43rd annual International Seaplane Fly-In takes off Sept. 8-11



BEST SEATS IN THE HOUSE – Hundreds of people gather at Stobie Seaplane Base in Greenville each year for the International Seaplane Fly-In. High winds delayed the pilots' competition last year, but the weather was near-perfect for the rest of the day. (Eastern Gazette photo – Mike Lange)

by Mike Lange

GREENVILLE – What started as a gimmick in the 1970s to keep tourists in Greenville following the traditional Labor Day weekend downturn is now one of the biggest aviation shows in the country.

The 43rd annual International Seaplane Fly-In takes off Sept. 8-11 with all of the traditional favorites like the pilots' competition, some new attractions and a few different venues.

On an average fly-in weekend, more than 300 aircraft land at Greenville Municipal Airport or on Moosehead Lake even though many don't participate in the organized games like the "bomb drops" and timed canoe race.

The "bombs" are actually oranges dropped from the aircraft and the canoe race requires one member of the team to paddle a canoe to a docked seaplane and lash it to a pontoon. Then the plane has to maneuver between a set of buoys, take off and land back at the starting point.

"It's like a huge family reunion for many people," said Darralyn Gauvin, who has been the fly-in committee's secretary since 2004. "Some have been attending the fly-in since it started."

There's no admission charge to the event, so the shoreline around Stobie Seaplane Base starts filling up with spectators long before the first event gets under way.

One notable change is this year is the relocation of the fly-in office to the Moosehead Aero Marine hangar – also known as Folsom's hangar – on Lower Lincoln Street

The office was formerly in downtown Greenville, but the new location will be more convenient for registrants, Gauvin said. "All the meals will be served in this hangar, but the vendors will still be set up at the Stobie Seaplane Base," she added. Both venues are a relatively short walking distance from each other.

As expected, accommodations are tight in the community and space traditionally set aside for camping at the airport will be restricted this year due to the runway construction, according to Angela Arno, executive director of the Moosehead Lake Region Chamber of Commerce. "Leisure Life Resort can take some of the camping overflow," Arno said. "Many places are booked solid, but visitors can check with the

Chamber for availability."

New this year will be a shuttle service for visitors on Saturday, Sept. 10. "Starting at 9 a.m., we'll have a shuttle running from the

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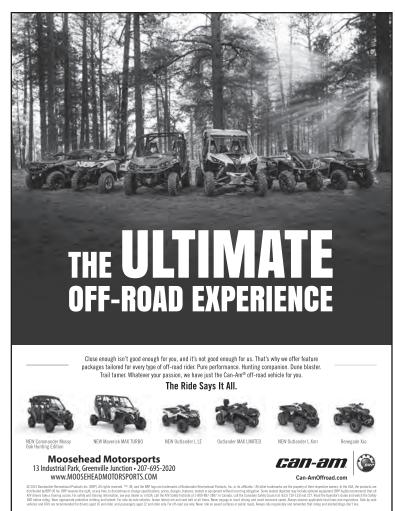
WELCOME TO THE SEAPLANE FLY-IN

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Saturday, September 10

7-9AM –Public Breakfast at the Masonic Temple on Pritham Ave.

The American Legion will be serving food during the day at the Legion Hall on Pritham Avenue

> The Craft Fair will be going on Saturday and Sunday in downtown Greenville

The Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring a 5K Walk/Run starting at 8AM

The Chamber is also sponsoring shuttle vans to downtown for those who wish to park on Indian Hill or at the School parking lot-running all day- see their website for more info.

10:00AM-all day-Activities at Stobiecontest order is determined by weather and numbers of participants







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Sunday, September 11

7:00-9:00AM-Public Breakfast at the American Legion Hall on Pritham Ave.

10:00AM Completion of contests not done on Saturday

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field on Indian Hill next to the Kineo Coffee Station and Bartley's Garage on Pritham Avenue," Arno said. "The bus will make a loop, taking visitors downtown from each parking site and dropping them off to enjoy the activities and the craft fair. They'll run until about 4 p.m. or until things wind down."

The shuttle bus is free, thanks to the sponsorship of Moosehead Marina and DKB Catering, Arno added.

Another new addition to the schedule is the Dave's World/U.S. Cellular Fly-In 5K on Saturday, Sept. 10. The event will be a road course with some mild hills and proceeds will go toward the Moosehead Lake Region Chamber of Commerce's marketing and community enrichment pro-

Online registration via the Chamber's website will remain open until Sept. 7 but in-person registrations will continue to be accepted at the Moosehead Lake Region Chamber office on Moosehead Lake road and on race day until 7:30 a.m.

The Columbia-Doric Masonic Lodge will have a public breakfast on Saturday morning from 7-9 a.m. and the Cecil R. Cole American Legion Post will be serving food later in the day. Both organizations are on Pritham Avenue, a short distance from down-

Fly-In organizers also hope to bring back retired game warden John Ford and retired state trooper Mark Nickerson for this year's show. The duo has written several books and also appear in what's known as the "Blue Lights and Funny Cider" tour with humorous stories about their years in uniform.

Each year, the International Seaplane Fly-In also honors a departed pilot who was deeply involved with the association.

This year, they'll pay tribute to Henry Hinman of Embden, the former president of North Anson Reel who later relocated to Sarasota, Fla. He passed away on July 8 at the age of 73. "Henry and his wife, Ellen, were not only longtime friends of the fly-in, but also made significant donations to a scholarship fund," Gauvin said.

Hinman's obituary noted that "he loved to fly and considered himself a bush pilot. He loved to go fast no matter what he was driving. An avid automobile enthusiast, he was definitely a motorhead – first and foremost."

More information and updates will be posted at www.seaplanefly-in.org and www.mooseheadlake.org.



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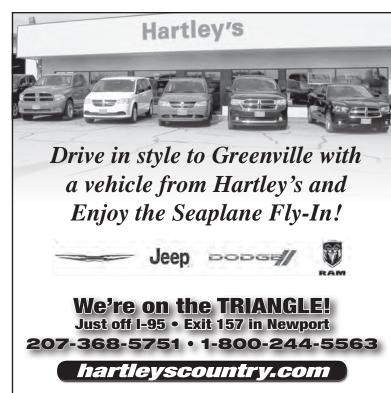


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