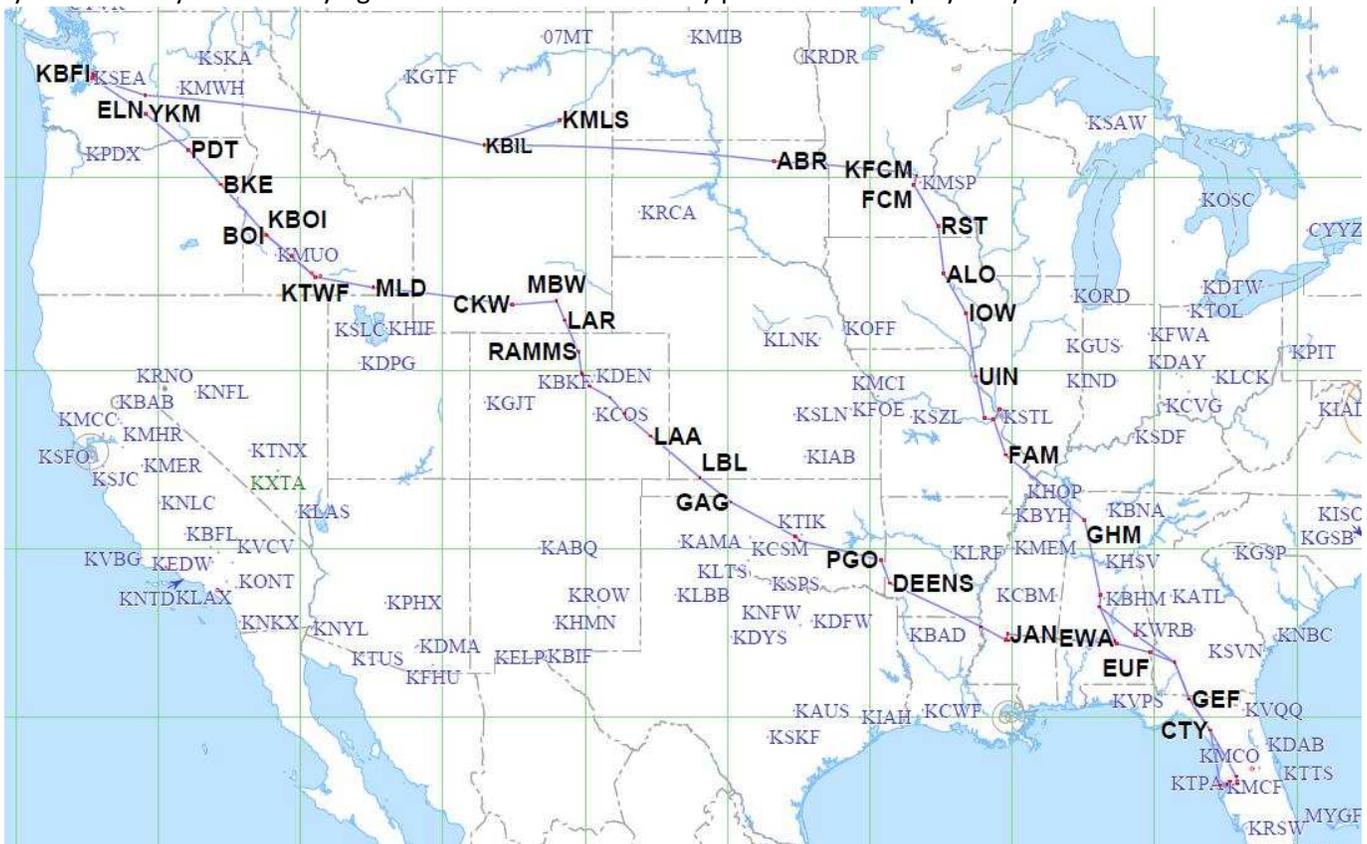


# AOPA Summit 2009 Trip Report

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## Day 1: November 1, 2009 KRNT→KBIL

The overall plan for the 11 day trip was a route through Billings MT to Minneapolis to spend a bit of time with my daughter and her family. Then I would proceed southeast to Tampa Florida on a relatively straight route, with some deviations for MOAs. I would spend three days at AOPA Summit 2009 (Thursday through Saturday). Then, to return, I would leave Tampa and proceed to Jackson MS to visit with my son and his family, and then to Denver to check on my parents there. Finally, I would return home through Twin Falls ID on the last day. The legs were all planned with Jeppesen FliteStar and I printed approach charts for all of the primary and alternate airports that I planned to use. I would track the flight with FliteDeck on my Dell laptop (with real-time position provided by a Bluetooth GPS in the airplane) and use it to display approach charts should I need to deviate at any time from the plan. I would not use the laptop to connect to the internet, read Email nor discuss the seniority or schedule system with myself while flying! The overall route as initially planned and displayed by FliteStar looked like this:



The trip started with some difficulties. While I have made most of my cross country trips to AOPA meetings in my Comanche, N6087P, considering the typical November weather, I had determined that I had a better chance of keeping a schedule by taking the BEFA T210, N9843Y, to Florida and back because of its Flight Into Known Icing capabilities and its speed.

While the Comanche was ready to go, I reserved N9843Y per BEFA procedures, paid my deposit, prepared all of the cross country plans, secured BEFA Safety officer approval for the trip, and arrived at the airport expecting to fly this airplane for the day trip. After loading N9843Y, doing the pre-flight and starting the engine, I copied the ATIS and then discovered that the 480 GPS would not initialize correctly. I took a few minutes to try to debug this

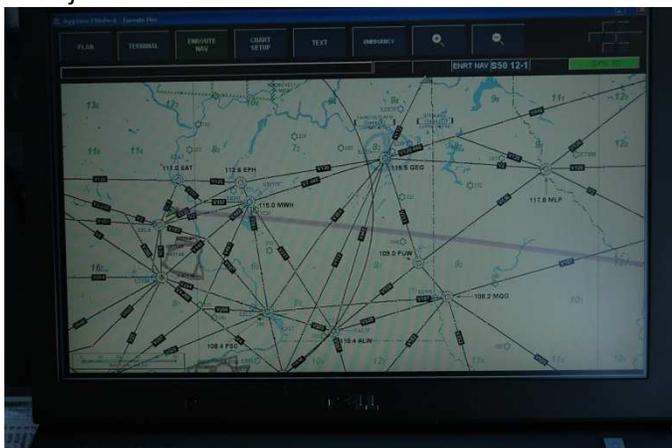
problem, but finally determined that it was going to remain inoperative. Thus, I unloaded everything, pulled my airplane out of the hangar, filled it with fuel, and filed a new flight plan to Billings in N6087P.



The departure day was very good weather with rain and snow just clearing out from Billings at the time of my departure. I filed KRNT SEA V2 ELN direct KBIL at 11,000 (instead of at 17,000 as planned in N9843Y). The trip was to be about 1 hour longer. Seattle ATC was cooperative with an early turn to the east. When I was 44 miles east of SEA at 11,000, my IAS was 130 in a high pressure system with the OAT at  $-4^{\circ}$  C. This gave a TAS of 152 and a nice ground speed of about 170.



Near Ellensburg, Seattle Center gave me direct Billings, a leg of 520 nautical miles at 11,000, predicted by the 480 to be just over 3 hours.



Enroute, I listened to music and monitored the weather aloft and ahead.

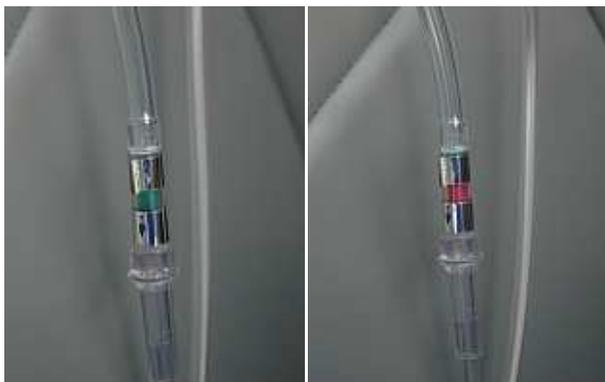


I also monitored fuel information (provided to the 480 GPS by the JPI FS-450 fuel system) and watched as the airplane began to fly over lower clouds as sunset approached.



At 2359z, ATC assigned 12,000' for higher terrain ahead, and I noted that it would be sunset at 0021z, so I got ready for some night flying on oxygen.

On the hose from the tank to the pilot, there is an indicator that shows green with oxygen flow, and red with no flow:



At 0039 I experienced some symptoms of hypoxia, confirmed with the Nonin FliteStat Pulse Oximeter, and I discovered that the oxygen flow was inoperative from my tank unless I applied downward pressure on the hose attachment at the tank regulator with my left hand. Not much fun to fly that way... Note to self: always completely test the O<sub>2</sub> flow after plugging everything in before departure!

After reference to the enroute chart on FliteDeck (and verification with a paper enroute chart) I requested Direct BAXTA so that I could get to V287 where a lower altitude was available. On the airway, I was able to descend from 13,000' to 8,000', and got rid of the troublesome O<sub>2</sub> tank. ATIS "M" at KBIL indicated runway 10L was in use, so I set up for the GPS LPV to 10L and flew the glidepath to an uneventful night crosswind landing. Leg time was 3:31 on 47.9 gallons of fuel.

**Day 2: November 2, 2009 KBIL→KMIC**

I took the hotel shuttle up to the airport on a beautiful but cold morning to find frost on the wings.



The airplane was parked in the shade, so the first order of business was to move it and get all of the frost removed. It was very light, so paper towels did the trick. The clearance was as filed, and after a departure to the west I got a turn back east on course to Aberdeen. At 9,000' the IAS was 137 and the OAT was 0° C. This computed to a TAS of 155 and a tailwind gave me an initial ground speed of 177 knots. About 24 minutes after takeoff, ATC gave me "direct to Baker City due to military airspace". I had a difficult time finding the VOR (BHK) as it was not in the GPS database. It turned out that this was an airport, and KBHK worked just fine.



I did not have to go all the way to this airport, and when I was past the military airspace about 49 minutes into the flight, ATC gave me direct to my destination, KMIC.

About 480 miles west of Minneapolis, Salt Lake Center ATC gave me lost communications instructions for a frequency change to Minneapolis Center at 425



miles west of Minneapolis, but I did not need to use this contingency.

I listened to a Barron going into Watertown who could not get the visual approach clearance because a commuter aircraft in front of him had not yet landed and cancelled IFR. As soon as the cancellation was received, the Barron got his clearance, but my CFI senses said that he did not have it “all together”. I asked ATC what the rules were for an aircraft that landed and failed to cancel IFR. After some research, they indicated that they could clear another aircraft for an approach after 30 minutes with an explanation to and approval of a pilot, and could clear any aircraft after 60 minutes. Sure enough, after a bit of time ATC asked me to call the Watertown Unicom and determine if the Barron had landed as he indeed had failed to call them and cancel IFR. By talking to the FBO manager, I determined that he had landed and I relayed the cancellation to a very appreciative controller.

When you get to the Midwest, things are mostly flat and “the same”. For student pilots, navigation by “pilotage” is much more difficult than it is in Seattle.



My ground speed continued to increase as I proceeded east. Just under 200 miles west of Minneapolis (before descent) it was up to more than 200 knots.

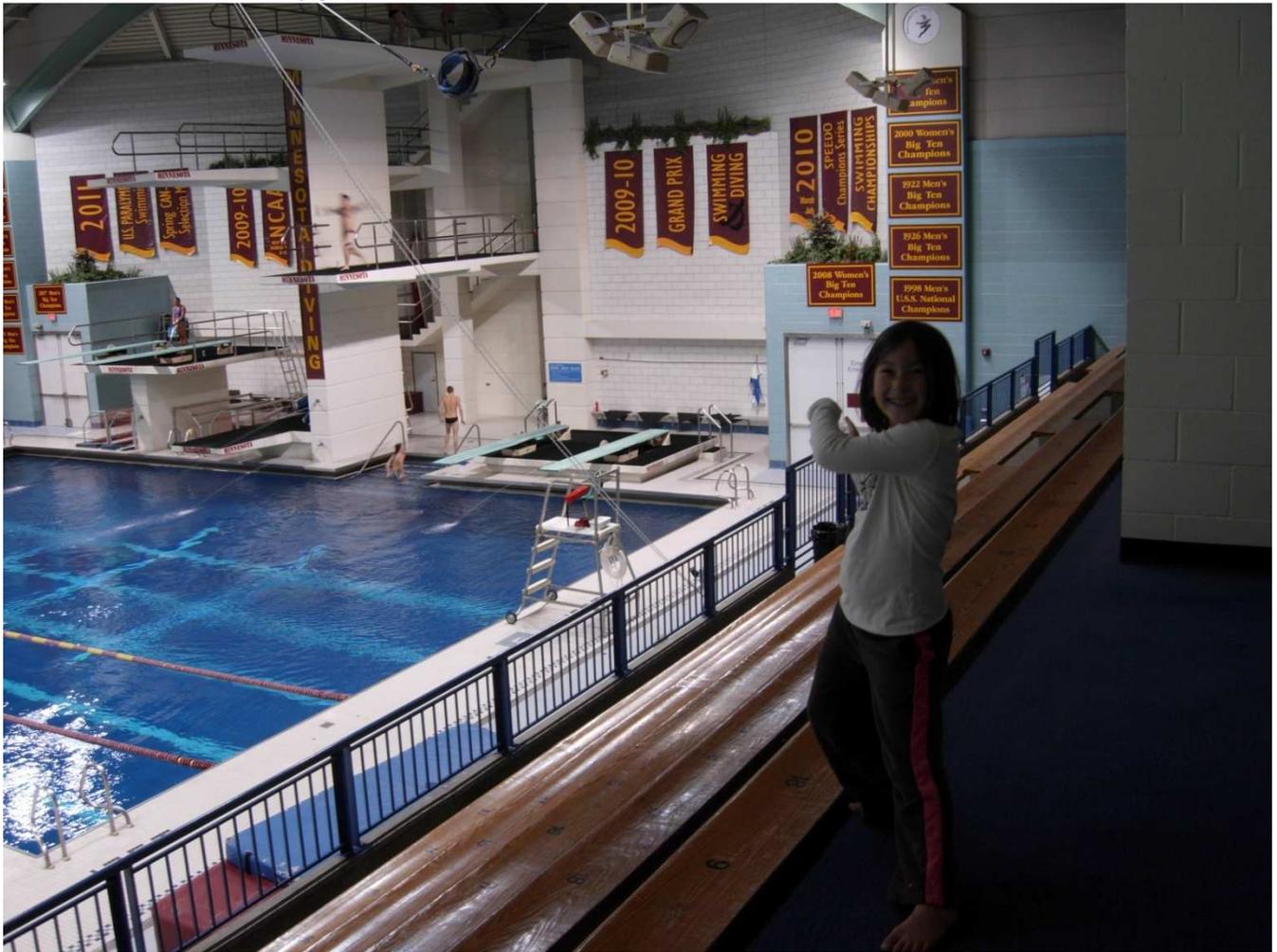
I was on top of a few puffy clouds in smooth air until about 60 miles from Minneapolis when I was asked to cross 35 miles west of Minneapolis at 5,000' and maintain 5,000'. As I descended through the clouds I got a lot of turbulence from updrafts and downdrafts. The ATIS at KMIC was reporting surface winds from 290 at 18 gusting 25, with runway 32R in use. The tower subsequently reported gusts to 35. About 10 miles from the airport for unknown reasons I lost communications with Minneapolis approach, so I called the tower and was cleared for the visual approach. The crosswind landing was safe and on the centerline but not very pretty right after touchdown. The leg time was 3:38 on 53.8 gallons of fuel.



I spent the balance of the day with my daughter and grandchildren and we had a visit to the local zoo.



I also got a tour of the University of Minnesota swim facility where granddaughter Rebekah does diving, and a demonstration of Karate by grandson Joahua in the basement of the house.



**Day 3: November 3, 2009 KMIC→KSUS**

After breakfast and some work on my daughter's PC, it was time to go to the airport for a local sightseeing flight. She and my two grandchildren had a nice flight which included turns-around-a-point, the point being the house that they purchased and moved into just a week ago.



Then after lunch, it was time to depart for Florida via a planned stop for the night in St. Louis. The high winds had left the Minneapolis area and at takeoff were down to 170 at 7 knots. I was cleared as filed and vectored around the west side of the Minneapolis class B at 3,000'. Then I was given direct Rochester MN and a climb to 7,000'. Weather was moving in from the west, and I got out in front of it with no troubles and no IMC for the leg. At 30 minutes after takeoff, I had full throttle (23" MP) and 2400 RPM which gave me 143 knots IAS, 156 knots TAS and a ground speed of 155 with winds from the east. It was very smooth at 7,000'

I had not filled the tip tanks and wanted to burn off the 4-5 gallons that should have been in each from the previous day. I waited a bit too long to switch from the left tip tank and ran it dry. A quick switch to the next tank and boost pump corrected the problem before the engine completely quit, and the autopilot held altitude during the process.



I noted that I was going to fly very close to Cedar Rapids, Iowa where I went to college, so I asked for VFR-on-top so that I could maneuver the aircraft for some aerial pictures.

This went very well, and then I proceeded back on course to Iowa City. Most of the flight during this leg was under a high overcast that was ahead of the approaching warm front. Winds at Spirit of Saint Louis (KSUS) were calm with clear sky and 13° C and ATC gave me direct KSUS about 60 miles out and then a visual approach for runway 8R following a Challenger jet. The leg time was 3:03 on 50.9 gallons of fuel.



A very nice FBO (Aero Charter Executive) that I had selected based on [www.airnav.com](http://www.airnav.com) research had a corporate account at a nearby Hampton Inn, and this included a free shuttle. There was a “no charge” happy hour with beer and wine, ham and cheese sandwiches, mozzarella cheese sticks and sauce, so this was dinner. There was a complimentary hot breakfast in the morning as well.



**Day 4: November 4, 2009 KSUS→KEYK**

Some rain showers passed over St. Louis as I slept during the night and the nice weather resumed in the morning.



I awoke to clear skies and high pressure again. I used Jeppesen FliteStar/DTC DUAT to check the weather for the day and filed two plans for the two legs. The first departure was scheduled for 8:00 a.m. The shuttle got me back to the airport where I ordered fuel, and takeoff was at 8:06. ATC had assigned the TURBO5.FAM SID, and it was easy to accept the initial vector and then join the procedure. I had a nice tailwind again and it was at freezing and smooth at 9,000'. After about an hour I checked my O<sub>2</sub> saturation (without supplemental O<sub>2</sub>) and it was a comfortable 91%. Winds at Bessemer, AL (just west of Birmingham) were calm at the airport and I selected the GPS approach for runway 23 and cancelled IFR on 10 miles final with the runway in sight. The leg statistics were a flight time of 2:20 using 34.4 gallons of fuel. Lunch at Bessemer was a nice burger in an aviation theme bar. I also took the time during lunch to put some charge on the batteries in my laptop as I was not sure if I could fly two legs on a single charge of the battery.



**Day 4: November 4, 2009 KEKY→KTPF**

Takeoff for the final leg to Tampa was planned for 1730z, and at the departure runway I called Birmingham approach. They gave me a clearance as filed with a Clearance Void Time of 10 minutes. It took 13 minutes to climb back up to 9,000' and the airplane again flew in smooth air with a slight tailwind. Maximum groundspeed in level cruise was 180 knots. I had planned a route to the west of the Tampa class B, but north of the area ATC put me on radar vectors to go to the east side. When I was about 10 miles from the airport, it was clear that they wanted me to cancel IFR, so I did so and entered a right downwind behind a CIRRUS for runway 3. Leg time was 2:44 on 38 gallons of fuel.



AOPA had volunteer "line crew" to direct aircraft to parking, and my last "lineman" was a Continental 767 Captain who told me that hopes to soon fly a 787 when he learned that I was from Seattle. A courtesy SUV took me from my aircraft to the FBO where fuel was ordered for departure on Saturday, and a shuttle bus took several of us to the convention center. I picked up my registration packet and walked the 3 blocks or so to the Sheraton.

My room was on the west side with a nice view of the river.



#### Day 5: Thursday November 5 at AOPA Summit



The Summit began with a general session at 9am with a discussion called “One Voice”. It included Ed Bolen of NBAA, Pee Bunce of GAMA, Peggy Chabrian of WAI, Jim Coyne of NATA, Paula Derks of AEA, and Tom Proberzny of EAA. They talked of the need and progress to defend General Aviation. The second half of the session was hosted by Tom Haines, Editor of AOPA Pilot and included Jack Pelton, Chairman of Cessna, Alan Klapmeier, co-founder of CIRRUS, Corvin Huber, Managing Director of REMOS LSA, and Rhett Ross, President of TCM. They talked about airframe, powerplant, unleaded fuel and related issues from the perspective of industry leaders.

I then attended a forum on Aging Aircraft, the GA Serves America Rally, a forum on the future of Avgas, an AOPA Safety Foundation forum on “What Went Wrong” and a CFI forum. The evening ended with a “meet and greet” reception in the exhibit hall.

#### Day 6: Friday November 6 at AOPA Summit

The second day began with another two part general session. First AOPA President Craig Fuller discussed NextGen with Margaret Jenny, President of the Radio Technical Commission for Aeronautics (RTCA) which recommends technical standards eventually to be adopted by the FAA. These have included GPS, WAAS, etc., and the NextGen standard is emerging from this group.



In the second half, Tom Haines discussed the future with Bill Stone, the Garmin Avionics Product Manager, Tim Taylor, the CEO of Free Flight Systems, and David VOS, Director of Control Technologies at Rockwell Collins. Mr. Stone discussed the advances which have led to synthetic vision and infrared vision, Mr. Taylor discussed the practical applications of ADS-B. I thought the discussion from Mr. Vos was particularly interesting. His former company which was recently acquired by Rockwell, developed guidance systems for

UAVs which are now in continuous use flying missions around the world without human intervention. He discussed the significant advances in autopilots and guidance systems, and had a fascinating video about a “digital parachute”. This self contained 8 oz proof of concept unit was developed from sensors and technology which he said have come from the auto industry and it flew a scale model F16 aircraft. In the video, 60% of one wing was intentionally blown off, and the system continued to successfully control the aircraft to a safe landing at its destination airport.

I subsequently attended Rod Machado aviation humor session and then the “GA At The Movies” luncheon at which the Hartranft award was presented to Rep. Allen Boyd and Rep. Vernon Ehlers for founding the General Aviation Caucus. The Sharples Award was given to Walter Friche who founded the Veterans Airlift Command. Finally, the Let’s Go Flying award was presented to Harrison Ford.

After lunch I went out to the Peter O. Knight airport and viewed all 100 of the aircraft on display. I have not included 100 pictures, but here are some of the highlights.





The day ended with a reception at the Tampa Aquarium, a riverside dinner (outside) back at the convention center (where I had a chance to meet and talk to new President Craig Fuller), and finally a John Oates concert.



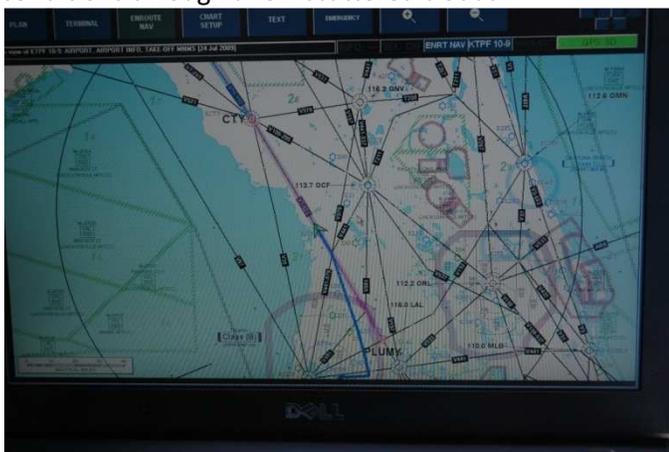
**Day 7: Saturday November 7 at AOPA Summit / KTPF → KHKS**

The final day of Summit began with the Town Hall general session hosted by President Fuller. It included a presentation by a young lady, Jessica Cox. She was born without arms, but as a child learned to do most of the things that other kids do by using her feet. This includes writing, typing 20 words per minute (I think), and even tying her shoe laces. She described her experiences in becoming the first woman born without arms who has earned her pilot certificate. A video is available at : <http://www.aopa.org/summit/live.cfm>

The body of the general session was to have been a discussion with Congressman Jerry Costello (D-III), chairman of the House Aviation Subcommittee. However, Rep. Costello was “detained” in Washington by house leadership because of the final deliberations on the Health Care bill (passed later that night). As a result President Fuller took questions from the floor and discussed a number of issues such as fuel availability, user fees, the dwindling pilot population, and other such topics.

After the session, I checked out of my hotel and took the shuttle back to KTPF to depart for Jackson Mississippi to have dinner with my son and his family on this his birthday. Tropical storm Ida was brewing in the Gulf of Mexico, and this strong low pressure system with its counterclockwise flow created very strong winds at the surface from the east. I arrived back at Peter O. Knight airport to find my Comanche parked in the grass where I had left it in good condition, with fuel as ordered, and ready to start the trip back home.

Sitting number one for the runway, I watched a Bonanza go around as he could not get lined up for landing, but then made it on the second try. I took off on runway 3 with winds from 100 that were gusting to 21. The departure was VFR per the published departure procedures, and then I picked up IFR in the air about 8 miles to the east of the airport. I was cleared as filed and quickly given a climb to 8,000' to join V7 northwest to the Cross City VOR. You can see the ground track of this combined VFR/IFR departure in the picture below and my climb to IFR cruise altitude was just a few seconds of instrument conditions through a few scattered clouds.



I had a 10-20 knot tail wind, courtesy of Ida for most of the flight which took 3:36 instead of the no-wind plan of 3:45. Jackson approach gave me the visual approach for runway 34 and I shut down. I had selected Jacobs Aircraft as my FBO at Jackson and they had a very nice facility with my rental car waiting.



The Hertz rental car came with a "NeverLost" Magellan GPS, so I used it to get to my hotel. It gave me a couple of bad turns at tricky interstate exits, but I got there without much reference to my previously prepared and printed [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com) directions. I tried to use it to find my son's house, but it properly took me to 103 Harbor DR which was in the middle of nowhere, as I needed to go to 103 Harbor RD (instead of DR). The avionics will only go where the pilot tells them to go, so it clearly is possible to get lost with a "NeverLost" unit. We had a nice birthday dinner that included neighbors and I was able to visit his family.



**Day 8: Sunday November 8 KHKS → KOUN**

My son Matthew is also a pilot, and previously was a CFI. The plan for Sunday morning was flights in N6087P with him and my grandchildren. There are 5, so 3 flights were required. These included an aerial tour of the house, their school, his place of work, etc.



After the first two flights which got the first 4 grandchildren into the air, all wanted another ride with the 5<sup>th</sup> grandchild! My son Matt wisely decided that each child would get only one flight but that resulted in some tears. On that last flight, Katie Beth was pretty much bored with Matt's touch and go landings in the traffic pattern.



These were all completed and by about 2 p.m. I was ready to depart for Norman, OK (KOUN). The flight was uneventful overall and once again I had a high pressure and a tailwind with the flight path keeping me well north of weather in Texas. Flight time was 2:29.

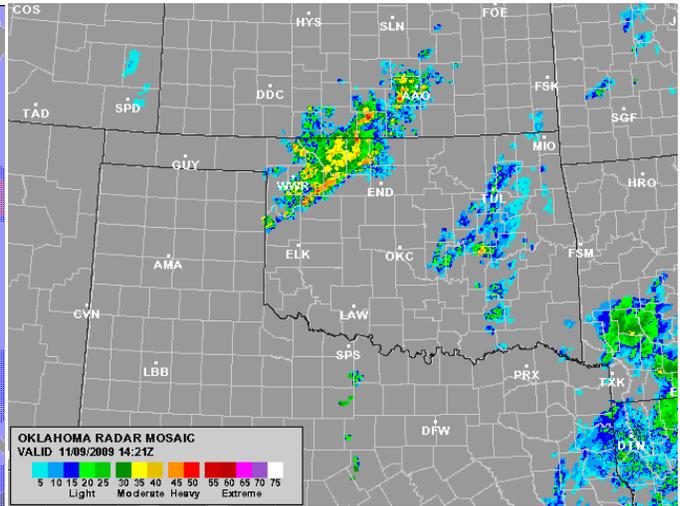
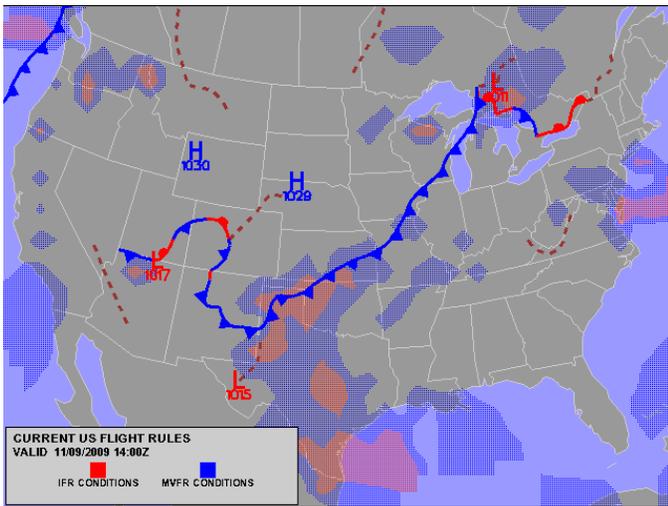


I spent the night in a very nice one year old Embassy Suites.



### Day 9: Monday November 9 KOUN → KAPA

This was a very interesting weather day. When I first checked the weather in the morning, I found that there was a cold front draped across the previously planned path from Norman, OK to Denver. Further, the ATIS for KOUN reported distant thunderstorms to the northwest (where I needed to go) and NEXRAD showed a batch right along my flight path.



Thus, I re-planned a very conservative course to the west through the Panhandle VOR (PNH) and then to the north to avoid the weather. I received a clearance that was a bit complicated. ATC said: "Depart heading 170 for radar vectors to the Will Rogers (IRW) 262 radial to a 39DME fix, direct PNH, and then as filed". I created a user waypoint in the 480 for the 39DME fix and took off into clear skies with a climb to 10,000'. After a few minutes to the south, ATC turned me west parallel with that 262 radial.



ATC eventually vectored me to a 290 heading to intercept the 262 radial.



At cruise altitude, I found that my O<sub>2</sub> saturation was just below 90%, so I got the oxygen turned on to have plenty of brain power for decisions to be made and got it up into the 90s.



When past the thunderstorms, I decided that I did not need to go as far west as I had filed and asked ATC about the status of the VANCE MOA C that was between the aircraft and a usable fix on the route, and was told that it was active. However, the controller suggested that I consider the ROLLS intersection which was just to the west of the active MOA. I found that it would work and would keep me out of both the MOA and the thunderstorms which were very clear both on NEXRAD XM weather and by looking out the window. I requested and was granted direct ROLLS direct UPIRE then as filed.





As I crossed the cold front the cloud tops became higher, and when I got bounced around in a couple of tops as I went through them, I asked for 12,000' which gave me a slower groundspeed, but kept me in smooth air above the clouds.

There were a couple of other thunderstorms along the route, but I was able to stay well clear of them without too much deviation.



The clouds dissipated as I approached Denver, and I accepted the visual approach into Denver Centennial.



I spend the afternoon with my parents, attending a concert by musician Al Galli and had a nice dinner with them in the Health Care Center dining facility.



I spent Monday and Tuesday nights with a cousin in Lakeland.

### Day 10: Tuesday November 10

There was no flying planned for Tuesday, and I spent it with my parents, moving my mother from the Health Care Center where she has been in therapy for the last month back to their Assisted Living apartment.

**Day 11: Wednesday November 11 KAPA → KTWF**

The route was long but mostly uneventful. The weather at Denver was VFR with a high overcast. I departed on radar vectors with a nice view of the Rockies under some blue sky to the west.



On departure from KAPA, I climbed to 10,000' and then requested a shortcut VFR-on-top at 10,500' to Medicine Bow, WY. Denver approach initially denied this clearance, but later gave it. The weather through most of Wyoming was very nice with interesting views.



The 396 GPS was usually able to tell me about features along the route.



As I approached Twin Falls, ID, I flew under an overcast ceiling and through some light rain. For a bit I thought that I was going to need to back to a hard IFR altitude, but this was not necessary. There was more rain on the windscreen as I got closer to KTWF.



I accepted the visual approach into KTWF but flew the GPS 25 to get lined up, and then entered the downwind for runway 7 to avoid VFR traffic in the traffic pattern. At lunch, a wall outlet was available to recharge the laptop, and I prepared and filed the next leg.

**Day 11: Wednesday November 11 KTWF → KRNT**

At the time of departure, there was a front right over Twin Falls and heavier precipitation to the northwest.



The leg started with a climb to 10,000' as filed, but at 10,000' the temperature was at freezing and while I could still see the ground, I started to pick up a trace of rime icing.



I requested and was granted a descent to the MOCA of 8,500' and this stopped the accumulation of ice. Approaching Baker City, OR (BKE), I needed to climb to 9,000' for the MEA/MOCA ahead and was still IMC at 0° C picking up light rime, but I could see the outline of the sun at 10 o'clock, so I requested a climb to 14,000' to attempt to get on top. This was not successful, and the airplane continued to accumulate ice very slowly. Engine performance was below par, and I was sure that ice had accumulated on the induction air filter. I saw heavier rain and snow ahead on XM NEXRAD, so I elected to divert to Baker City just ahead. I requested the VOR DME 13, and in the descent from 14,000' to 8,000' the engine coughed briefly (about 1 second), as I presume water came through the carburetor.

This approach was flown with approach chart data from Jeppesen FliteDeck, as I had no paper charts for Baker City. This worked out just fine and there was no problem in flying the approach with information from the laptop. I was too busy to take very many pictures of this process, but I have included a picture of the 480 during the procedure turn, of the 396 showing the weather ahead, and of the laptop approach chart when I was on final.



I saw the ground on the approach about 1,000' AGL, cancelled IFR, and landed runway 13.



Inside the Baker Aircraft FBO, I had a couple of cookies and connected to wireless internet to assess my options. It appeared that VFR to Pendleton, OR might be possible and it was clear from there to Yakima with scattered clouds in the Seattle area, but darkness was approaching. I filed IFR with VFR departure in the remarks, and climbed to about 1,000' AGL (4,300 MSL) to take a look. However, the visibility was not good, it was becoming dark, and the ceilings were low, and the 396 GPS terrain system started constantly complaining about obstacles and terrain as I proceeded west, so I decided to return to KBKE to spend the night after a very short 7 minute flight. The FBO called on the radio while I was on final approach and said that they were closing for the evening. They offered the keys to the courtesy car, and I accepted and after parking the airplane, I drove to town and found a motel for the night.

**Day 12: Thursday November 12 KBKE → KRNT**

When I awoke on Thursday morning DUATS reported clear skies at Baker City but below freezing temperatures. It also reported generally good weather to Seattle except for fog at Renton at the time of the report. I went outside with my luggage to the courtesy car and found it covered with freezing rain and light snow.



I used a very small scraper included with the car to get it ready for the short trip to the airport, filled the courtesy car with gas (always bring a courtesy car back with full fuel) and stopped by McDonalds to get the Egg McMuffin meal. I asked for a small decaf coffee, but they were out of small cups and put my coffee in a large container. (This will turn out to be important a bit later in the story...) On the way to the airport I was worried about ice on the roads, and kept the speed down. As I approached the airport on the access road which runs parallel to I-84, I saw emergency lights ahead and passed a 15 passenger van that was sitting inverted on the road. It made the national news and was transporting a church group from Denver to Portland during the early morning hours. Several occupants were ejected from the van, two were killed and several others were injured. They had all been removed from the vehicle by the time that I passed it, but the police car was still there.



Additional information about the weather and the accident can be found at:

[http://www.oregonlive.com/news/index.ssf/2009/11/five\\_people\\_remain\\_in\\_intensiv.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/news/index.ssf/2009/11/five_people_remain_in_intensiv.html)

A Pilatus PC-12 air ambulance was waiting at the airport not far from my parked aircraft.



My Comanche was covered with ice. I was unable to open the baggage compartment to start to work on the ice because the lock was frozen and the key would only go in about  $\frac{1}{4}$ ". I could get the key into the main door, but it would not turn because of the ice. The Baker Aircraft Director of Maintenance at the FBO arrived about this time and offered to put my airplane into their heated hangar with his powered tug in order to get the ice off of it and I accepted the offer. However, I had applied the brakes before securing the aircraft the night before and there was no way that it was going to move with the tug until I released them.



After a bit of thinking, I filled my now empty but very large McDonalds coffee cup with the hottest water that I could get from the bathroom sink and dripped hot water over the door lock, hinges, and the edges of the door. This did the trick and soon I was in the airplane and got the brakes released. Baker Aircraft personnel moved one of their own aircraft out of their hangar and my airplane into it, and a little more than 1 hour later, I was finished brushing all of the ice off the airplane. I purchased fuel for the left tip tank to balance the tip tank weights and was ready to come home.

At 1642z I departed VFR to the west with the temperature still  $-1^{\circ}\text{C}$  and picked up my IFR clearance in the air.



When I departed Baker City, KRNT was below IFR minimums with the ceiling at 300' overcast with mist as of 1553z, but Boeing Field was above the minimums for an IFR approach. Enroute, I was generally clear of clouds, but flew over or by airports that were IFR.





Crossing the Cascades was not a problem and there was a beautiful view of Mt. Rainier off the left wing tip and a few scattered clouds for the descent into Renton.



While enroute at 1724z, KRNT became 300' scattered, and when it was time to land the 1753z ATIS reported clear, so I was able to accept and fly the visual approach to runway 16. Because I landed at Renton at 10:20 a.m., I had already cancelled my first lesson that was scheduled for 8am on Thursday, but was ready to start the second lesson scheduled at 11 a.m.

In summary, the trip covered 4,880 nautical miles over 32 ¼ hours of flight time. I used just over 467 gallons of 100LL. The longest leg by hobbs time was the 4.5 hours from Denver to Twin Falls. The longest leg by nautical miles was from Billings to Minneapolis at 641 miles completed in 3:38 for an average ground speed of 176 knots. I was able to visit my family members, picked up a lot of great information at the AOPA Summit, and completed the trip with a single day delay due to weather and without any mechanical problems with the airplane. Not too bad for an airplane that is 50 years old!