Issue 35 October 2026



SKYWRITER

Calgary Recreational Flying Club

COPA Flight 114

CALGARY RECREATIONAL FLYING CLUB

COPA

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

Our Mission

Promoting the safe enjoyment of aviation for pilots, aircraft builders and enthusiasts.

Our Vision

Welcoming owners and pilots of all types of aircraft including ultra-light, amateur-built, certified and other types of aircraft.

Connecting members through regular meetings, monthly newsletters, our website, social media, BBQ's and fly-outs.

Exchanging knowledge and information about flying and flight safety, and aircraft construction and maintenance via meeting presentations, newsletters and other events.

Sharing and enjoying real-world flying adventures.

THIS ISSUE

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Featured on the Cover:

A beautiful picture taken by Brian Vasseur at 20,000' on a recent trip to Fairmont, BC in a TBM700 turboprop. Story to follow next month.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

October 2026 ***BRIAN VASSUER***



An amazing month

September was an amazing month for flying and I got a lot of flights in. I also flew a lot of different aircraft which was alot of fun. I was able to fly a Mooney, a Lancair ES, an RV6, a C172 and a C170. I also got to fly right seat in a TBM850 but I didn't actually touch anything.

I was in the back seat in the 170 but that's because my Dad was up front in the left seat. It's been about 40 years since he last flew his 170 so he was very happy to have an opportunity to fly one again.



I've also been to quite a few airports and I'm pleased to announce that you can buy gas in Drumheller now. Fill up before ice cream so it doesn't melt all over the wing when you're fueling. The cardlock system in Drumheller is new and it's different than most other airports. It has 4 buttons on each side of the screen but the display pages are laid out as though it is a touch screen which is confusing to many people. When I was there I had to help several people figure it out because they kept touching the screen and not the buttons. It also asks for a registration but you can put in any 5 characters and it will accept that. Once you're past that you can fill up and get ice cream or use the car to drive into town to eat.

I'm making very good progress on my RV6 and with some extra hands it's coming together quickly. For the longest time I was making a lot of harnesses and assemblies but now that they are being assembled it's looking like it could fly soon.

One last topic I wanted to mention was the concerns with aviation medicals. Many of us are of that age where medical concerns may be enough to ground you temporarily at your next exam. The doctors have access to Netcare so you need to be honest as any medical items your regular doctor has seen will be there. It is still taking awhile for many people to get through the process although a few people with minor things like cataract surgery have had good success. Sleep Apnea is also an item that is coming up alot so if you are carrying a few extra pounds or snore at night you may get asked for a sleep test to get approved at your next review.

It looks like there will be several more months of good flying so take the opportunity to get out before it gets really cold.

Brian Vasseur



Skywriter Update

Newsletter Editor **GREG LABINE**



Big Thanks!

We owe a big thanks to two of our members for stepping forward to volunteer for positions on the Executive. **Carl Forman** as the **Secretary/Treasurer** and **Brian Taylor** as a **Director**. Thanks guys, this club relies on the valuable contributions from those who volunteer to work on our Executive Board.

This month we have a really important article from Brian Vasseur on the criticality of performing Maintenance Tasks correctly using the proper parts, materials and techniques. Very good insights and advice in this one.

Also from Brian, a great story on a flight he and Jackie recently made to Salmon Arm. It includes some really good pictures and comments on the route choices on this trip.

Myself, I've resumed work on my Merlin project, which has sat on the back burner for some time, since I started work on the Cobra. More info to follow on this later.

This month you may notice that my sole content contributor is Brian. I do appreciate all the material he and Stu provide, but I would really appreciate any pictures, captions or stories any of you may also have. Flights you've done, projects you're working on or any other aviation happenings you've enjoyed. Please send them in so I can share them with our group.

Remember, the Final Snowbird performance ever will be during the Greycup game here in Calgary, over McMahon Stadium, Sunday November 15, 2026. ***End of an era for sure. Don't miss it!***

Hope to see you at our next club meeting **Wednesday October 14, 2026 at 19:00 at the Museum.**

Greg.

MAINTENANCE TASKS
By Brian Vasseur



Now that I'm getting fairly old and wise, and I have a few hours flying many different planes, I have been getting requests to inspect and test fly planes as they are completed.

I'm not an AME but I have done a lot of maintenance. If I'm doing something I'm not comfortable with then I get expert advice instead of guessing.

I've noticed that no matter what plane I fly that there is at least one thing that isn't working or isn't working as well as it should. Usually it's something minor like a loose piece of trim or cracked fairings but its still surprising things get overlooked even during the annual.

In this article I'm going to discuss some of the items I have come across and how they should have been dealt with. If you see a picture of something from your plane or you recognize yourself in the story I'm not trying to call you out publicly. I'm keeping everything anonymous. Everything here is just so you can learn from other peoples problems.

The first thing I look at is paperwork. I am looking for log entries for ever bit of maintenance done including adding oil. I am not very picky about the correct wording (which is important), but I want to see everything that was touched in the logs. Here's the legal details:

The CARS that cover the work you are doing on the plane are these sections
https://tc.canada.ca/en/corporate-services/acts-regulations/list-regulations/canadian-aviation-regulations-sor-96-433/standards/airworthiness-chapter-549-amateur-built-aircraft/airworthiness-chapter-549-subchapter-general-canadian-aviation-regulations-cars#549.23

https://tc.canada.ca/en/corporate-services/acts-regulations/list-regulations/canadian-aviation-regulations-sor-96-433/standards/standard-625-aircraft-equipment-maintenance-standard-canadian-aviation-regulations-cars

CARS 605 applies as well but the key item there is that you need to keep technical and journey logs and it needs to list every maintenance item on the plane. If you make a change to a critical surface then you need two signatures in both logbooks for that item. You need separate engine and aircraft technical logs which do not stay in the plane. If you have a fixed pitch propellor I would make any log entries to the aircraft log if you don't have a separate prop log.

The first thing I look at is the fuel lines. Normally these will be 3/8" aluminum lines with flared fittings and rubber hose with clamps where rubber fuel line is used for connections or where flexibility is required. Use the correct fuel line and change it at least every 10 years. In the engine compartment these lines should be wrapped in fire sleeve and routed away from things like exhaust. If you are like me and come from the ultralight world, I will not accept the blue and yellow polyethylene fuel lines, even if these are wrapped in fire sleeve. Fuel lines have to be secured along their length. I inspected one aircraft with a long piece of blue fuel line, run through the cockpit and behind the dash, with nothing securing it, and rubbing against various openings.



I also look for fuel leaks by powering up the fuel pump and running the primer several times to look for leaks. Even a drip is dangerous and needs to be fixed.
When connecting pipe thread fittings together you need to use fuel proof pipe dope like Permatex pipe joint compound or what Aircraft Spruce sells. The home depot thread sealant will say GAS on the label but that refers to natural gas and not gasoline or petroleum compounds. Never ever use teflon tape in an aircraft. Tiny pieces can tear out and clog brake fittings, injector lines and carb jets. it's nearly impossible to get all the little pieces out during disassembly so leave it for sinks and toilets.

USE THE CORRECT FUEL PUMP! Carbureted engines are happy with 5PSI fuel pressure, but fuel injection may need as much as 45PSI.

My RV6 with 180HP had a Carb pump for an FI engine. That was quickly swapped out. Facet GOLD pumps are not FAA approved but are a direct swap if you have a certified aircraft pump. These also have a replaceable filter and provide a steady 5PSI. The Facet Universal pump is 1.5-3PSI and doesn't have a filter. The price is $250 vs $60 for the universal, but ask yourself if this is really where you want to save money.

Rubber lasts about 10 years before it hardens and cracks and is no longer flexible. This applies to hydraulic, oil and fuel lines, and also to tires and tubes. If you've spent $25K-$100K on your plane then just spend a bit more money and replace these. Aircraft hoses disassemble from the fittings so you don't need to spend $100 per hose, you can just replace the cheap rubber line. Google how to repair Aeroquip lines.

Use the right bolts. Some moving parts need to use castle nuts and cotter pins, and you have to remember to put in cotter pins. Check the plans to see if you should be using nylon nuts or castle nuts. Don't assume the previous builder did it correctly and keep repeating their mistake. AN/MS hardware is a distinct alloy. A Grade 8 bolt may be cad plated and is stronger than AN hardware but is also more brittle and may break instead of deform like AN bolts will. Bolts from Home Depot and Princess Auto don't go in airplanes. If I see someone has used Robertson screws to attach fairings or inspection plates it's a guarantee I will be looking at that plane much more suspiciously.



Count the threads on the bolt. If more than three threads are showing then the nut is bottomed on the bolt and is not clamping the pieces together. If you don't see at least a full thread then the nylon nut is not secured correctly.

Finally, make sure your bolts are assembled correctly with the right washers. I inspected a plane that had the engine mounts replaced but with the wrong washers reinstalled. The washer was jammed at an angle putting very sharp pressure on the motor mount. In very few hours this would have cut into the mount and started a crack.

Exhaust brackets have a lot of movement and the mounting brackets often have cracks. Some aircraft use automotive brackets which may be less than $10 each to replace.



Wiring seems to be something many people struggle with. Wiring needs to be bundled and secured to prevent movement and keep it from rubbing against other parts of the plane. Aircraft wiring is teflon, has higher quality strands inside, and will be three times the price of Princess Auto. Use the aircraft wiring and put the correct connectors on it. Wiring should not be tightly routed against metal pieces. Make sure all of your switches and breakers are labelled. I won't fly a plane if I can't tell the fuel pump from the flaps.

Is your safety equipment complete and correct. I always check the fire extinguisher, ELT and survival kit including the log entries. I recommend Halon extinguishers even though they are very expensive. The automotive extinguishers aggressively corrode aluminum. If you use a regular extinguisher on an airplane consider it written off as you will not be able to stop the corrosion.

Steam Gauges seem to last about 10 years before they get sticky or just don't work like they should. Rather than look for eBay replacements, consider upgrading to glass. A 3 1/8" glass display that does everything can be purchased for as little as $1000 new and installed very quickly.

Finally, if your aircraft is a basic ultralight then you aren't required to follow any regulations and can use whatever parts you want. Having said that, an airplane isn't something that you should be maintaining using the cheapest parts you can find.

Look at the standards for amateur built planes and consider doing that in your ultralight. If you have an Advanced Ultralight you have to maintain it to the manufacturer standards, you can't deviate without written authorization.

Maintaining my planes is something I enjoy, and I appreciate I don't have to pay $5000 for a fuel selector because I have a certified plane. I do keep in mind though that planes don't have the same crash protection as a new car. Ensuring you can land your plane safely after every takeoff should be the goal every time you take on a new maintenance task.

Brian Vasseur







Some examples of defects detected include fasteners pulled out, fatigue failures, part worn almost completely through, part repeatedly cracked and repaired. Just make a new one!

QUICK TRIP TO CZAM

By Brian Vasseur



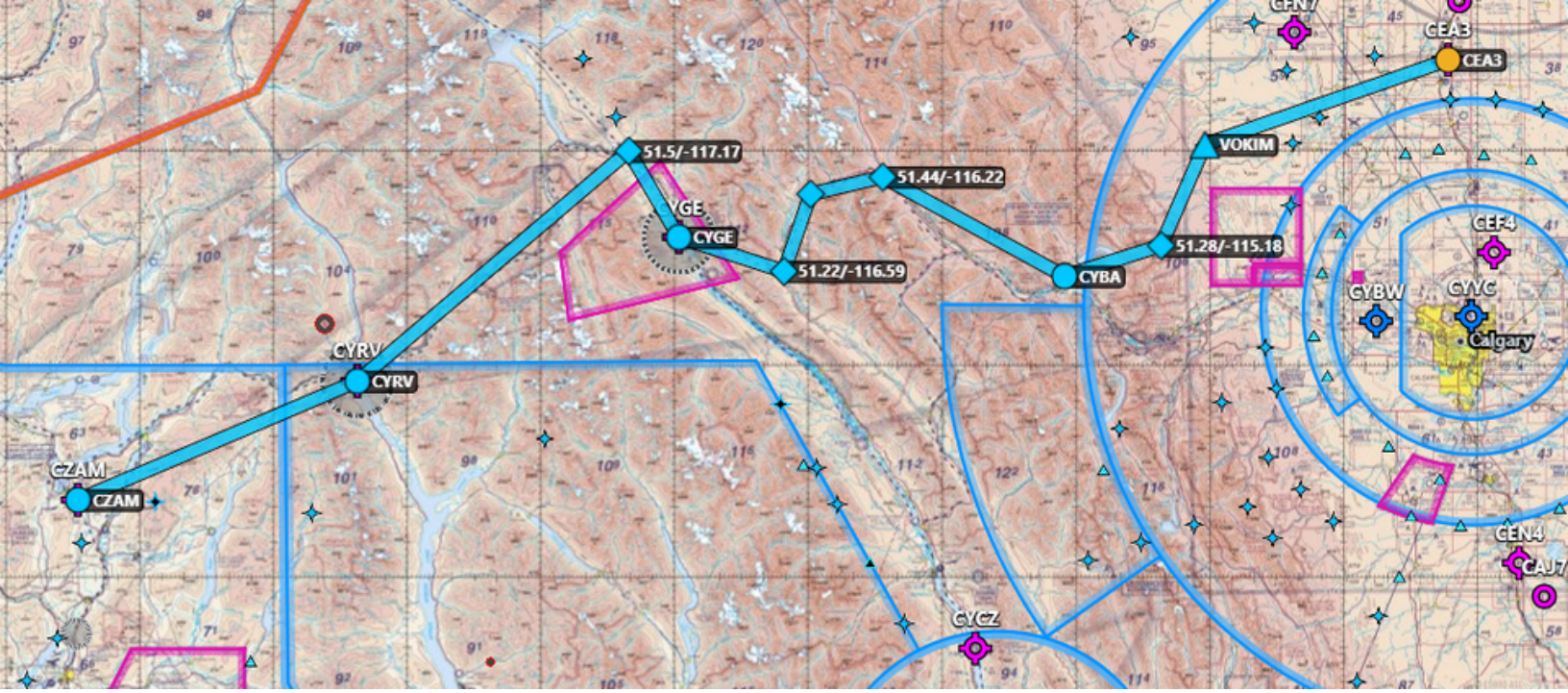


Last weekend we had amazing weather so Jackie and I decided to make a quick trip to Salmon Arm for a few days. Any day on the lake with the sun in the sky and hot weather is a good day.

Talking to Stu and Nav Canada briefing confirmed we could expect glassy smooth both ways. Since I don't have a flying plane I have to rely on the generosity of others and my friend Gord was happy to let me have his Mooney M20C.

This was one of the original Mooneys with manual hydraulic flaps and a big gear lever. The interior was the factory original red crushed velvet (now sun faded to gold) and the original brown paint, at least what hadn't chipped off from being parked outside for many years of its life. But the tires were new and the gas tanks didn't have any leaks and it goes fast so I figured it would be a good plane to take.

Jackie has done a couple short flights with me but nothing further than Linden. She usually opts for the premium WestJet seats when we go places together. The first thing she noted was that the factory original crushed velvet encompassed factory original seat foam. This was now little more than crushed urethane dust providing little to no protection from the steel tube seat frame and ensuring she sat low enough not to be able to see over the dash. I offered to turn back at Banff for better seat cushions but she chose to press on and didn't remind me too many times how uncomfortable she was.



Since we were leaving from Olds Didsbury I chose to skirt the NW practice area by Cremona and head to Banff via Lake Minewanka. From there we would mostly follow Highway 1 to Salmon Arm. A few people have asked why we just didn't go straight overtop and go direct. There's a few problems with that plan. The first is that you need to be at 12,500 to clear the peaks and stay at a westbound altitude, and you put yourself out of reach of assistance on the ground if you run into trouble. You also need permission to be in Class B airspace without the right equipment but that's usually granted in the mountains. We were able to get to 10,500 very quickly so we had no traffic conflicts to worry about.

In any case my route only added about 15 minutes to make it a 2 hour flight and the sights are a lot better. As further justification for this thinking, the day after we got back, another pilot in a Mooney landed on the TransCanada just west of Banff. During an interview on the radio he said his fuel pump failed. He had no injuries or damage and flew the plane out the same day. I always fly with a SPOT so Stu can tell SAR where to find me.

Something I always bring is a big survival kit including a sleeping bag, a handheld radio and a pulse oximeter. I use that for an occasional check to make sure I'm not getting hypoxic. It's never been an issue but as I get older it doesn't hurt to be a bit more diligent.

The Mooney has a newer panel mounted GPS which is great for IFR flying and really helpful for VFR too. I had planned out the trip in Foreflight on my iPad and when I powered up the avionics I got a message on my iPad asking if I wanted to share my flight plan with the plane. I pressed YES, the plane asked if I wanted to activate the new flight plan, and after pressing YES everything including my custom waypoints loaded on the screen. This also works in reverse if you make a flight plan change on the GPS. The GPS also feeds instrument data to the iPad allowing you to turn that into a second EFIS. Very cool technology.

One of the nice things about going to Salmon Arm is that once you're past Revelstoke you can start a descent and fly at more reasonable altitudes. There's lots to see with lakes everywhere and wide valleys with small farms all over.



CZAM airport is at 1700 feet and is 4000 feet long so it's easy to get in and out of. It also gets very busy there. I called in over Blind Bay which is outside of the zone and there were 2 gliders on the runway ready to go and jumpers just about ready to jump at 12,000 feet. This had a few other planes holding near the airport so we headed south towards Enderby waiting for things to clear up. As we passed midfield going south about 3 miles west of the airport we heard jumpers on the ground and saw one of the gliders starting their takeoff. We kept heading south until we heard the glider turn back north. As we turned North we quickly caught them but were well underneath as they were still working their way higher.

I could hear other people on the radio, and the second glider got pulled off the runway to allow planes to land. The plane ahead of me announced down as I was passing midfield so I dropped the gear and all the flaps and setup for a close circuit. I turned base and then crossed the threshold a bit fast but I greased the landing. It turns out it was an Air Cadet gliding weekend so there were about 30 spectators on the grass beside the runway judging me. I'm glad I made a good impression.

The ramp was pretty busy but we found an empty spot to park the plane and chocked the wheels. John McDermott met me and we had a brief conversation about what our plan was. John also met Stu and I almost 20 years earlier when we dropped into Salmon Arm in our ultralights.

We planned our departure for about 2:00 local time the next day. The airport was still very busy and we had a few planes ahead of us to buy gas. I finally got a spot, put 20 gallons in each tank and then pushed back to let more people in. There was a jump plane, transient aircraft, and two air cadet gliders so it was going to be just as busy getting out as it was to get in.

We planned our startup for when we heard the jumpers leave the plane and by the time we got the runup done the jumpers were on the ground and the gliders were hooked up ready to depart. We pulled onto the runway behind the glider and once they were far enough out of the way we took off and headed south.

Rather than turn back on the downwind we went a bit further south and then came back over Mara Lake and then followed our same route back home.



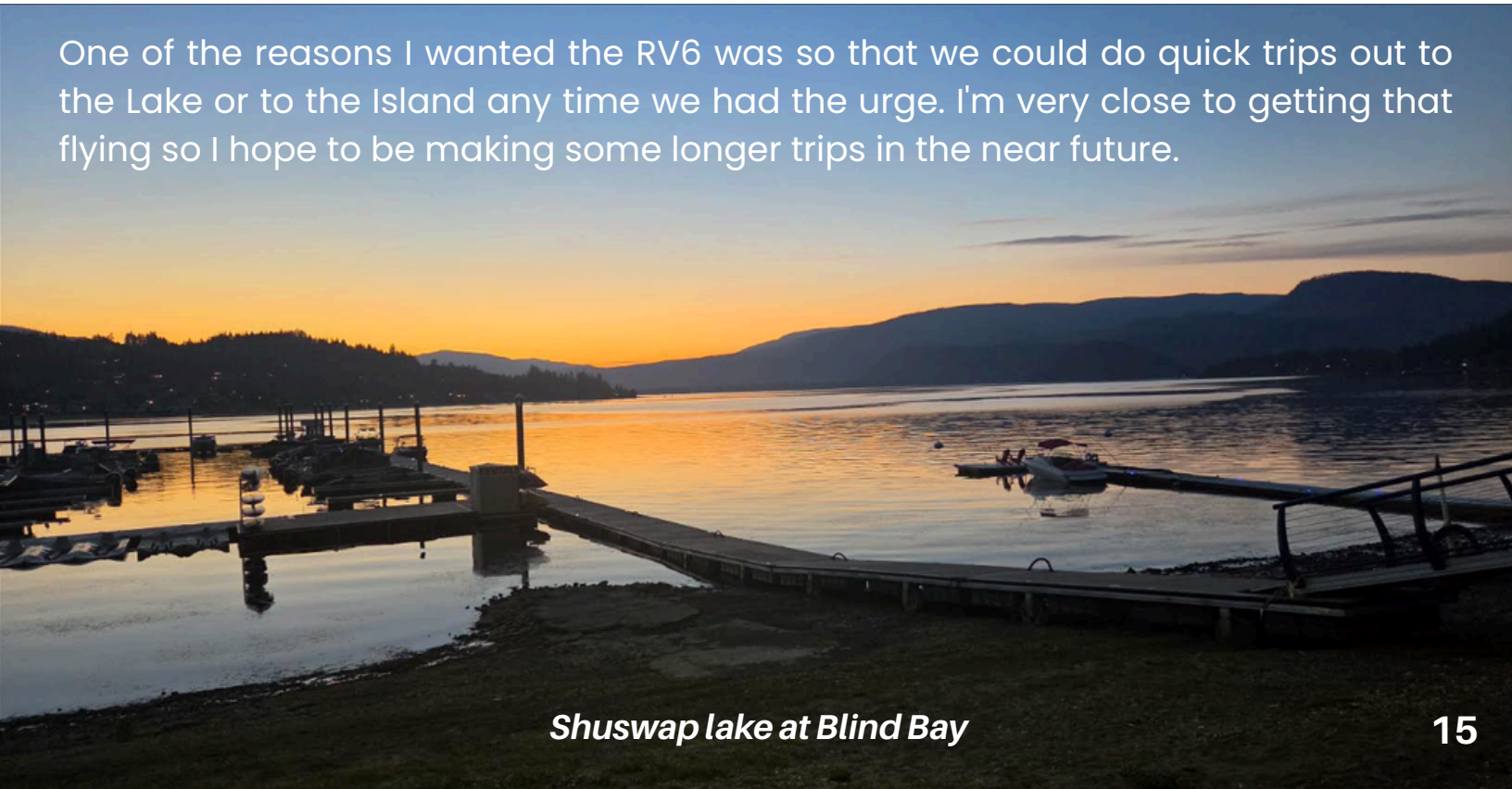
The trip home was a bit different. We noticed visibility wasn't as good from smoke, and as we climbed higher we could see a definite layer where the smoke stopped.

This was expected as the winds and temperatures showed a sharp decline around 10,000 feet on the charts. I got up to about 10,500 feet but it was getting bumpy so we dropped back into smoke at 9500 and it smoothed right out. We were getting a really decent tailwind though and the GPS showed about 170 mph most of the way back. That cut a half hour off of our trip.
What was surprising was that we we not hearing very many planes on 126.7 which was the same on the way out. This was perfect flying weather and it was a missed opportunity if you weren't in the air.

As we exited Lake Minewanka towards Cremona I got onto the frequencies for the training areas by Springbank and Cremona. These are published on the back of the Calgary VTA. There were no conflicts by Springbank but both practice areas were in use at Cremona. I talked to the pilots and I agreed to drop down so they could continue overhead. I went over Cremona at 4500 and then turned direct to Didsbury. There were only a few planes in the circuit at Olds-Didsbury so we got in without delay and parked at the pumps to fuel up the plane.

I made a quick call to close the flight plan and with full tanks taxied the plane back to the hangar. When we took the plane out it was behind a couple of others and it took three of us to work the plane out from behind everything. This time only one plane was in our way. It was a bit of work to get that plane out of the way but then we had lots of room to park the Mooney.

One of the reasons I wanted the RV6 was so that we could do quick trips out to the Lake or to the Island any time we had the urge. I'm very close to getting that flying so I hope to be making some longer trips in the near future.



Shuswap lake at Blind Bay



Calendar of coming Aviation events

First Saturday each month-
CEN3 Three Hills, AB. Fly- Coffee 9:00 to 12:00 noon.

Second Saturday each month-
CYXH Medicine Hat, AB. Fly-in Breakfast 8:00 to 12:00.

Third Saturday each month-
CEK6 Flagstaff - Killam/Sedgewick, AB. Coffee and Treats by Shelly.

Third Saturday each month-
CEG4 Drumheller, AB. Coffee.

Fourth Saturday each month-
CEX3 Wetaskiwin, AB. Coffee 9:00 to 12:00

Fourth Saturday each month-
CFX6 Vulcan AB. Coffee

If you have any future events, please feel free to forward the details to me so I may share them here with the members. crufcnews@gmail.com

CLASSIFIED

Buy and Sell

All things related to Aviation

2006 Blue Yonder EZFlyer $15,000 OBO





2006 build Blue Yonder EZFlyer
Rotax 912UL 80 hp approx 150 hrs
New wing fabric 2025, Polyfiber medium weight
Asking $15,000.00 or make me a good offer!

Doug Eaglesham eaglesham.de@gmail.com

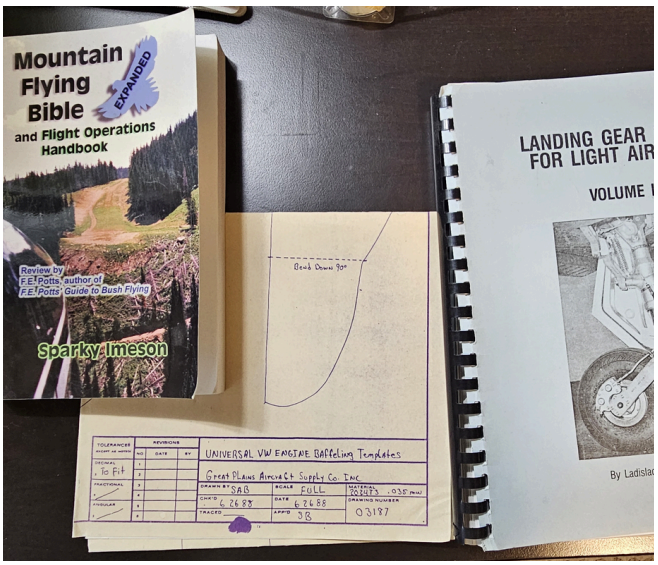
WANTED: Dual Comm VHF Transceiver Radio

Must be a panel mount installation type, Not Handheld.

Dirkjan Kiewiet 403-978-6481 kiewiet@shaw.ca

Cleaning out garage items

I've been cleaning out the garage and found these items. If anyone in the Club is interested, the books and baffle plans are free. I'd like to get $100 for the tail wheel (plus shipping). Cheers.





A couple of Books and Baffle Plans for a VW Engine, Free.

6" Matco tailwheel $100, plus shipping.

Bernard Kespe
(250) 752-7413 (Home)

Qualicum Beach, BC
(250) 927-7419 (Cell)

Your Executive

BRIAN VASSEUR President brian@brianvasseur.com

CARL FORMAN Secretary/Treasurer forman.c@shaw.ca

JOHN KERR Director oreal_kerr@hotmail.com

AL BALJAK Director dolac91@gmail.com

BRIAN TAYLOR Director bgt427@shaw.ca



www.crfcyyc.ca

www.facebook.com/flycrufc/

GREG LABINE Newsletter Editor crufcnews@gmail.com