



Valley Flyers

"Just Plane Fun!"

885 Lancaster Dr SE
Salem, OR 97317

August 2026



Quarterly Member Meeting - Aug 18th

Guest Speaker Joshua McKinney

The Quarterly Member Meeting will be hosted at Garmin at 7:00 PM on August 18th. We'll discuss the status of the club, the aircraft, our progress on this year's goals, a potential future plane, and we'll answer any questions members have.

We'll also have a special guest speaker. At last quarter's meeting, members asked how they can learn more about using our Garmin avionics when flying VFR. Valley Flyers member Joshua McKinney volunteered to do a presentation on tips and tricks for using the various Garmin equipment in our airplanes during VFR flying. Joshua is a CFI and is also a Flight Test Engineer who works in Garmin's Flight Test department. Joshua's flying and teaching experience combined with his intimate knowledge of the Garmin equipment will help our members learn new ways to use our avionics to make our VFR flying easier, safer, and more enjoyable. There will also be time to ask questions.

Club flyouts - August-October

Simon Hayes



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
08/08/2026	Orcas, WA	KORS
09/19/2026	Sisters	6K5
10/17/2026	Night currency	TBD

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

PIREP: Idaho backcountry 2026

Todd Lindley

What was supposed to be an annual summer event had been over the last couple of years derailed due to summer weather, life and a trip to Oshkosh, but we finally made it back to the mountain airports of Idaho last month flying N70574 and N941WM. The last trip was in 2022 (see club newsletter [June 2022](#)).

The weather was ideal for the Thursday-Monday trip with high clouds and light winds aloft making mountain ridge crossings docile. Our plan was to depart at zero-dark-thirty to arrive at Johnson Creek (3U2) before 11am to avoid the higher density altitude and canyon turbulence which typically develops daily after 11am. But due to an unforeseen maintenance issue we ended up departing late Thursday afternoon and stopped in Nampa, ID., for the night. We planned our fuel for arrival at Johnson Creek to be such that the quantity would keep the airplane's weight at about 80% of maximum gross to improve high altitude takeoff performance in the event we had to land and depart 3U2 prematurely with all our gear.

We chose a route that took us up through Garden Valley, ID., over Deadwood Dam and then into 3U2 via the south canyon arrival. 3U2 also has an arrival from the north via Yellow Pine, ID. We touched down on the groomed grass runway a little before 10am and set up camp. The plan for the weekend was that there was no plan. Sitting in a camp chair

Alan Lasneski CFI 503.866.2396	Brian Deno CFII 541.990.2696	Chris Eriksson CFII 847.345.5258	Corey Benson CFII 864.508.2605	Holly Benson CFII 704.960.9741	Scott Bragg CFII 970.219.0661	Simon Hayes CFII 256.652.1554	Todd Lindley CFII 425.681.9994
--------------------------------------	------------------------------------	--	--------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	--------------------------------------

with snacks and a beverage listening to the IO-540 background noise was good enough for this crew of four. After settling in we borrowed the crew car for a short drive into Yellow Pine for lunch at the Corner Pub.



Johnson Creek, looking north (3U2, 4960’ MSL)

Our evening discussions concluded that we should fly someplace for breakfast though staying at 3U2 was also an option. We tentatively settled on going to either Stanley (2U7) or Smiley Creek (U87) for breakfast but learned shortly after that a Utah Pilot group was having a fly-in into those airports, so we opted to avoid the potential for lots of pattern traffic in that area. Also taken into consideration were the remaining fuel on board, fuel burn to the next destination and fuel remaining when landing back at camp 3U2. Based on that we opted for plan B and decided on Big Creek (U60) and getting breakfast at the Big Creek Lodge. U60 was just a short hop from 3U2 and with an early start we could get into and out of U60 and back to Johnson Creek before the heat, high-density altitude and canyon turbulence developed. The temperature trend for July climbs to the 90s starting at around 11am and not cooling until after 7pm

Day Two - We briefed the arrival and SOPs for Big Creek that are published by the [Idaho Aviation Association](#) before departing and had a game plan in mind for approach and landing at Big Creek. What the SOPs don’t reflect is the daunting heights and canyon sizes where many of these mountain airports reside. So, after dropping down into Big Creek Canyon the paper diagram doesn’t really let on to the fact that the large hill on the east side of the runway is high and obscures the runway while

on base. After passing the hill the runway comes into view. Another challenge is that the first 800’ of the runway is typically slushy grass due to bad drainage (as called out in the SOP) so the recommendation is to fly past the first 800’ and land on the remaining 2750’ which is uphill.



Big Creek, looking south (U60, 5743’ MSL)

After landing we secured the aircraft and walked the 50 yards to the Lodge. The Lodge served an all you can eat breakfast for \$30 and the first thing the server said was, “if you leave hungry, it’s your fault”. After breakfast we briefed our departure which entailed taking off downhill to the north and flying up the canyon to gain altitude before turning around and returning to Johnson Creek.

Day Three – Today we’re looking for another new mountain airport to visit and a new breakfast spot, and we discussed once again Smiley and Stanley but based on fuel on board we would have had to fly to a fuel stop and then east to either of those airports which sit at 7200’. The fuel calculations worked better for a climb out and a landing at a lower elevation airport, and then making a fuel stop before returning to Johnson Creek. The time constraints for beating the heat and turbulence back to 3U2 wouldn’t work for our plans so we opted to spend the day elsewhere and return to 3U2 in the evening. With that plan in mind, we briefed a route through some of the lower canyons over to Garden Valley (U88).

Garden Valley has a pristine grass runway and full camping amenities, including crew cars. The airport sits along the Payette River at 3177’ and would be an excellent beginner Idaho mountain airport for camping and warmup for Johnson Creek. We arrived

Alan Lasneski CFI 503.866.2396	Brian Deno CFII 541.990.2696	Chris Eriksson CFII 847.345.5258	Corey Benson CFII 864.508.2605	Holly Benson CFII 704.960.9741	Scott Bragg CFII 970.219.0661	Simon Hayes CFII 256.652.1554	Todd Lindley CFII 425.681.9994
--------------------------------------	------------------------------------	--	--------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	--------------------------------------

at U88 and were greeted by the airport grounds keeper, and he gave us an overview of the amenities and set us up with one of the crew cars. After a recommendation we drove to Wild Bill's Coffee and Bistro for a top-notch breakfast.

The morning was passing by, and the plan was to waste the rest of the day in McCall. With that we boarded the crew car after breakfast and returned to U88 to preflight the aircraft and hop over to McCall (KMYL) for fuel and exploration. After checking in at the local FBO and discovering that taxis and Ubers are banned in McCall, one of the line staff gave us a ride into town. The first stop was ice cream at Ice Cream Alley where a single scoop cone is more like three scoops. This place is a tourist favorite as shown by the constant line of patrons.

After stuffing our faces with frozen dairy goodness, we made the short walk to the lake and relaxed in the shade to kill some time before getting a late lunch/early dinner. The time flew by watching the boats and jet-skis and it was time for another round of food, this time on the roof of the Salmon River Brewery. After dinner we summoned the FBO shuttle and returned to KYML to fuel up the aircraft and fly back to Johnson Creek. We departed for 3U2 about 7pm with a fuel load that would keep us light for the next day's departure with full camping gear. The return took us up and over the 9000' peaks east of McCall and then down into the canyon leading to Yellow Pine and eventually to Johnson Creek.



Garden Valley, looking west (U88, 3177' MSL)

Back at camp we reminisced about the previous days' adventures and formulated an itinerary for Idaho back country 2027. While sitting around our campfire we had a surprise visit by Terrance H., a

former Valley Flyers club member and builder of a Zenith, which some of you may have seen in the hangar across from the south side club hangars. He and his father were there for the night and were continuing their Idaho adventure for the remainder of the week.

Day Four – We got up early to pack up the camping gear and depart by 8am. Since the fuel on board was kept to a minimum from the previous day, we planned a fuel stop at KMYL and a lunch break in Pendleton (KPDT). Our plan was to try out the new airport restaurant for a potential future club fly out, but with the time zone change, we arrived at KPDT an hour before the restaurant opened so we ended up taking an Uber to a local café. The flight back to Salem was smooth, though a headwind kept the 182's ground speed to more like a 172's. Overall, a good trip and looking forward to doing it again next year.

New member intro: Noah Beaman



I have joined Valley Flyers once again in April (I originally joined the week after 9/11/2001). I've had the aviation bug since the age of 6 or 7. However, earning my PPL has been a longer journey than what I originally hoped.

I am from the Salem surrounding areas and live in Stayton with my wife Chelsey of 26 years. We have 2 boys, 23 and 19, and I work for City of Salem Public Works in the Water Department.

If I am not in the airplane trying to get my CFI to be quiet, you can usually find me on my Harley or with family. I am wanting to finally get my license done so I can fly my family to new adventures. Please say hi when you see me at the hangar.

Alan Lasneski CFI 503.866.2396	Brian Deno CFII 541.990.2696	Chris Eriksson CFII 847.345.5258	Corey Benson CFII 864.508.2605	Holly Benson CFII 704.960.9741	Scott Bragg CFII 970.219.0661	Simon Hayes CFII 256.652.1554	Todd Lindley CFII 425.681.9994
--------------------------------------	------------------------------------	--	--------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	--------------------------------------

New member intro: Brandon Hoff



Brandon Hoff joined Valley Flyers in February of this year. Prior to joining the club, he earned his private pilot certificate through Jerry Trimble Aviation in McMinnville, Oregon, in 2025.

Brandon grew up in Grover Beach on California's Central Coast, where as a child he developed a fascination with aerospace. He fondly recalls attending the annual air shows at Vandenberg Air Force Base (now Vandenberg

Space Force Base). One of his most memorable experiences was seeing the Space Shuttle Challenger mounted atop the Boeing 747 Shuttle Carrier Aircraft at Vandenberg.

In 2009, Brandon moved to Salem, Oregon, after joining the Salem Fire Department. Throughout his career, he has served at several fire stations across the city before being assigned to Station 6 at McNary Field in 2024. Working at the airport sparked his interest in general aviation. Fellow firefighter and Valley Flyers member Dmitriy Zubov introduced Brandon to the general aviation community and provided valuable guidance as he pursued his pilot certificate.

In addition to being an active member of Valley Flyers, Brandon is a co-owner of a Cessna 172E (N5366T), which he frequently flies from Salem. He plans to earn his instrument rating within the next year or two to further expand his flying capabilities.

Outside of his career in firefighting and hobby of aviation, Brandon is the proud father of two children, Maya (15) and Owen (11), who keep him active. Maya has developed an interest in aviation, and Brandon hopes to continue fueling that interest while supporting her journey toward earning her own pilot certificate.

Fuel surcharge update

Avgas at Salem is still at \$6.90/gallon, just above the \$6.78/gallon mark at which the club applies a fuel surcharge. The surcharge is still 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.

Alan Lasneski CFI 503.866.2396	Brian Deno CFII 541.990.2696	Chris Eriksson CFII 847.345.5258	Corey Benson CFII 864.508.2605	Holly Benson CFII 704.960.9741	Scott Bragg CFII 970.219.0661	Simon Hayes CFII 256.652.1554	Todd Lindley CFII 425.681.9994
--------------------------------------	------------------------------------	--	--------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	--------------------------------------