madras, Oregon last August, Mike and Samantha Tryggvason and their "Wing Walker Sam" routine on the Grumman G-164 "ShowCat" as well as Jeff Shetterly of Radial Rumble AirShows and his North American SNJ-6 Texan. The Commemorative Air Force Southern California Wing came back again for 2026 as well, this time bringing their North American SNJ-5 Texan and Mitsubishi A6M3 Zero (one of only five original Zeros currently airworthy today, not including replicas!); needless to say, as someone who is half-Japanese, I was very excited to see an authentic Japanese Zero fly!



Additional jet performers included Tom "Lark" Larkin of Mini Jet Air Shows and his Sonex SubSonex JSX-2 powered by the PBS TJ100 turbojet engine

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(demonstrating a big performance with plenty of jet noise in a small package, with a jet engine that's roughly the size of beer keg!) as well as Jason Somes of High Alpha AirShows and his Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-17F "Fresco." Both Larkin and Somes apparently flew incredible performances at the night air show on Saturday night with wing-tip mounted pyrotechnics and afterburner respectively. Unfortunately for Sunday's daytime air show, Jason Somes ended up aborting his takeoff roll prior to his performance in the MiG-17 due to a mechanical fault, resulting in a scrubbed flight. Disappointing for sure, but he demonstrated superior airmanship by electing not to continue the flight and ultimately preserve a historic Cold War era jet.



Overall, the 2026 Buckeye Air Fair & AOPA Fly-in was one of the best I've seen at this venue since I started attending back in 2024! The performer line-up was top-notch, there was a variety of displays, and membership with AOPA made the air show experience quite comfortable and enjoyable. It just felt good getting to attend this air show as it was a breath of fresh air for me, considering the abrupt and somewhat lackluster end I had with the 2025 air show season, not to mention how the government shutdown really hurt a lot of late-season air shows towards the end of last year. This air show and this overall trip to Arizona was also a good hit of the reset button for me as well. This was my third year attending the Buckeye Air Fair, and it's safe to say that this air show is one I'll keep going back to. And I keep falling more in love with Arizona each year I visit! I told my dad that while we may have lost the Reno Air Races for a father-son tradition, we certainly gained a new tradition we can enjoy in Buckeye, Arizona!

I can't recommend this air show and fly-in enough! Like Tom Larkin's "Mini Jet" performance, the Buckeye Air Fair & AOPA Fly-in punches well-above its weight and offers quite a lot for a smaller show venue and smaller airport. If you maintain a current membership with AOPA like I do, I hope you'll consider checking out this event next year as well as for subsequent years; it's one of few aviation events in the country that offers extra perks for being a member. Not only is it a great reprieve from winter weather elsewhere, but there's also plenty to see and do in the area beyond Buckeye!

PIREP: A Window, A Door, and a Lesson in Survival

Frank de la Puente

As pilots, we have been trained, drilled, and perhaps even brainwashed to believe that when an emergency rears its ugly head, the reaction should be automatic: Aviate. Navigate. Communicate. Every instructor says it. Every pilot knows it. It belongs in the top five commandments of safe flying. So, what more can possibly be said about that flying ethic?

Last March, while training in the Skylane with Todd Lindley, I experienced a startling episode. On takeoff from KSLE while climbing through 500 feet the window suddenly popped open. The blast of air and noise startled me. It was not an emergency in the classic sense, but it got my attention instantly.

Wanting to free up my hands to close the window, instinctively, I turned to Todd—"Fly the airplane, please." Todd calmly responded—"Just keep flying the airplane." He continued doing his part as the CFI.

At the time, somewhere in the caverns of my mind, I wondered why Todd would not simply take the controls while I dealt with the emergency. After all, I was still learning the Skylane, still getting comfortable with the glass panel, still trying to stay ahead of the airplane — and now the window had blasted open beside me like a small explosion in the cockpit.

So there I was, climbing out, steering with my right hand, trying to close the window with my left hand. I was frustrated because I had to reach back for the latch since I had the seat so far forward. Eventually, I got the window closed and latched. After the dust settled, Todd commented that I had

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proven that the airplane will perform fine with the window open. Later, after landing, I realized that the window frame was broken and the latch does not lock down; one has to be sure to place the latch vertically; vibration can cause it to slip. Latching the window is on the checklist.

During our post flight debrief Todd included the window incident and my response. Immediately, I understood Todd's training wisdom. The open window was noisy, annoying, and distracting, but it was not going to kill us. Unless I let it. His lesson was simple—the airplane will fly with the window open. The airplane will not fly if the pilot stops flying it.

A couple of flights later, the window popped open again. This time, there was no drama. I kept flying the airplane. I stayed calm. When I was ready, I closed the window. Lesson learned.

The deeper meaning of Todd's lesson did not fully come home to me until last May, when I was watching a video about an RV-10 accident out of Fullerton Airport in which a man and his 16-year-old daughter were killed.

The NTSB preliminary report, Accident Number WPR25FA072, found that shortly after takeoff, the port side door opened. According to the NTSB report, the YouTube video, and other unofficial reporting, the apparent sequence was: the door opened after takeoff; the pilot became distracted; the open-door abnormality consumed the pilot's attention; and in the struggle to deal with the door and return to the airport, it appears that pitch, bank, and airspeed awareness were lost; the airplane spun into the roof of a building.

One witness reported seeing the airplane after takeoff at 100 feet AGL with the port side door open and up. The witness saw an arm reach up and try to pull the door down. The video I watched was consistent with the witness's recall. The video may have been generated by AI from the daughter's cell-phone video and the ADS-B file.

The image of the pilot struggling to close the door was depicted in the video and stopped me cold—my mind reached straight back to the first flight during which the window popped open. Suddenly, I understood why Todd didn't simply take the controls while I focused on the open window. Todd's reaction was right on—an opportunity to give me a survival lesson seeing the event for what it was: a harmless but startling abnormal event at low altitude, precisely the kind of event that can seduce

a pilot into doing the one thing the pilot must never do—stop flying the airplane.

Over the years, while other CFIs have impressed that same wisdom on me, I had never truly absorbed it. The window incident obviously proved that I needed to relearn to not allow a startling abnormal event to reach into the cockpit, seize my attention, and try to pull it away from my first duty as the PIC: fly the airplane. The window incident immediately tested that discipline.

After watching that video of the Fullerton accident, the lesson I re-learned lingered on for days. I reflected on how the human instinct in any sudden cockpit abnormality is to fix the problem that is screaming for attention, and stop flying.

There are NTSB reports of accidents where experienced airline pilots flew an airplane into the ground while attending to an emergency. See e.g. NTSB Report AAR-73-14 (1973) (Eastern Air Lines Flight 401: flight crew distracted by an unilluminated NLG light failed to monitor flight instruments allowing descent to go unnoticed until too late).

Last March, the open window was not the emergency; loss of aircraft control would have been. By continuing to fly the airplane first as my mentor counseled, the event became manageable rather than catastrophic.

Owing to that lesson with Todd, my takeoff briefing is no longer limited to options upon engine failure. It now includes any catastrophic, confusing, startling, or distracting event after takeoff. A door opens. A window pops open. A passenger panics. Something bangs, breaks, rattles, or explodes into noise. The reaction will be the same: fly the airplane.

[Editor's note: *Not every POH has a procedure for a door opening in flight, but plenty do. N5174E's is a good example: "Accidental opening of a cabin door in flight does not constitute a need to land the airplane. The best procedure is to set up the airplane in a trimmed condition at approximately 75 KIAS, momentarily shove the door outward slightly, and forcefully close and lock the door". Knowing your aircraft's systems and procedures thoroughly can stop a minor annoyance from turning into a real emergency.*]

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Member photos

Thanks to Mikel Wynn for sharing some photos from the 2026 Oregon International Air Show in Hillsboro, in May.

He says: "The main notable highlights were the Oregon Air National Guard's Portland-based Boeing F-15EX Eagle IIs, the USAF Wings of Blue Parachute Team and their C-130 Hercules jump platform, and the fact that this air show was co-headlined by two different variants of the Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II. The United States Air Force F-35A Lightning II Demo Team closed out the aerial demonstrations, which included an Air Force Heritage Flight with a P-51D Mustang. This year's show at Hillsboro also marked the first-ever appearance of the United States Marine Corps F-35B Lightning II Demo Team at this air show, with its incredible (not to mention loud!) hover demonstration."



Mikel Wynn



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Fuel surcharge update

Some good news: avgas at Salem has dropped to \$6.90/gallon. That's just above the \$6.78/gallon mark at which the club applies a fuel surcharge, and means the surcharge is now 12c/gallon:

Aircraft	Fuel burn	Surcharge/hr
C182	13gph	\$1.56
C172, PA28	8.5gph	\$1.02

The club will continue to reimburse fuel expenses fully as usual. The surcharge is a completely separate item and you'll see it show up in Flight Circle as part of your regular billing.

We appreciate members filling up at other airports if avgas is cheaper there, however safety and required fuel reserves always come first. Please don't try to stretch a flight simply to save a few dollars!

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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