

Preserving, improving, and creating airstrips for recreational access

## THE RECREATIONAL AVIATION FOUNDATION

[www.theRAF.org](http://www.theRAF.org)



Summer/Fall 2021 | Issue 28

### Arkansas – Pavilion welcomes visitors; Richland Creek improvements

The Trigger Gap pavilion is ready for use, thanks to many generous donors and volunteers who gave their time at multiple workdays earlier this season, also adding fire rings, a composting toilet, picnic tables, and a critter-proof camp storage box. Trigger Gap, 17A is just 29 nm east of Thaden Field, VBT, which serves Bentonville, and pilots from all over the country have enjoyed this special place. Campers enjoy a great view over the Kings River, famous for smallmouth bass fishing.



Pavilion reflects The Nature Conservancy taste

– Arkansas RAF Team photo.

“Trigger Gap offers a beautiful recreational flying destination for both experienced pilots and those new to this kind of flying,” RAF Arkansas Liaison Dave Powell said.

The open-air timber and stone pavilion was designed by RAF Kentucky Liaison and architect Jeff Smith to meet The Nature Conservancy’s aesthetics. It features solar lighting

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### Montana – A Warm “Welcome Back” at Ryan

“This year’s Ryan Fly-In had a family reunion feel to it,” said RAF Administrative Director Tricia McKenna. RAF President Bill McGlynn added, “The weekend was something almost ‘spa-like’, getting together with old and new friends, and taking a deep breath of the fresh pine air.”

Thirty airplanes eventually lined up along the green turf, tents sprouting beneath wings. The two rustic cabins were the perfect alternative for tent camping.



Friday night’s dinner was a requested re-run of grilled sausage and savory vegetables, cooked by RAF Washington State Liaison Dave Whitelaw and his brother John.

About a hundred folks gathered for Saturday’s traditional RAF steak dinner, perfectly grilled by former Montana Liaison Jon Hudson. RAF ladies brought an array of salads, and Florida Director Emeritus Tim Clifford dished up his wife Ann’s famous cowboy baked beans. All were treated to huckleberry ice cream after a group photo in front of the barn. While campers admired the afterglow on Strawberry Mountain, a crew set up a hot air balloon for a short tether flight. The kids were allowed to get close enough to sense the thrill of Lighter-Than-Air flight.

Margie Prill, one of the RAF’s first VP’s of Appreciation gathered the kids in the cool shade

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#### Hartzell’s Special Pricing on Backcountry Propellers

The RAF is thrilled that Hartzell Propeller is offering RAF members a \$1,000 discount on four all-new Hartzell backcountry propellers through next year.

In addition to these savings, Hartzell Propeller is making a \$250 contribution to the RAF mission for every member who buys a new Hartzell prop for backcountry flying until the end of 2022.

“Our friends at Hartzell have shown they are committed to our efforts,” RAF Chairman John McKenna said.

Details at [hartzellprop.com](http://hartzellprop.com).

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## Keep it the way it is

- RAF Chairman John McKenna



**W**e hear that all the time at the RAF. The RAF receives contributions based on the fact that we are not like all the others.

Whoever all the others are in our supporters' mind is not that important. What is important however, is how the RAF conducts itself both internally and in the eyes of you, our supporters, most who've figured out that the RAF model is unconventional in our approach.

In the beginning we concluded that being all volunteer as much as possible would serve the organization well. We simply did not have the money to pay folks to do the work that you and so many others are willing to do. This "skin in the game theory" truly applies to the RAF. What still surprises, and frankly humbles me, is the amount of time that folks are willing to contribute to saving, improving and creating the special places that are at the core of our mission.

There are challenges to keeping things "the way it is" as the RAF takes on more, and gains supporters who choose to be a part of the effort. We love knowing you, hearing from you and most of all sharing experiences with you. You have the commitment from RAF leadership that we are always looking for better ways to do things that fulfill our mission, while staying connected more personally with you.

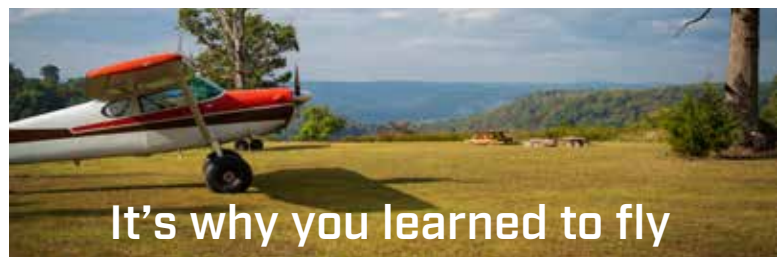
This is still an organization grounded in relationships as opposed to procedures. Procedures that make us appear a bit more corporate are simply not who we are. You are just as likely to see your RAF leadership out there wearing a pair of work gloves, as you are to see them in D.C., wearing a suit and tie.

We hope you'll always stay in touch and let us know if we get off that track. RAF relationships generate contributions, assist at work parties, and build facilities so all can have a better experience.

It is the personal connections we've all made that enable us to announce the opening of two new airstrips. Stand by for more exciting details.

So, as we move forward it is obvious that we can use all the help that you and others are willing to share. We hope it's even more obvious that while we are working diligently to stay in the game, we are working overtime to keep it the same.

RAF



It's why you learned to fly

## Preserving and improving airstrips on Public Lands through cooperation

The Recreational Aviation Foundation was formed in Montana out of a desire to prevent further closures of airstrips that provide recreational access. Before long, the organization was tapped to assist with similar goals outside of Montana.

State pilot organizations, like the Idaho Aviation Association had already gathered significant experience and success fulfilling part of their mission to “work with public and private entities for the preservation, maintenance and enhancement of aviation facilities.” Idaho pilots’ early activism resulted in the preservation of an enviable array of backcountry airstrips within Wilderness areas. (See *similar story about Utah Back Country Pilots, page 6.*)

The RAF saw the need to gain influence where major public land management decisions are made. As the RAF established relationships and gained credibility as a reliable partner with the US Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management and the National Park Service, its role became more of a facilitator to local and state efforts to fulfill missions like Idaho’s.

“The RAF works with Congress, and has been successful securing funding in the Forest Service budget that’s directed to backcountry airstrips,” RAF Director Tim Riley said. Riley flies out of Driggs, ID, and works closely with Chris Hartman, USFS Region 4 Director for Recreation and Heritage.

“To achieve outcomes similar to the Idaho example, the RAF communicates regularly with Washington based USFS leadership and Regional Recreation Directors across all nine forest regions to guide priorities on more than 90 airstrips across the United States.”

– RAF Director Tim Riley

resources for airstrips on the Payette, Boise, and Salmon-Challis National Forests. The coordination and collaboration with RAF and other partners that has been occurring will lead to greater success and productivity in maintaining critical infrastructure of these airstrips,” Riley said.

Dave Irvin, Idaho Aviation Association Region 7 Director had this to say:

“Early this spring the RAF was instrumental in organizing important conference calls with Joe Alexander (Forest Service Region 1 Director) and Chris Hartman.

This communication provided the foundation for projects, now in progress. The IAA was able to mobilize both a long-term care-

taker for Big Creek, and help with significant maintenance at Bernard Airstrip. This was a direct result of this early planning and communication. Communication, cooperation, and teamwork is the key to future success.”

Dan Conner, Airport Manager for Idaho Dep’t of Aeronautics explained his challenges managing airstrips under a variety of state and federal ownership. “With the opening of Hoodoo, Idaho Division of Aeronautics will manage 32 airports from the Nevada Border to the Canadian Border,” he said. Of these, a handful have amenities like caretakers, showers, internet, campgrounds and courtesy cars, like Cavanaugh Bay, Johnson Creek, Garden Valley and Smiley Creek. “Big Creek is up on the list also,” he added. “I credit our two full time utility craftsmen, seven seasonal caretakers and a handful of volunteers,” he said, adding, “I also couldn’t do a fraction of what we do without the relationships we have with the IAA and the RAF. Working with these amazing people along with the cooperation of the Forest Service and BLM, I feel like we are all working towards the greater good of aviation in Idaho’s backcountry.”

Hartman sums up the key theme, saying, “Our cooperation and relationship have grown and flourished and we look forward to our continuing partnership into the future.”

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*The RAF also enlists Ambassadors to represent the RAF at events. See current list on page 7.*

*Front page flag photo: Trigger Gap, Arkansas – Jim Stevenson 2020 photo contest submission.*

## Trigger Gap Pavilion; Richland Creek continued from pg 1

and a place to charge your electronics. You'll be able to build a fire to take the chill off the evening and reflect on the day around the fireplace.

A team of volunteers has worked to construct the pavilion from the ground up. The RAF thanks to all who have contributed to this project thus far.

### Volunteers Improve Richland Creek

In addition to all the work accomplished at Trigger Gap, volunteers took on projects at Richland Creek airfield, 4AR9. They constructed a composting toilet similar to Trigger Gap and erected a gazebo with wood cut by the same Amish supplier who provided timbers for the Trigger Gap pavilion.

"Trigger Gap and Richland Creek are two more examples of the best that the RAF can be...not only did we build structures, but once again we built community," said RAF Chairman John McKenna. "Big thanks goes out to the folks who traveled near and far to help as well as to those that contributed the funding needed to buy what hard work alone could not." Both Trigger Gap and Richland Creek listings can be found in the Airfield Guide.



*Above: Gazebo at Richland Creek – Arkansas RAF Team photo.*

"Great place, I have camped there with both my Luscombe and Cherokee 180. Might add 4M1 (Berryville, AR) close by is a great place for fuel and supplies as they have courtesy cars and very friendly FBO." – *Butch, May 2021*

## Arizona– Grapevine proves worthy of preservation

Years ago, the Arizona Pilots Association recognized the value of Grapevine, 88AZ, an asphalt airstrip on the Tonto National Forest. It lies within Sonoran Desert terrain near Roosevelt Lake, the largest body of water in central Arizona.

"Sadly, this incredible airstrip was in ruins after twenty-six years of abandonment," RAF Arizona Liaison and APA board member Mark Spencer said. "Thanks to the willing hands and open wallets of members of the Arizona Pilots Association, Recreational Aviation Foundation, and cooperation by the US Forest Service, Grapevine has been open the last six years."



*Attack helicopters on the ground at Grapevine, AZ – Stefanie Spencer photo.*

But Grapevine has also proven its worth for more than recreational access. For the second year in a row, the strip was closed to all but fire fighting aircraft as a critical base for fire operations in the area.

The airstrip is also used occasionally by the military, such as the 68th RQS from Davis Monthan AFB for search and rescue training.

This strategic location became available thanks to the many volunteers who worked grueling hot days sealing cracks. They organized a seal coating company to apply a heavy top coat to its entire length, and a chapter of the 99's then painted the markings. This spring, volunteers spread hundreds of yards of materials along the runway edges. The material and a new vault toilet were purchased through the USFS allocation for backcountry airstrips, made available through the continued efforts of the RAF in Washington, DC.

The groups continue to cooperate on continuing maintenance. "It takes all kinds of people and sacrifice to make something great like Grapevine a reality," Spencer added.

As of this writing, Grapevine remains closed due to fire activity. Check NOTAMS and TFRs before planning flights in the vicinity.



The Airfield Guide ([www.airfield.guide](http://www.airfield.guide)) is an interactive resource to help plan your next flying journey. If you're interested in recreational aviation and backcountry flying, you've come to the right place. RAF state liaisons are surveying and adding listings regularly. Currently there are nearly 300 listings. Once you register, you'll receive invitations to explore new listings. You'll find information like lat/long, elevation, ownership, and CTAF. Proximity to recreation like swimming, hiking, mountain biking, camping, lodging, horseback riding, restaurants and WiFi availability is included. Some include videos of approaches and departures.

You'll find important Safety Briefings, **some of which are required prior to landing**. The "Manage Tour" feature enables you to plan a flight of several locations, and send it to your friends who automatically receive associated Safety Briefings. Your "Tour" interfaces with ForeFlight® as well.

Register at [www.airfield.guide](http://www.airfield.guide) and begin planning your next adventure — brought to you by the RAF in association with Tailwind Aviation Foundation.

"We camped at Johnson Lake twice last summer to and from Idaho on two different trips. I credit the Airfield Guide for helping me find Johnson Lake. Terrific stop for cross-country trips. Another one which worked out great on two occasions is Miracle Mile in Wyoming, which was discovered thanks to the Airfield Guide!" – *Martin, January 2021*

## Ryan Fly-in cont'd from page 1

of the pilot shelter for a rock painting art project..

Shoppers bought new selections of RAF logo wear and gear in the barn.

Power tools could be heard all weekend as volunteers continued working on barn projects. Rain gutters went up, and inside, visitors were delighted with hot and cold running water in the front sinks, and admired the tile work progressing in the two restrooms.

The outdoor propane all-the-hot-water-you-want shower was in use until nearly midnight.

Honors for farthest flyer went to RAF member Tom Craig from North Carolina and his guest John Clary from Naples, FL in Craig's Cessna 180.

On Sunday, RAF New York Liaison Doug Turnbull arrived in his SuperCruiser on his leisurely cross country from his home in Bloomfield, NY.

Sunday morning most guests took advantage of the cool, calm mountain air to depart. Several remained to continue working on the barn. The RAF is grateful for all who helped make this year's fly-in so enjoyable, and for the continuing efforts of volunteers and supporters who have contributed to this special place.

*Front page Ryan Fly-in group photo – Voortex Productions;*

*Top Right: Youth and experience share conversation at Ryan; Kids practice passing a football on the field – John McKenna photos.*



## Alaska – Historic NPS marker dedication; RAF joins local groups on May Creek airstrip maintenance

The bars, brothels and hospital, school, and gymnasium are long gone in what was formerly the bustling town of McCarthy, Alaska, at the foot of the Wrangell mountains adjacent to the Kennecott mine, but its history is intact. And now, just across a footbridge, a series of “way-side” panels commemorate the many miners who lost their lives in the dangerous pursuit of underground copper mining for Kennicott Copper Mining Company, now the Kennecott Mines National Historic Landmark.

RAF Alaska Liaison Al Clayton, a longtime member of Pioneers of Alaska, had participated in the panel installations, and gathered with members of the Pioneers, the Flying Rotarians, local community members, and representatives of the National Park Service for the June 19 dedication ceremony, co-hosted by the Pioneers of Alaska and Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve.

That same weekend, Clayton hosted the Fifth Annual Aviators/Pioneers of Alaska Expedition fly-in at his Fireweed airstrip, OAK8, eight miles southwest of Kennicott, which

served as the camping place for the group. An estimated 100 people attended with 25 aircraft and other vehicles.

RAF, Pioneers, International Fellowship of Flying Rotarians and EAA Chapter 42 volunteers flew out Sunday in ten planes with eighteen volunteers and descended into historic May Creek, MYK. With weed whackers, loppers and other tools, they cleared brush from the approach at the southern end of the airstrip, around the “mail shack” and around the overgrown tie down area.

The airstrip features a National Park Service public use cabin available at no cost on a first-come, first-served basis and provides access to a host of recreational opportuni-

ties, including biking and hiking a network of roads, and access to the Nizina River for rafting.



*Top: RAF Alaska Liaison Al Clayton, (at right) with NPS Superintendent Ben Bobowski and Interpretive Supervisor Jamie Hart at the Kennicott cemetery wayside dedication ceremony on June 19 – National Park Service photo.*

*Bottom: Work party volunteers line up at May Creek – Patty Smith photo.*



“Thanks to all who made and make this spectacular place better, safer and accessible ! We flew up there from Arkansas in 2017, stayed at the NPS lodge and had outstanding fly outs for three days visiting the area and stopping in at May Creek. Truly A Wonderful Adventure !! “ – Ken D., July 2021

## Team Building – RAF adds three State Liaisons

For a complete roster of RAF State Liaisons, see [www.theRAF.org](http://www.theRAF.org)



### Jeff DeFrest, Alaska

Jeff began flying in 1972 then paused during his career as a US Forest Service geologist in Idaho, Oregon, and Utah, then Alaska in 2001.

His introduction to backcountry flying was in Utah. He flew SuperCubs in Arizona while studying to become a certified minerals examiner for the USFS. He earned his PPL in Alaska in 2002, adding a Seaplane rating at Kenmore Air. He added his Instrument, then both Comm SES and SEL in Alaska flying Beavers, and earned his Comm MEL in Arizona.

From 2010-2017, Jeff was District Ranger for the 3.3 million acre Ketchikan-Misty Fjords District on the Tongass National Forest.

For their first anniversary, Jeff and his wife Kari bought a Skywagon on floats to visit the many USFS lake cabins in SE Alaska. While working in Juneau, he had collateral duties in the lands program, and for the fire aviation program with single engine air tankers.

Jeff retired in 2020, but continues to work on-call for the fire aviation program, helps with Hunter Education, and was appointed to the Alaska Minerals Commission.

Kari and Jeff are passionate about preserving access to the USFS cabins on the spectacular lakes in Southeast Alaska.



### Chris Sullivan, South Carolina

A lifelong resident of Greenville County, South Carolina, Chris started flying in 1991 inspired by his Uncle John who had been a Marine Corps fighter pilot in the Pacific theater, and later flew a Mooney for business.

"Back in the early sixties, Greenville was a sleepy little Southern town. When Uncle John's business travel brought him close, he'd buzz the house and the family would drive out to the airport to meet him," Chris says.

Chris serves with the local Civil Air Patrol squadron, and the Upstate Aviation Club which hosts monthly social affairs.

Chris discovered the RAF online. At first, it seemed to him that there isn't a lot of "backcountry" flying in South Carolina, especially after having spent several weeks flying to Alaska and down the coast of Oregon and California. He made what he calls "a modest contribution" to the RAF because "it was something that needs to be protected," he said.

He got involved with the RAF project at Creighton Island, and says, "the world of backcountry flying was bigger than I realized," adding, "South Carolina is experiencing an accelerating development boom, which makes protecting what we have even more important."



### Steve Goebel, Texas

The RAF has added a second liaison in the state of Texas, long-time member Steve Goebel.

Steve's father was an airline pilot, "whose passion was aviation," Steve adds, so he was surrounded with airplanes his entire life. Steve soloed as a teenager and has since acquired more than 10,000 hours of flying time. He has flown professionally for Part 135 and 121 companies, but says, "For the last few years, I have enjoyed the freedoms and advantages of personal flying." He owns a Skywagon and a Husky, and his C185 has taken him to 49 states and several provinces.

Steve and his wife, Vicky now own and operate the Diamond V Ranch in Mountain Home, Texas. Goebel Field, 4TS5 was inspired by and dedicated to Steve's Dad. It is listed in the Airfield Guide.

While serving the International 180/185 Club as president, Steve became aware of the RAF's accomplishments over several years. When his tenure with the Skywagon Club ended, he was ready to volunteer for the RAF. Steve joins current RAF Texas Liaison Tres Clinton, owner of C3 Air flight school in Burnet, Texas.

## RAF salutes Utah Back Country Pilots for 25 years of effort and success

The RAF salutes Utah Back Country (UBCP) for over 25 years of success. It is reported that UBCP originated in July of 1997 at 7,000 feet during a conversation on 122.9 around Snowville Utah, returning from Idaho's backcountry. These pilots realized Idaho's recreational airstrips were secure thanks to an organization that protected and maintained them. "We have a handful of strips as beautiful as anything in Idaho," one said. "Why aren't we doing anything to protect them?" And the motive to organize an effort to protect Utah's backcountry began with a small but vibrant community of backcountry aviation enthusiasts who shared a common goal: Save backcountry flying and camping beside one's airplane for future generations.

Over 75% of Utah's land is publicly-owned and UBCP volunteers

learned the tools for dealing effectively with state and federal public lands managers and the bureaucracies involved. Since then, UBCP has prevailed in protecting these airstrips, some requiring legal action all the way to the federal level. As a result of UBCP's efforts, many airstrips have appeared again on Utah's Aeronautical Chart, available for public use.

UBCP has grown to an organization with several related goals in addition to preservation of airstrips. Safety through experience, promoting responsible use practices, and building community are the four pillars of their values.

Their dynamic website offers a wealth of information on Utah's airstrips, including timely condition reports. See [utahbackcountrypilots.org](http://utahbackcountrypilots.org).



## Riley named to RAF Board of Directors



Tim Riley of Driggs, Idaho has stepped up from his RAF Idaho Liaison position to a seat on the RAF Board of Directors. Riley has devoted many volunteer hours organizing and assisting on airstrip improvements in Idaho and Montana. He has worked closely with the US Forest Service to foster cooperation and support RAF goals on public lands across the country.

“We are excited to welcome Tim to the leadership team of the RAF,” said RAF President Bill McGlynn. “He has already shown his tremendous enthusiasm for our mission with his initiatives in Idaho and we look forward to his creativity on a national scale.”

Riley is a native of upstate New York. His early introduction to aviation was in a Beaver on floats in the Adirondacks. He has lived and traveled around the world during a career in the data networking and security industry.

Starting with hang gliders and paragliders, Tim has flown foot-launched gliders thousands of miles across the Western US. “You never knew where the day was going to end, but it was guaranteed to be an adventure,” he says.

As his kids grew, Tim switched to airplanes to share the joy of flying with his family, accumulating over 30 years of recreational flying experience. “From Baja to the Florida Everglades, from Mount Rushmore to Niagara Falls, recreational aviation is an incredible way to see the country,” he says. He also owned a flight school and maintenance shop, providing new and used aircraft sales. Tim has served on the Driggs Airport Board and currently volunteers to fly animal rescue flights. Tim and his wife Janette – also a rated pilot – enjoy hiking, kayaking, skiing, and especially backcountry flying and camping.

“By far, over the years, the best thing about flying has been the incredible number of kind and generous people we’ve met,” Tim says, adding, “the RAF is the epitome of this flying and family spirit. It is a privilege to work with such a group on preserving access for everyone to enjoy.”

## Our VP’s of Appreciation

*The RAF is proud of its all-volunteer crew of folks who write personal, individual thank you notes to each donor for supporting the RAF mission.*

- Diane Goodwin, Arkansas
- Kim Capozzi, Florida
- Carol Strong, Idaho
- Barbet Mason, Maine
- Ashley Castner, Minnesota
- Margie Prill, Montana
- Meghann McKenna, Montana
- Sarah Mayes, Oregon
- Penny Hergenrather, Texas
- Patty Bunce, Wisconsin

## RAF Ambassador Team

Our enthusiastic RAF Ambassadors serve at work parties and aviation events

Arizona	Jeffrey Iorio	Michigan	John Riordan
Arkansas	Donna Perkins	Minnesota	Paul Noskowiak
Arkansas	Presley Melton	Minnesota	Amy Gesch
Colorado	Michael Langersmith	Missouri	Jim and Sarah Dickerson
Colorado	Alex Ruehle	Missouri	Jim Rhodes
Colorado	Sam Chambers	Nebraska	Mark Farrell
Colorado	Bill Murrish	Nevada	Fred Williams
Colorado	Kurt Pennuto	New Mexico	Larry Filener
Connecticut	Greg Delp	New York	Bob Anderson
Connecticut	DJ Nicholson	New York	Sarah Tamar
Florida	Debra Folsom	North Dakota	Jeff Faught
Florida	Wes Whitley	ND and MN	Rick Mercil
Florida	Joe DeLeon	Ohio	Gabriel Jaszczak
Florida	Lynn Gardner	Oregon	Bill Ables
Florida	Wendy Sosa	Oregon	Alan Cossitt
Florida	Samantha Inguanzo	South Carolina	Bill Repucci
Georgia	Eric Davis	South Dakota	Ray Jilek
Idaho	Andrew Simmons	Tennessee	Cal Scholten
Illinois	David Warner	Texas	Mike Hergenrather
Illinois	Tom Scott	TX and MT	Steve Maus
Indiana	John “JC” Carroll	Virginia	Jeremy Vaughan
Iowa	Ken Warren	Washington	Ray Ballantyne
Kansas	Bruce Latvala	Washington	Jered Paine
Maine	Jeremy Harmon	West Virginia	Jack Soronen
Maine	Zach Monroe	Wisconsin	Charlie Miller
Maryland	Craig McCullough	Wisconsin	Bill Mecozzi
Maryland	Dhruv Thakkar	Wisconsin	Austin Levin

## The Flying Latvalas Father and Son

Our RAF Ambassador from central Kansas spends much of his time aloft delivering aircraft and mentoring pilot customers for Textron Aviation (Cessna Aircraft Company).



When the call went out for RAF volunteers to help raise the Ryan Barn, Bruce Latvala arrived in his company flying club’s new Cessna 172. And with Bruce, we got a double benefit – his father Jerry arrived all the way from Georgia’s St. Simons Island in his Mooney and did a lot of heavy lifting as well.

Bruce gets out West to enjoy backcountry flying as often as his work allows. Soon you may see him in the new RV-8 he is building.

A few of his favorite destinations are Moose Creek, Thomas Creek, Cornucopia, North Fox Island, and Richland Creek.

Beyond aviation, Bruce’s recreational passions include rock climbing and touring by kayak.

## New Mexico – Me-Own offers access to Wilderness

The RAF cooperates with New Mexico Pilots Association, and during the April 30-May 2 weekend, nine planes and 16 volunteers from both organizations worked to improve Me-Own Airstrip, 1NM0. This remote airstrip lies at an elevation of 7,554 and is special in that it is close to the Gila Wilderness Area, and immediately

adjacent to the Aldo Leopold Wilderness area.

RAF New Mexico Liaison Ron Keller reports that the group cleared encroaching trees and rebuilt the segmented circle to include traffic arms. “One pilot, new to Me-Own, flew all the way from Steamboat Springs, Colorado to help,” Keller said.

“Many of us hiked into the Wilderness after the work was finished,” Keller added.

New Mexico Pilots maintain a very informative website listing details about its backcountry airstrips, [www.nmpilots.org](http://www.nmpilots.org).

See the Airfield Guide for more information on Me-Own.

## New York – Marcy Field gets second RAF safety grant

Marcy Field, 111 is a 2,390 turf airfield near Keene, New York in the Adirondack Mountains, and has been awarded a second



RAF grant to enhance safety. Locals had expressed concern about the potential for planes hitting cars or pedestrians on the runway. “This seems to be an issue especially on Sunday when the farm market is open,” said RAF New York Liaison Doug Turnbull.

Turnbull is using the grant to purchase ten durable aluminum signs to be posted along the runway to protect against vehicle and pedestrian encounters. Assistant Airport Manager Bob Rose confirmed that the Town of

Keene will provide stakes and complete the sign installation. This is the second successful cooperative project between the RAF and the Town of Keene. In 2020 an RAF grant was awarded to remove encroaching trees and brush. The Town provided equipment and manpower, and local volunteers known as the Adirondack Aviators Group helped accomplish the work.

Find details about Marcy Field in the Airfield Guide.   
– Bob Burley photo.

## Michigan – Two Hearted Airstrip future improvements funded

RAF Michigan Liaison Brad Frederick has been awarded an RAF grant for improvements at Two Hearted River airstrip, 6Y5 north of Newberry, on Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. Michigan RAF member Jeff Littmann has generously offered to match the RAF grant funds to leverage the project budget even more.



### ***In the meantime, the airport is closed.***

“This airstrip already fulfilled the RAF mission when we opened it in 2017,” Frederick said, adding, “This project is just making it safer for a wider range of small aircraft.”

The airport is owned by Michigan’s Dep’t of Natural Resources, and in order to issue an operational license, the state’s Aeronautics Dep’t determined that the airstrip needed additional work to increase safety.

Frederick has organized volunteers who will donate labor and heavy excavating equipment operation to level a rise in the runway and fill low spots. An Off Road Vehicle trail will also be moved to mitigate potential conflicts between aircraft and vehicles. The project in-

tends to increase runway length by two hundred feet to 2,400 ft. useable feet.

Two Hearted River offers world class seasonal trout fishing, according to Frederick. The airstrip is within walking distance to a State Forest campground. In addition to the recreational opportunities, Frederick said Two Hearted could provide an option for distressed aircraft in this remote area, and could be used by DNR fire fighting aircraft.

“Rainbow Lodge owners Richard and Kathy Robinson own land we lease for part of the airfield,” Frederick said, “and they have been very cooperative throughout the work.”

The work is scheduled in August. See the Airfield Guide.   
– RAF photo.

“It was great to have Brad Frederick come talk to our EAA Chapter to keep us up to date on Michigan RAF projects. Can’t wait to visit Two Hearted River.”   
– Karl K., Michigan



## Florida – RAF ready to assist to keep Wakulla open for public use

The RAF has Wakulla County Airport, 2J0 on its watchlist, thanks to RAF Florida Liaison Bobby Capozzi who became aware that the County was considering closing it, due to complaints of large aircraft noise.

The turf airport is just down the Coastal Highway from Panacea, Florida. Recreational opportunities include Gulf fishing and boating, hiking, bird watching, and a live “Gator cam” that reveals fascinating underwater life.

Capozzi and AOPA’s Southern Regional Manager Steve Hodges attended a County planning session in June. Capozzi handed in a letter from the RAF stating in part that RAF volunteers cooperate with airport entities, communities, pilots and non-pilots, and other key stakeholders in helping airfields thrive.

“Recreational flying is one of the fastest growing segments of aviation. We are working harder than ever to save special places across the U.S. We recognize Wakulla as one of those special places, with its abundant recreation opportunities—hiking, biking and water based activities in close proximity,” it concluded.

The Wakulla News reported that local resident Jim Parham presented a Power Point to the commissioners addressing their concerns. “It’s not that they (residents) want to close the airport, but they want to keep it as it has historically been used, with light aircraft.”

Capozzi was pleased with the vote, saying, “in a surprising reversal, one hundred percent of them chose to invest \$2,500 and

forge ahead with keeping the airport open.” The money will pay for brush trimming and moving a fire hydrant in order to bring the airport into compliance.

See Wakulla County airport in the Airfield Guide.

*Cub curiosity at Wakulla County Airport Fly-in*  
– Airport Manager Steven Fults photo.



## Oregon – RAF grants funds for continued McKenzie Bridge maintenance

McKenzie Bridge Airport, 00S in the Central Oregon Cascades is popular with recreational aviators. It provides access to the McKenzie River, mountain bike trails, and remote camping. “Following the inspirational example set by the long term commitment of Oregon Pilot Association and RAF members Paul and Robin Ehrhardt, volunteers have been instrumental in maintaining and improving the McKenzie Bridge airport,” RAF Oregon Liaison Richard Mayes said. “Our efforts have been acknowledged by both the Oregon Department of Aviation and the US Forest Service. The positive outcomes at McKenzie Bridge demonstrate how collaboration between the RAF and public land managers can benefit the recreational aviation community,” he added.

For the past three years Mayes has organized at least two volunteer work parties each year to perform maintenance and safety improvements at the airport. To support these efforts, Mayes was awarded an RAF grant to mow and under-

take improvements to the airfield.

Oregon RAF volunteers began this year’s efforts in June. Using funds from the RAF grant, they rented a tractor and mower to mow the airfield, and used string trimmers to clear the tie-downs. The state-owned airport lies within the Willamette National Forest, and the USFS used a portion of this year’s federally allocated funds to provide additional improvements. A new picnic table and RAF fire ring supplied by the USFS were assembled and installed by volunteers Jim Campbell, Ed Stryker, Jeff Thompson, Todd Colver, and Kent Couch.

Discussions are ongoing with the USFS to construct an improved camping area on the southeast side of the runway. See the Airfield Guide for more information on McKenzie Bridge State Airport.

**See NOTAMS for TFRs in the region due to fire fighting activity, and forest airstrip closures due to high risk.**



*Above: Enjoying McKenzie Bridge State Airport;*  
*Below: Anchoring the new picnic table at July work party*

– Richard Mayes photos.

“[Richard Mayes] coordinates many airfield improvements with the support of local and federal governmental agencies that otherwise wouldn’t get accomplished. Thanks Rick for your many efforts at promoting the interests of all RAF members, but especially those in the Pacific Northwest.” – Jeff T., May 2021



When friends gather around the fire ring, there are plenty of good stories. We're capturing stories from coast to coast and presenting them in our RAF and Backcountry Flying podcasts. Find them on Spotify and Apple Podcasts, or on the RAF website.

Host RAF President Bill McGlynn is adding interviews we think you'll enjoy. Each guest shares personal stories of how they were attracted to the RAF, its engaging people, its mission, and of course, you may hear a few flying yarns.



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## Virginia – Volunteers create new campground at Barrows Field

Barrows Field, VA04 is an RAF supported grass airfield near Roanoke, Virginia in the Shenandoah Valley along the Catawba Creek, home to R&B Aircraft, makers of Bearhawk aircraft. To make the field more of a recreational destination with ameni-



John Ely barbecues for the crew – RAF photo.

ties, owner Bob Barrows requested a little help from the RAF.

RAF Virginia Liaison Alan White surveyed the needs and was awarded an RAF grant to make improvements. "There are very few airstrips along the east coast that are catering to the airplane camper," White said.

Over a dozen folks showed up and pitched in over Mother's Day weekend. "We accomplished all of the planned activities," White reported, and "A special thanks goes to EAA Chapter 1031 out of Winchester for their great support of this project," he added.

Workers felled trees that were encroaching on the approach. They developed a camping area adjacent to the river, and installed an RAF fire ring. They assembled

a picnic table, blazed a new river walk trail from the campground to the existing hiking trail and cleared downed trees from the trails. The group installed signs pointing out the campground and trails. "We all ate lunch at our new picnic table," he said.

"The finishing touch after any major accomplishment is to raise the victory flag and that's just what we did," White said, adding, "An official RAF windsock was installed and now flies proudly over Barrows Field."

Seven of the crew decided they "had to give the new campground a proper initiation" and pitched their tents. After John Ely's barbecued dinner campers enjoyed sitting around the new RAF fire ring.

Find more about Barrows Field in the Airfield Guide.

"Love this! Hoping to finish my Bearhawk in the next few months and looking forward to a visit."

– Larry D, June, 2021

## Montana – RAF helps MPA work on airstrips

**Spotted Bear accomplishments** – In late May 20 people representing the RAF, Montana Pilots Association, and Montana Aeronautics helped maintain Spotted Bear Forest Service airstrip, 8U4 along the South Fork of the Flathead River in northwest Montana. RAF Montana Liaison Scott Newpower reported that MPA President Mike Vivion flew in, and Montana Aeronautics Bureau Chief Marc McKee flew in with his father. “We wish to thank Aeronautics for the many years of partnership on these airstrips,” Newpower said.

Newpower, McKee, Vivion and other MPA and RAF volunteers met informally with the District Ranger for an update on maintenance and development.

The group realigned runway cones, replaced windsocks and repaired the standards. They cleaned and painted the out-house and installed a new shed roof. MPA Western Vice President and RAF member Perry Brown grilled burgers.

**Meadow Creek work** – This year’s MPA work party at Meadow Creek, 0S1 drew 25 folks from Montana and as far away as the Keystone State. RAF and MPA volunteers

flew in, enjoying ideal weather. RAF Pennsylvania Liaison Andy Turner had flown in with his two boys and set aside plans for a hike to help. The boys took turns mowing the entire field and parking areas, logging about six hours on the mower.

Volunteers weed whacked, filled gopher holes and replaced the windsocks. They cut and removed downed trees and cleared trails. RAF member Ry Keller provided a steak lunch, provided by the Kalispell EAA chapter, as has become his much-appreciated tradition.

*Montana Aeronautics’ Mark McKee (left) and his father take a break while painting the Spotted Bear privy – MPA photo.*



### Chance meet at Schafer inspires pilot

RAF Montana Liaison Scott Newpower (in green shirt) flew components for a new gate into Schafer Meadow USFS airstrip recently and was met by some folks who’d been flown in by Red Eagle Aviation of Kalispell, Montana to camp and fish.

They noticed the RAF logo on his shirt and asked about the RAF. Randy Cheney, (at right) is a recently retired airline pilot. “After our talk he’s now excited about buying a plane and getting back into GA, and said they are impressed with the job we do,” Scott said.

The woman offered Scott cash for the RAF. He gave out his card and suggested they join and donate online.

“Randy said he’s looking for something to do with his new-found free time and this might be it,” Scott said, having “planted the RAF seed.”

## Wisconsin – Visitors enjoy local hospitality at Cornucopia

Beginning with Friday evening’s locally-caught whitefish dinner, the Solstice weekend Fly-in at Cornucopia Airport, WI23 was a great success, RAF Director Jeff Russell and Wisconsin Liaison Trever Otto reported. Hosted by the Cornucopia Club and the Cornucopia Business Association, more than thirty airplanes showed up at the 2,000-ft turf airfield near Lake Superior and, “there were smiles all around,” Russell said.

“This airport wouldn’t exist today if it were not for the dedication of the Cornucopia Club,” Russell explained. The Club assumed mowing responsibilities from the Town of Bell in the 1980s, averting its closure.

“The natural beauty of the area is absolutely spectacular,” Russell says. “But as important is the warmth and generosity of the people that call this place home,” he added. Locals turned out to provide rides into the village. Others came to empty the

garbage; some donated firewood, others ran electricity to the new pilot shelter and installed device charging stations. “And some joined us for our evening social events and dinners. A small town welcome at its best,” Russell said.

The airport is adjacent to the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. Visitors kayaked to the sea caves, many enjoyed hiking, fishing, biking, and spending quality time at the campfire. “There were a bunch of kids there too, and I saw them having lots of fun,” Russell added.

The event is free, but this year, attendees’ donations were sufficient to cover some costs, and Russell and Otto provided a substantial amount to the Cornucopia Club toward mowing and maintenance of the field, managed by Tim Kaseno.

In 2019, the Village of Cornucopia enthusiastically helped raise funds that Russell leveraged with an RAF grant. Village

and RAF volunteers built a pilot shelter, tie-downs, picnic tables and procured loaner bicycles for the one-mile ride into town. Russell’s prediction, that “Cornucopia is going to continue to benefit from the exposure we have given to their little slice of heaven with lots of returning pilots.” has come true.

For information about Cornucopia, see the Airfield Guide.

*Hikers head toward lake Superior from Cornucopia airfield on Solstice weekend – RAF photo.*





*Alaska's West Turner Lake US Forest Service historic cabin,  
Tongass National Forest – Jeff DeFreest photo.*

*The Recreational Aviation Foundation preserves, improves, and creates airstrips for recreational access.  
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