

Monday, 30 November, 2015

To all Challengers owners and enthusiasts:

**INVITATION TO THE 26th ANNUAL
ICOA WINTER WEEKEND RENDEZ-VOUS
"BIRDS OF A FEATHER FLOCK TOGETHER"**

Again this year, with the help of Mr. Bryan Quickmire of National Ultralight Inc., Canadian Distributor of the Challenger line of aircraft and the help of many COPA members, COPA Flight 121 (Carleton Place, ON), is organising the annual International Challenger Owners Association (ICOA Canada) Winter Weekend Rendez-Vous. This is the 26th edition of this event and we will celebrate this year the fact that so many Challenger and ultralight owners have made Montebello their winter flying and gathering destination.

This fun-filled ski plane event will be held on the weekend of Friday 29 January to Sunday 31 January 2016, at the beautiful Fairmont Le Château Montebello, 392 rue Notre Dame, Montebello, QC. The GPS co-ordinates for the hotel are: N 45 39 W 74 57.

This year, our Rendez-Vous will feature six Saturday "hangar flying" sessions. At 09:30 hrs, in the Quebec Room, Mr. Claude Béland, Instructor at the Rockliffe Flying Club, Ottawa, ON, will give us a briefing on VFR navigation and on the efficient use of the VNC and VTA charts.

Refreshments will be served at 10:30 hrs and again at 15:00 hrs, courtesy of National Ultralight Inc.

Starting at 11:00 hrs in the Quebec Room, Bryan Quickmire, owner of National Ultralight, will review the recently announced new Challenger Light Sport 'E' Series and explain the new Canadian Dollar Challenger pricing.

At 14:00 hrs in the Ontario Room, Claude Roy from Ottawa, Ontario, will give us an informative presentation about flying competency and flight safety aboard ultralights. Flying ultralights since 1984 and teaching ultralight flying since 1985, Claude has over 5,000 flying hours aboard ultralights and would like to share his experience with you.

At 15:30 hrs in the Ontario Room, Kshemendra Weeratunga will wow us with an exotic presentation about "Flying Challengers in Sri Lanka". Kshemendra is Chief Pilot, SriLankan Airlines, and he owns one of two Challenger XL-65's operating in Sri Lanka.

At 14:00 hrs and at 15:30 hrs in the Quebec Room four new Challenger owners will relate their experiences assembling and flying Light Sport XL-65's. All are private pilots transitioning from the world of general aviation to flying real airplanes! They will share their triumphs and their challenges plus offer tips and techniques.

Finally, the evening's post-banquet entertainment will feature a presentation entitled "Westbello 2015". It is about a 4,000 mile journey by John Baker, Ed & Betty deNijs, Claude Roy and Patrick Vinet, when they flew their Challengers to the western summer rendezvous in Wetaskiwin, Alberta.

Montebello Radio Frequencies

**Enroute: 122.75 Mhz
5 nm from Montebello: 123.2 Mhz**

Saturday morning is usually your best time to observe the airplanes coming in and buzzing all along the Ottawa River. Anyone with an air radio should monitor the two frequencies mentioned above.

Last year, our 25th Winter Weekend Rendezvous was held in this same venue. On the weekend of the event, the temperature was frigid, between -20 and -30 degrees Celsius. Most people decided on driving, but for those 40 or so local planes who dared the cold, the conditions were picture perfect!

The 2015 "Farthest Flown" Award was won by Bob Kovacs from Carleton Place, Ontario. Mike Prescott from Ottawa, Ontario, won the "Best Show Plane" Award with his beautiful 2008 ROTAX 582-powered Challenger II registered C-IMMP. The "Dave Allan" Award, in the memory of the late Challenger builder Dave Allan, was won by Frank Hofmann for many years of service to the Challenger Community and to aviation at large. Finally, the prestigious "Maurice Vinet" Award, honouring a Challenger pilot who exemplifies the passion for flight of the late Maurice Vinet, actually went to a pair of hangar buddies, John Baker and John Sutherland from the Baldwin Airport, north of Toronto, ON.

Again this year, a group of owners of ski-equipped Challengers is planning to fly in formation from southern Ontario to the Challenger meet. We would like to extend an invitation to all other Challenger owners to join them along the route and/or help them in this aerial odyssey. This group will originate from the Toronto area and will proceed generally eastward to Montebello, adjusting their route to meet up with others along the way.

You can also come on your own or, better still, organise your own group to come to the Challenger Rendez-Vous! Let me know of your intentions to fly to Montebello and we will help you with contacts and use of the Challenger website to promote your own adventure flight.

Of course, flight planning is subject to weather. The group may leave a day or two early or get back a day or two late. Either way, this is true adventure. It is a great opportunity for you to build flying memories that will last you a lifetime. Groups usually can alter their plans to accommodate other Challengers. For more information or to indicate your desire to join this Southern Ontario group, contact Bryan Quickmire at bdq@challenger.ca or 705-721-9811.

Again this year, our group will be the hotel's prime customer during that weekend as I pre-booked for you a block of thirty Fairmont rooms (30) for Friday evening and sixty (60) rooms for Saturday evening. You can personally reserve one (or many) of these rooms **until Monday, 28 December 2015**, after which any of the hotel's remaining rooms will be on a "first come, first serve" basis at the regular rates. Price wise, the hotel offers us a very special group rate of \$219.00 per room per night (many rooms have two double beds). This is a good bargain considering the luxury and comfort of this hotel. Le Fairmont Château Montebello also offers an impressive selection of recreational facilities for the whole family to enjoy. You can make your hotel reservations by either calling the Fairmont Hotel Reservation Centre at 1-800-441-1414 or faxing your request directly to Le Château Montebello at 819-423-5283. Please, specify you are part of the Challenger group, so you can get the special rooms and group rates.

Year after year, the deluxe buffet supper formula is a success. Having our own buffet and banquet room means we can all be together in casual clothing, we can move around freely and talk "Challenger Talk" all evening long with everybody. Again this year, le Château's biggest reception room, the Canada Room, holding a maximum of 200 people, will have a deluxe hot-cold buffet served with bar facilities available in the same room. Jeans are perfectly acceptable in our banquet room as well as throughout the hotel during the whole weekend.

As in previous years, the hotel will make one invoice covering everything for the banquet except personal bar expenses. The hotel will not collect individually at banquet time, which means I have to collect the money from everyone in advance.

Again this year, the price for the banquet is \$60.00 per adult and \$30.00 per child (under 12) which includes all taxes and a 15% service charge. The hotel will need to know the exact number of people who will be attending this buffet by Monday, 25 January 2016. Therefore, I need a firm commitment of your presence to the banquet one week prior to the event by Friday, 22 January 2016. Your confirmation will be in the form of a personal cheque sent to me at the earliest convenience and dated 22 January 2016 at the latest. The amount of your cheque will cover the full amount of your reserved seat(s).

Once again, if for any reason anyone from your group does not show up for supper, Joan, my wife, will be manning the banquet reservation table at the entrance of the "Canada Room" banquet hall. She will do her utmost to sell your seat(s) at the door on the night of the banquet. Providing we are successful in selling your paid seat(s) to someone else, once Montebello is over, I will return your money in the form of a personal cheque sent to you by mail.

Hotel rooms and banquet places are limited. Attendance can reach or surpass the hotel's full capacity of 200 people. We work on the principle of "first come, first serve", so please make an early commitment on your personal or family schedule for this special event, making this one your best and most important Challenger activity in 2016. Whatever the weather, whatever the means of transportation (by Challenger preferably!), come and meet all your flying friends.

Every year, Montebello serves as an ideal launching point for discussions on the upcoming summer float flying adventure. Personally in 2016, I plan to organise another summer float flying adventure. This trip will be called the "Quebec/Ontario Border Tour". The whole adventure will depart from the Montreal (QC) area and will go north to places like Mont-Laurier, Ste-Anne du Lac, Val d'Or, Amos and La Sarre. At some point, we will cross to the Ontario side and go down south along the "border" to places like Cochrane, Iroquois Falls, Kirkland Lake, Earlton, Temagami, North Bay, etc.

This round trip will cover about 2,000 kilometres. Departure time will be Saturday, 06 August 2016. The trip will stretch over a period of two weeks. This adventure requires all pilots to have a minimum of one full year of flying experience, plus at least one season of float flying experience. People involved in the trip will take lots of pictures and will prepare a feature presentation of their adventure to be given at the 2017 Winter Rendez-Vous in Montebello.

If you are interested in joining us or meeting along the way, contact me personally at my home phone indicated below.

Like every year, we encourage the more experienced people at Montebello to seek out the less experienced ones, the new faces, and simply do their very best to help the newcomers in their quest for flight. Conversely, I ask all the newcomers who will be there to leave any shyness behind and come forward with their salutations and questions. Montebello is an ideal venue for gaining knowledge from the experience of others. Go for it!

In conclusion, let me invite you, once more, to keep current with the latest Challenger news through the Challenger website at www.challenger.ca. Be sure to leave an email address of where to reach you on the Challenger website notification list, so we can send you an advance notice and regular updates on all of our activities.

My wife Joan joins me in wishing you all "Season's Greetings" and lots of good flying in 2016.

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