

# Montana and the Sky

Montana Department of Transportation

Aeronautics Division

Vol. 74, No. 11

November 2023

## Aviation Teacher's Workshop a Success!

In early October, teachers from across the state were invited to attend the STEM Aviation Teacher Workshop hosted by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) Aeronautics Division and the Montana Learning Center (MLC). The workshop is aimed to connect aviation with STEM subjects. Teachers received classroom instruction, conducted science experiments, and explored aviation facilities in the Helena area. During the workshop, teachers had the unique opportunity to fly in aircraft and tour facilities including the Montana National Guard Army Aviation Support Facility, Helena College's Airport Campus, and the Boeing manufacturing facility. These experiences allowed participants to learn about aviation training and career opportunities for their students.

The second day of the workshop was focused on interactive inquiry-based lesson plans at the MLC. Teachers received instruction both inside and outside the classroom and learned how to fly using the MLC's flight simulator. The workshop equipped teachers with supplies the knowledge and supplies to implement aviation-themed activities with their students. This annual workshop equips Montana teachers with knowledge on how STEM and aviation intersect, inspiring the next generation of pilots. The workshop is open to all Montana teachers who teach STEM subjects. Participants earn 20 renewal units through the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) upon completion.



Photo courtesy of Aeronautics Staff



Photo courtesy of MLC



Photo courtesy of Aeronautics Staff

## Tailwinds, Mike

Photo courtesy of The Ferguson Family

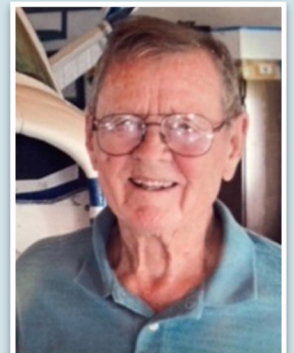
Michael (Mike) Ferguson served in the U.S. Air Force from 1951 to 1955, followed by owning an airplane maintenance business in Billings, for 14 years. Afterward, he worked as the administrator of the MDT Aeronautics Division until his retirement in 2001.

Mike, along with his wife Jeanie, had a passion for flying and explored numerous states in the U.S., as well as Central and South America. They built their hangar home at Townsend Airport, where they housed their Beechcraft Bonanzas. In 1985, Mike achieved recognition for his remarkable solo flight in a single-engine aircraft (a Bonanza) from Hawaii to Salt Lake City, Utah and then to Oshkosh, Wisconsin. His accomplishments also earned him the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award and the Charles Taylor Master Mechanic Award. Additionally, Mike played a significant role in the Experimental Aircraft Association's (EAA) Young Eagles program, providing over 1,100 kids the opportunity to experience general aviation flight.

Given his extensive experience and dedication to aviation, Mike became an ideal choice as Aircraft Owners and Pilot's Association (AOPA) regional representative. During his time in this role, he advocated for pilots' rights and safety. He actively opposed a Washington State Senate bill that aimed to penalize pilots for flying too close to the state Capitol building. He worked tirelessly to maintain the Northwest region's backcountry strips and testified in support of a bill to protect public-use airports in the state from incompatible development. Mike voiced his opposition to proposed legislation in Montana that could limit the availability of automotive fuel for general aviation aircraft and supported a measure that sought to provide liability relief for aerial rescue workers in Washington state.

During his time at the MDT Aeronautics Division, Mike collaborated with other state aviation organizations to establish the Montana Aviation Conference, an annual event that will celebrate its thirty-ninth gathering in the upcoming year. As a tribute to his contributions, the board of directors of the Montana Pilots Association (MPA) has decided to rename one of its flight training scholarships in honor of Mike.

Mike passed away peacefully at home at the age of 91 on October 3, 2023.



# Montana Aircraft and Pilot Registration Renewals Begin Next Month

Montana does not tax aircraft, but instead issues an annual aircraft registration fee in lieu of tax. The fees are set by the Montana Legislature and are determined according to the type and age of the aircraft. Annual reminder invoices will be mailed in early December, so please be sure to check your mail.

Aircraft customarily kept in Montana, as well as any aircraft with a Montana address on its FAA registration, **must** be registered with the MDT on or before March 1st every year (or within 30 days of purchase date for any aircraft purchased). Aircraft renewal invoices are sent the first week of December, and a reminder letter is sent before the renewal deadline. **A statutory penalty for late registrations must be assessed in the amount of five times the registration fee if payment OR signed affidavit for exemption with supporting documentation is not received by the deadline.**

**PLEASE POSTMARK OR TIMESTAMP YOUR REGISTRATION PAYMENTS OR AFFIDAVIT FOR FEE EXEMPTION WITH REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION ON OR BEFORE MARCH 1ST FOR A RENEWAL (OR WITHIN 30 DAYS AFTER A NEW AIRCRAFT PURCHASE) TO AVOID THE PENALTY.**

Please keep in mind that aircraft out of annual inspection are not considered "unairworthy" as defined by administrative rule and **are** subject to annual registration fees.

Online fee payment services for aircraft and pilot registration are available at:

<https://app.mt.gov/aeronautics>. Payment processing fees apply.

For other questions, please contact the Aeronautics Division at 406-444-2506 or [mdtad@mt.gov](mailto:mdtad@mt.gov).

**\*ACTION IS REQUIRED BY AIRCRAFT OWNERS ON ALL AIRCRAFT REGISTRATIONS EACH YEAR\***

## Did You Sell Your Airplane?

The MDT Aeronautics Division requires a copy of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Bill of Sale to cancel your state aircraft registration.

A **copy of the FAA Bill of Sale** must accompany your signed affidavit, found on the bottom portion of your annual renewal invoice (a copy of your annual invoice is mailed to you twice annually prior to the registration deadline as a courtesy).

Your signed affidavit and FAA Bill of Sale must be received by the annual renewal deadline of March 1st each year.

It is also a good idea to retain an additional copy of the FAA Bill of Sale for your own records. Failure to provide the required proof for fee exemption is the leading cause of aircraft registration delinquency in Montana.

The FAA Bill of Sale form can be found online by scanning the QR code:



**Please remember that registration and late fees apply for paperwork not received or incomplete paperwork, submitted by the March 1st due date, even if you no longer own the aircraft.**

## Aeronautical Chart Survey

*MDT Aeronautics Division needs your help!*

Please take a moment to take a one question survey by November 30, 2023.

Do you think the MDT Aeronautics Division should continue producing the Aeronautical Chart every four years?

Yes

No

*Your input is valued and we appreciate your time.*

Scan the QR code below to submit your answer.



# 2024 Winter Survival Clinic

January 5 - 7, 2024

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) Aeronautics Division invites you to attend the 2024 Aviation Winter Survival Clinic. The clinic will build your confidence in survival preparedness and techniques.

Please call MDT Aeronautics Division at 406-444-2506 or email [mdtad@mt.gov](mailto:mdtad@mt.gov) with any questions.

The all-inclusive cost is ONLY \$75

At the Sugarloaf Lodge  
Anaconda

To register scan the QR or go to:

[https://www.eventsquid.com/event.cfm?event\\_id=21229](https://www.eventsquid.com/event.cfm?event_id=21229)



# 2024 Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic

There will be a Flight Instructor Refresher Course (FIRC) happening in Helena on February 2 - 3, 2024. The MDT Aeronautics Division is organizing Aviation Seminars to provide the two-day course approved by the FAA. The seminar will take place from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday.

This course fulfills the renewal requirements for certified flight instructors and includes FAA renewal. Even if you are not a certified flight instructor, you can still attend and learn valuable information as a pilot. The cost of tuition is \$75, but if you are a registered pilot in Montana, you can get a \$25 discount. If you are not currently registered with the MDT Aeronautics Division, you can register for \$10 per year and save on the FIRC tuition.

**\*You do not have to be a flight instructor to attend\***

Additional information about pilot registration is at:

<https://www.mdt.gov/aviation/regpilot.aspx> [mdt.gov]

To sign up, visit: <https://aviationseminars.com/mt-firc/>  
or scan the QR code.



SCAN ME

# Montana Aviation Conference Registration Open

The Aviation Organization of Montana (AOM) is pleased to announce the Montana Aviation Conference will be held in Butte February 29 to March 2, 2024, at the Copper King Hotel. The conference brings Montana's aviation organizations and the flying public together for three days of speakers, seminars, workshops, awards ceremonies, business meetings, comradery, and social events. It is an opportunity for those from the aviation community to connect, learn, and exchange ideas and information. Around 500 participants are expected this year. Speaker, vendor, attendee, and guest conference registration starts October 2 and may be completed by scanning the QR code below:



**Register by February 1, 2024,  
to save on registration fees!**

**If you are interested in saving even more money on your registration, check out the "take off to landing" package on the registration website!**

Lodging is available at a special rate by calling the Copper King Hotel in Butte at 406-533-6960. Mention the Montana Aviation Conference for discounted room rates.

Reservations must be made before January 1, 2024, to get the event rate of \$109 + tax for single room, \$109 + tax for double room, or \$169 + tax for family suite.

For more information, contact the MDT Aeronautics Division at 406-444-2506 or email [mdtad@mt.gov](mailto:mdtad@mt.gov).

## Calendar of Events

November 15, 2023— Loan Grant Application Deadline.

January 5-7, 2024— Winter Survival Clinic. Sugar Loaf Lodge, Anaconda. See above for more details.

February 2-3, 2024— Flight Instructor Refresher Course (FIRC). Double Tree Hotel, Helena. See above for more details.

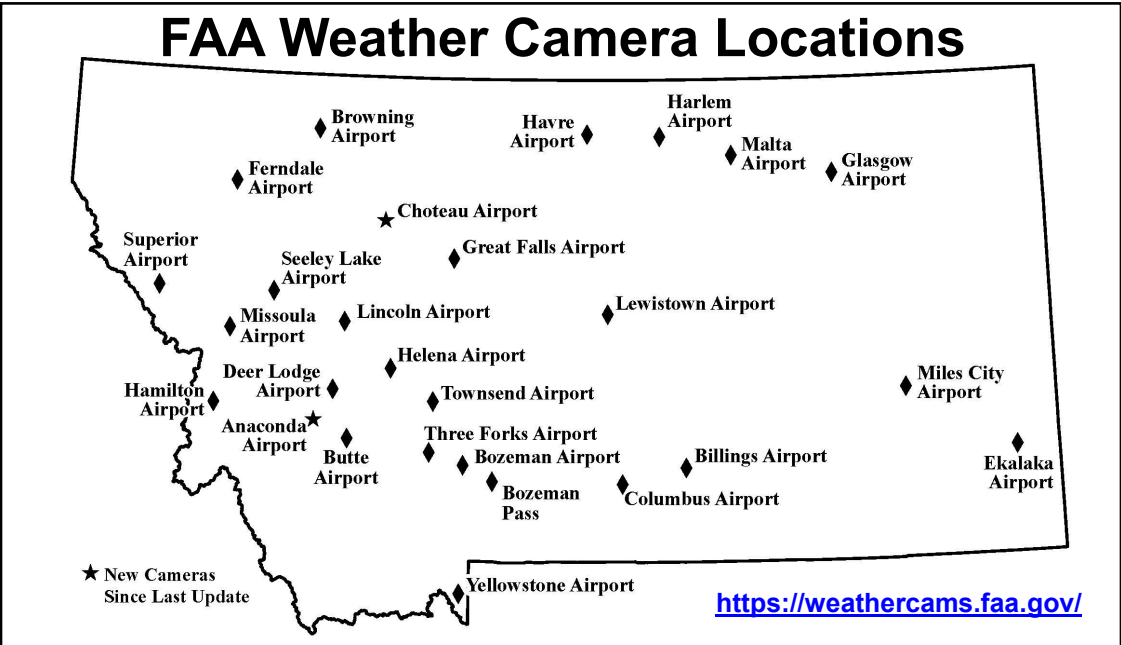
February 29 - March 2, 2024 — Montana's 39th Annual Aviation Conference . Copper King Hotel, Butte.

March 1, 2024 - Montana Aircraft and Pilot Registrations due by date.

**MDT Aeronautics Division**  
**PO Box 200507**  
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**Thank you for  
reading  
*Montana and  
the Sky.*  
Fly Safe!**

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