



Comm One



News of the Reading Aero Club

October 2024

President's Message – Todd Weaver



“America’s oldest continually operating flying club.” While that does sound like quite a claim-to-fame, do we truly consider the weight that carries?

If you’re new to RAC and haven’t had the time to dig into

our history, I’ll tell you that about 95 years ago, in 1929, the origin of Reading Aero Club was forming at a place called Whander Field. This was going on in spite of the stock market crash and what would become The Great Depression. If you drive by the site of Whander Field where our first clubhouse stood, you’ll see the freshly excavated land where a new manufacturing facility is being built alongside Route 61 in Leesport. I’d wager not one person involved with that project is aware of the history that field has witnessed.

I urge you to take some time, go into the “Our History” section of our website and read about our club and the people who made it great. Look at the photos saved in there and maybe you’ll see some familiar faces. Look closer and you’ll see the time and great care they took. Not just waxing airplanes and helping at airshows but rebuilding the clubhouse we enjoy today.

At any given meeting, the gray haired or in some instances, bald headed guy enjoying a plate of food beside you could have some great stories to share

about events from as many as 5 decades ago. That’s not a typo. Yes, we have members who’ve been with us for 50 years.

One such example is highlighted in what I hope will become a permanent addition to our monthly newsletter. **Ralph Nevel** joined Reading Aero Club on this very month in 1974. This same year Richard Nixon resigned as President of the United States and yours truly was only 6 years old.

Ralph is just one example of the many pilots who still call RAC home and whose stories are woven into our club’s great history. Be proud to walk in their footsteps and start your own story of how you too, made this the greatest flying club in the USA.

Todd Weaver
RAC President



Upcoming Events

- **Club Meeting:** 10/10/2024, 7:30 PM
- **Food @ 7:00PM by:** Tim Schad



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General Announcements

Fall Wash-n-Wax October 5, 2024

The fall Wash-n-Wax scheduled for Saturday **October 5, 2024** was a success. We would like to thank all those who came out to help and **Slim (Oliver Rick)** for heading up the operation this year. The club does this event twice a year to help keep our planes in great shape and also for members to get to know one another and talk shop. It is also a good opportunity to get some service hours. Please ensure your service hours for this event are properly recorded.





General Announcements

RAC Member Flight Accomplishments

Please join me in congratulating **Ian Lloyd** who completed his first solo flight September 18, 2024. Also, **Peter Knight** passed his Instrument checkride on October 6, 2024. These are great achievements and we are proud to have them as members of the club. We wish you many years of safe flying to come! Congratulations!



Press Flights for Career Expo

As the Career Expo nears, the airport authority hosted a press event where local news outlets learned about and reported on the upcoming event. On Thursday, October 3rd at 2:00 pm the press event occurred at the FBO hangar. Club members volunteered their time to taxi club aircraft to the FBO hangar and a few airport employees were flown around the traffic pattern. Events like these are very helpful to showcase both the Career Expo and strengthen the relationship of the Reading Aero Club with the airport and local community. So please continue to look for notifications of such events in the future and volunteer your time to continue making this the oldest and greatest flying club in the USA.

Member Spotlight

As you continue to read this months CommOne, you will notice a new section entitled “Member Spotlight.” This section is intended to shine a spotlight on our members to showcase their uniqueness and varied stories as we come from all walks of life. Please consider shining the spotlight on yourself for next months article so that we can get to know more about YOU. Whether you are a doctor, engineer, retired or have a great life story to share about yourself, we would love to hear it and feature it in our new Member Spotlight section.



General Announcements

Club History Article

As mentioned in the Presidents message above, the club has a long, varied and interesting history throughout the years to become Americas oldest continually operating flying club. Please enjoy the following article to learn more about your clubs history.

50 years

RAC recalls thrills of stunt flying

By CARL W. BROWN JR.
Staff Writer

They banded together just south of Leesport half a century ago to "barnstorm" across the countryside.

Today, the thrills of flying still stir members of the Reading Aero Club, even though they don't practice heart-thumping stunts anymore.

Considering itself the oldest continuously active flying club in the United States, RAC has kept pace with the changes in aviation technology over the past 50 years.

Club members have evolved from thrill-seekers to functional hobbyists, and their activities reflect that transition.

For instance, RAC's golden anniversary banquet — to be held Saturday in the Reading Motor Inn — will feature speeches by an editor of an international aviation magazine and a top official with the Federal Aviation Administration.

The club also will have a special

booklet published that describes its illustrious history both on and off the ground.

A colorful part of that past is Grant Blimline, a spry 73-year-old who still flies every chance he gets. Blimline enjoys recalling the club's early days, when mini-airshows were held almost every weekend of fair weather.

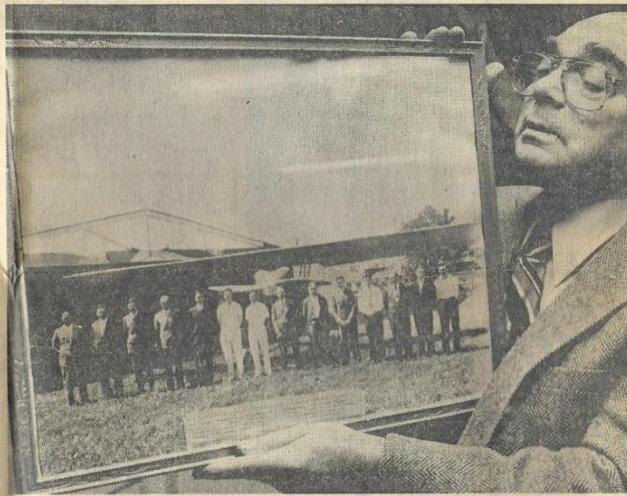
"The purpose of our club in the very beginning was to keep flying costs down so the average guy could fly," the Pennside appliance dealer said.

RAC still upholds that purpose, and currently owns two Cherokee four-seater planes, worth about \$28,000 each, that are equipped to fly in most weather.

Blimline joined the club in 1933, and recalls strapping on a leather helmet and goggles before jumping into a biplane with an open-air cockpit that the club bought for little more than \$1,000.

"The big word in the Reading Aero Club was safety, and it still is," he

(Turn to Page 21, Col. 1)



RAC recalls 50-yr. history of flying

(Continued from Page 15) stressed. "We've had a few washouts (bad landings that damaged planes) in the club, but we've never had a fatal accident or anyone injured."

That untarnished record is the result of flying standards more stringent than the FAA's, Blimline said.

Despite such strict requirements, Blimline has seen the club purchase 28 different aircraft, and grow from 10 to more than 50 members. Club headquarters were relocated several times before an abandoned building on the Reading Airport grounds was chosen as a permanent site in 1964.

Many of the members joined RAC with no flying experience whatsoever, including club president Robert C. Beissel.

Some of them eventually became professional airline pilots, Beissel claimed. But most are content to enjoy fly-

ing as a hobby while remaining electronic engineers, corporate officials and government employees.

"A lot of the members use the airplanes for vacation purposes," according to Beissel. "As a matter fact, a few years ago one member flew all over the United States."

When they aren't buzzing to the Bahamas or California, the planes are often seen touching down on small airstrips in Hamburg, Womelsdorf, Bally, Shoemakersville and Kutztown.

They also have mingled with swarms of craft at such hot spots as Washington National Airport and Kennedy International Airport.

Both planes annually log about 100,000 miles, or 800 hours of flying time. It costs the non-profit club about \$4,000 each year to maintain the planes, and it costs considerable more to keep them in the air.

"The fuel costs have killed us," Beissel lamented. "Eve-

ry time the fuel costs go up 10 cents, we're up another dollar in flying time per hour."

Plane fuel now is \$1.90 a gallon, compared to 30 cents Blimline said he shelled out for each gallon in the 1930s.

But it will take more than skyrocketing fuel costs to

ground RAC members like Blimline, who helped keep the club intact despite talk of disbanding it during World War II.

"The Reading Aero Club has earned a place in the aviation history of Berks County," Blimline said proudly.



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Photography by Richard J. Patrick

Inspecting one of the Reading Aero Club's two airplanes before takeoff is Clarence M. Rowe, a charter member of the 50-year-old

group, left, and club president Robert C. Beissel. Below, RAC member Grant Blim-

early days with a photograph taken in 1935 of the club members and its plane.



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Maintenance Corner – Kevin Pannebakker



Welcome to the fall flying season! Temperatures are beginning to cool and days are becoming shorter.

Just a bit of industry news. The FAA has released a new interpretation regarding uncertificated individuals working under the supervision of an A&P or A&P IA. Basically, the interpretation came about due to a FSDO manager in Little Rock asking a question as to what the term “in person for consultation” means in the 21st century. He continued to ask if Zoom, FaceTime, or some other virtual means would be acceptable, since these means did not exist when the regulation was written over 60 years ago. After 26 months of waiting, the FAA interpreted that any uncertificated person must **AT ALL** times have a certificated mechanic present during all maintenance and be able to intervene if mistakes are made. This is particularly harmful to the industry because it will make one path to obtaining an A&P particularly more difficult and also greatly affect what is allowable in the case of owner assisted annuals. AOPA and a number of other professional aviation organizations are fighting back against the FAA and asking this to be reconsidered.

N2373K has been operating well. Steve Kunkle performed an oil change and the oil analysis from the first sample since the fresh overhauled engine was installed came back all clear. Steve Kunkle also repaired the pilot side door after he experienced it locking him out as well. This should hopefully no longer be a problem. We have also been made aware of occurrences of GI-275 reversions that have taken place during training procedures. Drew and I are planning to take the aircraft to KCXY at some point to have it looked at, but we are trying to avoid having another aircraft out of service at the same time others are.

Unfortunately, since the last meeting, N2946B ran into yet another snag preventing us from taking delivery of the aircraft. They had an issue where the left magneto would completely cause the engine to die when doing the standard magneto check. Also, the carburetor was found to have an issue and found to be worn. When stopping the engine using standard procedures, the engine would continue to run. Both issues were resolved and the aircraft is now ready for pickup. Drew and I made arrangements

and the airplane is scheduled to arrive back Tuesday October 8th, 2024. Again, it will go directly to Steve Kunkle's shop for the oil cooler replacement before member flights can begin.

N168F recently was tested to get its IFR certification. However, it was discovered that the aircraft had pitot and static system leaks that far exceeded the allowable limits. Steve Kunkle will need a good amount of time to dig into the airplane to locate the source of the leak and repair it before it can be retested. We are currently looking at schedules to see when we can accommodate this. Everyone, please be patient if it occurs during a period where you have a reservation.

As a reminder, if discrepancies are found on any aircraft, please email maint@readingaeroclub.org

Thank you all and fly safely!!

Kevin Pannebakker
Maintenance Director

Completed Items

68F

- GPS Updates
- IFR Check (initial before failure)

73K

- GPS Updates
- Oil change and sample
- Door locking squawk resolved

46B

- Aircraft in KLHV for GI-275 installation
- Return to Steve Kunkle's for oil cooler replacement before reservations can be made by member



Homer says: “The only time you can have to much fuel is when the airplane is on fire.”



Safety Officer – Brian K Stoltzfus

October – The Best Month to Fly?



Hopefully, by the time that you read this, the Dakota will be back. This dovetails very nicely with this month's article! If you are eligible and/or already checked out, take this opportunity to fly N2946B.

I'm a big fan of a daily 15 minute show called Weather World.(1) The show is hosted by a few PSU meteorology professors and students. They discuss forecasts and weather related issues mostly regarding PA weather. Every Wednesday, they have a segment called WX YZ (Weather wise, get it ;). Dr. Jon Nese gave some statistics that are very germane to pilots.

1. October is the driest month outside of winter. For RDG, on average, we get 3.22". In fact in many cities in PA, the driest month on record is in October (Erie, Pittsburg, State College, Philly and Scranton)
2. Why is it so dry?,
 - a) The jet stream which brings weather systems to our area is still well to our north.
 - b) humid air, (which is an ingredient for Thunder storms) is now well to our south.
 - c) tropical storm tracks usually stay off shore this time of year.
 - d) Average surface pressure is a high over Virgin



3. Given these factors, Thunderstorms and especially severe WX are almost completely shutdown. If you look at the number of Tornadoes in PA since 1950 broken down by month,

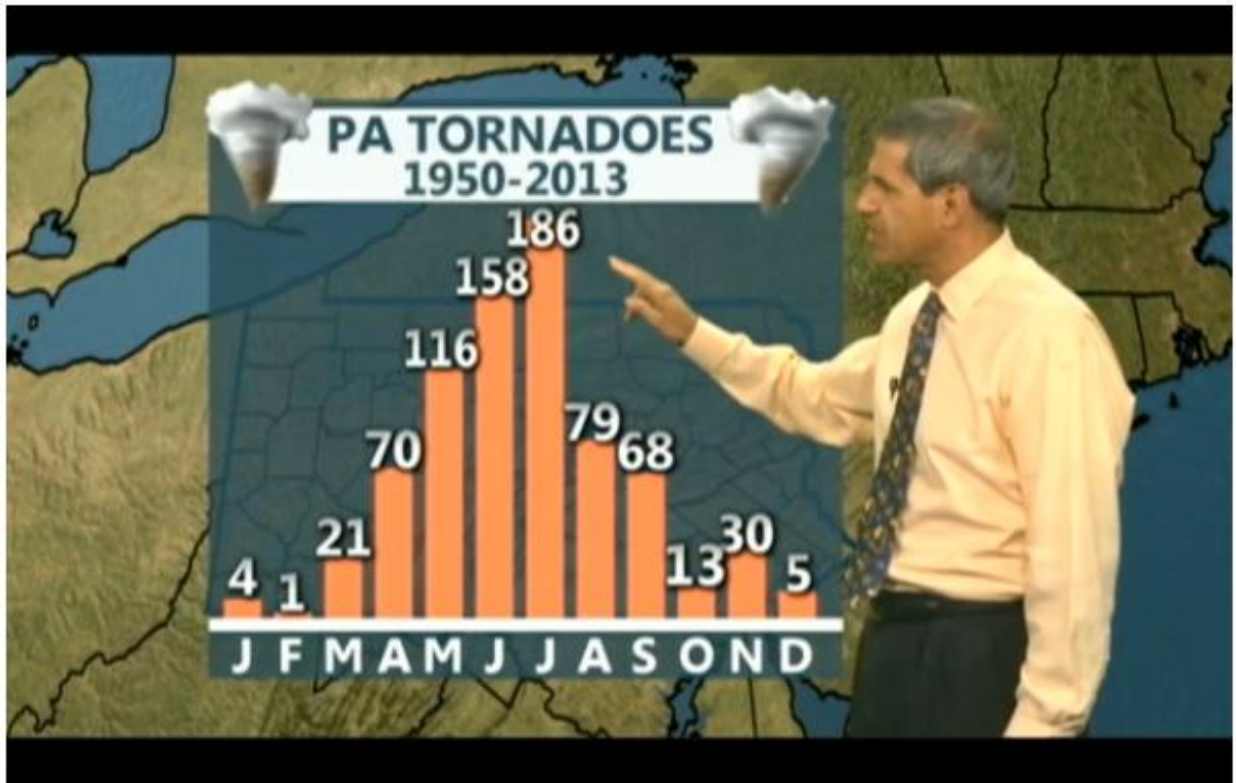


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you see that October has the least amount not counting the winter months (which have their own set of WX challenges to the pilot.)

Bottom line: Take advantage of the fall foliage and good weather and get some airtime!



Fly safe,

Brian Stoltzfus

1-Weather World is on PCN TV at 5:45 PM. Check local listings. Also you can watch it online at www.pcntv.com for free.



Administrative VP – Jay Nassar, MD



Turn Your Head and Cough

Sorry for not getting in a new article last month. Life always seems to get in the way. Anyway, I'm back and for this month I thought I'd go over the option of Basic Med, who is it for, its limitations and how to go about doing it. So as for the history of BM, on July 15, 2016, congress passed legislation to extend the FAA's funding. It's called the FAA EXTENSION, SAFETY, SECURITY ACT of 2016 which includes relief from holding an FAA medical certificate for certain pilots. This relief is called BasicMed.

So, what is needed to make this happen? First is comply with the general BM requirements (US driver's license, have held a medical after July 14, 2006. Then a physical exam with a state-licensed physician, using the Comprehensive Medical Examination Checklist. Lastly, complete a BM medical education course. As far as aircraft requirements, a max of 6 occupants and a max certified TO weight of 6000 pounds. The pilot may operate under VFR or IFR but under 18,000 ft and not exceeding 250 kts. And the pilot may not operate for compensation or hire.

There are a few medical conditions that will require a Special Issuance before operating under BM. Severe personality disorders, psychosis, bipolar and any substance abuse within the previous 2 years. Neurological disorders such as epilepsy, a disturbance of consciousness or any transient loss of nervous system functions. Finally, any cardiovascular conditions such as heart attack, coronary artery disease, heart valve replacement or heart transplant.

So if you think you qualify and might be interested, check out these links:

https://www.faa.gov/licenses_certificates/airmen_certification/basic_med

<https://www.aopa.org/advocacy/pilots/medical/basicmed>



Jay Nassar, MD



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Member Spotlight – Ralph Nevel

READING AERO CLUB - MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Member Name: Ralph Nevel D.O.B. 2/28/1948

Where did you grow up? Cleveland Ohio

Where do you currently reside? Wyomissing PA Employer? Retired

How did you get into flying:

A friend at work (City of Philadelphia Streets/Sanitation Engineering) got to talking and decided to learn to fly.

I took flight training - Piper Private Pilot Course at Turner Field, now a housing development.

Trained in PA-28-140's and got my license in December 1973. Moved to Reading in June 1974 and accepted into

the Club in September 1974. Prior to the club I flew out of Turner, Wings in a Cessna 150, Ocean City Maryland

Pottstown Municipal. Was the first club member to fly the Citabria in January 1976 and ground looped the plane,

first of three accidents in that aircraft, all different pilots.

What is your favorite place to fly in a club plane and why?

My flying was basically to punch holes in the sky, Lancaster was my favorite destination, it was close and I

would go out at night to practice landings at Lancaster. I enjoyed night time flying.

Tell us a bit about yourself and your family.

I worked as an electrical engineer for City of Philadelphia, Gilbert/Commonwealth, Enech Engineering, Hill and

Spotts Stevens and McCoy (SSM) and RPA engineering. Retired from SSM in 2014. Married, wife Kathy and two

grown children, Laura and John. Laura works as a consultant in Virginia, lives in Annapolis and is in the Navy

she did 12 years active duty and now is in the Reserves, she is a Commander with promotion to Captain in October

this year. John lives in Nashville self employed doing financial services on a consulting basis. Neither have any

interest in flying. I kept my interest in the club for many years even though I was not flying by being treasurer.

I was treasurer on and off from 1978 to 2007. From 1987 on I kept the books using different spreadsheets, from

Super Calc, to Lotus 123 to Excel. I still have all the files from 1987 to 2007. Now I work around the yard,

do some travel going to baseball games and the different stadiums, And go to Villanova football games both

home and away.



Charles H. Crosby

Reading Aero Club To Meet

The Reading Aero Club will hold its 46th anniversary banquet Thursday at 7:30 p.m. in Lincoln's Restaurant, Leesport R.D. 1.

Kent G. George, Reading Airport manager, will discuss plans for the airport.

Charles H. Crosby recently was elected president of the club. Other officers are:

Vincent J. Rose, vice president; Robert C. Beissel, financial secretary; Robert D. Carlyon, recording secretary; and Ralph J. Nevel, treasurer.

Members of the board of directors are Vance E. Rutter, chairman, and Frederick F. Behm, Grant Blimline, Harry E. Elder, and Vincent J. Rose.

Donald G. Tillison is chairman of the banquet committee. Other committee members are Elva M. Runyeon, Dottie R. Crosby, Ernest W. Hartmaier, Katherine L. Templin and William H. Weinerth.

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ADULT NON-FICTION

Consumer's Guide to Mental Health, by Dr. Brian L. Mishara and Dr. Robert D. Patterson.

Advice is provided for persons looking for therapy and treatment in the mental health field. Among the subjects treated are children, sex, old age, addicts, and suicides.

A Change in the Weather, by Fitzhugh Green.

The controversial subject of changing the weather — through rainmaking, cloud surgery, encapsulated cities — is examined for its positive and negative aspects.

The American Heritage History of the Automobile in America, by Stephen W. Sears.

This chronicle has been published in a year of celebration for the automobile industry, a year including the 75th anniversary of the Ford Motor Co., the 70th anniversary of General Motors, and the 70th anniversary of Henry Ford's Model T.

★ ★ ★ ADULT FICTION

The Reef Girl, by Zane Grey.

This dramatic romance takes place on the exotic island of Tahiti in the 1930s. It tells of the love affair between a young American writer and a beautiful half-caste — an affair that defies the primitive superstitions of her background and the shabby prejudices of his.

Amtrak Fares To Increase

WASHINGTON (AP) — Passengers riding Amtrak will be paying slightly more for their tickets beginning in May. The increase on peak period charges may be anywhere from \$1 on a ticket now priced up to \$9.99 to \$5 on a ticket now costing \$80 or more.

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Minutes of the September 2024 (9/12/24) Membership Meeting:

1. Record Attendance
2. Approve Minutes as written in Comm One
3. Report of Collection of Fines
4. Report of Executive Board *
5. Financial Secretary Report (*written report distributed via e-mail/published on website*)
 - a. Trends and analysis
 - b. Insurance updates – Paul waiting to hear back from AOPA attorney regarding insurance liability related to club performed maint on airplanes.
6. Bills Requiring Membership Approval
7. Communications (See Digital Signboard).
8. Maintenance Report Kevin/Drew.
 - a. 46B Update
 - b. Both N2646B and N168F will be going to Steve Kunkle for IFR checks in the coming weeks. Time TBD.
9. Report of Committees:
 - a. Building.....Ian Lloyd
 - i. TW and Slim to look at failing masonry.
 - b. Audit.....Dave Meade
 - c. Financial Goal.....Ron, Paul, Rick
 - i. Encourage ACH payments – This will help the financial team immensely.
 - d. Insurance Kitty.....Dave Meade
 - e. Operations CommitteeTim Earnest
 - i. Plane captains should not be board members. Need other members to step up and help the club.
 - ii. Advent of RAC membership manual. Tim and Jay continue to pick away at the new RAC Membership manual. They could use one more to aid in the endeavor. Perhaps a few members, each of which can work on separate chapters?
 - f. RAC swag/t-shirt/patch committee.....Due to the overwhelming response, Jay is considering putting together another order
 - g. Reading Aviation Career Expo 2024 Paul Jones
 - i. Need volunteers to signup – sooner rather than later



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- 10. Membership Items:
 - a. First Readings.....Tim Schad and Bill Hornets
 - b. Second Readings & Votes.....None
 - c. Other membership actions.....
 - i. Tim Guldner has requested an exemption to the rule requiring one year of pilot member status before becoming an associate member. The board gives this a favorable recommendation. (Membership majority vote required)

- 11. Unfinished Business
 - a. Club is still looking for someone to manage our social media, collect photos and post to the website when it's completed. Also upkeep schedule items. And FB. This person can help Matt Keperling with the website update.

- 12. New Business
 - a. Rick Hartman setup Live ATC Feed.
 - b. Board has granted Andy Klotzbach permission to hold up to 3 plane reservations, one of which is his check-ride on 10/29/24.
 - c. Ask members if they have any new business.

- 13. Good and Welfare
 - a. Food tonight brought by – Todd Weaver
 - b. Need food volunteer for October
 - c. Tonight's presentation – Oshkosh – A party of a different sort.
 - d. Next Month's presentation - ?

- 14. Adjourn
 - a. Next Month's presentation – OSHKOSH – A party of a different sort.

- 15. Adjourn

Dues: \$75/month Initiation Fee: \$1500 68F: \$140/hr 73K: \$140/hr 46B: \$170/hr Sim: \$20/hr	100LL prices at KRDG (10/7/24) Reading Aviation \$6.09
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