

Pancakes coming in for a landing at the Bancroft airport



By Kristena Schutt-Moore The Fly-in Breakfast at the Bancroft Community Airport is back for the first time in three years! After the long awaited return, after COVID-19 and the resulting regulations, the pancakes will be landing on plates and the airplanes on the airport runway on Sunday, July 10. This year's breakfast will be the 35th year. The Bancroft Community Airport was first opened in 1963 as the Jack Brown Airport, and has provided access to a series of services to the community ever since. These services include emergency services, OPP, Ontario Hydro, search and rescue, Department of National Defence, the Ministry of Natural Resources, Forestry and Mining, the Ministry of Health as well as a place for pilots to access the North Hastings area. The Ministry of Health air ambulance alone uses the helipad roughly once a week. The Bancroft Flying Club also sponsors the local Boy Scouts and the airport Terminal building is also used by other clubs such as the North Hastings Photography Club. The Bancroft Community Airport is one of a few community airports in Ontario that receives no regular government funding. The airport is supported and run by the volunteers of the Bancroft Flying Club, and while they do apply for grants, the majority of funding comes from fundraisers and the sale of fuel for the planes and helicopters that use the airport, and the volunteers keep the airport open and running 365 days a year. The Fly-in Breakfast is the airport's biggest fundraiser of the year. "While we do miss the Wheels, Water and Wings, it was just time to bring the people out and let them know what their local airport is about, and have a good time," said Bancroft Flying Club president Lynn Davis. The fly-in breakfast will start at 8 a.m. and this year because of word of support from the community the breakfast will switch into a community barbecue in the afternoon. This is to help bring more of the community together after several years of no events. This year the Ministry of Natural Resources helicopter will be on hand to show how it serves the community, as long as it's not called out on a forest fire. The Bancroft Cruisers will also be there to display their antique and refurbished cars for those who prefer to keep their feet on the ground, while flight tours of the Bancroft area will be available for those who want to try flying. As long as there's good weather there is an expected up to 60 airplanes to land at the Bancroft Community Airport. In past years pilots and planes have come from as far as Sault Ste Marie, Timmins and even Montreal. Before COVID-19 the volunteers served up to 500 to 620 breakfast plates. The breakfast menu will consist of the traditional handmade pancakes and sausages, local maple syrup and all the fixings. The lunch menu will include a barbecue lunch with hamburgers and hotdogs. The Bancroft Flying Club has roughly 55 members, and all have a hand in keeping the airport running smoothly. The operation of the airport is all done by the volunteers, there is no paid position. The club is always looking for volunteers and new members, those interested in aviation are encouraged to visit their website, www.bancroftflyingclub.ca. There is a one time fee of \$100, then the annual membership is \$90, and no airplane is required, just a love of flying and aviation. This funding is put into the running of the airport.