



Laurel Airport Receives Airport of the Year!

The Montana Department of Transportation (Aeronautics Division) 2014 Airport of the Year Award was presented to Dr. John H. Smith, Chairman of the Laurel Airport Authority and attending board members during the awards luncheon at the 30th Annual Montana Aviation Conference. The convention was held at the Holiday Inn Grand in Billings, February 27 through March 1, 2014. The Airport of the Year Award is presented each year to a Montana Airport which has excelled in meeting Montana's aviation needs and considered a valuable resource in the community it serves.

Over the years the airport has grown from a single runway turf strip airport in 1956, to a modern general aviation airport which today is home to more than 100 based aircraft. The Airport Commission was formed in 1956 when Dr. D.A. Nottingham was appointed Chairman. In 1957, David K. Powers was appointed to the Airport Commission and served for 20 years. He served as the Chairman from 1960 until 1971. Powers was responsible for overseeing the first federally funded improvements at the Laurel Airport which led the way for the present day facility. In 1971 Dr. John H. Smith was appointed Chairman of the Airport Commission and has served on the Commission and Laurel Airport Authority since that time. David Powers was present at the award luncheon and Dr. Smith thanked him for his dedication, commitment, and many years of service.

The airport has more than 50 privately owned hangars and over the last several years has seen between 2 and 4 new hangars constructed each year. Visibility minimums permitting, the airport is virtually open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year. The Laurel Airport is home to an aircraft maintenance and repair business and a full-service fixed base operator (FBO) who has regularly scheduled nighttime operations. This requires a commitment from the airport to make sure the runway is plowed and ready to go. Given the snow in south-central Montana this year, that commitment has been extraordinary. The airport not only provides modern facilities for the pilots and aircraft which use the airport, but this airport has also developed professional standards and procedures for the operation of the airport. The community of Laurel and the Airport Authority make the airport available to host an Aviation and Technology program conducted by local educators and organizations. This Aviation and Technology program showcases cutting-edge technology for elementary through high school students. It's held every 3 years and typically touches over 11,000 students from Montana, northern Wyoming and North Dakota. The most recent Economic Impact of Airport Study prepared by the Montana Department of Transportation, ranked this airport number 4 in terms of annual economic output for the State of Montana's general aviation airports. The Economic Impact Study indicates Laurel airport supports upwards of 82 jobs within the community. The Laurel airport has consistently grown, improved, and strives to fulfill the needs of the aviation community it serves.



Pictured with the airport of the year award is the Laurel Airport Board (l-r) Bob Western, Don Schlegelmilch (former Board member and current dedicated volunteer), Dr. John Smith, Al Koelzer, Kyle Albers, not pictured is Randy Hand.

Administrator's Column

Third Class Medical Update: The FAA will proceed with a rulemaking process that could increase the number of pilots eligible to fly without a third class medical certificate. The announcement comes two years after AOPA and the EAA petitioned the FAA to expand the exemption. The rulemaking effort will consider whether to allow private pilots to fly without a third class medical certificate in certain circumstances. Instead, pilots will be able to use other criteria, including a valid driver's license, to demonstrate their fitness to fly. The petition received over 16,000 positive comments. Legislation to expand the medical exemption has also been gaining momentum.

Check this out: Chuck Flynn, HLN shared this message: here is a great web site that features free USA sectionals and IFR enroute charts. These charts are from the FAA and they are now digital, not photo copies. Roll your mouse over the chart tab at the top to see the maps available click on sectional or an IFR product and you've got a very clear map on your screen. Use your mouse roller to zoom in or out. If you are using ForeFlight or WingX Pro, your downloaded charts will now be digital as well and much easier to read. Technology we can enjoy! Here's the link: <http://skyvector.com/>

Graduate Research Program: TRB's Airport Cooperative Research Program (ACRP) is accepting applications for its Graduate Research Award Program on Public-Sector Aviation Issues. The program, sponsored by the FAA through the ACRP, is designed to encourage applied research on airport and related aviation system issues and to foster the next generation of aviation community leaders. Applications must be received no later than May 29, 2014. Up to 10 awards of \$10,000 each will be made to full-time graduate students for successful completion of a research paper on public-sector airport-related aviation issues during the upcoming academic year. Candidates must be full-time students enrolled in a graduate degree program at an accredited North American institution of higher learning during the 2014/2015 academic year. Details on the award program, including eligibility requirements and application materials are available online.

Transparent Airfares Act: The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee passed legislation that will help ensure that airline passengers know how much of their ticket price goes to federal taxes. The Act will prevent airlines from incorporating government taxes in advertised prices, reversing DOT's Rule that required federal taxes and fees to be included in the base price of any advertised fare. Typically, around 20% of a ticket's price is comprised of federal taxes, which, by being included in the overall cost, are somewhat inherently hidden from passengers.

Airport Study Update: The FAA has issued its second study of general aviation airports, called ASSET 2, this time addressing 497 airports that did not fit into a category under the original study. In 2012, the FAA released a one-year-and-a-half study that examined the role GA airports play in the national aviation system. Nearly 3,000 GA airports were placed into four categories: National, regional, local, and basic with 497 airports not fitting into any of those categories. After further review, the FAA still has not been able to classify 281 general aviation airports. Montana has three unclassified airports: Geraldine, Philipsburg and Valier. These airports will remain unclassified and will also remain in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS).



Montana and the Sky

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Calendar of Events

May 12-13 – Aviation Career Exploration (ACE) – Aviation Career Program for high school students. For further information contact Dave Hoerner at (406) 444-9568 or dhoerner@mt.gov.

May 24 – Aviation Maintenance Technician (AMT) Day.

June 7 – Stevensville Airport open house, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The EAA will be having a pancake breakfast as an independent feature starting at 8:00 a.m. For further information contact Ron McCann at (406) 363-8250.

June 13-15 – 8th Annual Winifred-Breaks Fly In; June 13 - Arrival, camp in the breaks and barbeque provided by The CubWorks (location TBA); June 14 – Fly out up Judith River to join Lewistown Fly in for breakfast; Poker Run, hangar burgers by the plate at the Winifred Hangar (9S7); June 15 - Departure for Johnson Creek and other backcountry strips. For further information contact Ralph Rogers (406) 462-5487.

June 14 – 10th Annual Fly In at Lewistown Airport; 7:00 a.m. to noon. MPA sourdough pancake breakfast. Antique, Warbird, Experimental and Sport Airplanes. Held in conjunction with Central Montana Flywheelers Exhibition. For further information contact Jerry Moline (406) 350-3264.

June 23-26 – Commemorative Air Force Mitchell B-25 "Maid in the Shade" will be at the Cut Bank International Airport. Tours and rides will be available. For more information and to book a flight, call the airport at (406) 873-8683. Updates can be found at www.cutbankairport.org or on Facebook at Cut Bank International Airport.

July 24-26 – Fourth annual CanAm Aerobatics competition will be held at the Cut Bank International airport. Participants from the U.S. and Canada will be flying "in the box" and all participants and spectators are welcome. Updates can be found at www.cutbankairport.org or on Facebook at Cut Bank International Airport.

August 7-9 – Montana Antique Aircraft Association's 37th Annual Fly In at Three Forks. Begins Thursday at 12:00 p.m. Fly In Theme: Stearman / WWII Trainers. Flour Bombing & Spot Landing contests, aircraft on display, lunch and dinner available Friday and Saturday, free camping on the airport. For further information contact Pat Green at greenrrg@aol.com; Ken Flikkema at (406) 580-6207; Bob Green at (406) 539-7830 or Tim Linn at (406) 451-5897.

August 8-10 – Splash In 2014 sponsored by the Glacier Pilots EAA Chapter 102, Kalispell Montana. Seaplanes, music, a magic weekend. For visiting aircraft, water or land, contact Ry Keller, EAA Director at forestkeller@montanasky.us. Camping, food, and other activities. Musicians and music fans contact Bill Montgomery at bill@stillwaterlanding.com.

August 10 – Lions Club Drive In, Fly In breakfast and model airplane show at Hysham Airport 7:00 a.m. to noon. For further information contact Bob Miller (406) 342-5252 or email bpmiller@rangeweb.net.

August 15-17 – Montana Fun Weekend fly-in and car show at Cut Bank International Airport. Breakfast will be available on Saturday and Sunday mornings with various events and concessions Friday night and all day Saturday. Top three airplane awards of \$100 each will be given on Saturday. Updates can be found at www.cutbankairport.org or on Facebook at Cut Bank International Airport.

August 22-24 – Mountain Search Pilot Clinic, Lewistown, MT. For further information contact Dave Hoerner at (406) 444-9568 or dhoerner@mt.gov.

August 30-31 – Mountain Madness Air Show featuring the USAF Thunderbirds. Glacier Park International Airport (FCA). For further information call (406) 758-2800 or info@kalispellchamber.com or visit www.montanairshow.com.



Conference Celebrates 30 Years of Success!



MDT Director Mike Tooley attended Thursday's kick-off luncheon offering a welcome and update on what's happening at the MT Department of Transportation. That afternoon he participated in a session on Promotional Opportunities in Montana with Meg O'Leary and Jeri Duran from Department of Commerce.



Pictured (l-r) Steve Vold, Kevin Ploehn and Scott Newpower served as Co-Chairman for the conference and the official ribbon cutting before the grand opening of the Exhibit Hall.



We would not be celebrating 30 years of success without the continued support from our dedicated sponsors. Debbie Alke, MDT Aeronautics Administrator thanks (l-r) Breezy Burlison and Ed Croymans of City Service Valcon/Phillips 66 Aviation for their generosity at the Thursday evening Exhibitor awards and official opening of the Exhibit area.



The FAA Airport Traffic Control Towers were recognized for exhibiting at the conference for 10 years! Pictured (l-r) Scott Newpower and Michael Haines from the Billings Tower accept the award!



AOPA has been an Exhibitor at our conference for 13 years. We thank them for their support as an exhibitor and sponsor! Pictured (l-r) are Mike Ferguson who served as NW Mountain Representative and Greg Pecoraro, Vice-President of AOPA. Mike was also honored at the conference for his outstanding accomplishments in aviation. Thanks to Larry Chambers for putting together a remarkable presentation on a remarkable person!



We have two Exhibitors that have stood beside us for 30 years! Pictured (l-r) is Steve Vold (Cher) of Aerotronics Inc. and Rich Broberg (Sonny) of Omaha Airplane Supply, who offered their own version of "I Got You Babe"! Thanks to Steve & Rich for their support as Exhibitors and Sponsors and for just being all around great guys! They are a huge addition to the conference and we can't thank them enough for all they do!





The awards luncheon on Friday recognized our amazing group of scholarship recipients. Pictured with Debbie Alke are (l-r) Mason Lagerquist recipient of the Rosie the Riveter/Charlie Taylor scholarship offered by the Helena EAA chapter. And Alex Koch recipient of the Parrott Family Scholarship.



The Parrott family had such a group of fine scholarship applications they graciously decided to offer two \$1,000 scholarships. Pictured with Debbie Alke is Tommy Condon who is studying Aeronautical Science at Rocky Mountain College.



Jim Allbright, Bozeman (l) and Jim Lewis, Lewistown (r) were the recipients of the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award that recognizes pilots who have demonstrated professionalism, skill and aviation expertise by maintaining safe operations for 50 or more years. An award well deserved by these two gentlemen!



The ALOA (A Love of Aviation) Scholarship went to McKenzie Morgan of Billings. Pictured is McKenzie (center) with her flight instructor Bobbi Powers (l) and her mother Kristy Morgan (r). For information on all of the 2014 scholarship recipients visit our website at www.mdt.mt.gov/aviation/scholarships.shtml



We were honored to have Mark Baker President of Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) serve as speaker at the banquet. Pictured with Mark (l-r) is Roger Meggers of Baker, Mark Baker, Darin Meggers, Baker and Steve Vold, Billings. Roger and Darin were instrumental in getting Mark to come to Billings and we certainly appreciate all they do for aviation in our great state.



Bobbie Munger (l) pictured with Debbie Alke was the recipient of the Theresa (Nistler) Cooley Scholarship, a scholarship established in memory of Theresa by Bill Gallea and Jeanne MacPherson (Mountain AirDance Flight Training) and Brent and Rosie Vetter (Vetter Aviation).

Pictured (l-r) is Mark Baker, AOPA, Debbie Alke MDT Aeronautics, Greg Pecoraro, AOPA and Trish McKenna, Bozeman who serves as the Aeronautics Board Chair.



Interested in a Career in Aviation?

There is a multitude of jobs in the aviation or aerospace-related field. There are airport controllers, airport managers, airline pilots, flight instructors, maintenance technicians, and EMS helicopter/airplane pilots just to list a few.

If you know a student that is interested in pursuing a career in aviation, sponsor them to attend the 2014 ACE (Aviation Career Education) Academy in Helena, hosted by the MDT Aeronautics Division.

On May 12th and 13th, students will get a tour of the capitol, a field trip to the Helena Airport (and Tower), visit with professional helicopter and airplane pilots, fly flight simulators, partake in a ELT search scenario and receive a flight in an aircraft.

The Montana Chamber of Commerce and the Montana Pilots Association will be providing tuition slots for four students with the best written essays. Essay guidelines and registration details can be found online at www.mdt.mt.gov/aviation/events.shtml.

The future of aviation rests solely on today's aviation professionals and pilots. Take the time to pass on your knowledge of aviation and send them to this year's ACE program in Helena.

For further questions, please call (406) 444-2506 or email sdemars@mt.gov.



The 2014 Aviation Career Exploration (ACE) Academy

May 12th – 13th, Helena, MT
For Montana Students Grades 9-12 (Ages 14-18)

The Aviation Career Exploration (ACE) Academy is a program designed to introduce high school students to aviation and aerospace-related careers.

As a participant in the Aeronautics ACE program, you will attend field trips to places like the Helena International Airport, the Fort Harrison Star Base, and a trip to the mountains to demonstrate Search & Rescue procedures including signaling an actual plane to our location. Other activities include seminars on aviation careers and a flight in the local area.

Tuition is \$130 per student and enrollment is limited to 12 students per academy. Your tuition will include meals, tours, and field trip transportation. **Please note** that your tuition will not be due until you have receive your acceptance letter.

The Academy base will be at the MDT Aeronautics Division Office, 2630 Airport Road in Helena.

Meals will be provided as well as hotel rooms (double occupancy) for Monday evening. If you live in Helena and wish to stay at your house, that is also fine.

If you would like further information please contact us at the Aeronautics Office, Monday - Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. at:

(406) 444-2506 – Stefani DeMars
(406) 444-9568 - David J. Hoerner, Safety & Education Bureau Chief



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Registration forms can be located at the MDT Aeronautics Webpage below:

www.mdt.mt.gov/aviation/events.shtml

Please include the following items when submitting registration:

- One-page essay on why you want to attend the ACE Academy, including your aviation/other career goals.
- A letter of recommendation from an instructor/teacher or pilot.

APPLICATION MUST BE POSTMARKED BY MAY 2, 2014. NO LATE APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED!

MDT AERONAUTICS DIVISION

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Giant Concrete Arrows That Point Your Way Across America

Every so often, usually in the vast deserts of the American Southwest, a hiker or a backpacker will run across something puzzling: a large concrete arrow, as much as seventy feet in length, sitting in the middle of scrub-covered nowhere.

What are these giant arrows? Some kind of surveying mark? Landing beacons for flying saucers? Earth's turn signals?

No, it's the Transcontinental Air Mail Route.

On August 20, 1920, the United States opened its first coast-to-coast air-mail delivery route, just 60 years after the Pony Express closed up shop.

There were no good aviation charts in those days, so pilots had to eyeball their way across the country using landmarks. This meant that flying in bad weather was difficult, and night flying was just about impossible.

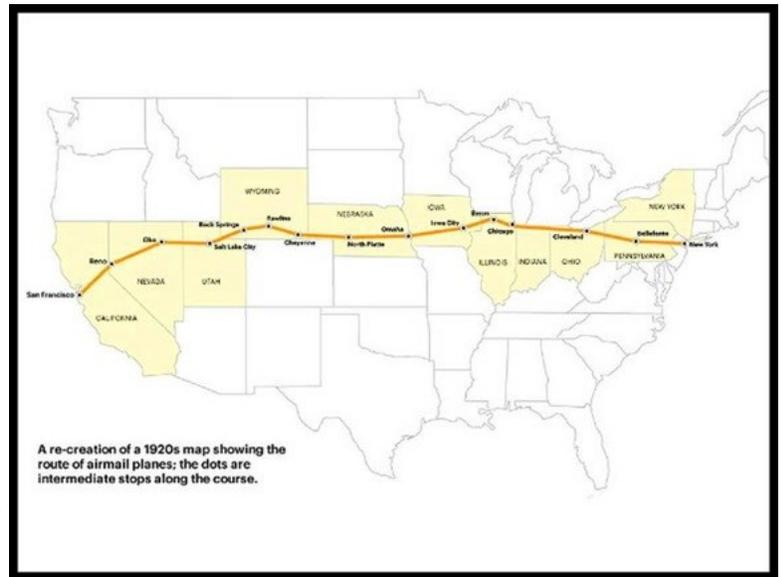
The Postal Service solved the problem with the world's first ground-based civilian navigation system: a series of lit beacons that would extend from New York to San Francisco. Every ten miles, pilots would pass a bright yellow concrete arrow. Each arrow would be surmounted by a 51-foot steel tower and lit by a million-candlepower rotating beacon. (A generator shed at the tail of each arrow powered the beacon.)

Now mail could get from the Atlantic to the Pacific not in a matter of weeks, but in just 30 hours or so.

Even the dumbest of air mail pilots, it seems, could follow a series of bright yellow arrows straight out of a Tex Avery cartoon. By 1924, just a year after Congress funded it, the line of giant concrete markers stretched from Rock Springs, Wyoming to Cleveland, Ohio. The next summer, it reached all the way to New York, and by 1929 it spanned the continent uninterrupted, the envy of postal systems worldwide.

Radio and radar are, of course, infinitely less cool than a concrete Yellow Brick Road from sea to shining sea, but I think we all know how this story ends. New advances in communication and navigation technology made the big arrows obsolete, and the Commerce Department decommissioned the beacons in the 1940s. The steel towers were torn down and went to the war effort. But the hundreds of arrows remain. Their yellow paint is gone, their concrete cracks a little more with every winter frost, and no one crosses their path much, except for coyotes and tumbleweeds.

But they're still out there.



MDT attempts to provide accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person participating in any service, program or activity of the Department. Alternative accessible formats of this information will be provided upon request. For further information call (406) 444-6331 or TTY (406) 444-7696. MDT produces 1,800 copies of this public document at an estimated cost of 39 cents each, for a total cost of \$702. This includes \$483 for postage.





Rocky Mountain College Flight Team Again Wins Top Safety Award

The Rocky Mountain College National Intercollegiate Flying Association (NIFA) Flight Team performed well at the regional competition last month in Prescott, Arizona according to Dan Hargrove, Rocky Mountain College Director of Aviation.

“The team won the overall Safety Award, which is a significant achievement,” Hargrove said of the regional competition in Arizona. The team also won the overall Safety Award two years ago. The RMC flight team competed against Metro State College of Denver, Colorado Northwestern Community College, Utah State University, Utah Valley University, Westminster College and the United States Air Force Academy. They also competed alongside Cypress College, Embry Riddle Aeronautical University - Prescott, Mt. San Antonio College, San Diego Christian College, and San Jose State University.

Jerid McCabe of Dubois, Wyoming placed seventh among the top scoring contestants, placing in the top ten in Simulated Comprehensive Aircraft Navigation (SCAN - one of the most difficult events) and Power Off Landing. Tommy Condon of Glendive, Montana received the Outstanding Team member award.

Other members of the team from Montana include Tyler Reed from Lewistown, Austin Kiehl from Winnett, and Jason Jorgensen from Billings.

Members of the team from other states include Seth Livengood (IA), Axl Snure (WA), Brian Joswick, Carli Hazelton (MI), and Erin Barklage (CA).

