

# WFC Flyer

Sunset over the Williamson-Sodus Airport, 29 November 2020 (Chris Houston)

## Important Dates:

**General Meeting**  
December 10, 2020  
WFC Clubhouse

**Board Meeting**  
January 7, 2020  
WFC Clubhouse

**General Meeting**  
January 14, 2020  
WFC Clubhouse

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## Williamson Flying Club Newsletter December 2020

### From the President's Desk by Randy Christian

As elections draw near, I feel that I need to take time to address conversations that I overhear often about "we are a club, not a business" and "why can't we just be a club?" Honestly, we are a victim of our own success in regard to the WFC and KSDC. What I mean is, quite simply, we have evolved to a point where it takes a business mentality to maintain what has been built up over the past few decades. It becomes a balancing act, but we do our best to maintain the club feel. This is a very difficult task to be sure, but I feel that our roots are intact after many years of growth and evolution. Many flyouts with club members happen annually and they always appear to be successful. Along with that, there are always tasks that need to be

performed around the airport. Our many wonderful volunteers really help bolster the "club feel". The more our members become involved as volunteers, the stronger our club atmosphere becomes.



Our challenges with Covid have placed some of our club activities on hold such as Saturday cookouts, the summer picnic and flower bombing contest, Thanksgiving lunch by Tony, and the long-standing annual Pancake breakfast. All of these are annual **club** events that have happened regularly before the events of 2020. Hopefully, we can start to bring these items back on-line soon.

I would offer that maybe it's time to re-

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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](http://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](mailto:bod@williamsonflyingclub.com)

**Medical Advisor:** Dr. Pam Tarkington

*“Our mission, in its simplest form, is to promote general aviation. How do we do that? By keeping our costs down and by training the next generation of aviators that will come from the WFC!”*

## Aviation Quote

“It is hard enough for anyone to map out a course of action and stick to it, particularly in the face of the desires of one’s friends; but it is doubly hard for an aviator to stay on the ground waiting for just the right moment to go into the air.”

- Glenn Curtiss, 1909

## From the President’s Desk by Randy Christian

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view our own documents on the club to have a solid understanding of what the club really stands for. Our mission, in its simplest form, is to promote general aviation. How do we do that? By keeping our costs down and by training the next generation of aviators that will come from the WFC!

This leads me back to elections again this month. I think this is a great time to take a look at the club and the airport and ask, “What can I do to help?”

We will continue to execute our charter

and continue to have these successes as a club and as a business. We will do this with strong leadership and enthusiastic volunteers coming together and applying a combination of tried and true practices with new ideas brought forth by both familiar faces as well as some new ones.

This is meant as food for thought as the next chapter unfolds for the Williamson Flying Club.

I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving, stay safe, and blue skies.

## WFC Elections and Eligibility List

Elections for the Williamson Flying Club’s Board of Directors will be held at the club’s annual meeting on February 11, 2021. The roles of President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary will be open. These roles have a one year term. A single Director seat will also be open for a 3 year term.

If you are interested in running for an office, contact Scott Lasky or Mick McKee from the nominating committee. If you are curious about what is involved in filling any of these roles, please feel free to reach out to any of the existing Board members for their insight. This is your opportunity to help chart the direction of our beloved club. Do you have new ideas? Do you want to become more involved? Serving on the Board of Directors is an excellent way to give back to the WFC!

Eligibility rules are straightforward: any Active or Permanent member who is in good standing and has attended at

least six General Membership meetings from February 2020 – January 2021 is eligible to run for any of these positions.

The following members have already met or exceeded eligibility requirements:

Adams, Dan	DiDonato, Joe
Bach, Bill	Dorschel, Dan
Baker, Jim	Englund, Frances
Barlis, Glenn	Fair, Ian
Bebernitz, Michael	Francisco, Tim
Cahill, Robert	Fuller, Jack, B
Caldwell, Gary	Herloski, Bob
Christian, Randy	Holtz, Barry
Ciolkowski, Ed	Houston, Chris
Clark, Robert	Isbell, Tim
Clemente, Lou	Jean-Louis, Lesly
Clingerman, John	Lasky, Scott
Colombo, Dick	Lauster, John
Creatura, John	Mangos, Chuck
DePuyt, Bob	Mazzola, Nick

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## WFC Elections and Eligibility List

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Additional members who are already eligible to run for the WFC Board:

McCutchan, Rich	Rynearson, Mark
Mehserle, Eric	Shippers, Lee
Mueller, Thomas	Sims, Duane
Murphy, Cody	Sippel, Paula
Murray, Steve	Spang, Mike
Norris, Brian	Stellrecht, Rainer
Palmer, Matt	Stevens, Gary
Perricone, David	Swingly, Dick
Probst, Daniel	Udyak, Bogdan
Rall, Erik	Weiner, Howard
Robideau, Bob	Whitaker, Kevin
Roehrig, Bradley	Wicinski, Pete
Rohner, Bonnie-Jean	Zeller, Scott

The following members have at-

tended 5 meetings since February 2020 and would need to attend one additional meeting in either December or January to be eligible:

Alesci, Tony
Arserio, Greg
Black, James
Fairchild, Eric
Foti, Ron
Kasprzycki, Joe
Mitchell, Mark
Oliver, Jamie
Verbridge, Alan

Finally, the following members have attended 4 meetings since February 2020 and need to attend both the December and January meetings to achieve eligibility:

Allen, Richard
Amorim, Rui
Carter, Tom
Cruz, Mike
Davenport, Dick
Fratangelo, Bob
Gierer, Steven
Kehoe, Tim
Niles, John
Safadi, Ziad
Whitmore, Justin

As a reminder, in accordance with the Club's Covid-19 protocol, acknowledging the emailed meeting minutes counts as meeting attendance in lieu of being physically present at member meetings.

## Cool Places To Fly by Chris Houston

**Destination:** Sanford Seacoast Regional Airport, Sanford, ME (KSFM)

**Distance:** 281 nautical miles

### Why It's Cool:

Sanford Maine is in the southeast portion of Maine that extends southward east of New Hampshire and not quite all the way to Massachusetts. The airport is 25 nautical miles southeast of Lake Winnepesaukee.

A formerly triangular runway layout hints at Sanford's military origins. During WWII, the airport was desig-



nated as a the Naval Auxiliary Air Facility Sanford. Sometime after the war, the airport reverted to civil

use. Lake Aircraft produced the Lake Buckaneer and Lake Rene-

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## Cool Places To Fly by Chris Houston

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gade at Sanford Seacoast Regional from the late 1950s until 1994.

Today, the airport is a thriving general aviation field. A nontowered field, the airport supports an active fixed wing flight school ([Southern Maine Aviation](#), also the FBO), a helicopter flight school ([Pine Tree Helicopters](#), claimed to be the only helicopter flight school in Maine), and a soaring club ([Sanford Soaring](#)). When I visited in July 2020, the gliders were operating from the grass southeast of runway 25. The ramp area was congested with a variety of transient aircraft from Piper Cubs to private jets. There were a lot of private jets.

Many of the transient aircraft were there to dine at the [Pilot's Cove Café](#). The restaurant opened under new management in 2019 to positive reviews. It is located on the main ramp at the north end of the

airport next to Southern Maine Aviation. Plentiful outdoor dining was available directly rampside, providing a great view of the aircraft parked there (though it got a little loud when a nearby twin engine jet cranked up its turbines). The restaurant's burgers are highly acclaimed, but I could not resist the lobster roll (when in Maine...). It was fantastic. On top of it all, the staff were very friendly.

The Pilot's Cove Café is open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner Thursday-Friday from 10:00 am to 9:00 pm, Saturday from 9:00 am to 9:00 pm, and Sunday from 9:00 am to 7:00 pm.

If you find yourself in need of a meal stop in eastern New Hampshire or southern Maine, the Pilot's Cove Café is worth considering.

### Tips:

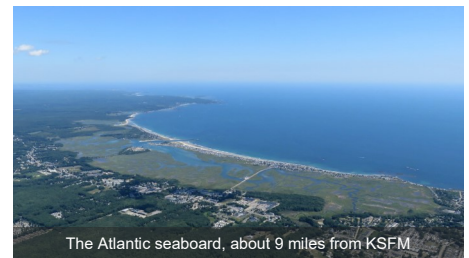
- The fuel farm is located just



View from the Pilot's Cove Café patio



Outdoor lunch!



The Atlantic seaboard, about 9 miles from KSFM



Outflow of the nearby Webhannet River

## Member Spotlight: John Griebisch by Chris Houston



Member: John Griebisch  
 Ratings: PP-SEL, SES  
 Hours: 3,000+  
 Joined WFC: 1992  
 Aircraft: Cessna 170

Amelia Earhart once wrote that, "...the lure of flying is the lure of beauty, and I need no other flight to convince me that the reason flyers fly, whether they know it or not, is the aesthetic appeal of flying." While many of us enjoy capturing photos from our flights, few embody Earhart's point better than WFC member John Griebisch. John is a [professional photographer and artist](#) with a keen eye for light, texture, and perspective who captures evocative images of the world around us. While some art-

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west of Southern Maine Aviation on the north ramp. Entering the ramp from Taxiway E will point you directly at it. Current fuel price is \$4.75 / gal, which is relatively high for the region.

- When approaching from the west, beware of the private airport home to Skydive Lebanon located about 10 miles west of KSFM. It was quite active on the day of my visit

## Member Spotlight: John Griebisch by Chris Houston

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ists create beauty through an arrangement of words or musical notes, John's medium is photonic and his artistry lies in capturing those photons from novel perspectives at the right times. Fittingly, he describes his aerial artwork as "Aerías".

Unlike those of us who adopted aviation as an avocation later in life, flying was a fundamental part of John's childhood. Before John was born, his father was the senior check pilot at Naval Station Grosse Ile near Detroit, one of the largest training stations for Naval aviators during WWII. After his stint in the Navy, aviation was never far away. He brought two BT-13 Vultee Valiant training aircraft home with him and continued instructing prospective pilots out of Saranac Lake and Lake Placid in a variety of Pipers and Aeroncas. An early photo of a toddler-aged John depicts him "working" under the wing of one of the Vultees. John's first officially logged time at the controls was a quarter hour in a J-3 Cub at age 15 with his father as the instructor.

As a college student in the late 1960s, John soloed from the Lake Placid Airport in an Aeronca Champ. John describes his first time alone in the sky as a "freeing experience". In his elation, he climbed about 1000 feet above pattern altitude, causing his father some consternation when the diminutive Champ seemed to vanish in the haze of the day. John earned his private pilot certificate in 1967, flying a Cessna on a cross country flight to Glens Falls to meet the

nearest examiner.

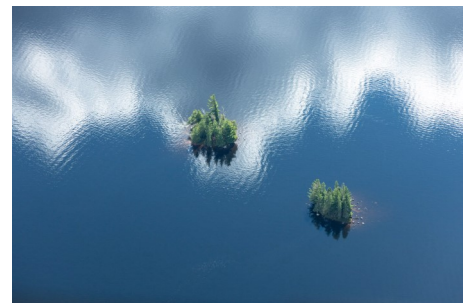
Photography has been a part of John's life since high school. Though John holds a BFA in Photographic Illustration from RIT, he was already so skilled in composition behind the lens that he paid his way through college by actively working as a photographer.

Because aviation and photography complement each other so well, it is little wonder that John combined his passions into a lifelong career. Of course, there were bumps in the road along the way. There always are.

John describes an early photo mission undertaken in a Cessna 140 with his father. On climb out, the engine lost significant power due to a stuck valve. Although John's role in the flight was as photographer, he was on the controls at the time and quickly surrendered them to his father. In the Adirondacks, options are often limited in a forced landing situation. The senior Griebisch aimed for a road, directing the Cessna between a power line above and a telephone wire below. They almost made it, but caught the tailwheel on a telephone wire and the pair found themselves hanging next to a telephone pole. Fortunately, the telephone pole had rungs and they were able to climb to the ground. The telephone company helped extricate the Cessna from the wires and brought it back to the airport.

"You're home early," his mother

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## Member Spotlight: John Griebisch by Chris Houston

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commented when he reappeared.

“I ran out of film,” John explained cagily. “There was an accident at the airport.”

Post college, as a certificated pilot and an established professional photographer, all that John needed was the right airplane. This came about by happenstance in the 1970s when John visited an airstrip in Red Creek to do feature photography for a Rochester magazine. A crop duster there owned a Cessna 170 and, through a friendship that developed between them, John began flying the tailwheel progenitor of the Skyhawk. He found it to be very stable and easy to fly at low speeds. For John, it was the perfect platform for aerial photography. Still early into his career, an airplane purchase was a stretch, but John managed it and the 170 has been a part of John’s life for 43 years.

John’s focus in aviation is on fun. This is well-captured in the picture of John at the beginning of this article, taken while flying from a grass strip in the Adirondacks with his friend Jim in a Fleet biplane. In 1985, John and a close group of aeronautically passionate friends from the Adirondacks (including Jim) earned their seaplane ratings in a Super Cub. As an experienced tailwheel pilot who was also a capable boater, John required less than two hours of instruction before taking his SES checkride. “Ski flying is a lot of fun,” John adds, with the smile audible in his voice. He describes landing a J-3 on skis

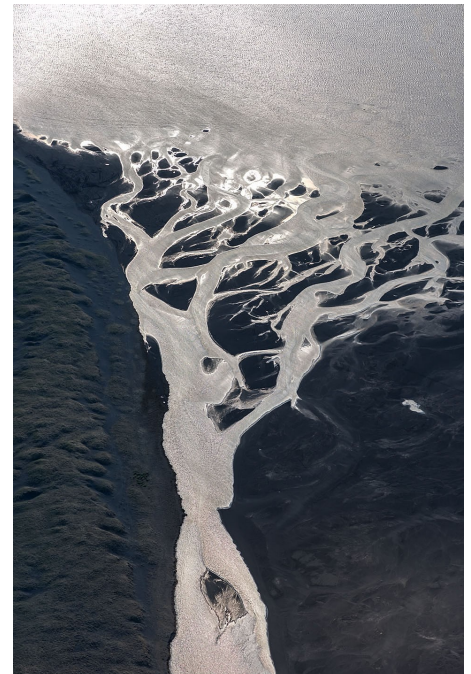
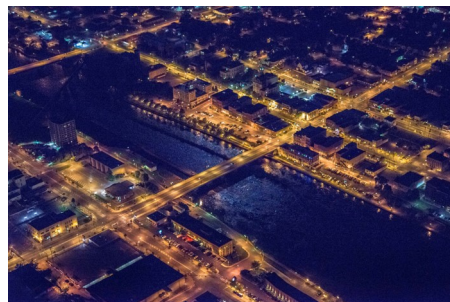
in the snow at Lake Placid, settling so gently into the powder that his first indication of having landed was a loss in airspeed.

John came to the Williamson-Sodus Airport and the WFC in 1992, relocating his airplane from Rochester after buying a home in Pultneyville. Though proximity to home might have inspired his move, he is glad to have made it. He likes “the vibe” at KSDC, noting that you only find it at some airports. John may be a bit of a lone wolf when it comes to his aerial art, but he is a genial one and always happy to exchange stories or help other WFC members push their airplanes back into hangars.

John’s work has taken him around the world, but one of his fondest adventures was flying the 170 to Seattle in 2004. He departed KSDC and landed at Boeing Field after flying six hours per day for

three days. Along the way, he stopped in Wahpeton, ND (KBWP, Harry Stern Airport). On UNICOM, he learned that the runway was closed, but he was told that he could land on the grass. A local crop duster rode his motorcycle out to John and led him back to parking. The crop duster shared a treasure trove of aircraft with John that included his own personal Corsair and other warbirds undergoing active restoration: a B-25, a Fieseler Storch, a Japanese Mitsubishi A6M Zero, a P-40 Warhawk, and all the tooling needed to build P-51s. The “crop duster” was none other than Gerry Beck, founder of Wahpeton’s [Tri-State Aviation](#) and famous in warbird circles as a passionate craftsman, an ardent supporter of aviation, and an ambassador for the warbird community. John wound up spending the night in Beck’s home and was utterly captivated by the man’s en-

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## Member Spotlight: John Griebisch by Chris Houston

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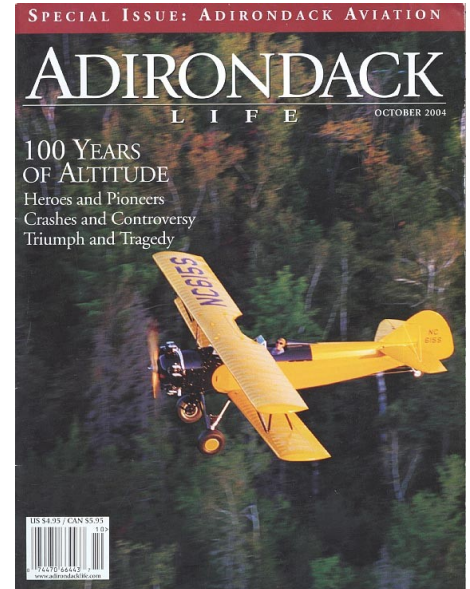
thusiasm for aviation. Sadly, the aviation community lost Beck in 2007 after a mid-air collision between a pair of Mustangs at Oshkosh. One of the aircraft was the Mustang that Beck built from scratch to original specifications. Something that John keenly appreciates is that these long cross country flights often serendipitously bring us into contact with many wonderful people and places.

In 2016, John flew commercially to Iceland and spent seven hours aloft photographing a magnificent southern coast wrought from vulcanism in a rented Cessna 172. Some WFC members may recall that John presented on this work

during a September 2018 “Hangar Talk” at the Club.

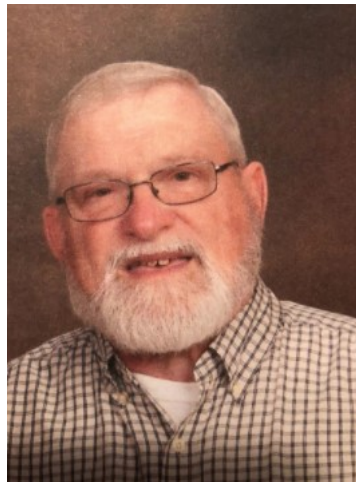
But there is joy in less grandiose adventure, as well. John delightfully describes a more recent low and slow flight from the Jersey Shore to Plymouth, MA; negotiating prolific banner tow operations at 500 feet over Sandy Point, NJ; working with New York ATC to transit the Hudson River; then proceeding eastbound over the Connecticut shore.

When you see John’s 170 returning home to the Williamson Sodus Airport, you can count on two things: that John has been out having a blast as an aviator and has likely composed some fine art in the process.



### Winter Flying Public Service Announcement

Winter Flying Tip: Moving an aircraft on an icy surface is at best an exercise in frustration and at worst a recipe for injury. Consider removable traction for your shoes like Yaktrax. Many pilots have found that these work well for ground handling of their aircraft. Just remember to remove them before stepping onto or into your airplane!



### In Memoriam: Gary Crawford

Gary Crawford, a longtime member and past president of the Williamson Flying Club, passed away on November 18 at the age of 74.

Gary was a man of many talents and interests, including snowmobiling, sailing, skiing, camping, hiking, music, hunting, fishing, and flying. Gary once flew cross country from New York to Alaska. He was a skilled tradesman and worked at Xerox as a carpenter until 2001.

He is survived by his wife of 53 years Norma (Mattison) Crawford, his two daughters Jenifer (Peter) DeMarree and Joanna (Caroline) Crawford, his 5 grandchildren Sierra (Reinhold), Wyatt, Sylvia (Sam), Olivia and Jared; his brother Norman (Mary Jean) Crawford, his sister Gloria Church and many nieces and nephews.

Services were held November 23, 2020.