



---FUN DESTINATIONS---

August 2015

submitted for NRI Flying Club by Sean Calhoun

For some mood music while you read this
["My Airplane"](#)

AirVenture, Oshkosh, WI

By Rob Scheifer

Myself and three other club members flew to the annual EAA AirVenture event in Oshkosh, WI in July. Javier Avalos, Rick Arias, and myself, joined Adam Silverthorne in his twin Baron to fly $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way across the nation to attend this amazing event. Adam's beautiful Baron, with fresh upholstery, was a pleasant ride, giving us 175kt cruise and at times 200kts with a tail wind.



We flew out of Concord on Tuesday morning, July 21st with a plan of two stops before spending the night in Sioux Falls, SD. We were quickly over the Sierras and then endured the long dry Nevada desert. After about 3 hours, we stopped at KOGD in Ogden, UT. Ogden, a class D airport, was a pleasant first stop at a friendly and very new looking FBO named Mountain Valley Aviation. The waiting area of the FBO looked like a winter lodge with wood paneling and a large fireplace. A restaurant was an easy walk for breakfast.

Flying out of KOGD meant about a 5,000 foot climb to get over the range of Wasatch Mountains that loom just east of Salt Lake and Ogden. Then it was level flight over Utah, Wyoming and into Nebraska, over green lands, desolate, and inviting. We chose a small, unattended airport in Nebraska named Valentine, KVTN. The small city of Valentine, 2,789 people, was quickly out of site as we flew east.



Our stop for the night was Sioux Falls, KFSD. This Class D regional was the perfect stop with an on field hotel called Aero Stay with rooms for about \$100. With an FBO crew car we drove to downtown Sioux Falls, about 15 minutes away, to a recommend local burger and beer joint. Burgers were 5 bucks and the local beers delicious.

The next day, we were off for Oshkosh, an estimated 1.5 to 2 hour flight. We planned to land at KOSH, to have the Oshkosh experience, where up to 3 planes land at once with instructions to land on one of 3 colored dots on the airstrip. But ATC informed us that an accident had occurred that morning and the airport was closed. A Piper plane had crashed shortly after landing causing a wing to break off and catch fire. Most of the occupants got out ok but one was hospitalized. No casualties.

Getting closer to KOSH, the ATIS still reported the closure with an update soon. EAA had produced a 32 page NOTAM to instruct pilots on how to arrive safely. Two holding pattern locations were noted at two lakes, one closer to KOSH than the other. One could fly around the lakes in a hold position until clear to proceed. We flew in thinking we could hold around the first lake but ATIS instructions, due to the crash, told us to stay 30 miles away, which put us outside the lake.

We thought that other aircraft would also be circling in the area so we flew south east to avoid the crowd and to consider landing at an alternate airport. EAA organizers had also set up Fond du Lac, KFLD, as an overflow or alternate airport with parking, camping, and shuttle service to KOSH.

Adam's plane is equipped with Garmin devices for weather and ADS-B. When we saw the growing swarm of airplanes showing up on his screen, we decide it was safer to land at Fond du Lac than wait it out in the sky for KOSH to open. Once landed, we started to see the efficient organizing force that EAA brings to AirVenture. A flagman directed us to a parking place in the grass. Soon a gentleman in a golf cart appeared with information and supplies. And soon after that, a school bus showed up to drive us across the field to the parking lot. We got a ride to KOSH and started our AirVenture adventure.



EAA's AirVenture, is an inspiring event. A one week airshow/aviation convention, which seems to grow every year. In July 2015, 10,000 airplanes descended on Wittman Field, KOSH, in Oshkosh, WI. There were 800 exhibitors – from sunglasses to Jets, daily air shows, 100's of seminars and 550,000 visitors came to see it all.



We saw warbirds, vintage planes, ultra-lights, kit planes, acrobatics, new planes and jets. We could not help but drool over some, and laugh at others. After a couple of days, it almost seemed routine to see a warbird on the field in the morning and then in the air in the afternoon for an airshow.

The airshows went on for hours featuring acrobatic prowess, war reenactments, comedy, and explosions. We saw one of two nighttime airshows that showed off lights, fireworks launched from wings, illuminated smoke, and an end of the night fireworks show that put any 4th of the July show to shame.





Lodging for AirVenture is tricky. With a population of only 60,000, there are very few hotels. Many local homeowners rent out their houses for the week. We had planned to camp, but with a fluke of good luck, we found a house for the 4 days we were there. Otherwise, we would have been camping at the satellite Fond du Lac airport and shuttling in to the show each day.

Transportation is also scant in Oshkosh. The local busses are few and their routes inconvenient for the show. EAA provides plenty of on site trams and busses but limited shuttles outside of the airport. We often walked home the 1.5 miles to our house.

After 3 days we were ready to come home. With a ride down to Fond du Lac we were in the air for home by 9:30am. We planned to fly it in one day, about 10 hours of flying, unless we hit bad weather or fatigue. Adam's plane also has Sirius weather with storm depiction on one of his Garmin devices. We were able to fly around a storm or two with ease.

Our route home was similar, stopping for fuel at a small corn field surrounded airport in Nebraska, then Camp Guernsey, a small military and civilian airport, before arriving at Ogden for a late lunch. Again we fueled up at Mountain Valley Aviation and with a crew car drove around the airport to an excellent restaurant named Rickenbacker's Steakhouse with a view of the Wasatch Mountains.

Back in Concord by 8pm, we were glad to be home and had a blast.

\$100 Kale - Flying to Columbia, CA

Brett Young

I don't need to explain the concept of a \$100 hamburger to a group of pilots. And there are an abundance of options for that type of hamburger. But I have a trip that I call my "\$100 kale" flight. Let me tell you more.

Columbia is located next to Sonoma, CA in the Gold Country. Columbia Airport (022) is a charming spot with several distinct features. For example, it has fly-in only camping, a grass strip (2,607') in addition to a paved runway (4,763') and a Cal Fire base for helicopters and tankers. Bald Eagle Aviation has the cheapest ice cream in town and the main town of Columbia is a short walk away. The airfield is 78 NM from KCCR, so it's a quick hop.

Watch your density altitude on departure. The typical active is 17 and there's little reward in flying a wide pattern - right base and final for 17 are over terrain.

But I haven't said anything about kale.

Kale is a barely edible, leafy green. Prior to 2013, the largest consumer of kale was Pizza Hut, who used it as a decoration on their salad bars. More recently, kale has been labeled a super food and, when prepared correctly, is edible enough to make one feel like chewing a leafy green can undo the harm of modern living. Kale is a darling of farmers markets.

And Columbia has a farmer's market! On Wednesdays and Saturdays (noon-6 pm), Mountain People Organics is right next to the FBO and is an enclosed space with a complete line-up of fresh produce, wood-fired pizza, chocolates, and hippy-dippy sundries. And they have kale! So grab your trendy reusable shopping bag fly yourself up to get your kale, sprouted greens and kombucha.



Brett's son, watching over the tent in the camping area at Columbia.



The FBO, with the Farmer's Market building beyond.



Kale, and other barely edible greens.