



## Yellowstone Fly-in Fun for All!

This year's fly-in at the Yellowstone Airport was excellent. Thanks to all those folks that attended. We had a number of neat aircraft that flew in. The BBQ provided by Aspen Grove Restaurant was outstanding. Music in the park was well attended and fun was had by all the entire weekend. We are planning another for next year due to the success and interest that we received this year. Please send your suggestions and comments to Airport Manager, Tony Bean [abean@mt.gov](mailto:abean@mt.gov) or (406) 646-7631 to help make next year's event even better. The Yellowstone Airport is always interested in hearing any comments in the areas of better dates, food, events, or competitions that you would like to see. Tony will compile all comments or requests that he receives and strive to make next year's fly-in even better!



*Those that flew in enjoyed the comfortable accommodations at the Yellowstone Airport campground, showers included!*

## Volunteers Construct Seeley Lake Shelter



On August 23 a great group of volunteers gathered on the Seeley Lake airport to construct a roof over the existing vehicle compound located on the airport. The roof will help to protect the maintenance truck and the old Case tractor that is used to mow the runway from sunshine and snow damage. It was a good day with Wade Cebulski's son in law John O'Brien guiding us and keeping us from making to many mistakes. The volunteers included Wade Cebulski, Dan Norhton, Steve Johnson, Kal & Karen Kovatch and Mike Rogan. We also had the use of Dave and Jan Guelff's skid steer to move dirt and lift plywood onto the roof. We are very appreciative to the Seeley Lake volunteers. Without them the airport would not be as nice a facility as it is today. Thank you everyone for your time and labor.

*A few of the hard working volunteers!*

# Administrator's Column

## Mountain Search Pilot Clinic:

I had the opportunity to take part in the 30<sup>th</sup> annual clinic recently as a pilot and what a delight! I hadn't flown as a pilot participant in six years and had forgotten what a fantastic training program this is. From the evening ground school sessions, to the dual flight instruction, to the advanced ELT practical "hands-on" homing training, to the awe-striking survival training the weekend flows. This intense 2-½ day program is designed to train Montana volunteer search pilots to proficiently conduct a search for a downed aircraft in mountainous terrain in the safest way possible. Many thanks to the first-class, expert instructors, speakers and volunteer pilots who participated in the clinic. The State of Montana is very fortunate to have such a fine group of professionals that volunteer to assist us in this mission day or night, 365 days a year. Thanks also to Jeanne MacPherson and Kelly Dimick of the Aeronautics Division for their work in ensuring this world-class training venue. Job well done ladies!

## Montana Dream Jobs:

Crop duster Mike Campbell has made the internet circuit of You Tube videos! Mike began his flying career in Kalispell 20 years ago and shortly thereafter purchased a 1942 Taylorcraft that he still owns. Mike has a flying business in Dutton, specializing in tail wheel instruction. He is also a spray pilot, single engine air tanker pilot and instructs for the Aeronautics Division at the annual Mountain Search Pilot Clinic. Check out Mike in this "coolest job ever" video. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ualkfifMfXw>

## Allegiant Air Service:

Allegiant Air has announced new twice a week nonstop air service to/from three Montana locations: beginning October 9 — Bozeman to Las Vegas; beginning October 17 — Kalispell to Las Vegas; and beginning October 23 — Great Falls to Phoenix/Mesa.

## Small Community Air Service Development Grants:

The U.S. Department of Transportation announced this week the selection of 16 communities in 12 states to receive financial grants under the program to implement air service initiatives. The Department received 66 grant applications from communities in 32 states, seeking \$36.3 million in federal assistance. I'm happy to announce that the Montana communities of West Yellowstone and Missoula were chosen to receive funds. AIR-21 established this pilot program to help smaller communities enhance their air service and address issues related to high airfares. Vision 100 amended the program eliminating the "pilot" status of the program and authorized it through FY 2008. A total of \$6.8 million will be offered with all of the selected communities contributing financial resources to the project. All communities have also established public/private partnerships to enhance community participation. Missoula will receive \$485,000 and Yellowstone \$105,000. Congratulations to both airports!

## Condolences:

The Montana aviation community has suffered a great loss recently with the passing of four great aviators and even greater men. **Bob Palmersheim** of Red Lodge; **Art Lindstrom** of Polson; **Greg Gonsioroski** of Baker; and **Jake VanderGriend** of Missoula. Sincere sympathy to all of the families, our thoughts are with you.

MDT attempts to provide accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person participating in any service, program or activity of the Department. Alternative accessible formats of this information will be provided upon request. For further information call (406) 444-6331 or TTY (406) 444-7696. MDT produces 2,400 copies of this public document at an estimated cost of 39 cents each, for a total cost of \$936. This includes \$565 for postage.



### Montana and the Sky

Department of Transportation  
Brian Schweitzer, Governor  
Jim Lynch, 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, Chairman**  
**Robert Buckles, Member**  
**A. Christopher Edwards, Member**  
**William (Bill) Hunt, Jr., Member**  
**Fred Lark, Member**  
**Fred Leistiko, Member**  
**Roger Lincoln, Member**  
**Chuck Manning, Member**  
**Ted Schye, Member**

### Montana and the Sky

Is published monthly  
In the interest of aviation in the  
State of Montana.

Third Class postage paid at  
Helena, Montana 59604

Editor: Patty Kautz

# Calendar

**September 13** – Ronan Young Eagles Day – breakfast 8:00 a.m. and fly kids at 9:00 a.m.

**September 13** – Billings Tower Open House and Fly In, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Fly in parking at Corporate Jet on the west end. 10:00 a.m. FSDO Safety Briefing; 12:00 p.m. luncheon hosted by Corporate Jet. Billings Tower tours available after lunch. For further information contact Scott Newpower (406) 670-3169 or email [scnewps@bresnan.net](mailto:scnewps@bresnan.net).

**October 1-2** – 2008 Burton K. Wheeler Fall Forum – The High Cost of Fuel: What’s Down the Road for Montanans? - Crowne Plaza and Billings Depot. To register and see agenda go to [www.montana.edu/wheeler/registration.htm](http://www.montana.edu/wheeler/registration.htm). For further information phone (406) 994-0336.

**October 3** – Rocky Mountain College Aviation Program Open House at campus in Billings. Tours, free flights for students, answers to questions about costs, the four year college curriculum, internships, etc. Call the Aviation Program at (406) 657-1060 to make a reservation.

**January 16-18, 2009** – Surratt Memorial Winter Survival Clinic, Helena, for further information contact Jeanne MacPherson (406) 444-9568 or email [jemacpherson@mt.gov](mailto:jemacpherson@mt.gov).

**February 6 & 7, 2009** - Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic, Helena, for further information contact Jeanne MacPherson (406) 444-9568 or email [jemacpherson@mt.gov](mailto:jemacpherson@mt.gov).

**March 5-7, 2009** – Montana Aviation Conference, Holiday Inn Grand Montana, Billings. For further information contact Patty Kautz at (406) 444-9580 or email [pkautz@mt.gov](mailto:pkautz@mt.gov).

# Registration for 406 Beacons Now Available Online

NOAA is proud to announce that the National Beacon Registration Database is now available online! Emergency beacon owners can now register and update their beacons directly via the internet.

If you purchase a new or a used 406 MHz beacon you **MUST** register it with NOAA as required by law. If you change any information on your registration (such as phone number, address, bought a new boat, etc.) you **MUST** update your 406 MHz beacon with NOAA. Also, if you sell your 406 MHz beacon, make sure the buyer re-registers the beacon. Otherwise, you may be contacted by rescue authorities if it is activated! Please provide the new owner our phone number or this web page so they can register the beacon.

If you have previously registered your 406 MHz beacon with NOAA but have not accessed your registration information via the new online registration site, you can access your beacon (just be sure you have your 15-digit Unique ID at hand) and view/update your registration now! Site: <http://www.sarsat.noaa.gov/>

“I’m in love with Montana. For other states I have admiration, respect, recognition, even some affection. But with Montana it is love. And it’s difficult to analyze love when you’re in it.”

—John Steinbeck, “Travels with Charley”

## Airport of the Year Nominations

Do you often hear yourself telling your friends that your airport is better than theirs? Do you feel an unquenchable need to brag about your airport? Have you had dreams at night where you picture your airport manager standing atop a three tiered podium with the American flag hung overhead with Olympic theme music bellowing in the background? If so, you may have what it takes to nominate your favorite airport for our annual “Airport of the Year” award. If you are interested in nominating a particular airport, please drop us a letter or an email to the following address with a brief description of just why you think that your airport is the best. Nominations will be accepted till the end of the year. Aeronautics will collect and review all of the nominations and will select one lucky airport to be our “Airport of the Year”! Awards will be given away during our annual Montana Aviation Conference in March. Nominations may be made by anybody on behalf of any airport. Please be sure to include a contact name and number that we can reach in case we have any questions and be sure to tell us just why you think your airport should be selected, whether it is because of some recent projects that have taken place, or because of it’s outstanding management or any other reason you can think of. Nominations can be sent to either of the following: MDT Aeronautics Division, Attn: Jim Greil, P.O. Box 200507, Helena, MT 59620-0507 or email [jgreil@mt.gov](mailto:jgreil@mt.gov).

# In Memory

## Robert A. 'Bob' Palmersheim



Veteran Montana pilot Robert A. "Bob" Palmersheim, 75, of Fromberg and Red Lodge, died at his home in Red Lodge on Aug. 22, 2008.

He was born Aug. 5, 1933, in Billings, a son of A.J. and Mary (Brady) Palmersheim. He graduated from Fratt Parochial School and Billings Central Catholic High School. He attended the University of Portland and Eastern Montana College, completing the course of study for a juris doctorate.

He married Mareita Lynch on Nov. 22, 1952, in St. Patrick's Church in Billings. He served in the Army from 1954 to 1956, stationed in England.

Mr. Palmersheim began his aviation career at Lynch Flying Service in 1951 when he and his wife made their first solo flights the same day in a Cessna 140. Over a career that spanned 50 years, he logged more than 16,000 hours as a flight instructor and charter pilot.

He was secretary-treasurer and general manager of Lynch Flying Service. He had served as a board member of the National Air Transportation Association, was past president and director of the Montana Aviation Trades Association and had been a Federal Aviation Administration-designated pilot examiner for 25 years. In 1999 Gov. Marc Racicot appointed him to the board of the Montana Division of Aeronautics. He was also a district search and rescue coordinator

for the Aeronautics Division for 30 years.

Mr. Palmersheim was a member of St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Fromberg and St. Agnes Catholic Church in Red Lodge and served as a lay minister. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus and the Montana Pilots Association.

Survivors include children, John Palmersheim of Darby, Tom Palmersheim of Seattle and Anne Palmersheim, Julie Vargas, Rich Palmersheim and Liz Robillard, all of Billings; seven grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; and sisters, Dode Donnelly of Billings and Mary Frances Birgenheier of Spokane.

## Arthur H. "Art" Lindstrom Jr.



Arthur H. "Art" Lindstrom Jr., Polson, passed away of complications with leukemia, Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008, at St. Patrick Hospital in Missoula. Loving hands of family members surrounded him as he begins another adventure.

Art was born in Monroe, La., on June 29, 1944, to A. Hugo Lindstrom of Missoula and Doris Fryberger Lindstrom, Charlo. Art lived most of the past 64 years in Missoula, Frenchtown or Polson.

Art married Valerie Siphers, of Arlee, in 1969.

He attended schools in Missoula, was a University of Montana student for many years before joining the Montana National Guard in 1968.

Art was an adventurous spirit. He was an avid hunter, fisherman, scuba diver and skydiver in his early years and continued with backpacking and hiking, downhill and cross-country skiing and photography throughout his life. He always enjoyed a good beer at the end of the day.

Art was foremost an aviator. His interest in aviation began early. As a child he walked a few blocks to the airport, Hale Field, now the site of Missoula's Sentinel High School and could be found playing in the old airframes scattered around Johnson Flying Service. He began working for JFS in 1965 as a ramp attendant, took flying lessons, and in 1966, after achieving his commercial endorsements, he began his seasonal job as a co-pilot on DC-3s. He became a full-time JFS employee in 1967, flying captain on the DC-3 and Twin Otter. He worked for JFS and later Evergreen Helicopters after they purchased JFS in 1975.

Art left flying in 1976 to spend more time with his family. He tried various professions, but the love for flying was too strong. At the age of 40, he realized his dream by being hired by United Airlines where he flew 18 years before retiring in 2003. He then returned to his favorite flying job, dropping smokejumpers from the Twin Otter during the summers of 2004 through 2006.

Art was an active member of the First United Methodist Church of Polson, a Cheerful Heart Inc. board member, a member of the Montana Pilots' Association, and Mission Valley Hanger. At the time of his passing he published the MPA bi-monthly newsletter and was Webmaster for the MPA Web site.

Survivors include his mother Doris, Missoula; sister, Janet, Sun City West, Arizona; wife, Valerie, Polson; son, Jeff and daughter-in-law Jenn and granddaughters Emma, Broomfield, Colorado; Nicole, Steamboat Springs, Colorado and Nicole's fiancé, Alan Lindenlaub, Kremmling, Colorado.

The family is truly grateful to Dr. William Nichols, Montana Cancer Center, for keeping Art flying and living for the last eight years and the center's wonderfully supportive staff of chemo nurses for their capable hands and loving care; and during our 20-day hospital stay, St. Pat's ICU staff, and all the nurses on 5 North.

## Gregory Jess Gonsioroski



Gregory Jess Gonsioroski was born on Nov. 24, 1966, the son of Jerry and Jean (Wyrick) Gonsioroski in Baker. He grew up and attended schools in Baker. Greg went to be with Jesus on Sept. 1, 2008. Greg was doing what he loved to do, flying an air tanker while fighting fires to save other peoples' lives. He was killed in a plane crash near Reno, Nev., as he was taking off with a full tank of fuel and retardant headed to a fire.

Greg has always loved to fly and received his pilot license from the University of North Dakota in 1993. He married Kim Karr of Helena on Aug. 12, 1995, and had celebrated 13 years. He was working for Neptune Aviation as an aircraft mechanic and pilot until the time of his death.

Greg was the most amazing person and anyone who had the privilege of knowing him knew that. He was a gentle giant and never spoke a harsh word to anyone. The love of his life was his wife and three darling children. He always said Kim was his soul mate. Above all, Greg loved the Lord Jesus Christ and knew Him as his personal savior. He always told his family when it was his time to go he'd be ready. He was the most caring, loving and patient husband, father, son, brother and friend and was devoted to whatever he did.

Greg was an avid hunter. You would usually find him on the first day of hunting season out with his boys, Gabe and Grady, looking for a buck. He taught them everything he knew about hunting and airplanes. Under Greg's big physique was a special spot for his little girl, Gracie, and he always had his eye out for something pink he could bring home to her.

Greg was talented at whatever he did. He was a pilot, carpenter, taxidermist, and woodworker and was in the process of building his children a two-story playhouse. If anyone had a question on how to do something, they called Greg. He will be missed by everyone who knew and loved him.

Survivors include, his wife, Kim of Baker; his children, Gabriel Jess, 6, Grady Gerald, 5, and Gracelyn Marie, 3, all of the family home; his parents, Jerry and Jean Gonsioroski; his grandma, Ellen Gonsioroski, all of Baker; three brothers, Joshua (Launa) Gonsioroski of Presque Isle, Maine, Ben (LeAnn) Gonsioroski of Hall, Charles (Katina) Gonsioroski of Baker; three sisters, Kathy (Mark) Loveland of Sundance, Wyo., Cyndi (Jason) Mayes of Baker, Debbie (Darren) Dunham of Hall; numerous nieces and nephews who adored their uncle Greg; and several aunts and uncles.

He was preceded in death by his Granddad Gonsioroski; Grandma and Granddad Wyrick; and very special uncle and aunt, Jerry and Terry Faye Wiseman.

## Zachary Jake VanderGriend

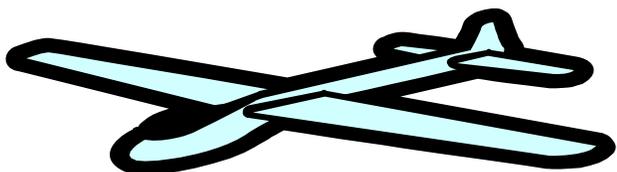


Zachary Jake VanderGriend was born on June 1, 1983, and flew into the arms of Jesus on September 1, 2008 during takeoff aboard a Neptune P2V-7 fire tanker 09 at Stead airport in Nevada; he and his fellow crew members were on their way to drop retardant on a fire in another location. Zach was living his dream. He loved his job as assistant crew chief, was passionate about serving and helping people, and he loved his new family at Neptune Aviation.

Zachary was born in Sunnyside, WA. He earned his private pilot's license, attending Waubensee Community College and working for Shodeen Flight Department and Dick Hansen as an aircraft detailer, and for Lumanair as a lineman in Aurora, IL. Zach attended Moody Bible Institute and was accepted into their flight program in Tennessee. The school was moved to Spokane, WA and partnered with Spokane Community College. It was there, and at Blue Sky Arrow in Morris, IL, that Zach received his Airframe and Powerplant mechanic's license. Zach then moved to Omaha, NE, where he attended Grace University and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in the Aviation Pilot/Business Program. After receiving his degree, Zach worked for a short time at the Tacoma Narrows airport as an A&P mechanic for Associated Aviation. He moved to Missoula, MT on May 26, 2008 to begin his dream job with Neptune Aviation.

Zach wanted to fly and become a Missionary Pilot and expressed his desire at the age of two. Zach was awarded a scholarship to attend the EAA's Air Academy in Oshkosh, WI. He was awarded the Presidential Youth Service Award and received it at the unveiling of the Butch O'Hare Memorial at O'Hare Airport; this was an aircraft Zach helped restore. He was given the first ever Eagle award by EAA 579. Zach loved life and was passionate about his faith in Jesus Christ. He loved his family and adored his little sister. He enjoyed working, whether it was restoring a car or an airplane. Zach loved to "turn wrenches" and get his hands dirty. He loved to travel, fish, hunt, read, ski, and he always enjoyed a good laugh. He also played piano and acted in local church productions. He was a joy to be with and his smile could light up a room. He loved to fly because it was there he felt closest to God. Zach was compassionate and generous to a fault, he was loyal, energetic and he was loved.

Zachary will be greatly missed by his parents, Steve and Marci of Gig Harbor, his very special friend and sister Andriana of Gig Harbor, his sweetheart Ashley Hutton of Spokane, WA, his "Nan," Grace Gortsema, of Sunnyside, WA, and his grandparents Mick and LenaMarie VanderGriend of Lynden, WA, the many aunts, uncles, cousins, friends and people he called family: Dick and RuthAnn Miller, Steve and Linda Valentine, Joe Cassidy, all of Aurora, IL, and Heather and Melody of Fresno, CA. He will also be missed by his family at Neptune Aviation, and his Crew Chief Robert. Zach was preceded in death by his grandfather, Jake Gortsema.



# New Children's Book Steals the Spotlight

Move over “Jay Jay the Jet Plane”— a new aviation-themed children’s book is quickly gaining altitude among critics and fans.

Written by Kermit Weeks, the creator and owner of Fantasy of Flight, an aviation-themed attraction in Polk City, Fla., “All of Life is a School” (KWIP Publishing, \$19.95) made its debut at the AirVenture air show, one of the world’s largest aviation events, held July 28 through August 3 in Oshkosh, Wis. Response to Weeks’ book, his first children’s publication, was over-whelming. By mid-week he had completely sold out of the 400-plus copies he brought to the air show.

Now that his book has been warmly received by the public, Weeks is prepared. He plans to send 1000 copies to the Reno Air Races, September 10 – 14.

“Writing a children’s book is something I’ve always wanted to do, and of course, the aviation theme is a part of me, so it was difficult to take a step back and look at the finished work objectively,” said Weeks, a former aerobatics champion and aircraft designer. “But seeing the enthusiastic response from those who purchased the book has been truly gratifying. I think there may just be more children’s books in my future.”

Drawing on his own experiences as a young man with his head in the clouds, it is no surprise that Weeks’ main character, Gee Bee Zee, is sometimes a little too eager to take to the skies. The little yellow monoplane takes off on an important assignment without paying close attention to his flight teacher’s lessons. If not for backup from his older brother, Jimmy G., Zee might have failed at his task.

The Gee Bee brothers are accompanied by a colorful lineup of expressive vintage aircraft characters from the Golden Age of Aviation, brought to life by Weeks’ imagination and illustrations by Project Firefly.

The scene is set at the mythical “Fantasy of Flight” airfield, where many types of airplanes created in the 1920s and ’30s live and where older, wiser airplanes help youngsters push the boundaries of flight. The true-life Fantasy of Flight is the premier aviation-themed attraction open since 1995 in Polk City, Fla., and the only aircraft museum in the world showcasing daily aerial demonstrations for guests. Weeks displays more than 40 vintage airplanes at the attraction, while others in his collection are in the process of being restored for flight.

Project Firefly illustrators Ron Cohee and Robert Stanton, former Disney animators, with art coordination by Pam Darley, give effervescence to Weeks’ characters through bright hues, cartoon-like features and realistic depictions of flight maneuvers.

Eager Zee is a reproduction of the 1931 Gee Bee Model Z Super Sportster that guests can see up close at Weeks’ Fantasy of Flight attraction. Older, wiser Jimmy G. is the red-and-white monoplane based on the Gee Bee Model R-1 and named after famed pilot Jimmy Doolittle, who flew it to victory in the Thompson Trophy race of 1932. And, coming soon, Fantasy of Flight guests will be able to visit with another colorful character from the book as the attraction welcomes a new

airplane to its collection —The Brown B-2 Racer “Miss Los Angeles”, which was the inspiration for Missy. Other characters are based on historic aviators and airplane designers. Flight instructor Roscoe’s character combines attributes of a Wedell-Williams plane and the renowned pilot who flew it to victory in the 1934 Thompson Trophy

race, Roscoe Turner. New student Benny bears the moniker of award-winning airplane designer Benny Howard, known for his DGA (Darn Good Airplane) series of planes.

Along with other airplane characters, Zee and Jimmy soar with the message that children should pursue their dreams and their passions.

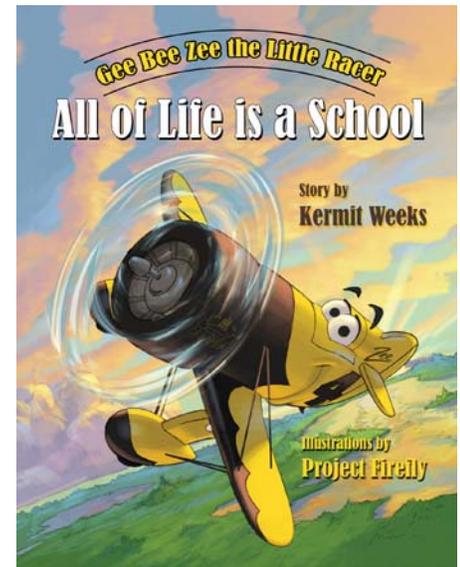
It was important to Weeks that his book developed the Fantasy of Flight concept of “going beyond ourselves,” said the first-time author. “Everyone can relate to the metaphor of reaching for the sky and the stars. Within us all, we soar in our imaginations and fly in our dreams.”

Weeks says he wrote his children’s book for two reasons – to impart a valuable lesson to his daughter, Katie, and to continue laying a foundation for a new generation theme-park industry based on “things that are real. I will continue to pursue my own dreams and create Fantasy of Flight as a place where others can discover theirs.”

“All of Life is a School” (KWIP Publishing, \$19.95, 64 pages) is available in hardback at the Fantasy of Flight gift shop, and through [www.geebee.com](http://www.geebee.com).

Fantasy of Flight is an aviation-themed attraction showcasing vintage aircraft from the world’s largest private collection; themed immersion experiences; flight simulators; interactive exhibits; a tram tour of aircraft maintenance areas; Restoration and Backlot tours; and an Aerial Demonstration of the Day. Hours are 10 a.m.-5 p.m. daily. Audio tours, hot air balloon rides and biplane rides also are available. The Art Deco-styled Compass Rose Diner serves lunch daily from 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Recent additions to Fantasy of Flight include the Fun with Flight Center; The Tuskegee Airmen – *They Dared to Fly* exhibit; and a multimedia tribute to the WASP (Women Airforce Service Pilots) – *A Passionate Pursuit*. For more information about Fantasy of Flight, call (863) 984-3500 or visit [www.fantasyofflight.com](http://www.fantasyofflight.com).



# Del Bonita Work Session

By: *Jim Greil, Airports / Airways Bureau Chief*

On Saturday July 12, the annual Del Bonita fly-in and work session was held. This multi-national fly-in, jointly arranged by the MDT Aeronautics Division and the Alberta Flying Farmers takes place each year at the Del Bonita international airport located between Cut Bank, Montana and Del Bonita, Alberta. The Del Bonita airport is one of three international airports administered by the MDT Aeronautics Division and is located directly on the US and Canadian border and is entirely located in the international boundaries “no man land”.

The fly-in was well attended as usual by participants from both sides of the border, and as usual, the Alberta Flying Farmers also provided participants with the always wonderful bar-b-que. It is always so nice to see our good friends from North of the border. I flew our Division’s Cessna 206 up there on a fine and sunny day and was happy to see so many other aircraft there from both sides of the border, including another 206 flown by our new friends at the Department of Homeland Security’s Northern Border Air Wing out of Great Falls. The MDT Aeronautics Division always provides a multitude of tools and “gopher bombs” for the runway maintenance work. Since I have flown into this airport now dozens of times, I don’t usually have trouble finding it, however, for the newcomer, locating the airport can be somewhat daunting as the international border can be harder to find than you think.

Once again, we did what we have always done in the past by filling runway badger and gopher holes, using poison smoke to kill the pesky rodents, replacing damaged runway cones, clearing weeds and other general upkeep. After working long and hard in the evenly tempered mid-July sun, we came back to the comfort of lawn chairs, shade under aircraft wings and of course, the best hamburger cookout around. As we dined, we listened to short presentations by various representative parties including US and Canadian Customs, Alberta Flying Farmers, Nav Canada, Montana Pilots Association, as well as my own spiel for our MDT Aeronautics Division. After the speeches were over and our bellies were full, it came time once again to depart and say goodbye for another year to our buddies across the border that we see far too little of. I know it’s a whole year till the next one, but I’m already looking forward to it again.

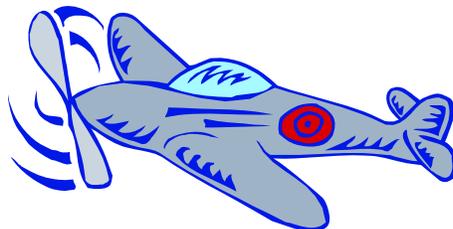
Traveling to the Del Bonita airport is easy and the runway is in especially good shape. The airport is located approximately 31 miles North of Cut Bank Montana and is located directly on the international border. It can be fairly tricky to locate the US Canadian border by the air as there is no obvious demarcation, either natural or artificial to separate the two countries. For best results, try following highway 213 North from Cut Bank until you are able to spot the two customs border shacks on each side of the highway. The runway is turf, and is covered by thick, dense, short grass. Runway length is 4440, width is 65 and elevation is 4336, so even light twins should have no problem with operations. Make sure to call Customs one hour prior to landing if entering or leaving the US, or just as a courtesy even if you’re just visiting to make it easier on them. After landing, be sure to park in the respective US apron tie-down side. Call the Division for more information and we’ll see you there next year...ehh.



*This group of hard workers took a much deserved break before lunch was served.*



*Volunteers were treated to a delicious lunch before heading back home.*



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

*Montana Department of Transportation*



## **Safety Implications with Ethanol Fuel**

During the past several months, airworthiness concerns have arisen involving the presence of alcohol (ethanol or methanol) in automotive gasoline used in General Aviation aircraft. Those aircraft that are type certificated to use automobile gasoline and aircraft that use auto fuels under a supplemental type certificate (STC) are affected. There are two primary sources of auto-fuel STC's, the EAA and Peterson Aviation. Neither of the STC's allows for the use of auto-fuel containing alcohol.

Auto-fuels containing alcohol should never be used in aircraft for the following reasons:

- Alcohol adversely affects the volatility of the fuel, which could cause vapor lock.
- It is corrosive and not compatible with the rubber seals and other materials used in aircraft, which could lead to fuel system deterioration and malfunction.
- Alcohol in auto-fuel is subject to phase separation which happens when fuel is cooled as a result of the aircraft's climbing to higher altitudes. When the alcohol separates from the gasoline, it may carry water that has been held in solution and that cannot be handled by the sediment bowl.

When operating with auto-fuel, it is recommended that you use gasoline that conforms to the specifications listed in the airplane flight manual or STC flight manual supplement. Also verify that the fuel has the proper octane rating. If you are unsure about the fuel you are using, there are several test kits available for test for ethanol. If you have questions contact your aircraft/engine manufacturer, your aircraft mechanic, or you can contact the Helena FSDO at 1-800-457-9917.

