AirVenture 2014

EAA’s AirVenture Oshkosh 2014 was a resounding success - a gathering of epic proportions! Thunderbirds, true American Heroes, more aircraft than imaginable, and vendors with every possible aviation accessory you are dreaming of — that is what a yearly trip to Oshkosh is all about. It is a show that brings people together like none other can.

Holding the client lead folder measuring 3 inches thick, Holly Ciochetti declares, “This year’s Oshkosh AirVenture was hands down the best ever!” Her feel for the show is echoed throughout the General Aviation community fresh from a week of top entertainment, awesome static displays, expert advice, equipment and services, and newfound friendships.

The 2014 “World’s Greatest Aviation Celebration!” certainly lived up to and exceeded expectations over the recent year’s. EAA Chairman Jack Pelton’s press statement at the close of the show conveyed all this and more, as he reported record numbers with an unparalleled enthusiasm from attendees.

“Oshkosh, of course, is the Mecca of Aviation,” notes Mike, “It simply has everything. We always meet the greatest people and many of whom become our future owners. This show was special. It had an even more powerful feel to it.” Mike and Holly attribute some of this good fortune to their Heaven’s Landing Angel, Vannessa. “Vannessa has a lot of sales experience, and it showed,” commented Holly, “Yes, I must note that I am her mother, but we are very proud that she took the reins and spoke to clients with informed knowledge and a great love of the Heaven’s Landing community.”

Returning home means months of follow-ups, visits and sales which are the heart and soul of this thriving community. “We’ve prided ourselves on a great system that has worked for us throughout the years,” states Mike, “We refresh the Heaven’s Landing exhibit often with new stunning photos, our sales team loves working with the public, and you just can’t beat the unparalleled quality of the product!”
Heaven’s Landing Angel, Vannessa Sisto, was definitely a highlight of the multifaceted week-long AirVenture show and a fantastic representative for Heaven’s Landing!

Vannessa enjoyed each day greeting attendees and other vendors.

EAA AirVenture for the Entire Family

By Mike Ciochetti

If you have never been to Oshkosh for the annual Experimental Aviation Association (EAA) fly-in, you have no comprehension of what you are missing. It is just one of many aviation tradeshows that the Heaven’s Landing staff attends each year, but it is the one and only one that really doesn’t feel like work. For young or old, for male or female, Oshkosh is a spectacle!

EAA 2014 in Oshkosh will go down in my personal memory as the most rewarding aviation expo that I have ever attended. Why? For the first time ever, I was able to collectively share the full Oshkosh experience with both my 6 year old grandson, Laban, my mother and father, Jan & Mike Ciochetti Sr., our 26 year old daughter, Vannessa, my beautiful wife, Holly, and of course our 19 month old daughter, Bella. The overall experience was a lot of fun, very rewarding, and well worth the chaos.

It was quality time spent with some of my favorite people in a truly magical place. Combine my father’s reverence for Warbirds, WWII Aces, and all things that fly, with Bella and Laban’s innocence and intrigue about anything with wings, and sprinkle in the first time Oshkosh experience for Vannessa, and you start to get the idea that this was more than just a typically week at work for us.

My father was like a kid in a candy store watching the arrivals and departures, and the daily air shows, and my mother was right there with him. It was mom’s younger brother, Joe Walan Jr., who died from a heart attack a few years ago who took me on my first flight when I was just 8 years old. Uncle Joe was also responsible for bringing me to my first EAA Expo at Oshkosh back in 1979. So it was fully understandable when my mother had a complete meltdown and was reduced to tears during the Thunderbird F-16 Squadron’s brilliant aerobatic routine. This served to create a highly emotional melancholy moment for all of us.

The Heaven’s Landing exhibit in “Hangar B” was one of the usual focal points for attendees at Oshkosh, and this year our daughter Vannessa served as the “Angel” on duty to meet and greet all of our prospects. Thousands of people stop by each year to have their photo taken with an “Angel”, and Vannessa was nothing short of spectacular in playing the part. We signed up a record number of Heaven’s Landing prospects this year, and I have to believe that Vannessa had a lot to do with that. Having recently launched her career as a corporate flight attendant, Vannessa was anxious to see and meet more people in the aviation community. Anyone needing a good corporate flight attendant would do very well to contact her.

-continued
Family Continued—KidVenture! A Grandpa’s Dream Come True!

The highlight of all Oshkosh highlights for me however was something called KidVenture. This is an educational section of AirVenture that EAA hosts exclusively to introduce kids to aviation and “really” educate them about it. My 6 year old grandson and I spent the better part of two days going from station to station at KidVenture, where he was given “hands on” one on one instruction on the various aspects of aircraft design, construction, aerodynamics, avionics, meteorology, flight safety, pre-flight inspection, and yes, even flight instruction.

On day one Laban learned how to build and shape a wooden propeller, dismantle and re-assemble an aircraft engine, drill and buck rivets, re-line a brake pad, build a wind generator, build a wing rib, trouble shoot an electrical problem, and work on avionics. Upon completion of all stations, each child was given the choice of a free set of tools. No kidding, real tools! They were so nice that I wanted them!

On day two Laban was given a similar regiment of stations that related to flight instruction. This course ended with a 15 minute flight in the “Red Bird Simulator” and the issuance of a logbook with the instructor’s endorsement. It was marvelous to see each child receive individual training and hands on instruction from experts that were so graciously willing to share their knowledge and skill. It was equally marvelous to watch each child willingly absorb the information at hand with high interest and consistent focus. I would personally like to give thanks and high praise to EAA for providing the time, man power, money and resources necessary to facilitate KidVenture. Like all things “AirVenture”, if you haven’t been there or seen it, you’re really missing out!
Ernest Michael Merkelis, 62

The entire Heaven’s Landing family of partners and owners are deeply saddened by the untimely loss of Ernie Merkelis on Saturday July 26th, 2014. Ernie was flying solo on his way to Lansing, Illinois and then on to Oshkosh, Wisconsin when his aircraft was involved in a fatal crash.

Ernie was a regular attendee at AirVenture, and was also a member of the association of Quiet Birdmen. Our heartfelt thoughts and prayers go out to his entire family. He will be missed.

From the Clayton Tribune:
Ernie is survived by his wife, Janice; his mother Helen; two brothers, John and Tom; and a sister, Marilu.

A Celebration of Life service was held at the Waterfall Club on Friday, August 1, at 4:30 PM. In lieu of flowers the family asks that donations in Ernie’s name be sent to:
Rabun Paws 4 Life
PO Box 216
Clayton, GA 30525
The company that is constantly breaking new barriers in side-by-side racing, wannaGOFAST, returns for their third, high-octane, sellout year to Heaven’s Landing Airfield, September 13 and 14.

Heaven’s Landing welcomes the masses to the airfield where the atmosphere is relaxed yet full of excitement. Spectators will enjoy a weekend of constant action - interact with more drivers, see more beautiful cars, witness record-breaking speeds, and explore more vendor and sponsor booths.

WannaGOFAST President Blake Hutchison, can’t wait to return to our remarkable airfield. The company has agreed to team up with Heaven’s Landing to complete the connection between the end of runway 5 and the northeast taxiway. “This will create a very smooth transition for drivers at the end of their runs and make turn around times much faster for participants,” Blake explained. Look for work to begin and be completed in the next few weeks.

The driver spots for the Heaven’s Landing event sold out months ago. This year there are 135 entries, up from 125 last year. The explosive popularity of wannaGOFAST events just keeps growing across the county, and the cars and the drivers never disappoint! Blake proudly reports, “We just broke a new world record for street legal vehicles. On July 12 at Horseshoe Bay Resort Airport in Horseshoe Bay, TX, a 2008 Lamborghini Gallardo Superleggera clocked 233.64 MPH.”

Make your area reservations now, you will not want to miss a minute of this weekend event. Follow the updates on wannaGOFAST’s Facebook page.

Cokinogenis Taxiway Lot

John and Susan Cokinogenis’ taxiway lot at the end of Runway 5 is moving along nicely. Grading is progressing at a quick pace with great weather for construction.

It is destined to be a spectacular home and spacious hangar!
Rabun County is certainly one of the most beautiful places to live, but it also is an amazingly rich community offering boundless opportunities. Each year on the Monday after Labor Day, one spectacular evening is on everyone’s mind—Rhapsody in Rabun.

Rhapsody in Rabun is a night of great entertainment and outreach wonderfully woven together. You will enjoy delicacies from the local fine restaurants, black ties and gorgeous gowns, live music that will make anyone want to dance, and bidding opportunities for vacation packages, home décor, art, and gift certificates during the live and silent auctions. The Rhapsody in Rabun Gala, Hands of Rabun, will be held on Monday, September 8, at the Rabun County Civic Center. The evening begins at 5 pm. Celebrate a wonderful evening with your dear friends and community. Reserve your table online or by mail.

This year’s gala benefit recipient is Community Partnership of Rabun (CPR).

Community Partnership of Rabun County (CPR), is a network of non-profit organizations, churches, public and private community leaders, state agencies, local government representatives and Rabun County children, youth and families who all work together to develop and implement a community plan to improve results for families in Rabun County. CPR is a participating non-profit agency in Georgia Family Connection Partnership (GaFCP), a statewide organization of communities, agencies, businesses and families dedicated to improving the lives of Georgia children and families. To learn more about GaFCP, please go to www.gafcp.org.
We are delighted to welcome new Heaven’s Landing owners this month, Glenn and Jean Whitehouse. The Whitehouse family hail from Miami, Florida where Glenn is currently based with a 28-year career flying for American Airlines.

Glenn and Jean have had a glorious summer in oh so many ways! Kicking it all off, they participated in the Heaven’s Landing/AirCam Fly-In last month. They traveled by car since Glenn is currently building his AirCam in his garage. Falling in love with the Heaven’s Landing community and lifestyle, they jumped at the opportunity to purchase lot #169 and Hangar S3. What more can be said, “our first impressions were ‘WOW!’,” Glenn writes.

The couple also squeezed in an amazing two-week trip to Alaska in the middle of July, catching “hundreds of pounds of halibut” and finding the most amazing views while hiking. Glenn and Jean were so taken with Alaska they are considering adding to their retirement dreams which includes summers in Alaska and the off seasons at Heaven’s Landing.

Jean is an aspiring pilot, and they recently purchased a 1977 Cessna 172 for her to begin her training. The couple have two children Stephanie (21) and Rachel (14) and an “adopted son” (a young man they are helping), named, Solomon. Solomon lives in Ghana, and the family has supported him through college. Glenn’s long aviation career includes flying B727s (Flight Engineer), DC-10s (Flight Engineer), MD-80s (First Officer), DC-10s (First Officer), MD-80s (14 years Captain), and currently Captain of B757-767 for the past 2.5 years. His routes are typically to South America.

We welcome the entire Whitehouse family, and we also hope they find great enjoyment fishing on our area lakes, which offer a much longer fishing season with milder conditions than Alaska.
UP the Road A Bit

A few months ago, we highlighted, The Wayward Traveler’s Guide to Waterfalls and Back Roads. Inside describes their “Favorite Drive of Them All” - a day of adventure that is just around the corner from Heaven’s Landing (see directions below). The 9 mile drive begins at Persimmon Road and Tallulah River Road, and it has something to do and see around every corner. You can pull off and park anywhere the US Forest Service designated space and walking the road gives you ample opportunities to see this beautiful river (but always watch your step.)

You might be familiar with the Tallulah River from the beautiful Tallulah Gorge State Park in Southern Rabun County, but this driving/hiking journey takes you up river within 2 miles of the Tallulah’s headwaters (both the headwaters and a part of the Appalachian Trail are on Standing Indian Mountain, NC. Another great place to explore, see link for description and directions. The Tallulah River winds its way through Rabun County most of its 47.5 miles, and it is the main tributary for the Georgia Power lakes.

Driving up Tallulah River Road (USFS 70) you first come to the Tallulah River Campground, the first of three primitive, but fantastic Forest Service facilities. You'll see anglers, campers, and day use people enjoying these areas throughout the warmer months. Just past this camp, the pavement ends at the new bridge over the Coleman/Tallulah River confluence. If you haven’t walked the Coleman before, stop here and enjoy this wonderful 1 mile one-way hike. You can take little side trails along the way, down to the water. The cascades are beautiful, the salamanders are plentiful and fun to look for under wet leaf litter, and the wildflowers and fall colors are fantastic. Heaven’s Landing owners can simply drive up, enjoy an hour of relaxation after a long day, and be home in minutes.

Continuing up Tallulah River Road, you cross over a few bridges making your passengers stretch for the view of the rapids. The upper sections get more and more beautiful. At mile four, you'll see Tate Branch Campground, and at 4.8, Sandy Bottom Campground, with more great sites for tents and smaller RV’s. “Civilization” returns around mile 5.5. You’ve arrived at Tate City, GA—not much here, but this once tiny corundum mining community has always delighted those looking for a quiet remote place to call home and boasts a population of “+ or - 32” as their sign playfully announces.

Time to stop again at mile 6.4 at River Run Road (might be unmarked but is right after Chapple Road). You are now a little over a mile from the North Caroline state line. Park for the Denton Branch Falls on River Run Road. Carefully cross the river on foot and the falls are about 1/4 mile. Photographer Jack Anthony describes and photographed the falls in his book Mountains and Waterfalls of North Georgia, another great hiking and photography guide.

At mile 9 the road ends. You are now at the Beech Creek—Chimney Rock Loop trailhead. This is your doorway into a week of exploration! See the Sherpa Guides link. It will help get you oriented.

Time to turn and drive the same scenic way out. But there is one more quick detour, before heading back to Heaven’s Landing - Kilby Mills Falls. Upon reaching Persimmon Road, turn left and travel 3.2 miles north. Park across from the entrance of Camp Ramah Durom and hike the 1/4 mile+ trail to the upper falls (the lower falls are a little overgrown).

Enjoy!
Just as quickly as summer begins, it draws to a close. The temperatures have been mild and the weather has been beautiful all summer. Here we are on July 29 at 3 pm on a bright incredibly beautiful day at 75 degrees! Most of us know and appreciate what great amenities we have living in this amazing place. The only problem is time passes so quickly, and here we have it, it is time for school.

Believe it or not, some school-aged children are excited about starting a new school year. Among our amenities here in the mountains are the blessings of exceptional school choices. My children go to Rabun Gap–Nacoochee School, and yes, I’m a little biased. But I know every option in our area has exceptionally high-standards and offers an education to suit your child’s personality, so go visit all of them.

There are two great boarding schools to choose from, Rabun Gap and Tallulah Falls School, award winning public schools with updated facilities, and a host of alternative (home school groups and smaller private options).

Rabun Gap impressively sits poised on the hill in Rabun Gap, GA overlooking the Dillard House. Tallulah Falls is nestled in in the historic and scenic Tallulah Falls, GA in the southern end of Rabun County.

Both schools have excellent reputations, but the reason might surprise you. They are both boarding and day schools boasting 100% college admission for their graduating seniors; but, where most private schools are only competitive with high standards and excellence, these two share a similar vision that looks beyond. You would be hard pressed to find private schools that extend financial aid up to 65-70% of their student body (TFS and RG-NS respectively). Dr. Anthony Sgro, Headmaster of Rabun Gap-Nacoochee, cites that this is one of the main reasons he accepted the position three years ago. Not only does the school have a well-balanced international student population, (new this year to RG- Lithuania, Somaliland, Afghanistan, and France,) the social-economic breakdown of families is very diverse. Both Rabun Gap and Tallulah Falls actively look for students with special gifts to complement academic achievement, sports, and the fine arts; but, they also seek high-achieving, high-potential students who otherwise wouldn’t have access to a prestigious education. This is made possible by fantastic financial aid programs and forward thinking board of directors.

A Quick Overview of Schools—

*Rabun Gap*—(5-12th grade); known for classical liberal arts curriculum with a strong fine arts program including the Circus Arts (think Cirque du Soleil); offers 14 competitive sports; avg. class size: 16; enrollment is 404; student to faculty ratio is 7:1. (Have separate middle school and upper school campuses.)

*Tallulah Falls*—(6-12th grade); known for a strong math and science program blending academics with a respect for natural resources; offers 12 competitive sports including equestrian; avg. class size: 15; enrollment: 412; student to faculty ratio is 9:1. (Have separate middle school and upper school campuses.)

*Rabun County Public Schools*— (K-12th grade); known for a competitive athletics program. The county system also celebrates high standardized test scores and has an impressive use of technology in the classrooms. Rabun has the highest number of teachers in the state holding advanced degrees.
Heaven’s Landing Events:

September 13-14 ~ wannaGOFAST
An incredibly successful event in its third year. Heaven’s Landing hosts the wannaGOFAST Georgia 1/2 mile shootout. Spectator tickets are on sale, $15/day or $25/2 day pass, plan your weekend in the mountains and take in two days of great side by side racing!

Area Events:

First Friday through October ~ First Friday Fest
Enjoy free concerts in the park sponsored by the merchants of Clayton. Enjoy great music at the Rock House on Main Street, 6-9 pm.

Every Thursday May through Nov. ~ Featured Farmer Thursdays
Lake Rabun Hotel & Restaurant, 6-10pm Come enjoy a freshly prepared meal by Chef Jamie with featured food grown from one of our local farms. Learn more about the local farmer and their methods of farming. Dinner is served from 6-10pm. For more information go to www.lakerabunhotel.com or call 706-782-4946.

August 16 ~ North Georgia Golf Tour—Kingwood Resort and Golf Course
This year’s amateur tour is wrapping up with the last venue before the tournament at Kingwood Resorts. Try this event for $75, membership is $50 and is open to any player with a handicap of 0-25. The tour begins each year in March and concludes in mid October with the tournament. Members can play in as many or as few of the tournaments as they like but must play in a minimum of 4 events to be eligible for the Tour Championship at Waterfall Country Club. Please review the website for Tour Rules and FAQ or email at info@northgagolftour.com.

August 9 ~ Foxfire Children’s Heritage Days
Let your children experience a day back in time. Foxfire Children’s Heritage Day Activities include: Blacksmithing, Rope-Making, Animal-Tracking, Candle-Dipping, Folk Art Painting, Woodworking with projects to make and take home including: Decorative Hook, Hand-made Rope, Candles, Folk Art Piece, Hiking or Walking Stick. Each session is one day from 9am-3pm. For ages 8-18; Cost: $40/person; $5 sibling discount. Call Michelle Bourlet at 706-490-3977. An application can be downloaded at foxfire.org.

August 16 ~ NBHA Horse Show
NBHA Horse Show, Rabun Arena, Tiger, GA Sponsored by Shane Beck and Matt Beck. Come out to watch some great barrel racing and Exhibitions and have a lot of family fun. The Exhibitions will start at 10am and the actual Barrel Racing will begin at 2pm. For more information call the Arena Director at 706 982-0792.

August 17 ~ Rabun County Music Festival
This will be Emile Pandolfi’s third visit to the Rabun Music Festival stage at the Readen Theater on the campus of Rabun Gap Nacoochee School. Pandolfi plays everything from boogie-woogie to jazz, French melodies to Italian opera. He breaks up the sets with comic bits; the interplay between piano playing and joke telling balances perfectly. He is one of our audience favorites! www.emilepandolfi.com. Tickets are $21 and the show starts at 4pm.

September 8 ~ Rhapsody in Rabun
Get ready for the finest evening of A Taste of the Mountains. You will enjoy a great evening of music, dance, and auctions to support Community Partnership of Rabun. This is the grandest gala event of the year. Held at the Rabun County Civic Center from 6-11 pm. Advance Tickets are required.
Heaven’s Landing Concierge Services

*Heaven’s Landing Concierge Services* is on call for our truly unique and mobile owners. The Heaven’s Landing staff is pleased to provide clients with a vast array of services.

Please call the office at **706-212-0017** for pricing information and other consultations. Please note that due to offering a vast array of services to our owners, all requests for assistance will be billed at a pre-arranged fee.

Some of our commonly requested services include the following:

- Interior Cleaning
- Holding Postal Mail
- Receiving Service Personnel
- Receiving Furniture and Appliances
- Lot and Yard Maintenance
- Shopping
- Pressure Washing
- Alarm/Security Checks
- Receiving Packages
- Scheduling Party Staff
- Scheduling Maintenance Services
- Landscaping
- Tree Removal
- Window Washing
- Gutter Cleaning
- Transportation Needs

Building Resources

- **The Engineer/Designer**—Ken Risley; Specializing in Hanger Homes. Enjoy his blog on Heaven’s Landing.

- **Montana Log Homes**— One of the nation’s best know and premier hand-crafted log home manufactures. Builder of Tom and Jan Nasser’s fantastic Heaven’s Landing home.

- **Pioneer Log Homes**— Enjoy a fun new series, *Timber Kings*, on The Discovery Channel featuring Pioneer Log Homes, out of British Columbia, Canada in action. Saturday’s at 10 pm (E/T).

Quick Links

- **Weather Link.** Stay up to date on the Clayton, GA weather conditions and forecast from NOAA.

- **Heaven’s Landing Facebook Page**: “Heaven’s Landing Residential Airpark.”

- **Marina and Boating Information**: Anchorage Boat Rentals at 706-212-0534 or LaPrades Marina at 706-947-0010.

- **Local Events and Information**: Rabun County Chamber of Commerce and Rabun County Visitors Bureau.

- **Facebook “Likes”** - Exploring the back woods: Waterfall of Western North Carolina, Waterfall and Back Roads of North Georgia, and The Wayward Traveler.

Airfield Fuel Prices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fuel Type</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AV GAS</td>
<td>$6.15/ gal*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JET A</td>
<td>$5.30/gal*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Prices Subject to Change.  

*Prices as of August 1, 2014*
Local Discount Card

Whether you are visiting or live in Rabun County full-time, the 2014-2015 Eagle Card will save you money for over a year! Cards are $10 each. You’ll receive repeated discounts at 22 area businesses.

Purchase the cards at Rabun County Chamber of Commerce, Mishima Express, or at the Rabun Gap Nacoochee Admissions Building.