

THE AVIATOR

November 2006
Volume 1, Issue 3



“FLIGHT SIMULATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY”

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THE AVIATOR

T H E A V I A T O R S O C I E T Y

FSX IS RELEASED!

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Well the Microsoft Flight Simulator team has really done it again. They continue to out do themselves with each edition. With new scenery, aircraft, missions, and much more, FSX really has the potential to be the best of the series. The only thing holding it back is....our hardware! There are some that are going to be skeptical or even turned off by FSX initially because of the performance issues it comes with on the first install. But after a few

tweaks, some adjusting to what and where we fly it will serve as a very nice simulator until we update our hardware to make it as real as it gets. People tend to forget that with each new edition of Flight Sim there are always some growing pains. This is a good thing if you think about it. I mean if FSX came out and everyone could max out the sliders and run it on a 2 year old system the game would last like 6 months and then it would never be used

again. Microsoft has thought of the future and is why it continues to produce a simulator that last for years. In a year or two we will most be wondering when the next edition is coming out and have machines that are considered top of the line and it will all start over again. So here is to the future of Flight Simulation!



FROM THE EDITOR



We at "The Aviator" would like to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving has a pretty confusing past here in the US. Most believe that Thanksgiving Day was created to celebrate the Pilgrims (separatist) landing on Plymouth Rock in 1621.

While this is partly true, Thanksgiving Day as we know it is also believed to come from when President Washington established a day of Thanksgiving in December 1777 as a victory celebration honoring the defeat of the British at Saratoga. It wasn't until

1941 that Congress named Thanksgiving an official holiday and that it was to be held on the fourth Thursday of November. No matter how it became we all should be thankful and I for one am truly thankful for the friends I have in the Flight Sim community!

THE OUTER MARKER

“RTFM”

By: Chip Barber

Now, for you RW flyboys (note to the ACLU – when I say “Flyboys”, I also mean to include the fairer sex... and the not so fair sex, such as those who tend to dress like Carmen Miranda), you may as well leave now. We acknowledge your hours and hours of study, devoted to the intricacies of whatever bird your carrier has assigned to you. Of course, taking an attitude similar to a 9th grade student of math (what, me study?) will likely get you a trip to “The Great Gig In The Sky” (cue the heavenly angel music in honor of Waters, Gilmore, Mason & Wright). No, this is for those of us who would be referred to by the American Indians as “Dances With Pixels”.

RTFM. An interesting mnemonic familiar to anyone who frequent flight sim forums. Of course, the translation is “Read The Flight (ok, a little literary license, deal with it) Manual”. This may be seen as invective or friendly advice, but either way, it’s important to pay attention.

We all follow pretty much the same pattern of SimPilot development. Show of hands... who among you did not start with the C172? Other than Ms. (Mr.? Who can tell?) Miranda, it appears pretty much everyone took their first few flights with this unassuming little bird. Stable, predictable and forgiving, this angel with aluminum skin has introduced most of us to the

heights, but of course only just began to scratch our itch for flight.

Rather than bore you with the progression, which after all, we all pretty much followed by wrote, let us now examine some of the particulars of said progression. Certainly, we’ve all worn that silly, sloppy grin (you know, the ones that make people wonder exactly what it is we’re looking at on the monitor) we get when we touch down without that awful crunching noise. But much to our chagrin, the larger the bird, the louder that noise until we become adept at the particulars and quirks of each successive bird.



Now for the truly obstinate, this is accomplished by trial and error. Saving a flight with a title something like “Another Damn Attempt At Final To Rollout” or some such. Trial and error, while tried and true, only works with we pixel fanatics. You can try it in your rental C172, but that is a sure trip to the Emergency Room and a rather long

THE OUTER MARKER

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explanation to the guys in the suits, to say nothing of some really nasty looks from the rental guy.

For the rest of us, there are (cue music) manuals. Actually, for the default birds on which we cut our teeth, there are the knee-board lists. No depth, just numbers. Funny how those numbers begin to have meaning mighty quick, no? Phrases like Flap Speed, VRef and the like become enmeshed in our axiom. And much to our delight, we start greasing our landings. Pretty soon, we're strutting like Mick Jagger, confident in our ability to go from wheels up to wheels down, any where, any time. Bring it on, baby! Easy as cake. Piece of pie.

PMDG. PIC. Level D.
Ready For Pushback.

Boy, these names will give even the most staunch simmer a case of the erectus floppus the first few times out of the hangar! It's not even so much the complicated and scary-looking flight deck that does it. It starts with the keen eyed observation that the pdf file which contains the manual is in excess of 5 megs! Boy, you know you're in trouble then! Forget about reading the thing on the monitor. No, these babies demand to be printed, highlighted, noted, stickied, cross-referenced and

brought into the bathroom at every opportunity. I mean, these things are just plain silly! You're telling me I have to not only read, but become intimate with this two trees worth of paper?

This is where we separate the defaulters from the SuperSimmers. See, it's not a question of ability. Even the dimmest of the defaulters (of which I am one) has the



capacity to fly the big boys. What they may lack is simply the desire to invest all the time necessary to print, read and digest these papyrus pachyderms.

But guess what? This came as quite a surprise, actually. It's worth it! Every bloody minute of it! That's right, 50 years old, or 60 or 70, and still hitting the books, taking notes and practice, practice, practice. For the longest time, I was intimidated by all products with the PMDG

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“RTFM”



before their name. No longer. Yes, it took (for me, anyway) hours and hours, spread over months. But, I finally got her. My nemesis no more. And, I've just managed to bring to reign the PIC ERJ 145. Now there's a bird of a different color!

The point is, flight simulation is not unlike brushing your teeth (stay with me). The more you put in, the more you get out. Keep brushing and flossing, and your trips to the dentist are, while still not a reason to celebrate, far better than, say, becoming impaled on a stick. Invest time in your manuals, and amazingly enough, even the most intricate of aircraft simulations will become yours. They feel every bit as good as the default birds, but somehow better for all the effort.

Kiss the center line in a SuperSim. Enable the reversers and luxuriate in the power of the engines slowing you on your rollout. Enjoy your accomplishment at having programmed the FMC successfully, and followed your progress throughout your flight. Having invested your time, money and energy, and having RTFM, I'd say you deserve that sloppy grin!

Three Green!



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AIRPORT SPOTLIGHT

A FORGOTTEN FIELD

By: John Bratcher

Even Microsoft is starting to lose faith that Meigs will ever become an airport again. This is evident by the fact that they have removed it from the list of scenery in the FSX database. Meigs is located in the beautiful lakefront part of Chicago and was once the default location in Microsoft's Flight Simulator's 2002 edition. Most of you are aware of what some in our industry call the midnight massacre of Meigs. This is a tale of a tragedy at the hands of a Mayor with no regard for the public's interest or safety. While I normally do not like to mix political interest with aviation news some times it is inevitable and in this case I think it is important for all readers of the Aviation community to become aware of this tragedy.

In the late hours of the night on March 30th 2003, the Mayor of Chicago had demolition crews go in and destroy the runway of what

used to be a home to many aircraft in Chicago's great lakefront area. The City of Chicago has and still is facing many legal battles with both private interest and the US government.

You see this was done without any notice and complete disregard for the safety of the flying public. No notice was given to the travelers that frequented to that airport...not even the evening of demolition. It is law that any airport that has an instrument approach to it must notify the Federal Aviation



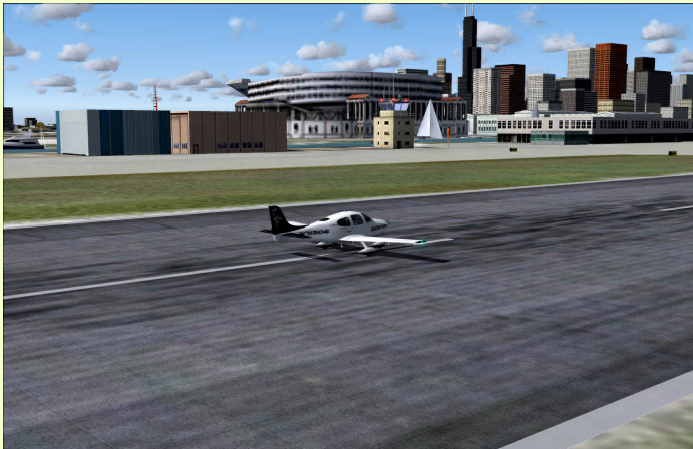
*“...that was
the night that
democracy
died in
Chicago.”*

AIRPORT SPOTLIGHT

A FORGOTTEN FIELD

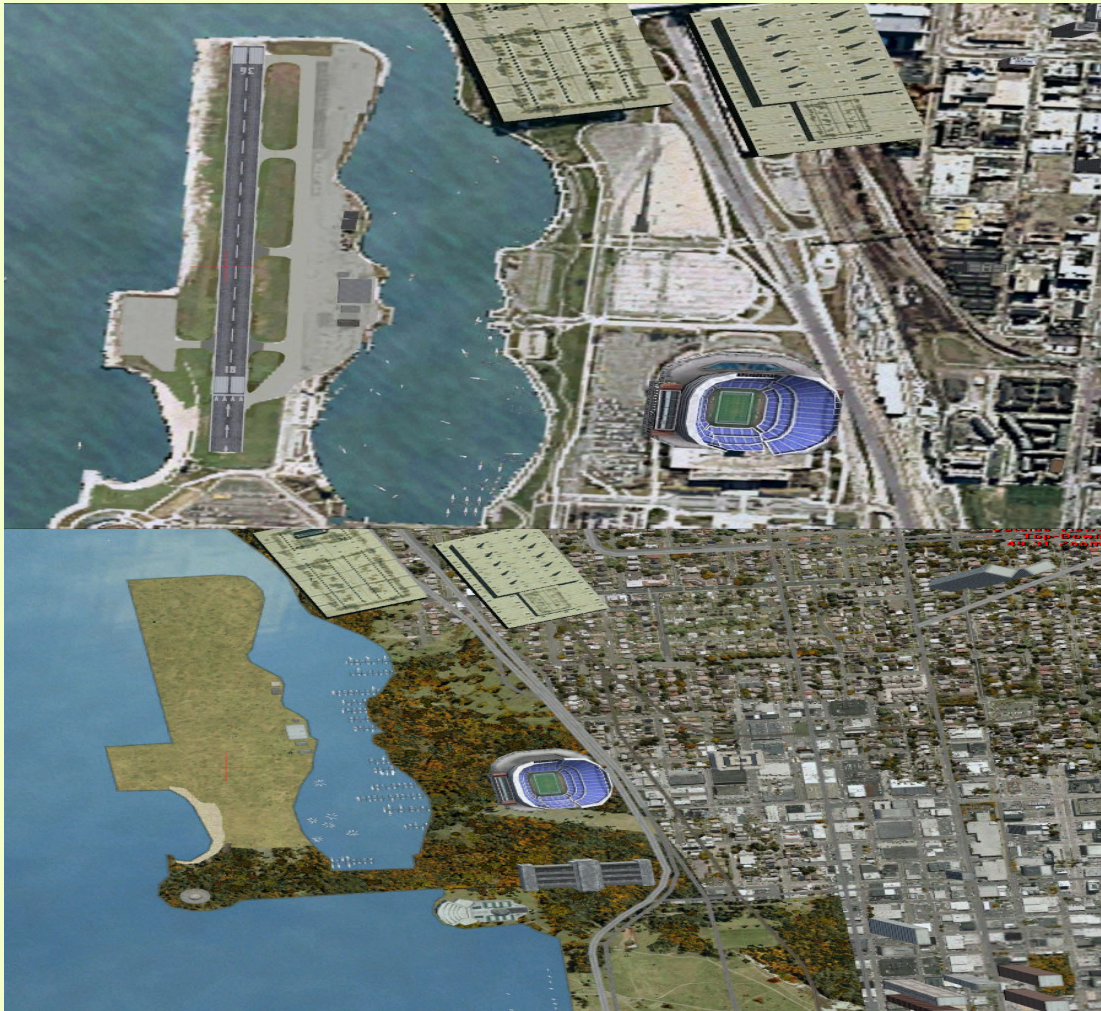
Administration 30 days prior to its closure. It was not until an Air Traffic Controller told a pilot of the need for deviation did most learn of what was happening.

As someone that is somewhat familiar with this event it was one of the first places that I visited when I got my copy of FSX. With much disappointment I found out that all that is left in FSX is what you see in the screen shots. Just a blank piece of land! What is sad is that is what the Mayor would like it to look like in the real world. In the past we have seen airports that are closed still appear in FS and I wonder if there is a reason that Microsoft did not choose to place a memorial or at least a rendition with X's on the runway. I for one am a big supporter of Microsoft's efforts to the



AIRPORT SPOTLIGHT

A FORGOTTEN FIELD



aviation industry but I think this was a mistake.

Most wonder the importance of Meigs and why anyone should care about its existence or lack there of. Meigs was the location of the first flight in Chicago. Anyone that has every had the pleasure to visit the area that Meigs is at would know that it is a beautiful spot that has great access to downtown Chicago. Not only was it the fact that Meigs was shutdown but it was how it was closed. It was an abuse of power and complete disregard for aviation safety.

I can only hope that one of the most talented scenery developers in the flight simulation community will take this project under their wings and right the wrong that has been done in the Flight Simulation world. While we can not just recreate the airport in the real world there are efforts to reverse the terrible injustice that was committed here. Mayoral Candidate Bill Dock Walls was quoted as saying "...that was the night that democracy died in Chicago." Please visit the Friends of Meigs website at www.friendsofmeigs.org and see what terrible acts can occur right under our noses! This site has some very valuable information about the efforts of both sides and why it is truly important to know who you are electing!

Why I Fly, What I Fly, Where I Fly

A THREE PART SERIES

WHAT I FLY

By: Jeff Taylor

If you read my previous article, Why I Fly, you know a little bit about my history with Aviation. This month's article is number two in a three part series: What I fly. We all have our favorites: Cessna or Piper, Commercial or General Aviation, Boeing or Airbus. It doesn't really matter to me. As long as it has wings and at least one engine (or the ability to be towed really high and released) I'm good. For the record though I prefer Grumman, Commercial and Boeing (although I like my Aviator Society A320 tail number N007JT).

miles northwest of Chicago. Built in 1971, this little gem has been owned by my dad for 3 years. N9404L is a beautiful little low wing, two-seat plane that is an absolute blast to fly. One of the really cool things about her is that she has a sliding canopy; you can fly with it open for fresh air. This is really nice to do first thing in the morning when a Young Eagle is going on his first flight, who has eaten way to many bowls of Coco Puff cereal decides to blow his breakfast all over his lap. Just reach up unlatch and ahhhh, fresh air. Try doing that in a Cessna.



In real world flying I have been behind the controls of many different aircraft, from 152's, 172's, 182's, to Cherokees, Cheetahs and Tigers (Oh My). I currently get yoke time behind N9404L, a Grumman Yankee based at Poplar Grove, IL (C77) about 50

Previously my dad had a Cherokee 140 that was pretty nice, but it lacked a certain appeal. I mean, you always see a Piper low wing, but you don't see a lot of Grumman's. He decided to "downgrade" in usable space, flight length and money to get her and he has been giddy ever since. Upgrades since taking over ownership have been numerous. New GPS, tinting for the canopy, alternator, a new instrument panel cover and leather yoke covers have done

wonders for the old girl. There was talk of possibly a new paint job to resemble U.S. Air Force training colors but I personally don't think it needs it. No doubt it would look really cool though.

Why I Fly, What I Fly, Where I Fly

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I'm not really looking forward to the day he gets rid of her. Neither is my 8-year-old son. He has "flown" it a couple of times and really likes the up's / down's plus the wiggles. I remember the first time they went up. Dad said they were flying along the highway and Brendan says "Wow, a truck". Next thing dad knows is they were in a 60-degree bank looking down at the rig. Both of them still talk about it. Brendan was able to go up again a couple of weeks ago. My dad said that you could tell he plays with the simulator because he knows the talk and can keep her straight and level. One of these days, I will have to stop screwing around and get my PPL. I gotta keep her in the family. If not for me, my son right?

In the simulator world, I will fly just about anything. The nice thing about being with the Aviator Society is that we are free to fly what we want, when we want. What I fly usually depends on two things: How much time I have and where I want to go. Since I work for an American Airlines/American Eagle, I typically fly planes associated with the routes AA and AE serve. My hanger has every current (and older) AA/AE aircraft plus all the Aviator Society planes as well as a couple of fighters, twin turbo-props and an ultra-light.

Most of the time on the free server of West-CoastATC, you will find me cruising the skies

in an Alaska Airlines B737-400 with Mickey Mouse and the gang on the fuselage and the tail. My average time flying is roughly two hours give or take so this plane is perfect for me. Created by the FFX design



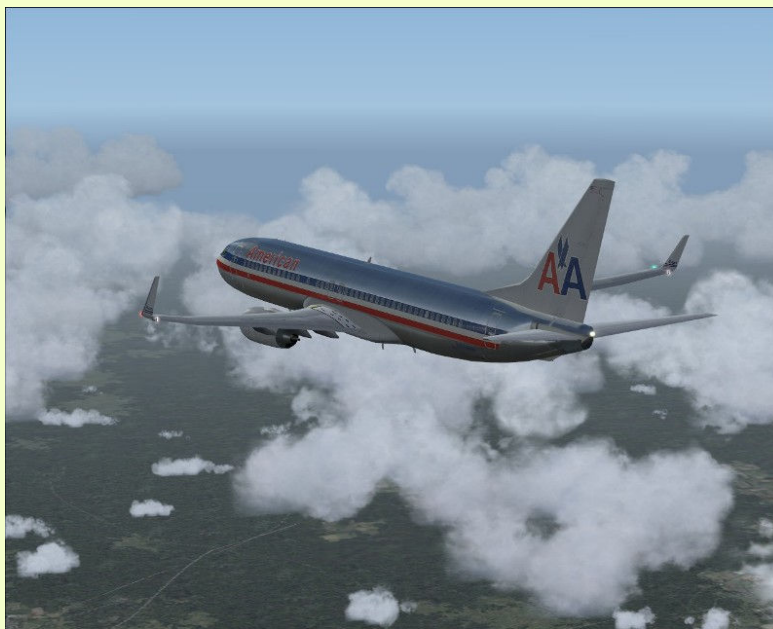
group, it is my absolute favorite aircraft in the hanger. I am a huge Disney fan and this plane just makes me smile. I have tried the PMDG 737 NG aircraft and while I must say they are very nice, that damn FMC just turns me off. I have tried and tried but I cannot figure it out. Sure, I could dump the panel and put the stock 737 one in there but that would be like painting a pig's toenails, it doesn't do it justice. By the way, that is not a slam to the fine folks at PMDG. I feel that I would be lowering the quality of their work by doing that. Besides, red paint on a pig's toenail would be a waste of good polish.

Why I Fly, What I Fly, Where I Fly

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When I am on the ATC server at WestCoastATC or over at VATSIM, I am usually sporting the colors of Aviator Society in our Citation X designed by Eaglesoft, A320 designed by IFDG, CRJ200 designed by POSKY or B1900D designed by PMDG. All of the aircraft were hand painted by Laurent (LB) Bellion and are masterpieces worthy of any screen shot art gallery. I have to admit that the CRJ200 is probably my favorite Aviator plane to fly but it's hard to not want to fly the plane that carries your call sign and initials. As I said before, it all depends on how much time and what the distance is to travel when it comes to choosing my Aviator Aircraft.



Occasionally when I just want to skirt the trees or do VFR flights I wander over to the other side of the hanger. There I usually select 1 of 3 aircraft: A C172 in Civil Air Patrol Colors, Piper J3 Cub or an ultra-light designed by Byron Warwick. There is just something soothing to hear the sounds of the engine along with wind noise

while squawking 1200. This is truly flying like a bird, albeit a bird that has a little bit of noise associated with it. It is not very often that I fly VFR so when I do, I try to enjoy it and make it last.

Over at the "secured" part of the hanger for military flights, I have the usuals. The F-16 Viper by Kirk Olsen is a damn fine aircraft and yes I do have the Thunderbird paint job to go with it. Have you ever taken an F-16 down the "Strip" at Las Vegas? I sure have. Team FS KBT F18 Super Hornet is another quality rendition as well.

Add to that realistic F-18 sounds and the sonic boom and you have got yourself one mean plane. I'm actually getting pretty good at carrier landings with this baby. I also have the venerable BUFF. The B-52 Megafortress with 8 engines smoking up the joint, hugging the terrain or soaring at high altitudes, is a tough plane to fly. But after a couple of sessions you get a real feel for her. I was messing around one day and created a "Dog Zero One" trip. For any of you that read "Flight of the Old Dog" by Dale Brown, you know what that trip was like. Luckily I didn't have to dodge fighters, avoid lasers or steal kerosene at a Russian outpost in Siberia. It was a long day when I did it and only took a couple of catnaps. I was actually kind of sad to put her down in

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Nome, AK. I did ferry her back to Dreamland later though.

I guess it all boils down to this. It doesn't matter what you fly. From the Wright Flyer to the Space Shuttle, as long as there are wings and an engine, someone will dream of stepping behind the controls to see what it takes to control that ship. My message to you is to stop thinking about it and do it. Grab your favorite plane. Taxi out to the runway and push the throttles to the stop. Achieve flight, even if it is only in the simulator. If you don't, someone will and tell you all about it. Why not be that person that has a story to share.



AIR ADVENTURE

THE ASPEN EXPERIENCE

By: John Bratcher

Recently I had the pleasure to experience something that some may never get to or want to do in their aviation career...land at Aspen/Pitkin County Airport (also known as Sardy Field) in beautiful Aspen, Colorado. As many of you have seen or tried in the flight simulation world the approaches to KASE is not easily done. Coming from the south to Runway 33, this is avoided by most in the real world, or bringing it in from the north to Runway 15 which isn't that much better, is something that is definitely better left to the more experienced aviators in the real world. However we in the Flight Simulation community have a great advantage, the reset function, so we will explore these approaches in to Aspen with a smile during this edition of Air Adventure!

We will start our adventure with a little preplanning which is always good for any flight both real and simulated. Our departure airport is going to be from Denver's Centennial Airport (KAPA). Since mountain flying is best down "low and slow" we are going to pick a smaller



general aviation aircraft to experience this adventure. I myself like the new FSX version of the Baron 58 with the G1000 Glass Cockpit and this will be the aircraft used by me in this adventure.

So first we need to see how much fuel we are going to need, view the NOTAMS for the departing and arriving airports, get a weather brief, and make sure we plot out our course correctly. The great thing about aircraft now days are the GPS and its integration with the aircraft's other avionics. So we are going to use the GPS for this flight but it is always a great idea to have a plan "B" so bring your charts. Aspen is about 96 miles west south west of Denver and it looks to be about a 45 minute flight from gear up to gear down.

I never like to travel alone so my friend is going to come with us on this flight. To protect the innocent we will change her name to "Katie". Katie and I both together weigh about 310 lbs and are carrying about 110 lbs of luggage. So for a 45 minute flight that is 96 miles long we are looking at burning about 21 gallons of fuel. So let's put in like

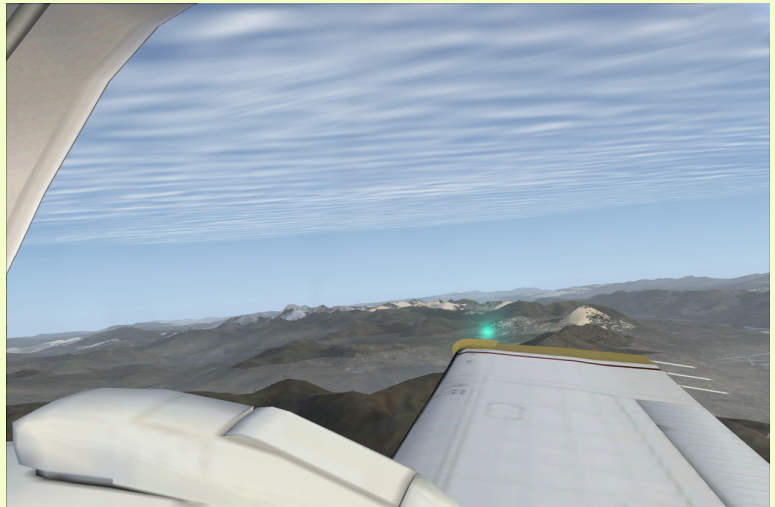


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40 gallons to be on the safe side. With fuel that puts us at about 4571lbs which is still 953lbs under the max weight.

Well Katie is late as usual because she had to get every hair perfect before our flight, so I have got everything all setup and ready to go. We are making this flight early in the morning (0700 MST) as to keep the sun out of our eyes on the way there and because if we waited until the evening we may be out of luck getting in to Aspen. Aspen has some pretty strict noise abatement procedures and one of them is that as a VFR aircraft you have to have landed or departed at KASE with in the last 12 months to conduct night operations at Aspen. So we are not going to chance it and plus the scenery is much better during the day. I just have to finish the pre-flight walk around and finish loading the luggage and we will be ready to go. After all that is complete and I set up everything in the cockpit, I listen to the ATIS which is on frequency 120.3 and finish inputting my flight plan data into the GPS as well.



After I am all set and ready to go I give Centennial Ground (121.8) a call and get my taxi instructions. There was no need to call for a clearance as we are going VFR today and I just asked for some flight following through the Ground Controller. He was happy to oblige and I was given my instructions and sent on my way. So after we were taxied out to Runway 17L I was instructed to give tower a call (118.9) when I was ready for departure. Naturally I was ready to get to Aspen ASAP but let us not forget to finish the pre-flight checklist and make sure everything is all set.

Well we are all set and I called up Centennial Tower and let them know we were ready for departure at runway 17L. Runway, Wind, Cleared for take-off and we were on our way. So once we are up and established at a good rate of climb we start our west turn to about 260 degrees. Our climb is going to cap off at about 16500 ft so we can still see the wonderful mountains but not end up in the grassy knoll in the sky! Tower gives



AIR ADVENTURE

THE ASPEN EXPERIENCE

us the switch to Denver Approach (132.75) and with the traffic in this area we follow that instruction swiftly. So Katie just loves this area and has taken some great shots of the terrain around us. Can't beat the scenery even if it is simulated!

So after trucking along for like 25-30 minutes we need to get ready for our approach into Aspen. We give Aspen Approach (123.8) a call and they inform us Runway 15 will be our arriving runway for today's flight. With the weather being beautiful like it is we can expect a nice calm wind visual approach into Aspen. When we are about 15 out we get the instruction to give Aspen Tower (118.85) a call and let them know our position and intentions. Tower gives us the instruction to make a left base and clears us to land runway 15. As we make our base to final turn we can see why Runway 15 is the preferred runway. After putting it on the ground we are welcomed to Aspen and told to contact Aspen Ground (121.9) for our taxi instructions. Ground gives us taxi instructions to the main



ramp and the FBO guys are already there to meet us. What great service! We are going to spend the weekend here before we make our flight back. For our departure on Sunday we are going to try and make it out later in the afternoon but well before sunset. Our departure will most likely be off of Runway 35 as a Runway 15 departure requires the airport manager's approval so I am assuming it is there for reason and don't wish to take my chances and Katie is grateful as well. So Katie and I are on our way to the snow resort we are staying at and will see you all on the next go around. See you on the slopes...I mean Scopes!



November 2006

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- November 4 — **WCATC Saturday Scramble**
Orlando Executive Airport (KORL)
www.westcoastatc.com
- November 9-11 — **AOPA Expo 2006**
Palm Springs, California
www.aopa.org/expo/2006/
- November 11 — **Veteran's Day**
The Aviator Society salutes all Veterans.
- November 11 — **WCATC Saturday Scramble**
Ronald Reagan/Washington Natl. (KDCA)
www.westcoastatc.com
- November 18 — **WCATC Saturday Scramble**
Ted Stevens Anchorage Intl (PANC)
www.westcoastatc.com
- November 23 — **Thanksgiving Day**
The Aviator Society wishes everyone a Happy Thanksgiving Day.
- November 25 — **WCATC Saturday Scramble**
Plymouth Municipal Airport (KPYM)
www.westcoastatc.com

WESTCOASTATC'S SATURDAY SCRAMBLE



WestCoastATC has been hosting some really interesting ATC events the last few months. One such event has become pretty popular among its members. It is the Saturday Morning Scramble. Each Saturday WestCoastATC opens its doors to its members to join them with a virtual cup of coffee and cruise the skies to different unique destinations...virtually anyway! These events,

starting last month opened airports from all over the nation. Airports such as Springdale Airport (KASG) in beautiful Northwest Arkansas, a snowy flight into Aspen-Pitkin County Airport (KASE) in Aspen, Colorado, and finishing in New York City at KLGA for the Nation's largest Halloween celebration the Village Halloween Parade. This month's scrambles are going to

feature some special spots as well. With both Thanksgiving and Veteran's day in this month, WestCoastATC is going to honor them both with its Saturday Scrambles.





THE AVIATOR SOCIETY

"BROTHERS IN AVIATION"

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Thank You for reading this issue of "The Aviator".

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AVIATOR DESKTOP CALENDAR

This issues winning screenshot comes from Ron McNeil. Ron is from Liverpool, England and has been interested in Flight Simming for quite some time. Ron is retired now and enjoys the freedom of flying in a virtual environment. Ron also enjoys several facets of Motorsports, flying, and working on computers. Thanks Ron for this wonderful screen shot.

We are asking for screen shot submissions for each month's calendar. Every issue one will be selected and posted on the website with the winner announced as well. Please email all calendar submissions to calendar@aviatorsociety.com. The winner will also be featured in the back section of the next edition of "The Aviator".

