

WFC Flyer



New hangar construction at the Williamson-Sodus Airport on March 22, 2020 (Chris Houston)

Important Dates:

General Meeting
April 9, 2020
Via email

Board Meeting
May 7, 2020
Location TBD

General Meeting
May 14, 2020
Location TBD

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Williamson Flying Club Newsletter

April 2020

A Message from the WFC Board of Directors on COVID-19

On March 22, WFC President Randy Christian sent an email communication about decisions made by the WFC Board of Directors with respect to Club operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Board takes this issue very seriously and their decisions are reprinted below.

1. We ironed out a "safety program" with the Board and Mike Bjerga, Airport Manager and Chief Flight Instructor. Mike has already distributed a communication in regards to steps for the membership to follow moving forward and those are reprinted on the next page.
2. During the April 2nd Board meeting, we will review this process and revise and update these decisions as needed.
3. The Board of Directors will hold the

April 2nd meeting via a telephone conference and emails as needed. This practice will continue until the COVID-19 emergency has been deemed safe by our State and Federal officials.

4. The General membership meetings will not be canceled, but they will continue under a different format until the emergency has been deemed safe by our State and Federal officials.

5. The new format for general membership meetings will come as a detailed e-mail to the membership. This communication will consist of high-level information gleaned from the previous Board meeting to include Old/New Business and very high-level information in regards to budget at the Treasurer's discretion.

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Williamson Flying Club

Williamson-Sodus Airport (KSDC)
5502 State Route 104
Williamson, NY 14589

Find us on the web at:
www.williamsonflyingclub.com

Board of Directors

President:	Randy Christian	Director, 2018:	Dick Swingly
Vice President:	Brad Roehrig	Director, 2019:	Paula Sippel
Treasurer:	Bob Herloski	Director, 2020:	Lesly Jean-Louis
Secretary:	Bob Clark		

Contact: bod@williamsonflyingclub.com

Medical Advisor: Dr. Pam Tarkington

A Message from the WFC Board of Directors on COVID-19

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The Board takes this issue very seriously...

Thank you for your patience, help, and understanding as we navigate these challenging times together.

Aviation Quote

"A pilot's business is with the wind, with the stars, with night, with sand, with the sea. He strives to outwit the forces of nature. He stares with expectancy for the coming of dawn the way a gardener awaits the coming of spring. He looks forward to port as to a promised land, and truth for him is what lives in the stars."

Antoine de
Saint-Exupery
Wind, Sand, and Stars

6. The informational e-mails from this meeting will include a link for the membership to click that will count you as being present for the meeting (for officer requirements) for next year's elections. This will also allow us to know who is attending under this format. Along with that, you will have the opportunity to ask questions via e-mail back to the Board.
7. The Board has also made the decision to cancel the annual Apple Blossom Festival Pancake Breakfast for 2020. We are sure that you can understand why this deci-

sion was made as we strive to keep everyone safe and adhere to COVID-19 guidelines.

We all know that these are some rather challenging conditions that we find ourselves in now. Our highest priority goal is to keep the club moving forward and the membership safe and informed.

Thank you for your patience, help, and understanding as we navigate these challenging times together. As we all know, this is a moving target and we are getting updates daily.

Flight Training and Club Aircraft Use by Mike Bjerga

In light of the current situation and in accordance with Federal and State guidelines, **the Board of Directors has temporarily suspended flight training.** This decision will be revisited during the May 7, 2020 Board meeting.

For anyone that chooses to fly or visit the clubhouse, the BoD and I recommend the following minimum actions:

- Comply with all Federal, State and Local guidelines.
- If you currently (or within the previous 12 days) have been around anyone exhibiting the following symptoms: **fever, cough, or shortness of breath, do not fly Club aircraft or visit the clubhouse.**
- If you or someone you've been

around has tested positive for a corona virus, **do not fly club aircraft or visit the clubhouse.**

- If you have traveled to a high risk area, **do not fly club aircraft or visit the clubhouse for 14 days.**
- Do not fly to high risk locations.
- Get your own headset. There will be no more borrowing.
- During preflight, disinfect the flight controls, engine controls, knobs and switches.
- I have put disinfectant wipes, gloves, and spray near the key safe. Please use sparingly as supplies are limited.

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Member Spotlight: Bob Clark by Chris Houston



Member: Bob Clark
 WFC Role: Secretary
 Ratings: PP-SEL
 Flight Hours: 190
 Joined WFC: 2016

Sometimes, our dreams are so persistent that they become impossible to ignore. At least, this was the experience of Williamson Flying Club member Bob Clark.

For Bob, it started with those little balsa wood airplanes and gliders that were once so ubiquitous at grocery store check-out aisles. Enthralled by these early opportunities to play aeronautical engineer and test pilot, Bob became interested in joining the Air Force, only for that aspiration to be scuttled by a need for vision correction. In the early 1990s, Bob flew radio controlled airplanes, working hard to manage the challenging shifts in perspective that occur depending on the operator's orientation relative to the aircraft. A moment of disorientation followed by his model aircraft auguring into the ground at 60 mph put RC flying on hold and entering graduate school shortly thereafter definitively ended it. As anyone who has attended graduate school knows, graduate students rarely have time for outside activities.

Years later, Bob found himself living in Williamson, NY just four miles southwest of the Williamson-Sodus Airport. It is difficult to forget one's dreams of flight when there are constant reminders sing-er their aeronautical siren's call over your house almost daily. *Hey! You down there! Join us!*

Almost all pilots had a catalyst that brought them to the door of their local flight school. For Bob, that catalyst was his 50th birthday. Somewhere between consideration of this key life milestone and the obstinatio of aircraft engines passing overhead, Bob decided to take the plunge.

He was already aware of the Williamson Flying Club, having attended the annual pancake breakfast in the 2009 timeframe. He took an introductory flight with Mike Bjerga in January of 2016, joined the club in March, and began routine training in May. He confesses to feeling a bit queasy on his first couple of lessons, but long-held dreams are not so easily put-off and Bob learned, like many of us before him, that the queasiness is short-lived. It doesn't stand a chance against the joy of aviating.

Bob soloed on 23 March 2017 and earned his Private Pilot certificate in December of 2017, a rather challenging time to schedule a practical test given the local weather. The third time was almost the charm until snow started falling after the oral portion of the exam. But when the snow stopped 45 minutes later, DPE Ken Lindsey called Bob and suggested they

give it another try. After completing his check ride, Bob went on to log time in larger, faster N1185X. He aspires to a grass checkout in 2020.

Bob recalls his first "I learned about flying from that" moment in the spring of 2018 when the clouds moved in quickly during a brief flight from Sodus to the Oswego County Airport. He was able to make it home safely, but gained significant appreciation for how quickly the weather can change along the Lake Ontario shore.

When asked about the Club, Bob is very complimentary. He lists aircraft availability, our excellent airport facility, great instruction from Mike Bjerga, and "a good bunch of people" as his reasons for enjoying the Club.

For those reasons, Bob stepped up and joined the WFC Board of Directors in 2020 as Secretary. He saw it as a way of helping out and giving back. The night Bob was elected, I watched Steve Murray bestow the thick tome of Robert's Rules upon him. When I teased him about digesting the contents of the book, Bob revealed that he was already familiar with it. He was in leadership of a Toastmasters group for 18 years, though he notes that being a part of the WFC leadership is more impactful. (Toastmasters does not quite have the budget and assets of the Williamson Flying Club to manage!)

Bob has been a Mechanical Engi-

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Flight Training and Club Aircraft Use by Mike Bjerga

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- Wash your hands for 20 seconds before and after flight and avoid touching your face.

WFC aircraft and facility updates:

- The hangar project is continuing on schedule!
- I will be working on washing the aircraft and a few other maintenance tasks.
- 1185X will be heading to Jamestown around April 6th to get a new G5 PFD added. This will make 85X a Technologically Advanced Aircraft that meets the requirements for Commercial training!
- Delivery of the engine for N736ES has

Member Spotlight: Bob Clark

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neer at Xerox since 1996. He has a Bachelor's degree from the University of Vermont (UVM) and a Masters from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI). His graduate work at RPI focused on Mechatronics, the intersection of Computer Science, Electronics, and Mechanical Engineering. Bob started at Xerox in R&D with a focus on "media handling", industry jargon for paper handling. His current role is a hybrid of product design and customer support, which seems like a great way to infuse the voice of the customer into new designs.

Additionally, Bob has been a motorcycle aficionado since age 12 when he started with dirt bikes. He has toured the eastern US by motorcycle from Maine to Georgia to Indiana. He was also a member of local motorcycle "gang", the Xerox Very Low Flying Air Force. (See? He made it into the Air Force after all!)

Please welcome Bob to WFC Board of Directors! Who would have guessed that all those years of listening to aircraft fly overhead would eventually acquaint him with Robert's Rules?

been delayed until May.

On the bright side, the weather should be **great** by the time things get back to "normal"!

[Editor's note: Adapted from emails distributed to the Club on March 18 and 27, 2020.]



Opinion: Know Your Limits by Chris Houston

Eleven years ago, while I was still based at the Le Roy Airport (5G0), I witnessed an unfortunate accident that always comes to mind when making go/no-go decisions.

I was at the airport with my friend Scott. We were the only ones there because the weather was decidedly borderline. Winds were running directly across the runway (10-28) from the south in the mid teens, gusting occasionally over 20 knots. It was within my envelope, but I was trying to decide if flying that day was worth the effort. As my primary instructor was fond of saying, "We could do it, but it wouldn't be any fun."

I observed a Cessna 172 lined up for runway 28. The aircraft was high and fast; I assumed that someone was practicing an instrument approach, but I was wrong.

The Cessna was still descending and, at midfield, it was much too high to land. It was pitched down significantly and its airspeed appeared excessive. I realized that the pilot was trying to force the airplane down onto the 2600 x 60 foot runway. This occurred before the runway was extended to its current 3854 foot length.

"Go around..." I muttered softly, unable to take my eyes from Cessna. With less than one third of the available runway length remaining and still tens of feet of altitude, the Cessna pilot added power and began to climb. I released the breath I had been holding.

Satisfied that certain disaster was

averted, Scott and I entered the terminal building. A few minutes later, the sound of an airplane engine caught our attention and I looked out the window to see the Cessna making another landing attempt. It was already midfield, high and fast ... again. This time, the airplane touched down on the last third of the runway. Some aggressive braking would be necessary to avoid going off of the end of the runway, but the pavement was uncontaminated with water or ice.

As I watched, the Cessna deviated from the runway center line, drifting toward the downwind runway edge. It slowed as the right main wheel encountered the snowbank alongside the pavement. Then the nosegear departed the runway and began to drag through snow. This brought the Cessna to a rather abrupt stop.

In slow motion, the tail came up, pointed skyward, and quivered for just a moment. Then, slowly, the airplane fell over onto its back in the snow beside the runway. I could not believe what I was seeing.

I called 911 first, then Ray Detor, owner of the airport. Ray issued a NOTAM closing the airport. Scott and I drove to the scene to check on the pilot and any passengers who may have been aboard. As we approached, the pilot and sole occupant of the Skyhawk climbed from the cockpit and stumbled away from the wreck. We were relieved to see that he was out and

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Contribute to the Newsletter!

Do you have anything that you want to share with the WFC membership?

- Destinations?
- Favorite flying photos?
- Trip reports?
- Great experiences?
- Opinions?

Submit your photos and stories, to the newsletter by emailing:

Newsletter@williamsonflyingclub.com



Opinion: Know Your Limits by Chris Houston

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moving on his own.

We parked on the opposite side of the runway from the stricken Skyhawk. Scott and I met the pilot on the runway center line. He was shaken, but appeared to be completely uninjured. The airplane, on the other hand, looked rough.

As we waited for the cavalry to arrive, we engaged in small talk. I learned several things about the accident pilot very quickly. He was a low time private pilot, having accumulated approximately 125 hours in the span of five years. The airplane was a rental from Rochester. He expressed that he was more accustomed to the larger runways there. The smallest runway at Greater Rochester International is 4000 x 100 feet - significantly longer and wider than what Le Roy had to offer. He was cognizant of the windy conditions, but had not flown in a long time and was eager to get back into the sky. The aborted landing we witnessed was actually his second; the accident occurred on the third attempt at landing.

I cringed as he told me all of this. I expressed how relieved I was that he was unhurt, but his focus was elsewhere. He was worried about the wrecked airplane disrupting airport operations, that his wife would forbid him from flying again, and that the Cessna's owner would be irate. (Based on what I witnessed, he was definitely correct on the latter point).

I was sympathetic and tried to be

supportive, reminding him that no one was hurt. With only some bent metal, it was a best case scenario for any accident. Internally, however, I was seething. My thought process went something like this:

*A low time pilot, not current, and accustomed to long, wide runways chose **this** day to land at my airport with its comparatively short, narrow runway and a direct crosswind near the maximum demonstrated capability of the aircraft he was flying. Two aborted landings were not enough to convince him that a return to Rochester, with six choices in landing direction on more forgiving runways, might be in his best interests.*

Really?

I understand an overwhelming desire to fly after a long time away from the sky. But I was genuinely baffled by the pilot's aeronautical decision making and the number of opportunities for a different outcome that he ignored before coming to rest upside down in someone else's Cessna at Le Roy.

But I held these thoughts hidden behind a calm smile. Soon enough, the fire department and police arrived on the scene. I think the firemen were quite disappointed that there was no fireball for them battle. Ray arrived shortly thereafter and handled the inquisitive media with a charm and purposeful grace that left me quite impressed.

Mishaps happen to the best of us, but in this case, the accident pilot was completely out of his depth



relative to the prevailing weather conditions. Moreover, he failed to take advantage of multiple second chances; two go-arounds should have been enough to inspire a new plan.

That day, all of us at the Le Roy Airport received an important reminder: **know your limits and respect them.**

Activities Committee Update by Chris Houston

It will come as no surprise to anyone that Activities Committee events are on hold until the COVID-19 situation is under control. Obviously, many possible trip venues are closed until further notice.

Nonetheless, your Activities Committee has brainstormed a number of possible events for later in the year. We're almost guaranteed to have a shorter flying season than usual, so we do not expect to accomplish everything on this list. Here's a sampling of the tentative plans in no particular order:

Social Events:

- Annual Christmas party: the annual party is scheduled for December 5, 2020 at the Blue Heron Hills Golf Club. Because Sky Sands was such a hit at the 2019 party, we have contracted with him to return and entertain us with new material.
- Club picnic: it is still our intent to hold a club picnic this summer.
- "Top Gun: Maverick": Our goal was to reserve a movie theater for the club to see this film. With the COVID-19 outbreak, release has been pushed back from June to 23 December 2020.
- Saturday lunches: Saturday lunches at KSDC are expected

to return in June (if able).

Fly-Out Trips:

- Saturday Breakfast Fly-Outs: Local breakfast flights will start up again weekly once we're able.
- A return to [Old Rhinebeck](#) to see the Saturday WWI dogfight airshow. In 2019, we saw the Sunday History of Flight airshow, which was fantastic. See [Cool Places To Fly, October 2019](#).
- [Penn's Cave \(N74\)](#): Land near a cave that can only be explored by boat! Bring sensible shoes! This destination was weathered-out twice in 2019.
- Niagara Falls: Fly the falls circuit, land for lunch (IAG), visit the [Niagara Aerospace Museum](#).
- [Empire State Aerosciences Museum](#): Land at Schenectady County (SCH) to visit a great museum that often holds Saturday fly-in breakfasts with aviation-oriented speakers.
- Fly to Ticonderoga (4B6) and take the [Star Trek Original Series Set Tour](#). This was weathered out twice in 2019. See [Cool Places To Fly, March 2019](#).
- Fly over Canada to eastern MI for a landing in Detroit (DET,

most likely) and a visit to the [Henry Ford](#). Like history? Like airplanes? Rare cars? Americana? You'll love the Henry Ford. Might include a tour of the Ford F-150 plant. The flight over Canada will be novel for many, but super easy—barely an inconvenience.

- Any architecture buffs among club members? We're planning a flight to visit Frank Lloyd Wright's [Falling Water](#).
- Cleveland is back on the list—there are a number of us that still want to visit the [Steamship](#) and Burke Lakefront is always a fun trip. See [Cool Places To Fly, March 2020](#).
- A longer trip to visit the amazing [National Museum of the United States Air Force](#). Because of the distance involved, this will require some careful planning and ground transportation contingency options.
- We're exploring the possibility of visiting the [Eagles Mere Air Museum](#) and [Eagles Mere Auto Museum](#), both located on a private, paved airport in northern PA. This venue was recently written-up in [AOPA Pilot](#) as a destination and is both close and intriguing.

Stay tuned. We'll communicate more when able.

