



Fly It Forward

By Tom Kuglin, Helena IR originally appeared in the March 8, 2014 issue of the Helena IR, reprinted with permission

School kids often hear that the sky's the limit, but for a group of Helena area high school students, that phrase might be closer to reality.

Nine young women and men spent Friday touring various sites around Helena Regional Airport, including the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks aviation unit, the air traffic control tower and a FedEx 727. The special tour, guided by the Sleeping Giant Flying Club, offered the kids a glimpse into the many job opportunities aviation has to offer. As part of the event, they will get to go up today for an introductory flight lesson and take their turns behind the controls of a Cessna.

The club regularly does "Young Eagle" events that take kids up flying, but actually letting young people fly the plane is a first for the club, volunteer Mike Korn said.

"The mean age for pilots is middle to upper-middle age," he said. "We're hoping we can affect some kids with the passion to fly."

Korn believes Helena has a solid base of flying enthusiasts who support each other, and that Helena is a great place to learn.

"The aviation community in Helena is extraordinary," he said. "I don't think I would've learned to fly anywhere else."

Although both young men and women made up the group, the tour came as part of the "Fly it Forward" nationwide event to encourage young women to consider careers in aviation. According to the program, only 6 percent of pilots in the United States are women, and club volunteers were hoping to change that.



From left Rachel Church, Jake Ramirez, Sidney Wilhelm and Rachel Nelsen play around in the cockpit of a 727 Friday while being introduced to flying by area professionals. Photo courtesy of Eliza Wiley, Helena IR.



Students make their way out of the Fed Ex 727 jet after a tour of the large cargo plane. Photo courtesy of Eliza Wiley, Helena IR.

Sidney Wilhelm, 18, comes from an aviation family, where her father and grandfather both worked as airplane mechanics.

"I took my first ride in a plane with my grandpa when I was 2 years old," she said.

Wilhelm now hopes to go into machining and possibly building parts for airplanes.

Nate Wordal, 16, is already working on his pilot's license and wants to become an Air Force pilot. The tour helped him learn about many different ways to make aviation a career, including going up in the tower and meeting the FWP pilot, he said.

"I started throwing luggage at the airport and now I'm a full-time flight instructor," club volunteer Harold Dramstad said. "If they have an interest, it's not that expensive. We're hoping we can encourage the future."

Administrator's Column

Wow -- 30th Anniversary a Success: Despite being held in sub-zero and blizzard like conditions, Montana aviators rallied in Billings to enjoy three full days learning, sharing and reminiscing. More than 400 participants, speakers, exhibitors, students and government officials braved the cold – thanks to each of you for your support. Congratulations to those honored at the aviation conference, award winners and scholarship recipients. A special thank-you to the Billings host committee Scott Newpower, Kevin Ploehn, Steve Vold, Bob Green, Pat Green and Steve Tostenrud for working for the past year to ensure a worthwhile program was offered to all. And to Patty Kautz and the entire MDT Aeronautics Division staff thank you for your hard work and dedication. We look forward to seeing you in Missoula in 2015.

Powder River MOA Resurfaces: In an unexpected move, the FAA Air Traffic Central Service Center in Fort Worth, TX is requesting comments to a revised proposal even though the US Air Force reports they are attempting to finish consultations and revise the Environmental Impact Statement. As we wait for answers from the FAA to many questions regarding the process and next steps please note that **comments must be received by the FAA on or before April 3rd**. Information regarding the proposal can be found at: <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/aviation/> the information is **NOT** available on the FAA or Ellsworth AFB websites and comments must be sent by US mail, comments cannot be sent by email. The proposal would quadruple the size of the existing military operations area with most of it located in Montana. This proposal will have a significant **NEGATIVE** impact to Montanan's economy (including oil exploration in the area), FBO's and related businesses. Aviation safety will be compromised; there is no method to provide safe separation of military and civilian aircraft. It is important your thoughts be heard, please mail your comments in time to **be received by April 3**. Continue to monitor MDT's website (above) to received updated information to possibly include an extension to the comment period.

President Releases Budget: The very large document once again calls for a per-flight user fee of \$100 on general aviation, ignoring the outcry from many in Congress and other government and industry stakeholders who oppose this approach. The budget increases the passenger facility charge (PFC) from \$4.50 to \$8.00 and cuts Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funds from \$3.35 billion down to \$2.9 billion, (the AIP handbook states that AIP must be funded at \$3.2 billion in order for non-primary airports to qualify for \$150,000 NPE entitlement per year). The budget language suggests that the focus will be on federal grants to smaller commercial service and general aviation airports, allowing the larger commercial service airports to make up any difference by the opportunity to increase PFCs. A quick overview for the FAA includes: operations budget \$9.75 billion; facilities & equipment \$2.6 billion; R&D \$157 Million. Stay tuned.

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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.

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 Cub-Works (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 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.

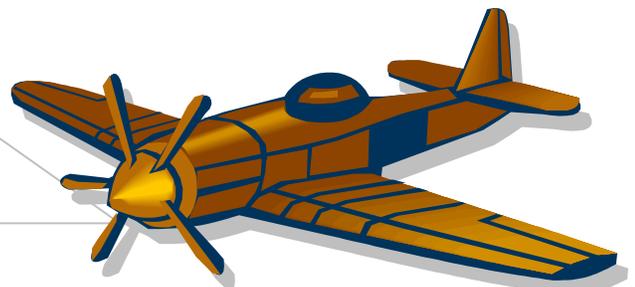
August 15-17 - Montana Fun Weekend fly-in and car show at Cut Bank International Airport. Breakfast will be available on Saturday and Sunday mornings with various events and concessions Friday night and all day Saturday. Top three airplane awards of \$100 each will be given on Saturday. Updates can be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

NOTICE: FREQUENCY CHANGE AT COLSTRIP M46

The airport CTAF frequency for the Colstrip airport M46 has been changed to 122.70. Please make a note of this until all publications have been updated.



Along the Divide: Up, up and away for Butte woman

By Kelley Christensen, Montana Standard, originally appeared in the January 20, 2014 issue of the Montana Standard, reprinted with permission

Kristi Dunks was one of the first people on the scene of the March 22, 2009, airplane crash at Holy Cross Cemetery in Butte, which killed 14 people.

A senior air safety investigator, she is no stranger to plane wrecks, but she takes pride in her work: making sure there are fewer crashes in the future.

“It was a terrible tragedy like all accidents are,” she said in an interview with The Montana Standard recently from her hangar in the general aviation area of the Bert Mooney Airport.

“We’ve conducted a lot of outreach on it and there are a lot of lessons pilots can learn. Our purpose is to respond to aviation accidents and determine what happened. Why did this happen? In ‘why?’, we can prevent future accidents from happening.”

Dunks, who grew up in Rocker and graduated from Butte High School in 1995, is a member of the National Transportation Safety Board, an independent government agency that investigates general aviation accidents. These include accidents in airplanes, helicopters and even gliders and balloons in an effort to learn what caused the accidents so they can be prevented in the future. She wants to make her passion for flying as safe as it can be so other people can experience the fun.

Dunks, who is in her 30s, knew as a young person she wanted to be a pilot.

“Like a few people my age, I was probably inspired by ‘Top Gun’,” she said with a laugh. “Of course after getting into flying I realized I have a real passion for the general aviation side of the industry.”

She attended Montana Tech for two years after graduating from high school before transferring to Westminster College in Salt Lake City where she majored in aviation operations.

“It’s interesting the different paths your life takes,” she said. “It was in my aviation law class I did research on the NTSB. Through the project I learned about this independent government agency that determines probable causes of accidents and I was inspired by the NTSB. I just had to figure out how to get there.”

After her time at Westminster, Dunks received a master’s degree in an online degree program in aeronautical science with specializations in human factors and safety from Embry-Riddle in Daytona Beach, Fla.

Dunks began her career with the NTSB in the Los Angeles regional office in 2002, and was appointed as an investigator in 2003.

“At that time there were many investigators in that office who had been with the agency for 15 to 20 years,” she said. “It was so exciting to me to learn from people who’d been doing it so long, to learn the tricks of the trade.”

The first accident Dunks went to was as a trainee a few weeks after she’d started with the NTSB. It was a mid-air collision in Carlsbad, Calif., and it was a little overwhelming at first.

“I was working with the investigator in charge,” she said. “I could see the importance of the work we do, coming in, taking control of the scene, uncovering what happened to prevent future events from occurring. I learned a lot. In any investigation you continue to learn a lot.”

Some things she can never forget.

“All investigations have impacted me in some way so they are difficult to categorize,” she said. “One was a Boeing 747 that was departing from LAX and experienced blown tires during takeoff, resulting in substantial damage to the aircraft and fortunately no injuries to the passengers. Responding to examine an airplane with landing gear larger than I am was quite an experience.”

After working in L.A., Dunks moved to the Seattle regional office, and when the NTSB started a telecommuting program a few years ago, Dunks jumped at the chance to return to Butte. She lives here with her husband, Richard Nelson, who is an artist, and her 18-month-old son, Tommy Nelson.

“I am really happy to live and work here,” she said. “For kids growing up in this town, the opportunities are endless. If there’s something you want to do, you just need to figure out how to do it. It may not happen overnight, but rejection doesn’t mean ‘no.’ It means you need to figure out a different way to get where you need to be.”

Much like the community she calls home, Dunks has found her profession has given her many opportunities to pursue her passion for aviation.

“We have a wide range and a wide scope,” she said. “We do make safety recommendations, but for me, I find most helpful the outreach activities.”

Dunks talks to pilots, mechanics, air traffic controllers and others in the aviation industry about accidents and what information they can take away.

She’s doing a talk for flight instructors renewing their licenses next month in Helena about the Butte plane crash in 2009, so those pilots can learn from it.



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Along the Divide, continued

The NTSB concluded that crash was likely caused by the fuel lines freezing up when a fuel additive to prevent icing was not added.

“Our focus is to improve safety within the aviation industry,” she said. “It’s difficult to deal with loss in the industry, but it’s helpful to see the safety changes that result in our work. As a pilot myself, I ask myself how I could get into a similar situation and what would make me continue the flight when I should have landed the airplane.”

For the past year, Dunks has been on a detail to the director of the Office of Aviation Safety in Washington, D.C., manning the NTSB’s safety improvements program.

“I work with investigators on resolving safety issues identified through investigations, track safety recommendations and conduct outreach,” she said. “I can still be called to investigate as necessary, but these are my primary duties while on the detail.”

Dunks said her profession has enabled her to reach out to the general public not only about air safety, but about what a delight it can be to be a pilot. She’s been busy for the past few years completing her doctorate from Texas Tech in technical communications and rhetoric, focusing on government reports and rhetorics of safety. Now, she plans to enjoy spending more time with her family and getting back into flight instruction. She’s also working on the Lindbergh hangar project at the airport, restoring a hangar that once briefly housed Charles Lindbergh’s airplane the Spirit of St. Louis when Lindbergh stopped in Butte.

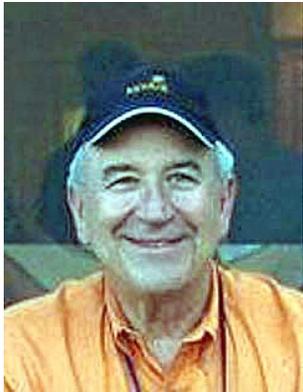
David Hoerner, the Montana Department of Transportation aeronautics division safety and education bureau chief, said having a person like Kristi Dunks in Butte is a real asset to the state.

“She’s someone we can call and connect with when we have an aircraft accident, or to learn from about an accident after it has happened so we can correct the issue so we don’t have it again,” he said. “She’ll come talk about accidents, teach instructors how things happen. It’s good to have that advice, that knowledge.”

Dunks said she’s looking forward to passing on her love of flying to others in the area.

“I love flying in the mountains and getting that perspective on things,” she said. “From the moment you push the airplane out of the hangar, it’s an exciting feeling. Learning how to fly can be a great hobby or a great career.”

In Memory - Philip Petrik



Philip Owen Petrik was born in Sidney, Mont., on Feb. 23, 1951, to Paul and Helen Petrik, and little brother to sister, Paula. He spent his early years on the farm north of Lambert, but moved into Sidney to attend grade school. He attended school in Sidney through the eighth grade and continued his education at Breck School, a private Episcopalian boys’ school in Minneapolis, Minn. He returned home during those summers to pursue his love of flying, building his first airplane as a teenager. He did well and had many fond memories of his years at Breck. Senator Mike Mansfield recommended Phil for the United States Air Force Academy, but when vision requirements kept him from flying fighters, he decided that wasn’t the route for him. He briefly attended the University of Minnesota and Montana State University, but the desire to fly brought him back to Sidney permanently.

Phil purchased Burns Flying service in 1971 and renamed it Richland Aviation. He started his aviation career doing aerobatics at airshows and providing flight instruction. Soon he added ag spraying, and followed with air charter. He had a great business sense and an incredible work ethic and worked hard to gain new skills to meet the ever changing economy. His aviation career consisted of

building airplanes, doing airshow aerobatics, crop spraying, flying charters, instructing all levels of flight, aircraft restoration, as well as holding his aircraft mechanics license. He was also an FAA check airman for both land and seaplanes from private through airline transport. He was always up for a challenge. One of his favorite accomplishments was to earn his formation flying card in the T-28. He said he’d never worked so hard at flying and been yelled at so much! He was a pioneer in several areas of aviation and is respected by many all across the nation. Over his career he logged well over 30,000 hours and was most at home in the cockpit. He was looking forward to fulfilling a lifelong dream of flying his newly restored P-51D home to Sidney. He and Patty had recently purchased a hangar/home in Arizona where the streets are taxiways. He could hop in the cub without even going outside...perfect!

In 1971, he married Amy Daniels and together they had two children, Allison (Greg Melchert and their children, Jonah, Samantha, and Julia) of Puyallup, Wash., and Michael (Sarah and their sons, Skylar and Ethan) Sidney. He married Patty O’Toole in 1983 and together they had two more children Kale (and daughter Layla) and Kallie both of Sidney.

Phil always loved the wind and it was a big part of all aspects of his life...whether on the sailboat or in the air, he always wanted to use it to his advantage. Going upwind or downwind, he could make the sailboat perform better than most, and when he was in any cockpit, performance and efficiency were top concerns. He always believed in doing things to the best of his ability, and his fight against cancer was no different. He worked hard and didn’t complain along the way. He was a grateful patient and was a wonderful example to all until he left us for his home in the sky.

Phil died on Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2014, at his home in Sidney, Mont.

He will surely be missed by all who knew and loved him.

WWII Airmen's Museum Acquires Historic Display

By Roy Nollkamper, Manager, Cut Bank International Airport

Over 8,000 B-17 heavy bombers were built to serve the Allies during WWII. Today, fewer than 20 are airworthy.

After the war, there was a desperate need for metals to feed the booming post-war economy, and most of the planes that returned from the fronts in Europe and the Pacific were scrapped and the metals salvaged.

Nearly 70 years after the last B-17 flew in the war, several individuals have used the last remaining instruments from the planes to re-create the historic Boeing Aircraft instrument panels.

Recently, the Airmen's Museum, located at the Cut Bank Airport, was contacted by Bruce Claxton who is the foremost builder of reproduction B-17 cockpit panels. He mentioned that he had built 26 panels over the past decade, but had only enough authentic instruments remaining to complete one final panel. The panel was purchased by an anonymous donor and is now located at the museum.

By "authentic instruments" Bruce means that the ones he uses came from a warehouse in Kingman, AZ, that had removed them from actual combat B-17's. As Bruce says, "They have really walked the walk and talked the talk from the combat skies in WWII." The final detail is the nomenclature plate that uses the actual serial number of a combat B-17.

While the panel housing the instruments is a reproduction, the instruments are important pieces of history and the detail incorporated is extremely precise.

Another addition to the museum is a second Norden bombsight. The gyroscope controlling the once top-secret sight is operational, and can be powered up to demonstrate how it was able to stabilize the apparatus regardless of what angle the plane was flying.

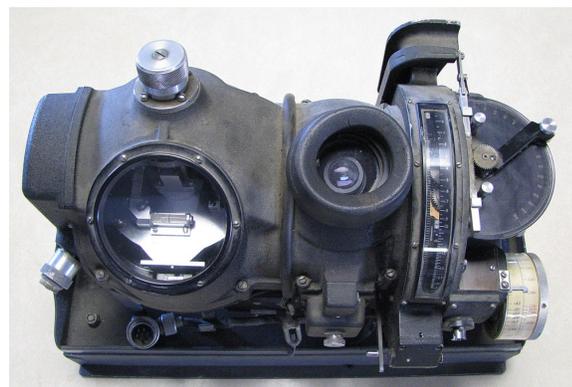
Both items will be on display at the museum in the airport terminal building. Restoration is in progress on the Armament Building, at the airport, which will be the new home of the museum.

The museum is open during regular hours Monday through Friday, and airport tours are available any time by special arrangement. The airport, which was a WWII B-17 training base has been listed on the National Registry of Historic Places since 2007.

For updates on all airport functions go to our website at www.cutbankairport.org or find us on Facebook at Cut Bank International Airport.



This replica of a B-17 cockpit panel is on display at the Airmen's Museum. It incorporates instruments from actual combat B-17 aircraft.



Once one of the most closely guarded secrets of WWII, this is one of two Norden Bomb Sights at the museum. It was used during the war for training purposes for bombardiers and is operational.

FAA Releases Advisory Circular

On February 12, 2014, the FAA released Advisory Circular (AC) 00-1.1A, Public Aircraft Operations. The AC provides information to assist in determining whether government or government contracted aircraft operations are public or civil aircraft operations. The AC also contains FAA policy pertaining to civil aircraft operators that provide contract support to government entities.

The AC and additional FAA regulatory and guidance materials can be found at <http://rgl.faa.gov/> or fsims.faa.gov.



Saving lives and Providing Information to Students is Our Goal

By David J. Hoerner, Bureau Chief, Safety & Education

MDT Aeronautics' Safety and Education Bureau is responsible for locating missing aircrafts or activated emergency locator transmitters. The bureau is also responsible for providing aviation related information to students and pilots.

Throughout the year are clinics that provide this information. Starting in January, a Winter Survival Clinic is held to teach procedures for surviving an aircraft accident and survival in a cold environment until rescued.

This program also teaches ways to plan to be rescued; good flight plans, survival gear and tracking devices are a must to surviving. Next year's clinic will be held in Lewistown on January 9-11, 2015.

Then each February a Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic is provided for Montana Flight Instructors. Recently MDT Aeronautics was certified by the FAA to sponsor this program. Because of the size and terrain in Montana this certification was needed to provide information on local subjects and search and rescue procedures.

Fifty two instructors participated in this year's program with professionals from all around the state providing educational information on aerospace related topics. With the help of these educated speakers and the local FAA office all instructors were able to leave with renewed knowledge and a new two year certificate.

During the Aviation Conference held on the last week of February, a teacher's workshop was provided to Montana teachers that have an interest in providing an aviation program to their students.

The first day is spent teaching aerodynamics and flight simulator use. On the second day, 42 students from the Burlington Elementary 4th grade class in Billings arrived and spent a couple of hours learning about aviation and having fun.

The students spent time flying simulators, playing with a wind tunnel, designing and flying paper airplanes, flying balsam airplanes, operating a 3D printer and naming parts of an airplane.

The next scheduled program is geared toward high school students is the Aviation Career Academy and that will be held in Helena on May 12-13. The goal of this program is to introduce aerospace and aviation to students.

There are many aviation related job besides being a pilot that are career builders. The two days are spent talking to area professionals on airport management, control tower operations, flying flight simulators and becoming professional pilots.

If you have a student that would be interested in participating in this year's program give our office a call and we will provide information on how to qualify for this clinic.

A yearlong aviation poster contest is scheduled to end on March 31, 2014 in Helena. Montana students can draw, paint or sketch an aviation related poster and send it to Aeronautics. There are 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners in the three categories with all winners receiving trophies. The 1st place winners and their families will be flown from their hometown to Helena to be presented their awards from the Lt. Governor or the Administrator of Aeronautics.

A tour of the capital is provided along with a lunch and flight back to their home towns. If you have a student or child interested in participating there is still plenty of time to get their poster completed.

On August 22 the annual Search Pilot Clinic will be held in Lewistown. This three day program teaches mountain flying and SAR techniques. While not flying participants learn survival and emergency locator procedures. Pilots who participate in the clinic are also added to the volunteer search and rescue roster.

Put these dates on your calendars and sign up early. Happy Flying!



Kaye Ebelt, a teacher from Missoula led the teacher's workshop in Billings. She brought along a 3-D printer and printed airplanes for the students!



Dan Hargrove of Rocky Mountain College offered his expertise to the teachers at the 2014 teacher workshop held in Billings.



Refresher Seminar Another Success

By Mike Rogan, Aviation Support Officer, A&P/IA

The annual Mechanics Refresher and IA Renewal Seminar was another success this year. There were 12 hours of training conducted by technical instructors representing many areas of aircraft maintenance and 4 additional hours of regulatory training conducted by the FAA. Sessions were well attended with 53 A&P Mechanics with Inspection Authorization (IA) from Montana, two from Wyoming and one from Texas, receiving a Certificate of Training which may be used to meet the requirements of CFR 14 part 65.93(a) (4), for eligibility for renewal of their inspection authorization.

For an A&P Mechanic, with an IA, to be eligible for renewal of their IA they must show that they are actively engaged in aircraft maintenance and also show completion of one of the five activities described in §65.93 (a) (1) through (5) below by March 31 of the first year of the 2-year inspection authorization period. This also applies during the second year of the 2-year period.

An A&P Mechanic with an IA must complete at least one of the following stated in §65.93:

- Performed at least one annual inspection for each 90 days that the applicant held the current authority; or
- Performed at least two major repairs or major alterations for each 90 days that the applicant held the current authority; or
- Performed or supervised and approved at least one progressive inspection in accordance with standards prescribed by the Administrator; or
- Attended and successfully completed a refresher course, acceptable to the Administrator, of not less than 8 hours of instruction; or
- Passed an oral test by the FAA inspector to determine that the applicant's knowledge of applicable regulations and standards is current.

Our FAA accepted course meets the requirements of §65.93(a)(4) and helps those IA mechanics renew their certificates each year who may fall one annual short or have not completed enough major repairs or majors alterations or who did not performed a progressive inspection.

This is a valuable course that the MDT Aeronautics Divisions provides for IA mechanics each year at the Montana Aviation Conference and for many years prior to the Aviation Conference's existence in 1985. We plan to continue providing this service and wish to thank all of the mechanics in the state and even some from surrounding states for attending.