NEWS AND VIEWS

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Items to Note!

1. Next COPA 26 Meeting is Tuesday November 10, 2026.
2. Our November 10 meeting speaker will be Caleb Winterburn, of COPA's Covalen Insurance.
3. The next Pilot Decision Making (PDM) Zoom Workshop is November 4, 2026. To join, send an email to cykf.pilotworkshop@gmail.com.

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- Stanhope Fall Colours Flight (Geoff Gartshore)

NOTE: Our January 2027 speaker will be Mike Kay, who will be providing a picture presentation on his trip to Germany, and flying there.

WELCOME!

Well, Fall is now upon us, and finding good VFR weather days can become more challenging. But they do exist, so take advantage of them as we begin to close off our flying season for 2026!



UPCOMING EVENTS

COPA Flight 70 (Peterborough/Kawartha):

- November 14, 2026: Flight 70 Cafe and Local Fly-Out
- December 10, 2026: Holiday Pot-Luck and seasonal wrap up.

Swing Out to Victory Dinner and Dance (November 14, 2026). A signature historical aviation social event hosted at the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum in Hamilton, featuring big-band music among the vintage aircraft

*. Our COPA 26 Christmas party will be at Runways Cafe, on December 8, 2026.

PILOT'S TIP OF THE WEEK

Black Out Landings

Featuring Ryan Koch

Subscriber question:

"My instructor taught me how to land at night without my landing light (with the runway lights on), in case the landing light ever failed. This has certainly come in handy over the years. So not so much a question as a suggestion: People really should learn this if they haven't before." —John T.



Ryan:

“On my first nighttime flight as a private pilot, my landing light burned out. I didn’t know that until it failed to light up the landing runway, at which point I was happy I’d practiced landing without it in training.

I make sure to do the same with my own students, which has revealed an interesting phenomenon: Students who struggle with the landing light on actually improve when it’s turned off. I think it’s because with the light they fixate on the small part of the pavement they can clearly see: the part lit by the landing light. If you stare at something, you’re probably going to hit it—and they hit the pavement hard. Without the landing light, their eyes naturally move down the runway and they take in a wider picture.

The primary risk, of course, is misjudging height in the roundout and flare. The FAA’s *Airplane Flying Handbook* suggests that the roundout should start ‘when the lights at the far end of the runway first appear to be rising higher than the nose of the airplane.’ Then it’s a matter of judging the flare. When the moon is out and the runway lights are bright, it’s not much different than a normal night landing. However, on an especially dark night it can feel like dropping into a black hole.

Seaplane pilots encounter a similar situation landing on clear, glassy water. The glassy-water technique involves setting a landing attitude and a shallow rate of descent, and waiting for touchdown. The same idea works for night landings without the landing light. Rather than trying for a full-stall landing, leave in a bit of power and slowly ease down, ‘feeling’ for the runway. The touchdown might be a bit firmer than usual, but that’s ok. It’s better than misjudging a full-stall flare, and dropping like a rock from 10 feet.

This technique can result in a longer landing, so it’s important to keep track of how much runway is left and set an appropriate abort point. For standard runway lights, it could be the point where the edge lights change from white to amber. That indicates either 2000 feet remaining or the last half of the runway, whichever is shorter.

Check all the aircraft lights on every preflight, even for day VFR. Too often, landing lights or position lights aren’t working when you need them most. That’s not a manifestation of Murphy’s Law—it’s the result of only checking them when they’re needed.”

STANHOPE FALL COLOURS FLIGHT (Sept 2023)
(Geoff Gartshore)

I always love a fall colours flight - especially up to the Canadian Shield.

Stanhope airport in the Haliburton Highlands provides just such a place for great fall viewing, and each year the Stanhope Municipal Airport Advisory Committee hosts the annual Fall Colours Fly-In to CND4. This event showcases vintage cars, motorcycles and aircraft, as well as MNR equipment and aircraft, and typically attracts a large number of local residents, aviation enthusiasts, and pilots from all over the province. The airport has a nice food truck set-up, picnic tables for sitting and visiting, and numerous static displays of vehicles and aircraft.

So this flight combines a bit of everything - great aerial fall viewing and scenery, plus lots to see and do at the airport as well.

The event is also well organized and managed with ground marshals directing ground traffic to parking areas and fuel, as required.

I have tried to attend this event for a few years, but family schedules and weather seemed to conspire to prevent it!

Finally, on September 30, 2023, all the pieces fell into place and I was able to join the fly-in in my Zenith.

It was a beautiful VFR day for the flight, with great visibility, relatively light winds, and fall colours in full swing.

I picked a route that crossed the Mono Hills, Shelburne, and Creemore areas which I have found to be good areas for fall colours, with large forest cover and some dramatic terrain (especially the Mono Hills area).

My route then continued on to Lake Simcoe and Orillia, which provide great views and colours. I also purposefully flew over Gull Lake to the northeast, where a pilot friend (retired Air Canada captain) has a cottage, enabling me to get good views of his cottage as well as the lake and Minden River. I planned to meet my friend at the fly-in, and we were able to catch up at the airport, checking out the aircraft and vintage cars, and enjoying lunch off-airport.

The photos that follow illustrate the flight and airport experience….



My Flight Route to and from Stanhope

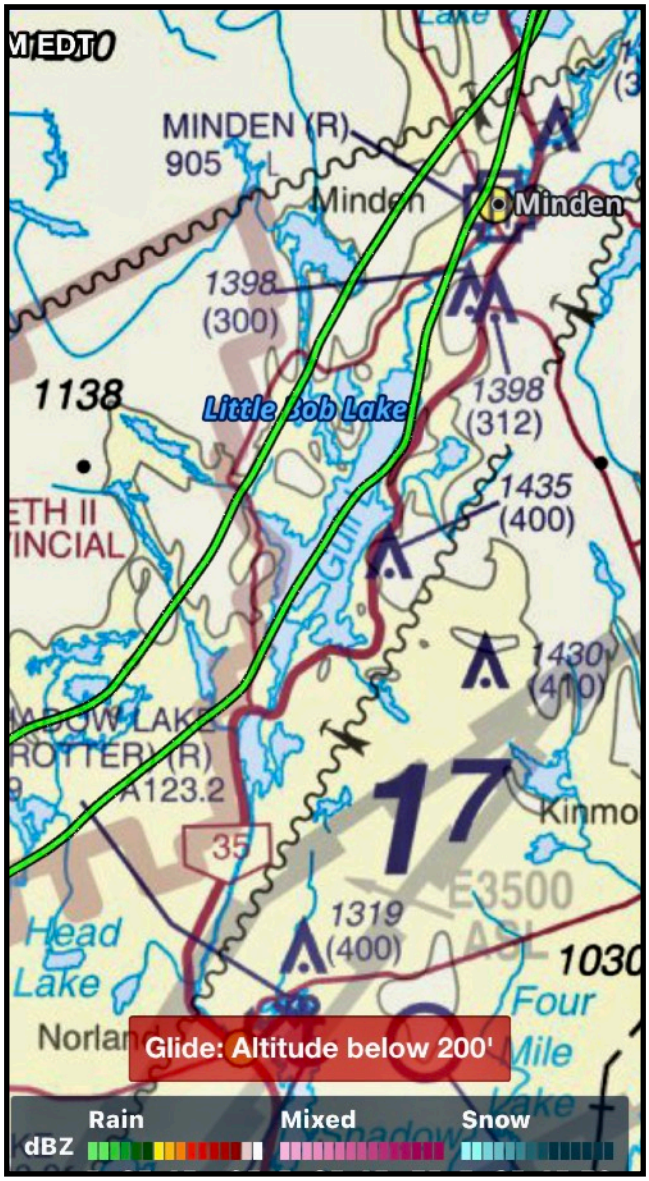




Enjoying the fall colours!



Passing Orillia Airport (CNJ4)





Checking out my friend's cottage (DRBLACK) to and from the event…



Approach - Runway 26 Stanhope



Short Final - Runway 26





Down and Parked! (left)





Soviet Antonov AN-2 Colt

The Antonov AN-2 Colt (photos above) flew in from Oshawa. It's a classic Soviet-designed utility biplane, and one of the largest single-engine biplanes ever put into production.

Here are some interesting facts and specs:

- 9 cylinder radial engine (1000 hp) with the large propeller
- Spacious passenger/cargo cabin
- Rugged construction designed for operations from short, unimproved airstrips
- The type first flew August 31, 1947
- Wingspan 59 ft 8 in.
- Cruise speed approximately 100 kts
- Seating for typically up to 12 passengers
- More than 18000 were built, including Polish and Chinese versions

The AN-2 is famous for its extraordinary short-field performance. It can operate from remarkably short grass strips, and some versions were fitted with floats or skis. It was a practical rugged working aircraft rather than a high-speed transport.



Hundreds attend fly-in

It was clear skies and beautiful weather Sept. 30 as the Stanhope Municipal Airport brought its community fall colours fly-in event back after a multi-year, COVID-19 enforced sabbatical. Well over a thousand locals visited the airport throughout the day, taking in tours of the 40 planes on show, including a stunning Soviet-era 1995 Antonov An-2. There was a classic car show, while Algonquin Highlands Fire Services and Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry staff displayed vehicles and equipment. Algonquin Highlands mayor Liz Danielsen said the event was, "a tremendous success. Everywhere I look, there are people with smiles on their faces. This has been a great day."

It's a slow news day when I get interviewed!

So - add this event to your "Places to Fly" list - as you can see it is well worth it!

Coming in the January-February 2027 Issue:

FLYING NIAGARA FALLS