

Richland welcomes planes for the OKK Fly-In

By Lisa Britton

Go! Magazine

RICHLAND — Vintage air-planes buzz into Baker County this weekend for the fifth annual OKK Fly-In on June 24 and 25.

Although this is officially the fifth year, the event has been years in the making.

"We did it unofficially before that," said Gail Kimberling, organizer of the OKK Fly-In.

She and her husband, Dave, bought their property in 1993 and discovered it had a unique attribute across one of the fields.

"It turned out there was a certified airstrip on the property," she said.

With pilots in her family, she said they decided to invite others to fly to Baker County and park in the field.

"It just turned into a weekend event — come look at the planes and talk to the pilots," she said.

The event is limited to small planes because the grass airstrip is only 1,500 feet long.

For comparison, runways at the Baker Airport are between 4,000 and 5,000 feet long.

"Not quite bush planes, but close," Kimberling said.

Planes start arriving on Friday, June 24, and stay through Saturday, June 25.



Gail Kimberling/Contributed Photo

This photo taken from a 1976 Cessna 180 shows the OKK landing strip along with Brownlee Reservoir.

"Saturday is the big day," she said.

Pilots are invited to camp on the property and partake in evening meals, she said. Although there is no registration fee, pilots make a donation to cover the cost of the meals.

"It's the chance to fly in a really beautiful area," she said.

Each year brings between 10 and 16 planes.

"If folks come earlier in the day they have a better chance of seeing the planes fly," she said. "It usually gets too warm in the afternoon for taking off from our

short field."

In the past, the OKK Fly-In coincided with Eagle Valley Days. This year, Kimberling said they decided to move the event forward one weekend so it fell between Eagle Valley Days and the



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Visitors are welcome to see planes and chat with pilots during the OKK Fly-In at Richland on June 24 and 25.

Fourth of July festivities to bring more visitors to the Richland area.

"Some stay in the motel or eat out — we try to support the community," she said.

Richland is 42 miles east of Baker City on Highway 86. The OKK airstrip, 37044 Sullivan Lane, is about 1.5 miles outside of Richland. To get there, go through the town toward Hewitt and Holcomb parks. Kimberling said signs will point the way to the airstrip.

Admission is free for spectators. For more information, send an email to gailkimberling@mac.com or call 541-992-2955.

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