

# Montana and the Sky

Montana Department of Transportation

Aeronautics Division

Vol. 72, No. 03

March 2021

## Welcome New Aeronautics Board Members

Newly elected Governor Gianforte appointed seven new Aeronautics Board members to fill open or expired terms. Outgoing board members are Tricia McKenna (chair), Walt McNutt (vice-chair), Roger Lincoln, Rob Buckles, John Maxness, Bill Hunt Jr., and Jeff Wadekamper. Many of the departing board members had graciously served for many years under financially challenging circumstances. They were committed to improving aviation in Montana but were hamstrung with a lack of funding until HB661 significantly changed the funding of airport grants. Their work helped shape aviation in all our hometowns with safer and more accessible airports. Aeronautics wants to thank the outgoing board members for their deep-rooted dedication and hard work – they had a much harder job than most realize, and they will be missed.

Additionally, Aeronautics would like to thank the two continuing board members and welcome the new members. There are a lot of airports in need across Montana and funding, although better, is still limited.

New board members join returning board members Dan Hargrove (Aviation Education) and Tom Schoenleben (General Public) with a broad array of impressive experience. The new board members are:

*William Lepper (Chairman)* – Interstate Commercial Operator – Bill started his aviation career in 1966 while stationed at Malmstrom Air Force Base. After earning his certificates in Great Falls, Mr. Lepper spent an incredible 55 years in aviation, flying corporate jets to destinations all over the world. He currently flies a Challenger 604 for his charter company, RB Aviation, out of Glacier Park International Airport.

*Wade Cebulski* – Montana Pilot's Association – Wade lives on Seeley Lake airport where he hangars his beautiful Beechcraft Bonanza. He has been part of the Montana Aviation Community for over three decades. Mr. Cebulski recently retired from MDT Aeronautics where, as the Airport and Airways Bureau Chief, he was a key player for many Aeronautics Board meetings.

*Robb Bergeson* – Fixed Based Operators - Robb has worked at Edwards Jet Center in Billings for over 20 years, the last 15 years as General Manager. The full-service FBO provides aircraft charter, maintenance, and fueling while partnering with air ambulance companies to serve the community.

*Tim Robertson* – Association of Counties – Tim began visiting Montana 25 years ago to enjoy the Montana Aviation Conference. Consequently, he and his wife fell in love with Montana aviation and decided to move here 20 years ago. He currently owns a 1961 Cessna 182 and has a Beechcraft King Air C90A for his company, Century Companies.

*Gregory Smith* - Association of Aerial Applicators – Greg is the owner of the full-service Skyline FBO in Lewistown, MT. He also runs a 135 charter service for surveying and flies a Weatherly for aerial applications.

*Timothy Sheehy* – Chamber of Commerce – Tim owns Bridger Aerospace (including a fleet of Super Scoopers) and Ascent Vision (UAVs) both out of Bozeman, which together employ over 300 people. He's a Naval Academy graduate, served as a Navy Officer until 2014, is a flight instructor, and an aerial firefighter.

*Pam Chamberlin* – Montana Airport Management Association – Pam is Airport Manager of Bert Mooney Airport in Butte. She helped oversee the new terminal building and many other airport projects over the years.



Continued on Page 2

The new board members were confirmed by the 2021 Legislative Senate and met virtually in February to give the newly appointed MDT Director Malcolm (Mack) Long and other members of the Montana Department of Transportation an opportunity to exchange introductions. Aeronautics Division Administrator Tim Conway, Safety and Education Bureau Chief Matt Lindberg, and Airports and Airways Bureau Chief Marc McKee provided an overview of Aeronautics and the division's accomplishments and goals for 2021 and beyond. We welcome the new board members and are excited to continue working toward improving Montana's airports!



## 2021 Montana Aviation Scholarships Awarded to Fifteen Outstanding Candidates

Through the generosity of Montana aviation communities, organizations, families and individuals, thirteen scholarships valued at more than \$20,550 have been awarded to well-deserving students. These scholarships are offered to Montanans to support their aviation educational career goals. Scholarship sponsors and their committees examined nearly 100 applications this cycle.

Two new additional scholarship sponsors answered the call for help after learning some scholarships withdrew this year for lack of funding because of the pandemic. Due to committed people like these, aviation has a bright future; thank you!

More information about Montana aviation scholarships can be found at MDT Aeronautics Divisions website <https://www.mdt.mt.gov/aviation/scholarships.shtml>

Congratulation to this year's recipients!

### **Aviation Organizations of Montana - \$1,000**

- Andrew Guthridge of Billings

### **Montana 99s**

- Megan Frey of Hamilton \$1,225
- Kelly Weed of Stevensville \$2,000
- Jennifer Fowler of Missoula \$2,080

### **Montana Association Of Aerial Applicators - \$1,000**

- Audrey Banfill of Missoula

### **Choice Aviation - \$1,500**

- Jordan Carter of Missoula

### **Montana Pilot's Assoc. Jr Pilot Award - \$2,000**

- Lucas Trefzger of Helena

### **EAA 517 Post Solo Scholarship - \$1,000**

- Taylor Renee Brown of Belgrade

### **Bob Redding - \$250**

- Ben Tanberg of Helena

### **Montana Pilot's Associations - Air Safety and Education Foundation - \$2,000**

- Bailey Stevens of Bozeman

### **Theresa Nistler-Colley Scholarship - \$2,000**

- Elijah Louver of Red Lodge

### **Edwards Jet Center - \$500.00**

- Aaron Trueblood of Columbia Falls

### **Parrot Family Scholarship - \$1,000**

- Jack Cline of Miles City

### **Mike & Julie Melouche Flight Training Scholarship - \$1,000**

- Jacob Kelly of Billings

### **Briar Creek Flight Training Scholarship - \$2,000**

- Tracey Mitchell of Billings



Tim Conway, Administrator

**Montana and the Sky**  
Department of Transportation

Greg Gianforte, Governor  
Malcolm Long, 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/)

### **Aeronautics Board**

**Bill Lepper, Chair**  
**Robert Bergeson, Member**  
**Wade Cebulski, Member**  
**Pam Chamberlin, Member**  
**Dan Hargrove, Member**  
**Tim Robertson, Member**  
**Tom Schoenleben, Member**  
**Timothy Sheehy, Member**  
**Gregory Smith, Member**

**Editor:** Patricia Trooien

Follow MDT on social media!





Calling All Youth Artists!



The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) Aviation Awareness Art Contest is designed to broaden awareness of the importance of aviation and aerospace to the economy and to promote careers in these industries. The contest is open to all students in grades K-12 in public, private, and home schools.

## Categories

### Category 1:

Kindergarten - 5th grade

### Category 2:

6th Grade - 8th Grade

### Category 3:

9th Grade - 12th Grade

## Prizes

### FIRST PLACE in each category:

1. A round trip flight to Helena for the winner and his/her parents (legal guardians) for the awards ceremony in Helena. Date to be decided.
2. All three first place winners will be presented with a trophy, certificate, and their framed artwork during the awards ceremony by a state official.
3. Following the ceremony, the winners and their families will tour the Helena airport and enjoy lunch.

### SECOND & THIRD PLACE in each category:

1. A trophy and Certificate of Achievement.

## Entry Requirements

1. Contest deadline is: Friday, May 7, 2021.
2. Contest is open to all Montana students, grades K-12.
3. Size of poster is not to exceed 11" x 14".
4. Artwork must have an aviation theme - can be color or black & white.
5. Please no tracing the images.
6. All artwork must include the following:  
Name of Student, Student's Grade, School's Mailing Address, Phone Number, and Teacher's Name
7. Previous year's first place winners are welcome to participate but are not eligible for first place prize.

## Get More Info

Artwork will be returned only to first place winners unless return is specifically requested. Winners will be contacted after the contest deadline. Arrangements will be made at that time for air travel to Helena.

All prizes and awards are subject to change, modification, or cancelation under latest COVID-19 guidance.

**Mail Artwork To:**  
MDT Aeronautics Division  
P.O. Box 200507  
Helena, MT 59620-0507

**Visit Our Website:**  
[mdt.mt.gov/aviation/](http://mdt.mt.gov/aviation/)

**Or Contact:**  
Matt Lindberg  
[mdtaerosafetyed@mt.gov](mailto:mdtaerosafetyed@mt.gov)  
406-444-2506



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## Tailwinds, Patty Mitchell

Patty Mitchell passed away December 3, 2020, after a courageous battle with cancer. May she rest in peace.

Patty flew for more than 50 years and was a member of the Ninety-Nines for almost as long. She first joined the Ninety-Nines in Houston in 1979 and belonged to both the Montana and Idaho chapters. She started the Big Sky chapter in Billings a couple of years ago. Patty was a professional pilot for 41 years which included being a flight instructor, charter pilot, airline pilot and FBO owner.

Patty's aviation background includes flying Twin Otters and being the first woman pilot to be hired by Metro Airlines. She also was the first woman smoke-jumper pilot for the Forest Service on contract in 1980 out of Missoula. For 15 years, Patty flew for United Airlines, flying 747s until she retired in 2003. Please see the 99s Fly! blog for more about this wonderful lady, who will be sorely missed, at

<http://nw99s.org/p/28/Well-miss-you-Patty-Pilot>



Patty Mitchell Photo Credit: Montana Ninety-Nines

## New Webcam Program

Montana Aeronautics is working on establishing a new webcam program. This wildly successful program reduced weather-related accidents in Alaska by 80%. Aeronautics received three complete camera systems on loan from the Alaska FAA Weather Camera team that will be installed in the coming months. The program, if successful, will be expanded to install more camera sites as quickly as possible. Images will be made available on the Aviation Weather Cameras website <https://avcams.faa.gov/>.

Through the Montana Pilot's Association, Aeronautics surveyed pilots to see where the highest demand for camera sites resides. It is no surprise most of the requests are for the mountainous parts of the state. The first three web cameras will be installed and tested in Montana very soon.

A few airports have already committed to purchasing cameras which MDT Aeronautics will install and the FAA will host the images. This program is open to any airport interested in purchasing equipment. The goal is to install the cameras in mountain passes and common travel routes throughout the state to provide an additional tool for pre-flight planning.



Photo credit: Alaska Dept. of Transportation

## You Could Hear an Autopilot Announcing its Intention to Land - Emergency Autoland Overview

Three aircraft have been certified with Emergency Autoland (EAL) systems in 2020: the Piper M600, the Daher TBM 940, and the Cirrus Vision Jet SF50.

EAL systems can perform an emergency landing in the event of suspected pilot incapacitation. When these systems are activated, the autopilot will begin to announce its intentions on air traffic frequencies. Here is what other pilots in the area should know about EAL systems.

EAL can be activated in three ways:

- 1) EAL senses erratic flying, stabilizes the aircraft, and checks for pilot responsiveness; if no input, EAL activates.
- 2) Emergency Descent Mode (EDM) activates. After descending, EAL checks for pilot responsiveness; if no input, EAL activates.
- 3) EAL can be manually activated by a pilot in distress or a passenger. EAL will squawk 7700 and broadcast a Mayday advisory on the aircraft's last pilot-selected frequency and on Guard (121.5) as follows: "Mayday, Mayday, Mayday, November One Two Three Four (N1234), Emergency Autoland activated, standby for more information."

Continued on Page 6

# A Look Inside the Yellowstone Airport Smokejumper Base



*SEATs (Single Engine Air Tanker) AT-802 Photo Credit: Aeronautics Staff*

The Yellowstone Airport is home to the West Yellowstone Fire Center. The United States Forest Service has owned and operated the smokejumper base since 1955. The base was originally established at the old airport west of the town of West Yellowstone before the airport moved to its current location in 1965 where it still operates today. Nationwide, there are approximately 450 smokejumpers, and WYS is home to 28 of them. The primary mission for the base is for a quick response to any wildland fires within the regions of Yellowstone National Park, Teton National Park, Gallatin Custer, and Caribou-Targhee National Forests. However, the smokejumpers are prepared to deploy anywhere in the nation when needed.

During the operating season the base is open to the public for facility tours. Joe Rock, Operations and Training Manager, says he will sometimes give three to five tours in a week. He enjoys when the schools take field trips to the base showing students around and giving them an in-depth experience into the life of a smokejumper. If you visit the base yourself, you'll see all of the jumping equipment including jump suits, packs, and harnesses, which are all made by hand by each jumper who uses them. In addition to hand making their own equipment, the jumpers also rig their own parachutes. To properly and safely do this, each jumper must become a Federal Aviation Administration certified parachute rigger.

At the back of the base is an equipment room which holds everything from chainsaws to sleeping bags. The jumpers use this room to prepare and maintain all of the equipment they might need while on a mission. There are several boxes outfitted with gas for the chainsaws, water, food, and a myriad of other provisions to support the jumpers while fighting fires. Each box is rigged with its own parachute, which the jumpers drop separately and later recover on foot.

Joe Rock has been with the USFS for 22 years and is originally from Wilsall, Montana. He spent much of his childhood around the smokejumper base in Missoula. For Joe, the best part about being a smokejumper in West Yellowstone is not only the team he gets to work with every day, but also all the cool places he gets to visit. He recalls his first jump from West Yellowstone into Yellowstone National Park as well as jumping in the Alaskan Brooks Mountain Range while simultaneously seeing the frozen Bering Sea and parts of Russia while parachuting down. On average, a smokejumper will jump five to ten wildland fires per year. Joe says that most of the time the public never knows when smokejumpers are deployed. "If we are doing our job right, then we are staying out of the public eye," he said.

Continued from page 4.

After the initial broadcast, there will be a 25-second pause for Air Traffic Control (ATC) to move conflicting traffic. Twenty-five seconds after activation, EAL broadcasts the following: "N1234, pilot incapacitation, XX miles southwest of KABC, landing KXYZ airport. Emergency Autoland in XX minutes on Runway 00." The aircraft then begins maneuvering to the selected landing airport.

Subsequent broadcasts will be on Guard. After initial activation, it will immediately broadcast on Guard if EAL changes destination due to weather or other factors. As necessary, the aircraft descends in the hold at the final approach fix for landing at the emergency airport.

EAL will broadcast on the appropriate ATC frequency or Common Traffic Advisory Frequency (CTAF) within 12 miles of the landing airport. Subsequent broadcasts at intervals repeat information and update time to landing. After landing, EAL broadcasts at 90-second intervals on Tower/CTAF and 5 minutes on Guard as follows: "Disabled aircraft on Runway 00 at KXYZ airport."

Once activated, the EAL system will make verbal announcements to passengers in the cockpit on upcoming maneuvers, and indicate the route of flight and ensuing maneuvers via a video map display. A push-to-talk button is available for passenger communications to ATC.

EAL will avoid prohibited areas; known obstacles and terrain; and significant weather.

**EAL does NOT** check notices to airmen, avoid military operations areas, special use airspace, restricted areas, or temporary Flight Restrictions, turn on aircraft lights (lights that are already on when EAL activates will stay on) see or avoid other traffic.

EAL operational considerations include only selects airports with a published GPS or Area Navigation instrument approach, may cross international boundaries, does not exit the runway, may land opposite direction to current traffic, does not receive braking action reports, does not know about personnel and equipment on the runways, will not alter route of flight per ATC instructions, must have a terrain database loaded (may be out of date).

The EAL system selects a suitable landing airfield based on several factors: weather, wind, runway length, and towered/non-towered airport status. EAL selects towered airports over non-towered airports where possible and uses runway requirements that depend on the aircraft type. If the system loses the GPS signal, the airplane continues straight flight without attempting to land until GPS coverage resumes.

*\*Article summarized from  
FAA Safety*

*Photo Credit:  
Garmin Avionics*



# Aviation Quiz



1) You want to take your friends up for a night flight to tour the city in your Cessna 172. In the past 90 days, you've logged 4 night touch-and-goes and 2 night full-stop landings in your plane. Can you take your friends on this flight?

A: Yes

B: No

2) Why does avgas have lead in it?

A: It prevents engine knocking

B: It prevents oil buildup in the cylinders

C: It reduces spark plug fouling

D: It decreases the ignition temperature for avgas

3) Individuals who are fatigued can start to experience hypoxia symptoms as low as \_\_ during the day and \_\_ at night.

A: 5,000' MSL; 3,000' MSL

B: 4,000' MSL; Sea Level

C: 10,000' MSL; 5,000' MSL

D: 12,000' MSL; 10,000' MSL

4) Name this Montana strip:

A: Cow Creek

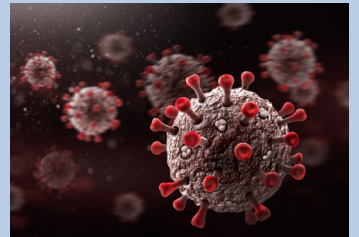
B: Bullwhacker

C: Knox Ridge

D: Left Coulee



# FAA Not Extending COVID Exemptions



The FAA has advised officials with the National Business Aviation Association and other general aviation advocates that it will not extend relief granted through several exemptions contained in Special Federal Aviation Regulation (SFAR) 118-2 (Relief for Certain Persons and Operations during the Coronavirus Disease 2019). Without further action, SFAR 118-2 will expire on April 30, 2021. The special regulation provides short-term extensions to certain training and proficiency requirements, medical certifications and other mandates, including special flight permits for moving aircraft to storage. NBAA and other industry groups recently requested the extension of SFAR 118-2 in a letter to Associate Administration for Aviation Safety Ali Bahrami.

Rick Domingo, executive director of flight standards service at the FAA, denied the request, citing an increase of aviation activity and availability of personnel to complete training and check activities, according to NBAA officials.

However, he said the FAA will continue to monitor operational disruptions caused by COVID-related restrictions, indicating the agency could consider further relief if necessary.

“NBAA is disappointed in the FAA’s decision not to extend SFAR 118-2 as members continue to report challenges in safely conducting training and checking events and securing checkrides from FAA or contract check airman,” said Brian Koester, CAM, NBAA director of flight operations and regulations. “However, we’re grateful to the agency for its cooperation in managing the COVID crisis to this point. The exemptions that were previously granted allowed the business aviation industry to be an integral part in COVID-19 response, including transportation of test kits, vaccines and personnel.”

SFAR 118 became effective on April 30, 2020, and was extended twice.

*Summarized with permission from General Aviation News*



## Calendar of Events



**March 03, 2021 — Stories from Montana's Aviation History.** MPA's Gallatin Valley Hangar is hosting a virtual presentation by Anne Millbrooke. Join us from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. More information can be found at <https://www.montanapilots.org/>

**May 07, 2021 — Aviation Art Contest Deadline.** See Page 3 for more information.

**May 15, 2021 — Aviation Organization of Montana (AOM).** Spring meeting, time to be determined.

**June 10, 2021 — Aeronautics Board Meeting.** For more information, please contact MDT Aeronautics at (406) 444-2506.

**July 16 - 18, 2021 — Straight Tail 182 Fly-In Smiley Creek, ID.** A Fly-In of straight tail Cessna 182 aircraft at the Smiley Creek Airport, Idaho. Recommended you contact the organizer at [phil4id@gmail.com](mailto:phil4id@gmail.com)

**All events are subject to modification or cancellation per the latest COVID-19 guidance**

**Quiz Answer Key: 1: B 2: A 3: C 4: D**

## WANTED: Your Montana Aviation News

Do you have exciting aviation news from Montana to share? Did you know you can send it to the Aeronautics Division to be considered for publishing in the *Montana and the Sky* newsletter? We love to hear about and share your Montana Aviation news, photos, and stories. Please send contributions to [mdtaerosafetied@mt.gov](mailto:mdtaerosafetied@mt.gov) before the first Friday of each month for the next month's issue.

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**VISION ZERO**

zero deaths · zero serious injuries

MONTANA DEPARTMENT  
OF TRANSPORTATION

**March 2021**

5403

Aeronautics Division  
2630 Airport Road  
PO Box 200507  
Helena, Montana 59620-0507



## **Vision Zero: A Goal for Everyone**

In 2020, there were 209 fatalities on Montana roads.

What does that mean? 209 parents, children, grandparents, friends, siblings, spouses, and other loved ones had lives that were cut short. It also means countless tears and shattered lives for 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 2019 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 Malcolm Long, MDT**

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

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

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