

Message from Roy about the Cancellation of the 2021 GGG

Hello everyone,

It is with a heavy heart that I must report that it has been decided that the 2021 GGG must be canceled. Before continuing I must point out that the Pirates' Challenge, also held at Geneseo, starting today, is proceeding as planned. The decision was reached by me, in consultation with a couple of others, taking a number of factors into account. You will find some slightly mitigating news at the end of this email.

News media this morning are reporting that the closure of the US border to non-essential travel from Canada will continue for at least another thirty days, regardless of vaccination status. As the GGG is a joint US/Canada endeavour it would be a very different affair if no Canadians are able to participate. It was also felt that, even the number of US folks who would attend is likely to be fewer than normal, leading to a much curtailed affair. Part of the reason for that concern comes from the fact that the Delta variant of the Covid-19 virus is spreading very rapidly in the USA, so it seems likely that a number of potential fliers might be reluctant to travel to the event. As an example, yesterday's numbers for the new cases of the disease were ~160,000 in the USA and ~2,700 in Canada. The USA's population is 8.3 times that of Canada, so Canada's rate of new cases would be 22,410 if we had the USA's population. The fully-vaccinated rate in Canada is ~72% and rising, that in the USA is ~50% and relatively stagnant, and the USA's rate of infection is more than seven times that of Canada. The connection is clear, which is why we feel that it is likely that there would be a low turnout, even among US citizens, who are allowed to travel to the event.

This is extremely disappointing for me - and I am sure that it is for you as well, probably more so for many of you who are not actually prohibited from attending. As a small measure of compensation I can report that the field is booked and available for the three days. Any and all who wish to do so can turn up and fly there. I strongly urge that, if you do, and you are the first one(s) there, you let the museum staff know that you have arrived and will be on the field flying. That is simply a safety courtesy that should always be observed - the museum staff need to know that there are people on the field. Brad Bane has agreed that, on the Saturday, if sufficient people show up and wish to fly against one another in a contest, he will help arrange Ad-Hoc events for those that wish to do so. Also, on the Saturday, if folks wish to attend a communal dinner, he will arrange for a table at the Yard of Ale restaurant.

The last time I, and many others, were able to fly was at the GGG in 2019. I do hope that by next year we will be sufficiently 'back to normal' to be able to hold a full contest again.

Thermals

Roy