

WFC Flyer



Diverting to an airport above the clouds: Cattaraugus County Airport (KOLE) in Olean, NY (Chris Houston)

Important Dates:

General Meeting
July 8, 2021
WFC Clubhouse

Board Meeting
August 5, 2021
WFC Clubhouse

General Meeting
August 12, 2021
WFC Clubhouse

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Williamson Flying Club Newsletter

July 2021

Cool Places To Fly by Chris Houston

Destination: Basin Harbor Airport (B06), Vergennes, VT

Distance: 173 nautical miles, direct

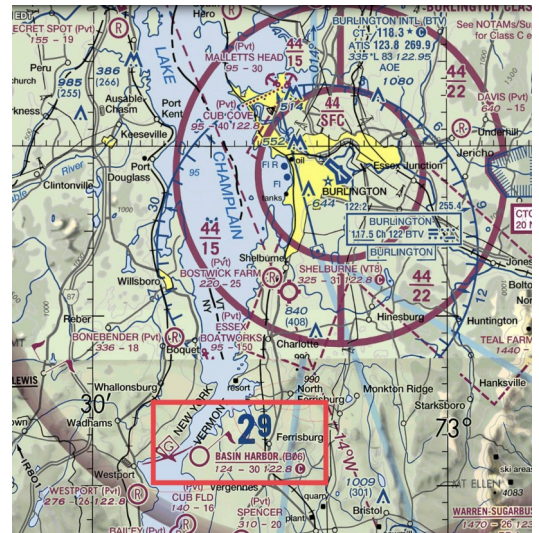
Why It's Cool:

The Basin Harbor Club is a resort on the eastern shore of Lake Champlain. Adjacent to the Club's golf course is a 3,000' by 90' turf runway (02-20) in excellent condition. Not only is the turf runway smooth, it is very well groomed. Aircraft parking is on the north end of the runway, adjacent to the [Red Mill](#), a wonderful restaurant in a renovated (though still rustic) 1940s era saw mill. These factors all combine to make Basin Harbor a very popular \$100 hamburger destination in the northeast.

My first visit to Basin Harbor was in October 2016. I had been reading wonderful things about Basin Harbor for years and that first visit did not disappoint. We happened to arrive on October 15, which was the last

weekend that the Red Mill was open for the season. Because insulation would have broken with the rustic authenticity of the place, the Red Mill has none. As a result, it closes mid-October and reopens mid-May each year.

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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

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Cool Places To Fly by Chris Houston

Aviation Quote

“So the crew fly on with no thought that they are in motion. Like night over the sea, they are very far from the earth, from towns, from trees. The motors fill the lighted chamber with a quiver that changes its substance. The clock ticks on. The dials, the radio lamps, the various hands and needles go through their invisible alchemy. From second to second these mysterious stirrings, a few muffled words, a concentrated tenseness, contribute to the end result. And when the hour is at hand the pilot may glue his forehead to the window with perfect assurance. Out of oblivion the gold has been smelted: there it gleams in the lights of the airport.”

- Antoine de Saint-Exupery

Describing instrument flight in *Wind, Sand and Stars* (1939)

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Basin Harbor was hopping when we visited. By the time we departed, there were ten aircraft parked in front of the restaurant that ranged from an Ercoupe to a smattering of Cessnas (a 120, two 150s, a couple of 172s, and a 177) to a V-tailed Bonanza.

As for the food at the Red Mill, it was outstanding. More recently, the Red Mill has a new chef and a new menu. Indoor and outdoor dining options are available. Per the website, reservations are required.

My daughter’s favorite part of the visit to Basin Harbor was the playground situated between the Red Mill and aircraft parking. The playground has reopened since being closed due to COVID.

While exploring, we noticed that the [Lake Champlain Maritime Museum](#) was nearby, but we did not have the time to investigate. Something tells me that we’ll be back. Admission is free.

The WFC Activities Committee is planning

a trip to Basin Harbor on Sunday, August 29th.

Tips:

- There is no fuel available at Basin Harbor Airport.
- Those hoping to fly WFC aircraft to Basin Harbor will require at least 150 hours and a grass checkout with a club instructor.
- Basin Harbor Airport is located approximately 19 nautical miles south-southwest of Burlington, VT. It is on the opposite shore of Lake Champlain from a distinctive hook along the shoreline near Westport, NY. The runway is directly east of the golf course. Note that a displaced threshold is marked on the ground for runway 20.
- The Red Mill, airport, and Lake Champlain Maritime Museum are open from mid-May to mid-October each year. The 2021 season runs from May 22–October 17.
- Reservations to the Red Mill are required.



Looking northeast across the Basin Harbor Airport



Parked at Basin Harbor with the Red Mill in the background



The Red Mill restaurant



The Red Mill restaurant is rustic by design

Member Spotlight: Mike Bebernitz by Chris Houston



Member: Mike Bebernitz
 Ratings: Comm-MEL, IFR, CFI
 Hours: 650
 WFC Role: Instructor
 Joined WFC: 1988

This spring, Williamson Flying Club member Mike Bebernitz became a Certified Flight Instructor (CFI), coming full circle on a path that he has followed for at least 35 years. "I am having a blast right now," he says of his first month serving as an instructor for the WFC. For someone as passionate about aviation as Mike, even a long road is worth pursuing.

Mike has been fascinated by flight since such an early age that he no longer remembers what initially captured his interest. He confesses to a fascination with the Space Shuttle program as a kid, a trait that many pilots who grew up in the 1970s likely share. A pivotal moment in Mike's childhood came when he had to choose an activity one afternoon during 4H camp at Camp Oswegatchie in Croghan, NY. He was presented with a list of compelling options, but zeroed

right in on "airplane ride". As a young teenager who could not discern a Cessna from a Piper, he climbed aboard a red, high wing seaplane for the flight of a lifetime. With that, the proverbial hook was set.

Intending to become an airline pilot, Mike joined the aviation program at the Florida Institute of Technology (FIT, now known as Florida Tech) in 1986. At the time, the program was ranked #2 in the country and was unusual for getting students flying right away. Some of the other schools like Embry Riddle and Farmingdale required more coursework before students could lay hands on yoke or throttle.

FIT still operates out of Melbourne International (KMLB) on south Florida's Atlantic coast. Located just 28 nautical miles north of Piper headquarters in Vero Beach (KVRB), the entire FIT fleet was stocked with Pipers. As a student pilot, Mike never flew anything that was more than four years old. As he earned his ratings, he worked his way through the Piper line: he earned his Private Pilot certificate in Warriors (April 1987), flew a T-tailed Arrow IV for his Commercial, a Seminole for his Multiengine, and a Navajo for a course on air taxi operations. He even got some stick time in a Cheyenne, but confesses that he was a little behind the big twin turboprop. They flew the Cheyenne to Marathon Key for dinner at a Japanese steakhouse, an early adventure with other classmates.

Mike was fond of one of his in-



Mike Shippers and Mike Bebernitz at the Alton Bay Ice Runway (B18) in 2010



The Bebernitz Family at Puddle Jumpers (KFZY) in 2015



Mike Shippers, Mike Bebernitz and son, and John Clingerman at the Alton Bay Ice Runway in 2014

structors, a recent FIT graduate named Victor Osumi. Osumi, who was Japanese, was well-humored and would admonish Mike, "Don't be a kamikaze!" Osumi is still involved in aviation, albeit at a different level than most of us. He is currently the Managing Director and President for Delta Airlines in Japan (according to LinkedIn).

Intent on joining the airlines, Mike earned most of his ratings within the first two years of starting col-

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Member Spotlight: Mike Bebernitz by Chris Houston

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lege. However, with the CFI as the next rating milestone, Mike saw the world change. Eastern Airlines, one of the “Big Four” since the 1930s, struggled and fell into bankruptcy. The Braniff name was revived twice, once in 1983 and again in 1991, with both resurrected ventures ultimately failing. In the age of deregulation and crippling strikes, joining the airline industry did not appeal to Mike as it once did. Instead, Mike completed his degree and returned to New York. The CFI rating would have to wait.

Mike spent the next several years working for his father’s business that included a custom harvester operation and Benchmark Hydraulics. Along the way, he married Tammy and started a family. Since 2007, Mike has worked for Colacino where he currently manages their life safety business, giving him oversight of generators, smoke alarms, etc.

With a full time job for which he is



At the Oswego County Airport in 2017



Burke Lakefront Airport, Cleveland, OH in 2016

sometimes on-call, plus the demands of a young family, time and money for flying were in scarce supply. Fortunately, the Williamson Flying Club provided Mike a lifeline to aviation: encouragement and affordable flying.

While he was still a college student, Mike went looking for opportunities to fly during the summer while home in New York. After earning his Private Pilot certificate in 1987, he spent 0.7 hours checking out in a Cessna 172 based at Le Roy. It was his first time in a Cessna and, immediately following the check-out, he flew rides for his family. But due to Le Roy’s distance from home, this was an imperfect solution.

In June 1988, Mike joined the Williamson Flying Club. His first flight was in the Club’s Cherokee 235. But from 1994-2002, fiscal pressures prevented Mike from adding any new entries to his logbook.

In 2002, Mike returned to flying. He became Club-current and had



2018: On the deck of a WWII submarine in Cleveland, OH



Mike investigates the business end of a WWII submarine deck gun during a WFC flight to Cleveland in 2018

Contribute to the Newsletter!

“Hey! I take some pretty great photos, too! Why aren’t mine in the newsletter?”

We’re always looking for an opportunity to showcase how our members enjoy aviation. Or maybe you have a great story to tell? We’d love to share it. We’ll even help you write it!

Submit your photos and stories to the newsletter by emailing:

Newsletter@williamsonflyingclub.com

the good fortune to fall into the company of Mike Shippers and Chris Karpenko, both of whom were relatively new aviators seeking adventure. Mike describes flying to an AOPA Expo in New Haven, CT where they shot an approach to minimums after holding for 30 minutes to get in. He reflects very fondly on his first visit to the Alton Bay Ice Runway with Shippers. Mike, Shippers, and Karpenko once shared flying duties to Dulles International, a trip Mike describes as “nerve-wracking, but exciting.” They made the flight post-9/11 after the original ADIZ was established, but prior to the establishment of the existing SFRA/FRZ airspace. Some mistakes may have been made, but controllers were still learning the new rules, too. He always enjoys flying to Lake Placid, describing it as, “Such a magical place”. The annual pancake breakfast in Piseco (K09) is among Mike’s favorite excursions. (This year’s is scheduled for August 28.)

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Cool Places To Fly by Chris Houston

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These early flights may have crystallized one of Mike's philosophies on aviation. "I believe in the buddy system," Mike says. He learned the ropes of real world aviation through his shared experiences with other WFC members. By teaming up, they pushed and supported each other as pilots. Together they tackled new things, learned much, and had many adventures.

Other Club memories include cold-patching the runway in the early 1990s and flying as a ride pilot for the annual pancake breakfast. He remembers an era when the Club borrowed aircraft from Bill Law for breakfast flights. In one memorable example, Mike, Mike Bjerga, and John Lauster flew their borrowed aircraft back to the Williamson-Sodus Airport from Rochester in pouring rain. It was his first and only time departing controlled airspace on a Special VFR clearance.

"There is no other club like this," Mike states when asked about the WFC. "You're not going to fly any cheaper than this and you're not going to find airport infrastructure like this [owned by a club] anywhere in the country. This place is special."

While the WFC served as Mike's lifeline to aviation during summers home from college and throughout his non-aviation career path, there was still opportunity to become even more involved. This time, the Club reached out to him.

About three years ago at the annual WFC Christmas Party, Mike was

approached by Mike Bjerga and then-president Mike Malec. Would Mike be willing to earn his CFI and become a Club instructor? Mike's wife Tammy, who was needed to support this venture, was persuaded that this was a good idea. With critical spousal support, Mike resumed the road to CFI that he abandoned decades before.

There were many challenges along the way, including life, weather, and a global pandemic that delayed the rating, but in May 2021, Mike finished the CFI rating—a mere 35 years after starting flight training. Mike described his transformation into CFI as being broken down and reformed. He is grateful to Mike Bjerga for outstanding instruction and other Club members for their encouragement. Most of all, he is thankful for Tammy, whose vital support brought this achievement within his grasp.

Just over one month in as a Club instructor, Mike is enthusiastic. Through Mike Bjerga, he has access to a rigorous and time-tested syllabus. He is learning how to gain insight into his students, adjusting his teaching to address the way each individual learns and sees the world. For now, he is a part-time instructor for the Club while still working full time for Colacino. Mike indicates that his time spent instructing passes like no time at all. Members agree and have shared that Mike is thorough and fun to fly with. Perhaps this is not surprising; the Club has reconnected Mike his first passion. Although he is still assessing long term plans, Mike is excited to see what the future brings.

Outings: Dinner at Primo Barone's, Venango County Regional Airport (KFKL), 06 June 2021



Scott Lasky, Lesly Jean-Louis, and Chris Houston



Dan Probst lands N1185X at KFKL



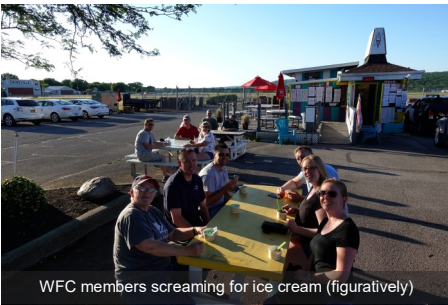
Lesly Jean-Louis and Scott Lasky at KFKL



Lesly Jean-Louis, Dan Probst, Steven Snyder, Janice, Chris Houston, and Scott Lasky with N1185X at KFKL

All photographs provided by Chris Houston

Outings: Ice Cream Island, Dansville Municipal Airport (DSV), 17 June 2021



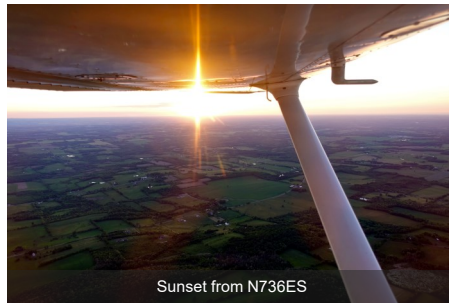
WFC members screaming for ice cream (figuratively)



WFC aircraft queued for departure at Dansville



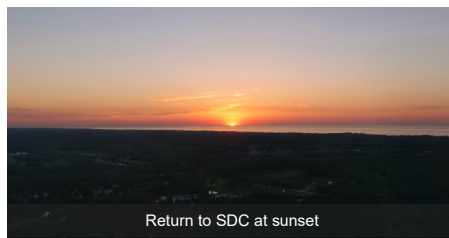
Most of the crew (Dan and Mary Dorschel slipped away before the photograph was taken)



Sunset from N736ES



Chris Houston's Warrior taxiing for departure



Return to SDC at sunset

Nice weekday evenings are perfect for spur of the moment Club fly-outs for ice cream! In this instance, we had seven aircraft and twelve people attend. In the group picture are (l-r), Chris Houston, Denise, Brad Roehrig, Bob Robideau, Derek Six, Dave Lowry, Mick McKee, Tom and Alicia Carter, Brittany, and (not pictured) Dan Probst, Dan and Mary Dorschel.

Caution! The portions at Ice Cream Island are enormous. Insert obligatory commentary about checking weight and balance prior to flight.

Stay tuned for more weekday ice cream runs this summer.

All photos courtesy of Dan Probst.

Recommended Reading



EMBRACING THE ENVIRONMENT



If you like your aviation with a side of environmental sustainability, check out the July/August issue of [FAA Safety Briefing](#)

Recommended Viewing

Poppins Takes a Pinch-Hitter Course

Last month, we included a link to the [SoCal Flying Monkey](#) channel where the pilot's anxious wife was learning to manage their aircraft in the event of a medical emergency. These videos were done in collaboration with Jason Miller from [The Finer Points](#). Part Two has finally dropped: click below to see if Poppins managed to successfully land the Cherokee 6. A must watch for non-flying spouses.

- [“Can I fly the PLANE if the pilot is unconscious?”](#) (Part 1, SoCal Flying Monkey)
- [“I thought I'd hate this—learning to FLY our Cherokee 6”](#) (Part 2, SoCal Flying Monkey)

Arrival at Sun 'n' Fun 2021

On the [310 Pilot](#) channel, ride along with Kevin and Jamie for a hectic arrival at Lakeland, FL for Sun 'n' Fun 2021, including that moment when the tower went completely NORDO mid-broadcast.

- [“Jamie's LAST Fly-In Ever?”](#)

Congratulations!



Congratulations to Nick Mazzola on earning his Private Pilot certificate on June 20, 2021!

Images by **Chris Houston**



IFR over Rochester in June 2021. Does anyone else see the shadow of a dragon?

Upcoming WFC and Local Events

Saturday - Sunday July 10-11	Greatest Show on Turf 2021 , Geneseo Airport [D52].
Saturday-Sunday July 10-11	Jimmy Stewart Airshow, 2021 at Indiana County Airport [KID].
Saturday July 10	WFC fly-out to Hagerstown, MD [KHGR] for lunch at The Grille at Runways and a personalized tour of the Hagerstown Aviation Museum.
Sunday July 11	FLY-IN / DRIVE-IN PANCAKE BREAKFAST, 8:00 am - 11:00 am. Elmira-Corning Regional Airport [KELM]. Sponsored by EAA Chapter 533, please meet at their hangar—this will avoid landing fees. Breakfast includes pancakes, eggs, sausage and beverages for \$8.00. For more information visit EAA 533 [Note: This was erroneously listed on July 4 in the June newsletter]
Saturday July 17	WFC fly-out to the Empire State Aerosciences Museum at the Schenectady County Airport [KSCH].
Saturday July 24 Date Change!	WFC fly-out to Detroit [KDET] to visit the Henry Ford / Rouge Plant Tour (where Ford builds F-150 trucks). 3rd class medical certificate or higher required for PIC flying across Ontario. See "Cool Places To Fly" in the June issue of the WFC Flyer for additional details.
Sunday August 1	WFC fly-out to the Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome, tour the museum, see the Sunday WWI airshow. For more information on Old Rhinebeck, see "Cool Places To Fly" in the October 2019 issue of the WFC Flyer.
Sunday August 1	FLY-IN / DRIVE-IN PANCAKE BREAKFAST, 8:00 am - 11:00 am. Elmira-Corning Regional Airport [KELM]. Sponsored by EAA Chapter 533, please meet at their hangar—this will avoid landing fees. Breakfast includes pancakes, eggs, sausage and beverages for \$8.00. For more information visit EAA 533
Saturday August 14	WFC Annual Picnic at KSDC
Saturday August 14	2021 Wings and Wheels [KFKL]. Music, food, machines, and fun! For more information, call Jim Aaron at 814-758-5470 or Jim Gaiter at 724-301-8231.
Saturday August 21	58th Annual Antique Airplane Club of Greater New York Fly-In. Lufker Airport [49N]. All GA aircraft welcome. Bomb drop contest, spot landing contest, BBQ dinner, camping welcome. For more information, contact Bob Mott at 631-245-0829.
Sunday August 22	WFC Fly-Out to Long Island (KFRG) with visits to the American Air Power Museum and Cradle of Aviation Museum. Details coming...
Saturday August 28	Piseco annual fly-in pancake breakfast [K09]. 8:00 am—11:00 am
Sunday August 29	WFC Fly-Out to Basin Harbor [B06] for lunch at the Red Mill. Grass strip only—members flying club aircraft require a grass check-out. See "Cool Places To Fly" in this issue for more details.

- Selected events are generally within 150 nautical miles. For additional events in the wider area, please see the WFC [Upcoming Fly-Ins listing](#).
- Items in **bold** are sponsored by the WFC Activities Committee.
- Saturday lunches will run at SDC every Saturday at noon starting June 5 until October (end date TBD).