



# THE Summiteer

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Issue 16

Letter for Residents and Friends of Summit Square in Waynesboro, Va

See Drone Video of  
Baltimore Bridge Collapse at  
MTSB B-Roll Key Bridge

## Local Airport Nears 80th Anniversary

Eagle's Nest Airport is raved about by local airplane owners and others from up and down the East Coast. Its reputation is largely the effort of former Manager John Trissel whose name was synonymous with the airport for over twenty years. He recently retired after an arduous search for someone who could take over the business.



Former manager  
John Trissel.

New manager T.K. Rosolina is developing ideas for more airport initiatives and emphasizing the role of vintage aircraft. He brings to the job 30 years of experience in aviation.

Established in 1946 and in business for almost 80 years, the airport sits on 40 acres at the end of Aero Drive, just west of Waynesboro. The closest other airports are commercial facilities in Weyers Cave and Charlottesville, 23 and 38 miles away.

A total of 64 airplanes are based at Eagle's Nest with some owners choosing the airport to base their airplanes simply because of easy access to get there and the nearby city amenities. The majority of the airplanes are single-engine craft.



What makes Eagle's Nest unusual is that another 12 airplanes are housed in hangars in the neighboring residential community, often referred to as an airpark. The homeowners have the unique privilege of merely taxiing from their homes to reach and use the airport runway.

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## RESIDENT FOCUS

Jim Maxwell needed ways to restore his life after his wife Miriam died in 1988. With a natural talent for music and rhythm and looking for a way to exercise, he joined the Cranberry Cloggers, a team of traditional cloggers who danced in black single-tap shoes to live music. They performed throughout Northern Virginia doing clog dances as well as tap dances and Irish step dances.

A participant in only a few shows and classes and with absolutely no experience in directing a dance team, he found himself taking over leadership of the group when a family medical emergency forced the director to resign.

Jim grew into the art and so did the team of dancers. The name of the group was changed to Patchwork Dancers and he earned the title of Certified Clogging Instructor by writing and performing his own dances at national clogging conventions.

He modestly remarks that it was the dancers who made the group function. "All I did was to organize the shows, teach the dances, and run rehearsals." He taught dancing at recreation centers in Northern Virginia and organized and led more than 200 performances during the 15 years that he directed the team of dancers.

His leadership of the Patchwork Dancers was highlighted with a surprise party organized by a team benefactor when he was presented with an unusual keepsake quilt that he treasures to this day. The quilt was stitched together using imprinted shirts made for past festivals and clogging shows where the dancers had performed.

Jim was born in Vancouver, Canada. Upon discharge from the U.S. Army after World War II, his father moved the family to near Los Angeles, California where Jim graduated

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## Resident Focus (cont'd)

from the public school system. After that he enlisted in the U.S. Navy, graduated from the University of California, and married his high school sweetheart.

Playing the trumpet since the age of nine, he served as a bugler in the Navy and performed in both school and community bands. He also sang tenor in college musical productions of Finian's Rainbow and in works by Gilbert and Sullivan. This musically gifted gentleman sang at church services and continues to share his talent with others as a member of the band called Second Wind Band, an ensemble of seniors based in Charlottesville.

Jim started in the mathematics program at college and later switched to music majoring in trumpet performance. But the prospects for teaching music were slim, so he switched to psychology and business, graduating with a degree in psychology. His first job was teaching 15 different subjects to fifth graders for one year in the riot-torn Watts neighborhood in Los Angeles, where he felt he was needed and where almost no one else was willing to go.

He later earned a PhD in educational research methods from the University of Pittsburgh. Following completion of his post-graduate education, he was hired by the U.S. Department of Education as an analyst of new federally assisted education programs introduced by President Lyndon Johnson as part of his war on poverty.

He was employed by the education department for 35 years evaluating Black college programs, the GEAR UP program, and vocational rehabilitation and special education programs.

Jim is the father of two sons. Son David is the developer of financial programs for small organizations. He and his wife Simran live in Kensington, Maryland and are the parents of two daughters. His son Nathan who resides in Sarasota, Florida is afflicted by psoriatic arthritis. Jim helps provide for his independence by assisting with both his housing and transportation needs.

Jim is gratified to report finding "someone who would put up with me." He and his partner Jane lived together for 30 years starting in the early 1990s and moved to a home in Afton after they both retired. Jane's worsening Alzheimer's condition caused them to move to Summit Square in 2022 where Jim could continue to see her daily. She died of Alzheimer's in February 2023.

Despite his several setbacks and with clogging only a memory, Jim Maxwell's blowing and fingering continues unabated on the musical instrument that made Dizzy Gillespie and Louis Armstrong famous.



*Clockwise from top left: the quilt honoring Jim's service as the Patchwork Dancers Director; Jim with his wife to be at a high school dance; Jim at Navy boot camp with his mother, father, and sister; Jim and his wife Miriam with son David; Jim and the Patchwork Dancers in 2008; and Jim when he was Navy bugler.*

## MISCELLANY

**Summit Square Facebook users** may find the Tree Streets Neighborhood group a helpful source. The group is for Tree Streets residents to share information or to post anything that can make the neighborhood better informed. Type "Tree Streets

Neighborhood" in the search bar and click "Join Group." New members must await the approval of the group moderator. Membership stands at 231.

### The Summiteer

issued bi-monthly for residents and friends of Summit Square in Waynesboro, VA

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**Waynesboro City Councilman Terry Short** told resident Jim Wilson that a roundabout at 13th and Rosser (*Summiteer* Issue 8) has not been forgotten. It is currently under design with construction a possibility in 2026.

**The salvaging of Francis Scott Key Bridge** in Baltimore Harbor is on live 24/7 video stream.

Camera operators pan the entire length of the collapsed structure while also concentrating on the crews and cranes that are removing the debris. Middle sections of the 1.6 mile long bridge fell into the Patapsco River on March 26 when the cargo ship *Dali* lost power and destroyed a bridge pier. The live stream is at [youtube.com/watch?v=83a7h3kkgPg](https://youtube.com/watch?v=83a7h3kkgPg).



*Looking downstream toward Chesapeake Bay*

## Local Airport Nears 80th Anniversary (cont'd)

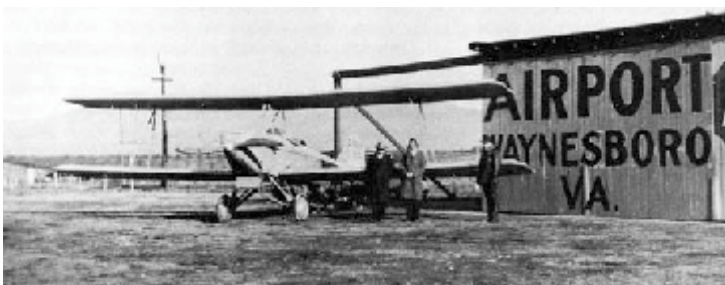
Trissel lives there, too, but he explains that the only relationship with the airport is an agreement made years ago for use of the runway by the homeowners.

Eagle's Nest has the distinction of having the shortest paved runway of any public airport in the state. The single 2,000-foot runway is excellent training ground for short landings, but some pilots who are used to longer runways will not even attempt to fly in.

Non-pilots are attracted to Eagle's Nest, too. Airplane rentals are offered and half-hour introductory lessons let persons thinking of pilot training to experience taking control while accompanied by a flight instructor. At one time, more than 30 people took flight lessons at the airport, but now student enrollments are much lower. The expense of getting a license has grown so much that it is now unaffordable for many who would otherwise be interested in becoming pilots. Certification is being sought for providing air tours of the area.

Besides the FAA certified flight school, the biggest money maker for the airport is a full-service airplane maintenance shop. The top-certified service is often booked six months in advance and draws airplane owners from as far as Florida. Airplanes are required to be disassembled and inspected every 1,000 hours of flight time and must be equipped with replacement engines after 2,000 hours.

Waynesboro has a long aviation history. Eagle's Nest Airport was established as a replacement for Valley Airport which was closed in the early 1950s to make way for the construction of the former General Electric plant about a mile northeast of Waynesboro. Although Valley Airport was known to exist in 1928, its date of origin is unclear. Valley Airport had two grass runways and, like Eagle's Nest, was privately owned.



*The earliest known picture of Valley Airport, circa 1933.*

A life-long resident of Augusta County, John Trissel began cultivating his interest in aviation by flying remote control model airplanes. He started taking flight lessons when he was 20 years old at the very airport he ended up managing.

Aviation remained his part-time interest for 34 years while employed by Augusta County schools as an elementary school teacher and in several supervisory positions. He chose early retirement from the school system to make the jump into running an airport.

Trissel's recent retirement had been delayed until a successor was found who could devote at least as much to the future of the airport as has he. It is probable that when Rosolina was named manager, Trissel had mixed emotions over leaving a valuable local enterprise that was an integral part of his life for so long.



*Manager T.K. Rosolina*

## UVa Airport Just a Memory

Although the first airport to exist in Albemarle County is closed, it was established 15 years before Charlottesville-Albemarle Airport (CHO) in Earlysville opened. Eager to establish a flight training curriculum, The University of Virginia in 1940 established the airfield in the floodplain of the Rivanna River across from the Glenmore Country Club.

The State Corporation Commission was unswayed by landowners who argued that Thomas Jefferson never envisioned a university airport in the school's charter. The University of Virginia Airport, also called Milton Field, quickly became a leading pilot training center. UVA's flight school classes were producing up to 30 certified pilots every two months in anticipation of the second World War.

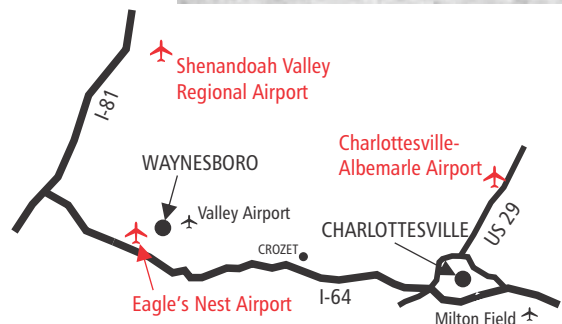
Losing interest in aeronautical training after World War II, UVA chose to lease the airport to another operator and ordered that it be sold as soon as possible. It became an attraction for hundreds of sightseers to watch stunt fliers in action.

But the business of basing and servicing private airplanes dwindled, particularly after the opening of CHO, resulting in the official airport closure in 1971. The property still belongs to the University.



*An undated photo of the fleet of University training aircraft at Milton Field.*

*A stuntman leaps from a moving convertible to a plane flying along the Milton Field runway in this undated photo.*



**DO NOT OVERLOOK** the advantages of booking airline flights from the Shenandoah Valley Regional Airport (SHD). Nearly 20 minutes closer to Waynesboro than the Charlotte-Albermarle Airport, SHD provides service by Contour Airlines to Charlotte Douglas International Airport where connecting service is provided to most American cities. Passengers only need to arrive one hour before boarding time, instead of the typical two hours. Airport parking is free or door-to-door service can be reserved for one way or round trip shuttle service to and from the airport. Call 540-234-8304 for help in scheduling your trip.

## Thanks, but No Thanks

Two passers-by were photographed at this Summit Square feeder before continuing elsewhere, declining to return again. Dressed in their fancy regalia, they were either turned off by the food menu or the manicured environment or perhaps just determined to stay moving.

Bird guides confirm their identities. Our feathered friend with the stout bill and heavy brownish splotches on its sides and breast was a fox sparrow. The pink-red head and chest together with a conical bill are the signs of a purple finch. The purple finch is the bird that Roger Tory Peterson famously described as a "sparrow dipped in raspberry juice."

Both birds are considered sparrow in size. They are both common and found in Virginia during the winter.

Both species are of low conservation concern at this time.



## Irrational, but Still Upsetting

Most of us have a pet peeve—maybe even two or three. Dictionaries say peeves are something that a person finds annoying despite it not being bothersome to others. One might say that pet peeves are irrationally upsetting.

The term pet peeve was introduced by cartoonist Frank King in a short-lived single panel comic strip of thoughtless behaviors and nuisance frustrations called *The Little Pet Peeve*. Published in the *Chicago Tribune* during the period of 1916 to 1920, the comic did not last long, but the term endured.

Some examples of pet peeves are drivers who don't use turn signals, rugs that keep catching on the bottom of doors, or encounters with an empty roll in a toilet paper holder. Since coming to Summit Square, *The Summiteer* has found door slamming to be a pet peeve. The fire-safety spring-loaded closers on apartment doors accentuate the effect.

Tell us your pet peeve by emailing ([summiteereditor@gmail.com](mailto:summiteereditor@gmail.com)) or by calling (3323). We might find that many of them are shared.



"We've got some peeves."

## Aerial Photography by Remote Control

**A one pound flying vehicle lifted from the parking lot across from Summit Square one day in February. Its four rotors could be heard whirring as it rose 50 feet above the ground and turned to face Summit Square. A pilot navigated the craft by a hand-held controller equipped with joysticks, knobs, push buttons, and live video imagery transmission. Its built-in camera zoomed into the selected subject and uploaded a digital image. Returning to the ground, its motors slowed to a halt before it was folded up for storage.**

The unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), otherwise known as a drone, is a plaything jointly owned by residents Jim Wilson and Jim Clark. Recreational drones have become popular since about 2020. Before that, drones were developed and operated mainly for military purposes.

The rapidly expanding drone industry has grown to include new commercial purposes such as search and rescue, film making, policing, and fire fighting. Drones were instrumental in saving the Notre Dame Cathedral from complete destruction by finding the best positions for aiming fire hoses.

Four motors and propellers comprise the technology that moves the drone into the air and makes it fly in any direction or to hover. The propellers work in pairs with two rotating clockwise and two rotating counter clockwise. Data sent from the flight controller direct the motion by adjusting individual motor speeds.

FAA regulations required Wilson and Clark to become certified UAV pilots for recreational purposes by completing an online test. A copy of the certificate must be presented if requested by a law enforcement officer and the drone must carry an ID transmitter that remotely identifies its unique registration number.



*From top: drone front view showing the camera on its underside; Jim Clark and Jim Wilson on drone arrival day; and wide angle photo made by drone.*

