

# Montana and the Sky

Montana Department of Transportation

Aeronautics Division

Vol. 68, No. 7

July 2017

## Airport Work Sessions Build Community

More than 60 pilots, 14 airplanes, and two helicopters gathered at Whetstone International Airport (H28) on the U.S.-Canadian border on Thursday, June 15<sup>th</sup> for the annual fly-in work session. The airport, also known as Del Bonita for the town located two miles north, is situated on the international border 30 miles northwest of Cut Bank, MT. A large contingent of the Alberta chapter of the International Flying Farmers (IFF) were on hand to work on gopher control, with support of the Montana Department of Transportation

day in July because it conflicted with the Calgary Stampede. Local pilot and IFF organizer, Don Althen, was pleased with the tremendous turnout for the event, held for the first time this year during the work week. Attendance was the best in the 30-year history of the Del Bonita work session.



Canadian pilot, George Porter, flew his 1946 Cessna 120, CF-JYI into Del Bonita for the work session from his strip near Cardston, Alberta. George has flown this airplane from coast-to-coast across Canada, and enjoys flying into back country strips in Montana like Benchmark..

Aeronautics Division. Volunteer work sessions like this one at are a valuable means of maintaining general aviation airports. Pilots on both sides of the border find the strip a convenient, no-hassle location to clear with customs and immigration officials when heading north or south. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection Air Wing in Great Falls uses the airstrip as a refueling point for their operations. This year's work session was moved from the long-standing date of the second Satur-

Did you make it to the Meadow Creek USFS Airport (0S1) work session this year? If you did, you were one of only a handful that attended this year's work session held June 17. Evening rain kept everyone away on Friday night but after the low clouds cleared on Saturday morning, the beginning of a beautiful weekend brought 5 planes with 10 people plus, the family of R. T. Adkins hiked in from the Meadow Creek Trail-head.

R.T. Adkins' family came to Meadow Creek with purpose – in memory of R.T. (who passed on September 9, 2015) and in lieu of flowers at his service, the family chose to donate funding to the Montana Pilots Association (MPA) which partially funded the replacement of facilities that were lost due to the 2015 fire that swept through much of Meadow Creek. On behalf of the Montana Pilots Association, Scott Newpower dedicated a beautiful new outhouse and picnic table in memory of R.T. Thanks to all who donated.



Some of the family and crew following the dedication.

Continued on page 7

# Administrator's Column

**Congratulations:** **Mary Wadekamper** was honored recently with the FAA Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award and is only the second Montana woman to be recognized with this prestigious award. Mary began flying in 1967 and holds an ATP, CFII and A&P ratings. She and her husband Leo have operated an FBO, rebuilt airplanes and make time to fly every chance they get! **Ralph Rogers** was presented the MPA Ambassador of the Year Award recently. Ralph is a true general aviation ambassador! He hosts an annual fly-in at the Winifred Airport that includes he and many other recreational aviation buffs exploring the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument and he is always happy and excited to talk aviation or assist when needed. Congratulations Mary and Ralph!

**FAA Reauthorization:** Both the Senate and House bills continue to advance and besides differences regarding Air Traffic Control privatization each contain other important provisions.

**Senate:** Four-year bill; includes language to relax the 1,500-hour rule for commercial airline first officers, subject to FAA approval; expands the block grant program; increases funding for the Airport Improvement Program (AIP); and includes reforms for certification and contract towers. **House:** Six-year bill; increases AIP funding beginning in 2019; expands the block grant program; increases Essential Air Service (EAS) and Small Community Air Service Development (SCASD) funding; prohibits the ATC corporation from receiving any funds from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund.

**ATC Privatization:** More than 100 general aviation organizations have united in opposition to H.R. 2997, legislation in the House that seeks to privatize the nation's ATC system. The proposal, again this session, was introduced by House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) and was recently approved by this committee largely along party lines. The group is sending a loud and clear signal of opposition to ATC privatization. H.R. 2997 is expected to be considered by the full House in the next few weeks. The U.S. Senate's reauthorization bill S. 1405 does NOT call for ATC privatization, leaving the responsibility to the FAA, yet it does address the need for aviation system modernization. The letter from the GA organizations regarding H.R. 2997 can be viewed at: <https://www.nbaa.org/advocacy/letters/20170712-general-aviation-groups-united-in-opposition-to-hr-2997.pdf>. It is likely that this issue could lead to a standstill and result in another short-term extension. The backing of Speaker Ryan and President Trump will be a significant factor as the legislation moves forward.

**Small Community Air Service Working Group:** USDOT released and transmitted to Congress the report from the Small Community Air Service Working Group; [Report of the Working Group On Improving Air Service to Small Communities](#). This group was appointed by the U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary to look at current and emerging priorities, issues and funding needs related to providing air service to small communities. Thanks to MDT Director Mike Tooley and Brian Sprenger, Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport Director for their participation and contributions to this report.

**National Weather Service Pilot Reports:** You can log in to the electronic pilot report submission page on the National Weather Service's Aviation Weather Center Digital Data Service (ADDS) website and submit turbulence, icing, and other types of Pilot Report (PIREPS). These PIREPS will be instantly displayed in graphical form and distributed nationwide.

The PIREP submission web page transitioned from experimental status to operational status and has undergone numerous enhancements to make it more user-friendly. The result is a web page with easier-to-use data entry forms; new help pages; automatic computation of the nearest location of a surface weather observation; and better security, as well as other refinements. Register now to share pilot reports by setting up an account: [set up your account](#). When weather is better than forecast, as well as when it is worse, the FAA encourages pilots to relay the information so other pilots can benefit from your experience.



**Montana and the Sky**  
Department of Transportation

Steve Bullock, Governor  
Mike Tooley, Director

Official monthly publication of the  
Aeronautics Division  
Telephone - 406.444.2506  
Fax - 406.444.2519  
P.O. Box 200507  
Helena, MT 59620-0507  
[www.mdt.mt.gov/aviation/](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/aviation/)

Debbie K. Alke, Administrator

**Aeronautics Board**  
**Tricia McKenna, Chair**  
**Robert Buckles, Member**  
**A. Christopher Edwards, Member**  
**Dan Hargrove, Member**  
**William (Bill) Hunt, Jr., Member**  
**Fred Lark, Member**  
**Roger Lincoln, Member**  
**Walt McNutt, Member**  
**Jeff Wadekamper, Member**

**Editor: Patricia Trooien**

**Follow MDT on social media!**





# High School Students Explore Aviation Careers

The early and mid-high school years are a critical time for students to consider where their interests lie and how they should prepare to meet their future—college, trade school, military service, or a combination. Last month the Montana business and aviation community brought together pilots, aeronautical engineers, machinists, air traffic controllers, army aviators, flight instructors, and mechanics for a two-day camp to expose high school students to as many facets of aeronautics and aviation as possible in Helena.

The MDT Aeronautics Division's Aviation Career Exploration (ACE) Academy hosted 12 students from towns across the state, with support in the form of scholarships from the Montana Chamber of Commerce, the Montana Pilots Association, and Lincoln-area pilot, Jerry Cain. The goals of the camp align well with those of the business community, according to Montana Chamber President, Webb Brown, who noted that work force development is a major objective of the Chamber's 10-year strategic plan.

Students visited the shop floor of Boeing Helena to see machinists produce main landing gear beams and wing attachment fittings for commercial airliners. The tour was led by Boeing Process Engineer, Jeff Nye, who explained how 2000 lb. billets of titanium are milled to a semi-finished state in the Helena plant before shipment for assembly in South Carolina.



Pictured above, students pose for a group photo in front of an H-60M Blackhawk helicopter following a tour by Warrant Officer Travis Gronley. Officer Gronley explained the mission of the Montana Army National Guard as students toured the fleet of Chinook, Blackhawk, and Lakota helicopters.

Ryan Loomis, Admissions Counselor at the Helena College, hosted the ACE students for a hands-on tour of the Aviation Maintenance Technician program at the airport campus.

FAA air traffic controller and tower supervisor, Dave Soule, gave the students of taste of what a controller does from the cab of the Helena facility, one of only two non-radar approach controls in the nation.



Pictured above pilot/mechanic and aircraft restorer, Paul Gordon, opened his hangar to display all the capabilities sheet metal, welding, fabric, and engine work he has mastered in his 30-year career as an A & P mechanic.

The ACE Academy explored the wonder of flight as well, with each student taking a half-hour flight in the right seat of the Division's A-36 Bonanza or Cessna T206. Campers watched from the ground as aerobatic instructor, Jeanne MacPherson, of Mountain AirDance performed loops, rolls, Immelmans, and 4-turn spins in her Super Decathlon in the aerobatic box over Silver City.

Tail dragger pilots flew into Canyon Ferry airport where the ACE kids watched takeoffs and landings, including those of float plane pilot, Bob Davis, of Helena, and amphibian pilot Chris Fuher of Townsend. Pictured below, REACH Air Medical showed the students the capabilities of the "flying emergency room."



Hot air balloonist, Michael Rees, explained the details of balloon aerodynamics in a ground school lesson in preparation of a tethered flight at sunrise. Although thunderstorms prevented the inflation of the envelope, students did work as ground crew and assembled the basket and test fired the burners.

*Continued on next page*

Continued from page 3

Hang glider pilot Perry Jones of Helena, and para-glider pilot Steve Tubbs of Boulder demonstrated the most basic form of flying from a launch site on the Winston Ridge north of Townsend.



**The MDT Aeronautics Division  
thanks the following sponsors &  
supporters who helped make the  
ACE Academy a success:**

- Montana Chamber of Commerce
- Montana Pilots Association
- Jerry Cain
- Boeing, Helena
- 1<sup>st</sup>, 189<sup>th</sup> Army Aviation Support Battalion
- Mountain AirDance, LLC
- Helena FAA Air Traffic Control Tower
- Rocky Mountain Fire Training Center
- Mountain Butterfly Hot Air Balloons
- Winston Livestock Company
- Gordon Aircrafting
- REACH Air Medical, Bozeman
- Helena College (University of Montana)

## Construction Underway at Yellowstone Airport

This summer, the Yellowstone Airport is getting a facelift. All taxiway and apron surfaces will be receiving new pavement. Construction started the end of May, and crews have been working diligently to resurface the north end of the ramp and taxiway. The re-pavement project has been in the works since 2016 and was originally designed to be completed over two summers.

The project is split into four phases. The north end reopened July 7<sup>th</sup>, and work has begun on the south side of the airport.

The final piece, which includes the section of apron directly in front of the terminal, will be completed after commercial service stops in early October. Finally, the “North Alpha” and “South Alpha” crossover intersections on the taxiway will be renamed A1 through A4. Construction is scheduled to be completed before the airport closes for the winter.

Though the project will ultimately benefit to all airport patrons, that does not mean that there have not been some challenges to work through. On several occasions, the runway has been closed to all but air carriers. For pilots planning to make a trip into West Yellowstone this summer, it is important to do pre-flight planning to ensure that you can land and take off at your desired dates and times. All closed areas are lighted and barricaded.



Despite the construction, the pilots' campground is still open. Parking is currently limited to the tie downs north of the terminal, which allows for easy access to the sites. Water has been shut off to the campground for the season, so showers are not available. Please bring your own water bottles; they can be filled at the fire station or terminal building. The outhouse is stocked with toilet paper and hand sanitizer. Construction activities typically take place Monday through Friday, 7am to 8pm. While the campground is sheltered from the construction zone, there is still some noise.

NOTAMS are the best way to find out about runway and taxiway closures, and they are generally posted 72 hours before the event. Please contact the airport operations office (406-646-7631) or visit [www.yellowstoneairport.org](http://www.yellowstoneairport.org) for additional information.

## Loan & Grant Applications for FY 2019

Please be advised that MDT Aeronautics Division must receive a [Closeout Status form](#) for any outstanding projects from FY 2017 before access will be granted to the FY 2019 online Loan and Grant application system. For further information, contact Wade Cebulski at (406) 444-9581 or by email at [wcebulski@mt.gov](mailto:wcebulski@mt.gov).





## Mary Wadekamper Earns Wright Brothers Award

By Pat Johnson

On Saturday, June 10, 2017, Mary Wadekamper became the second Montana woman and half of the first Montana married couple to receive the FAA's *Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award* for over 50 years of safe flight.

Mary Wadekamper began flying on March 27, 1967, never having been exposed to aviation beforehand. Her interest began when on a vacation with her parents in Arizona during her junior year in college. The motel where they stayed was located across from a GA airport, she noticed numerous planes going around and around in the pattern, and wondered how to become a pilot.

When she arrived back home in Fargo, North Dakota, she looked into the prospect of learning to fly at Kundert Aviation where a young and enthusiastic instructor convinced her to go on an introductory flight and she was hooked. She went back shortly after that flight and signed up without telling her parents. Later, she did tell them prior to solo, since parental permission was required for someone under legal age. Her father was thrilled and signed the permission slip. Her mother worried.

Mary's first solo flight was May 12, 1967 in a Cessna 150. After that her enthusiasm continued to grow and she obtained her private pilot certificate in July 1967. She went on to pursue her commercial and flight instructor ratings and achieved both in 1968. Flying became a priority. She finished college and supported her flying with three part-time jobs during her last two years of college. She was hired as a flight instructor by Skroch Aviation in Fargo and instructed mostly primary students along with those seeking additional ratings. The FBO had a contract with the ROTC program at North Dakota State University and she helped several of those enrolled obtain

their private pilot certificate. She also obtained her ground instructor certificate during this time and began to teach ground school as well as doing flight instruction.

In 1969 she married Leo Wadekamper and moved to Minnesota where they established an FBO. She did flight instruction, charter flights and Mary began assisting Leo with mechanic work. Their son Jeffrey was born in Minnesota. Being around aircraft all his life, he is now involved in aviation, and serves as the Director of the Helena Regional Airport.

Mary enjoyed aircraft maintenance and continued to learn on the job to gain the knowledge and skills required for obtaining a mechanic certificate. Together, she and Leo rebuilt many aircraft. Over time she qualified for an airframe mechanic rating which she obtained in 1982 while they were living in Fairbanks, AK.

Mary and Leo moved to Fairbanks, Alaska in 1980 where Leo worked for the FAA. While there they both joined the Civil Air Patrol and flew many hours. They purchased a Super Cub and had many flights on wheels, floats and skis, exploring the vast expanses of Alaska.

Mary, Leo and Jeff moved back to the lower 48 and settled in Montana in 1984. Mary obtained a second degree from Carroll College and worked in the healthcare field for many years. Also, during that busy time Mary went on to get her instrument rating, instrument instructor rating and finally ATP certificate. She flies every chance she can get and keeps her ratings current. Mary continued to work as a mechanic's helper towards her Powerplant rating, which she eventually earned, combined with her earlier Airframe rating, now making her an Airframe & Powerplant mechanic.

Mary and Leo continued, as a team, to fly and rebuild airplanes over the years. Currently, they rotate flying their various airplanes whenever they get the opportunity.

Mary joins long-time Helena pilot and former Montana Pilots Association president, Pat Johnson, as only the second woman in Montana to receive the Master Pilot Award.



Leo & Mary Wadekamper at Cromwell Dixon day Oct. 2011

For more information about the FAA *Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award* visit <https://www.faasafety.gov/content/masterpilot/>

## Solar Eclipse Aug 21st, 2017

On Monday, August 21, a solar eclipse will track from the Pacific to the Atlantic oceans. Thirteen states will experience a total eclipse while a partial eclipse will occur over the rest of the U.S. Many areas have planned viewing events. Check NOTAMS if you plan on flying. For most Montanans, the greatest totality will occur in a time window of approximately 11:30 to 11:50 a.m. Mountain Daylight Time.

# Montana Ninety-Nines Air Marking in Full Swing

By Janine Schwahn

The Montana Ninety-Nines are off and running this 2017 year with our air marking. We started on May 20th (getting an early jump on the season) with a compass rose at Butte, MT. It was 60 feet across with 8 points. We decided to be different and made the North Point checkerboarded white and blue. We are attempting to do all commercial service airports in Montana with a compass rose over the next couple years, each with a different design. It took 20 gallons of white paint and 10 gallons of blue paint. There were three of us consistently there, with help from four others throughout the day. We started at 9:00 am and finished at 4:00 pm with three breaks for rain squalls to blow through. We were lucky each time, as there was time for each layer of paint to dry before the weather hit. The temperature ranged from 55-75 degrees. One of our Ninety-Nines lives in Butte, another flew in from Bozeman, and two drove 80 miles.



Photo Credit: Janine Schwahn.

June 3rd, we hit the pavement hard with two air markings set for Bridger, MT and Red Lodge, MT. Three of us drove the paint two and a half hours from Bozeman to Bridger, where we hit the asphalt at 9:33am. With a total 15 people descending on Bridger, two 182's and a Piper Warrior each hauling in Ninety-Nines, we wrapped up Bridger at 11:53 am. We had ordered food at a local bar and three of us headed to my truck to drive the 45 minutes to Red Lodge along a gravel



Photo Credit: Janine Schwahn. Charity Fechter, Miranda Edwards, Kelley Mcallister, Janine and Deb Schwahn and others working hard on Bridger air marking.

road up the mountains, gaining 2000' in elevation. We ate as we drove enjoying the backcountry scenery, while the other 12 headed to get out of the 85-degree sun and rest from the fire ants that lived in the middle of the "G," before flying the short 10 minutes over the range. Within 10 minutes of us arriving at Red Lodge, the aircraft descended again, bringing

in the Ninety-Nines aboard, and at 12:58pm we started the layout at Red Lodge. We wrapped up Red Lodge air marking at 3:04 pm. The three aircraft departed, carrying away the other Ninety-Nines, while three of us loaded up into the truck, reached for our ibuprofen, and settled in for the two and a half hour drive back to Bozeman. The trip totaled 360 miles on the truck and ice cream Snickers and coffee rounded out the trip home.

The wind came up to 25-30 knots at Red Lodge, which allowed the girls to get some crosswind practice in. The winds had been calm at Bridger. The temperature was the same at Red Lodge as Bridger, which made the cooler breeze welcome. We were joined by the newly chartered Big Sky Chapter for this double air marking day. At Bridger, we used 6 gallons of yellow and at Red Lodge we used 7 gallons. Many gallons of water were consumed, much sunscreen slathered, and only minor spills to clean up with the ever present black "touchup" can of paint, which was mostly due to the wind.



Photo Credit: Janine Schwahn.

There will be more air markings to come from the Montana Ninety-Nines traveling paint caravan, and their flying companions.

## Aeronautics Division to Train Search Pilots

The MDT Aeronautics Division will conduct annual search pilot training on September 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> at the Fort Peck airport for volunteer pilots who wish to participate in the air search and rescue program in Montana. Flight and ground training will include aviation weather, search patterns, the air search and rescue system in Montana, and the use of mobile devices in air search. Ground school lectures will begin on Friday evening, with flight training and field exercises in wilderness air crash survival and the use of ELT direction finding equipment on Saturday and Sunday. Local area certified flight instructors will conduct the flight training in Cessna 182 and Cessna 206 aircraft. Participating pilots will log about 3 hours of dual instruction over the weekend, and will then be qualified to fly as volunteer search pilots. Cost for the clinic is \$140, and pilot enrollment is limited to 24. Deadline for registration is August 28<sup>th</sup>. Those wishing to attend only the ground portion of the training are welcome, for a fee of \$70. Hotel accommodations are available at the historic Fort Peck Hotel, 406-526-3266. A registration form may be found at: <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/aviation/events.shtml>



# Calendar of Events

**July 21-22, 2017 - Can-Am Aerobatic Competition -** Cut Bank Airport. This is the only sanctioned competition in Montana drawing pilots and airplanes from Montana and northwestern U.S. and Canada. Everyone is welcome with transportation to town available during the event. Call Dave Ries for more information at (406) 229-0376.

**July 22, 2017 - Jerry Cain's Annual BBQ and Community Open House** at the Lincoln, Airport (S69) from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. There will be hamburgers, hot dogs, cake, ice cream and more! You may bring food to share or cook on the BBQ. Tie down area and campgrounds available! Contact Jerry at [jcain@theraf.org](mailto:jcain@theraf.org) for more information.

**July 23, 2017 - Annual St. Ignatius (52S) Huckleberry Pancake Fly-In Breakfast** - From 8 a.m. until noon. This free event is sponsored the EAA Chapter 1122. For more information, contact Michael Kuefler at (406) 544-2274.

**July 22-23, 2017 - Flight Over the Falls** - U.S. Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron, Thunderbirds in Great Falls, MT. For more information, contact Montana Air National Guard at (406) 791-0159.

**August 4, 2017 Young Eagles Rally** - at Three Forks Airport (9S5) from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. Helena EAA Chapter 344 is hosting free airplane rides for 8-17 year old students. Parent/guardian permission required to fly. Contact Lance Seaman at (406) 442-8459 for more information.

**August 13, 2017- Hysham Airport Fly-In & Drive-In (6U7)** - From 7 a.m. to noon. The breakfast is a fundraiser for the Hysham Lions Club. Cost is \$8 and will include pancakes, ham, eggs, coffee, and juice. Contact airport manager, Bob Miller, with questions at (406) 342-5252.

**August 18-20, 2017 - The 15th Annual Montana Fun Weekend Fly-In and Car Show** will be held at the Cut Bank Airport. Breakfast available Saturday and Sunday. Burn-out contest and movie Friday night. Car, motorcycle, and airplane show and shine Saturday. Concessions onsite Saturday. Call Roy at (406) 450-1078 for more information.

**September 8-10, 2017 - Search Pilot Clinic**, the 2017 MDT Aeronautics Search Pilot Clinic will be conducted at the Fort Peck Airport, 37S. For more information contact Harold Dramstad at (406) 444-9568.

**September 9, 2017 - Polson Fly-In Breakfast** - From 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Courtesy of EAA, Chapter 1122. For more information, contact Joe Kuberka at (719) 393-5550.

**September 9, 2017 - Annual Missoula General Aviation BBQ** - From 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. This free event is sponsored by the Missoula airport at the *brand new* EAA Chapter 517 hangar. Contact Gary Matson at (406) 370-6584 for more information.

*Meadow Creek Work Session Continued from page 1.*

A work session wouldn't be a work session without getting some work done and this crew came ready to work. While some ensured the windsocks got changed and a fresh coat of grease was applied to the standards, others were busy cutting and disposing of burnt standing dead trees.

The campground received a refurbished bear box that was powder coated by the Montana Pilot's Association and flown-in by Montana Aeronautics Division personnel.

If you haven't helped mow the runway at Meadow Creek, you're missing out on some good exercise. Each roundtrip results in a 42" swath that's mowed using a push mower by anyone willing to walk 3,700 ft each way. You either have to walk fast or carry extra gas to keep the mower running the whole way!



*Volunteer Angus Anderson mowing Meadow Creek runway.*

**Thanks to all the volunteers that pitched-in to make the Meadow Creek work session a success.**

Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided on request. Persons who need an alternative format should contact the Civil Rights Bureau, Department of Transportation, 2701 Prospect Avenue, PO Box 201001, Helena, MT 59620. Telephone (406) 444-9229. Those using a TTY may call (800) 335-7592 or go through the Montana Relay Service at 711.



## Vision Zero: A Goal for Everyone

In 2016, there were 190 fatalities on Montana roads.

What does that mean? 190 parents, children, grandparents, friends, siblings, spouses, and other loved ones had lives that were cut short. It also means countless tears and shattered lives of those left with the aftermath of unsafe driving behaviors. Which loved one are you prepared to lose? If your answer is none, then Vision Zero is also YOUR goal.

It will take every one of us to work towards the day that Vision Zero is met, and the fatality total reads "ZERO." Two of the highest contributing factors to traffic fatalities in 2016 were alcohol and no seat belt.

These are behaviors that can be changed! Start by always wearing your seatbelt and planning for sober transportation. Remind your loved ones and those around you to do the same.

**-Director Mike Tooley, MDT**

Visit [www.mdt.mt.gov/visionzero](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/visionzero) for more information.

**VISION ZERO**  
zero deaths · zero serious injuries

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION