

John T. Kounis, Editor In Chief of *Pilot Getaways* magazine gave our first class of the 2014 season to a full house of 110+ pilots on the topic "Fun Fly-In Destinations In The West".

John 's presentation was based on a clockwise tour of western states with destinations within a radius of 10 flight hours. From awe-inspiring national parks, remote grass strips and luxurious resorts to vibrant cities, the West has excellent fly-in destinations. His research team consists of himself, his son George and their new puppy Radar. If anyone asks them if they have Radar on board, they can accurately answer "yes, we have Radar on board!!!



The presentation included video and pictures of each location including approach patterns and interesting sites to see and fun things to do. So much information was shared, I can't include everything but will summarize the highlights of each location.

1. Los Angeles Basin: You can download from the Pilot Getaways website a map of waypoints of fun sights to see such as the Hollywood sign. The only thing you can't fly over is Disneyland, but all else is doable. Here's the link: <http://pilotgetaways.com/aerial-tours/labasintour>
2. Catalina Island: The 3,000' runway is on top of a 1600' plateau. It's called an "aircraft carrier" landing - you turn base over water at 2,000' and you are right over a cliff when you land so it's important not to come in too hot or too high. After you land you can take the Zip Line Eco Tour in the town of Avalon. <http://www.visitcatalinaisland.com/activities-adventures/land/zip-line-eco-tour>  
<http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/ma10>
3. Kernville, CA: There is a campground midfield of this airport, which is next to the Kern River. At the end of the runway there's a courtesy car that you can borrow to drive to the trail head where you can hike 1 1/2 miles to a remote swimming hole. <http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/fal01>
4. Oakland International Airport, CA: Oakland has 2 separate 5,000' general aviation runways and is the closest airport to downtown San Francisco. For \$5 you can take BART to downtown - no rental car needed. For spectacular views of the Golden Gate Bridge and other SF sights you can fly the "Bay Tour". <http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/spr04>

5. Little River Airport, Mendocino, CA: A coastal town in Northern California. There's a pilot Bed & Breakfast Inn called Wilma's Sea Cottage right on the airport. You can store your aircraft in the hangar and stay in an apartment right above the hangar. A courtesy car is also available if you want to drive into town. <http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/fal99>
6. Cedarville Airport, Surprise Valley Hot Springs, CA: At the end of the runway there are 2 cars with keys in them that you can take to the Surprise Valley Hot Springs Resort. East room in the resort has a hot tub with springs & wells and it's a very romantic getaway. <http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/win00>
7. Mahogany Mountain Airport, Silver Lake, OR: People drive 100 miles to get to the famous Cowboy Dinner Tree Restaurant. You can land on the 2600' private dirt strip; just call ahead -the owner is friendly. Or you can land at Christmas Valley airport, which is a 5,000' paved runway 20 miles away, and the restaurant will pick you up. You can also camp on the Private strip. <http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/ma08>
8. Boeing Field, WA: Boeing Field is the best airport to fly into to visit Seattle. Downtown is only 5 miles away and cab rides are cheap. Talk to the tower to do the aerial Downtown Tour. If the wind is calm you can also do an aerial tour of glaciers and crevasses. <http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/win02>
9. Copalis State Airport, WA: Copalis is the only airport located right on the beach. You need to land on the wet part of the sand, which is darker. Look for the windsock to determine where the airport is. There are no tiedowns there so you can't stay long, but there's good clam digging there. <http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/fal99>
10. Nootka Island, British Columbia, Canada: It's not an official airport, but you land in the middle of the island right at the base of a waterfall. It's in Canada so you need to clear customs in Vancouver.
11. Cascade Loop, WA: The Cascade Loop is a 400 mile driving tour of Washington State. There's also a flying version of the loop - so why drive it when you can fly it! In the tour you get to see wineries, artist towns, waterfalls and glaciers.
12. Skykomish State Airport, WA: Skykomish Airport is a grass strip that was used for emergency landings for DC3s crossing the Cascades. Bring a picnic lunch because there are picnic tables. <http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/ja07>
13. Black Rock Desert, NV: This is a flat stretch of desert and you can land anywhere - there's 100 miles of sand. The land speed record was set here. If you land by the 2 playas there are 2 hot springs close by. Be careful taxiing in the fine dust. <http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/fal00>
14. Black Rock City Airport, Burning Man, NV. One week every year 1,000s gather in the middle of the desert for free artistic expression. The runway changes each year due to the location. <http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/ja09>



15. Owyhee State Airport, OR: There's an 1800' strip located by a reservoir. There is a cabin just east of the Owyhee runway, euphemistically known as the "Owyhee Hilton." It's a "first come, first served" sort of thing. The cabin is rough and most would prefer to pitch a tent, but it could provide a welcome refuge. <http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/spr01>

16. Stanley Airport, ID: True back country flying, Stanley airport is like flying in the Swiss Alps up to 7,000 feet high, so watch your density altitude.

17. Wilson Bar Airport, ID: There's a 1500' airstrip with a canyon entrance to the runway. There's a campsite nearby, and it's close to the middle fork of the Salmon River. If you are looking for something remote and private, this is your getaway. <http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/fal03>

18. Cabin Creek, ID: Tailwheel only aircraft are recommended here

19. Johnson Creek Airport, ID: This is luxury backcountry flying! It has a 3400' grass runway with smooth lanes and golf course worthy turf. The camping is very posh with electricity, wifi, telephone service, hot water showers, hot coffee and they even cut firewood for you. There is no fuel, however. You can hike 1 1/2 miles to a cast iron bathtub out in the wilderness that's made into a hot tub. <http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/sum02>

20. Ryan Field, MT: Used to be owned by Ben & Butch Ryan, who loved Aviation. They donated it to a wilderness association. It's located 1 mile from Glacier National Park. You can camp right on the field. There's a wood stove and BBQ. It's not luxury, but it's doable. There's also a curtesy car available or you can take the Red Bus to see Glacier National Park. <http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/so11>

21. Seeley Lake Airport, MT: There's a great restaurant here- Lindey's Steak House. They have 2 courtesy cars you can use to get to the restaurant. The airstrip is grass but good quality. You can stay at the Eagle Bed & Breakfast and park your aircraft in the hangar. Or you can stay in a room in the control tower. There's a chain of lakes with meadows and streams. You can get dropped off in a remote area for backcountry

canoeing and wildlife watching. There are deer everywhere!

<http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/sum02>

22. Lindey's West Seaplane Base: Get your Seaplane rating here and stay in the apartment over the hangar. There's also a secluded beach for picnics.

<http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/sum02>

23. Stillwater Landing, MT (flyover): WILD!!!. Only packers and pilots get to see the "Chinese Wall" cliffs on the continental divide. <http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/jf13>

24. Schafer Airport, MT: You can only walk to or fly to this destination in the Bob Marshall Wilderness. If you want quiet, this is the place. This is nature as it was with eagle, bear and deer. There's a campsite on the airport and fly-fishing close by.

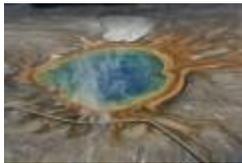
Beware of bears! <http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/sum00>

25. Meadow Creek, MT: This destination is good for any flight training. It's on the edge of the wilderness, with camping and hiking available.

<http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/mj07>

26. West Yellowstone, MT: The springs are awesome to fly over. The views are so much better than from the ground. Photos are best at mid day.

<http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/sum01>



27. Jackson Hole Airport, WY: Tall Mountains with beautiful lakes around the Tetons.

[http://pilotgetaways.com/jep\\_10\\_destinations/jackson-hole-wyo](http://pilotgetaways.com/jep_10_destinations/jackson-hole-wyo)

28. Lake County Airport, Leadville, CO: Leadville is 9927' high with the pattern altitude at 11000'. It's the highest airport in the US. Morning or night flying is best due to density altitude. Make sure to get a mountain check-out first from a local Colorado CFI.

<http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/fal01>

29. Marble. CO - McClure Pass: There's a large grass strip that's not an official airport. It's famous for the marble quarry that supplied the marble for the Lincoln Memorial and the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. You can also fish here.

30. Durango, CO: With elevations of 6,000' you are high up in the Rockies and San Juan mountains. You can take a 3 1/2 hours steam train trip that leads to an old west town.

<http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/nd11>

31. Goulding's Lodge, Monument Valley, UT: Fly among 3D Spires! Sunrise is great for pictures.

Goulding's Lodge is private, but just call ahead to land. There is an iconic western hotel & restaurant with great Navajo fry bread. The runway is at the base of a monument - there are no go-arounds here!

<http://pilotgetaways.com/blogs/reader-getaways/monument-valley>

32. Bullfrog Basin, Lake Powell, UT & Page, AZ: Lake Powell is like the Grand Canyon with water. There are 2 airports here, with sandy beaches and a restaurant. There's a van available. and you can rent houseboats. In Page there's "The Wave" which is a 3 mile hike to a red rock walk through (permit required). It gets hot here , so winter months are best. <http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/sum00>

33. Grand Canyon: Fly the VFR Corridors at 10,500 ft high for the phenomenal views.

34. Grand Canyon West Airport: Located 7 miles from the canyon, it is run by Hualapai tribe. Take the bus to The Skywalk, which is a horseshoe shaped glass walkway that extends 65 ft over the canyon below. <http://pilotgetaways.com/jepp>

35. Meteor Crater, Winslow, AZ: The crater is 1 mile across and 500' deep. It's hard to find, so make sure to put the coordinates in your GPS.

36: Sedona, AZ: Very impressive airport. It sits on top of a mesa. It's considered an "Aircraft Carrier" runway. There's a hotel and grill nearby. <http://pilotgetaways.com/blogs/reader-getaways/sedona-adventure-march-2013>

37. Bisbee, AZ: This is a copper mining town and is very colorful. <http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/win00>

38. Las Vegas, NV. McCarran Airport is right next to the strip so is very convenient however there is very heavy traffic and fuel is expensive. Henderson Airport is a better choice with cheap fuel and tiedowns and bus service into town. <http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/jf07>

39. Saline Valley, CA: This is not on the map. The Saline Warm Springs are located in Death Valley and it takes hours to drive there. There is a 1300' dirt strip and a 1/4-mile walk to the clothing optional springs. <http://pilotgetaways.com/mag/win99>