



## AOPA President Speaks in Bozeman

By: Anne Millbrooke

Craig Fuller, president of the National Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, discussed general aviation in a speech at Gallatin Field in Belgrade (Bozeman) on August 5.

Fuller reported on Congress and Oshkosh. He said there is Congressional support for general aviation and cited as evidence leaders in the House and Senate opposed to new user fees and the formation of general aviation caucuses in the House and Senate. The increased attendance and increased aircraft exhibits at the recent AirVenture Oshkosh event demonstrate the strength of general aviation even in these difficult economy times, he said.

"But," Fuller added "the value of general aviation and the utilization of general aviation tend to be poorly understood by opinion leaders and decision makers. Even local elected officials often know little about the use and value of a local airport." That is why the AOPA keeps working to defend general aviation and funding for general aviation.

The Transportation Security Administration's security directives came up in discussion. A former chief of staff to Vice President George H.W. Bush, Fuller explained that the new Air Operations Area Identification Badge and the proposed large aircraft directive are legacies of the former administration and that the current administration and the new FAA administrator are working with the AOPA. Even the "tone" has changed at TSA.

Fuller joked about being one of the Harrison Ford guys, a reference to the highly popular advertisements featuring Harrison Ford supporting general aviation, which are on the General Aviation Serves America website ([www.gaservesamerica.com](http://www.gaservesamerica.com)).

Hosted by the Gallatin Valley Hangar of the Montana Pilots Association, Fuller spoke to an aviation audience, including local pilots, Airport Director Brian Sprenger, Airport Board Authority members Kevin Kelleher and John McKenna Jr, and the AOPA's Northwest Region Representative Mike Ferguson (formerly of the Montana Aeronautics Division).



*Craig Fuller had a chance to visit Montana's Russian Flat during his trip to Montana. While touring the strip and its amenities, Fuller commented, "This Russian Flat airstrip is a wonderful example of how a local pilot's organization like the Montana Pilots Association in conjunction with the Recreational Aviation Foundation can work to bring a facility like this to the public." Bill Ryan, AOPA pilot accompanying President Fuller summed up the general feeling, saying, "This is the reason that we all started flying so we could go to places like this, even if our lives take us in different directions, career and flying wise; we still want to be in this kind of special place." Pictured left to right: AOPA President Craig Fuller, RAF President John McKenna and RAF Director Jerry Cain at Russian Flat, August 6.*



*President Obama's visit to Yellowstone Airport, pages 5-6.*

# Administrators Column

**Private Screening Contract Awarded:** After many long years of Montana's seven eastern essential air service communities fighting to secure Transportation Security Administration (TSA) screening services at its airports, a permanent contract has finally been awarded. The successful contractor, Trinity Technology Group of Fairfax, VA will partner with Covenant Aviation of Anaconda, Mont. to perform screening of both passengers and checked baggage at Miles City, Wolf Point, Sidney, Glendive, Glasgow, Havre, and Lewistown. Since the start-up of Great Lakes Airlines at these airports, screening services have been performed by the TSA's mobile screening workforce, rotating in employees from all parts of the country every few weeks. Prior to the Great Lakes Airlines service there was no screening performed at these airports. The communities have been working with the TSA, Congressional delegations, and MDT Aeronautics Division to secure these services. This is good news for these airports with hopes that local residents will be hired to help fill these part-time jobs.

**AIP Update:** It appears that FAA reauthorization is stalled out with Congress focusing on health care reform. As September continues to pass us by, a Continuing Resolution is probably on the horizon. Hopefully, it will be short-term and we will get a bill passed yet this year. The FAA has been operating on a string of short-term authorizations for the past two years when the last FAA reauthorization bill expired.

**Large Aircraft Security Program (LASP):** The highly controversial notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) issued by the TSA early this year was met with strong opposition from the general aviation community and resulted in TSA listening and meeting with key industry representatives to hammer out an acceptable version of the notice. TSA has made the decision to issue a "supplemental" notice of proposed rulemaking that will replace the original proposal. The supplemental is expected to be much more palatable than the original edition.

**Proposal to Change Pilot Certification Rules:** The FAA recently published NPRM recommending several changes to the pilot, flight instructor, and pilot school certification rules. Among the changes is requiring a pilot-in-command proficiency check for single-piloted, turbojet-powered airplanes; the ability of applicants to apply for and be issued a private pilot certificate and instrument rating concurrently; and a proposal for replacing the 10 hours of complex airplane training required for a commercial pilot certification with 10 hours of advanced instrument training. Noting the potential for safety benefits, the FAA said replacing the 10 hours of complex time with 10 hours of advanced instrument training will allow students to more efficiently use their time, giving them experience with more useful instrument training. Flight schools will save by not having to keep an inventory of complex and non-complex airplanes. To see the proposal and comment go to: [www.reulations.gov](http://www.reulations.gov) and search for FAA-2008-0938. Comments are due by November 30, 2009.

**Final Rule Issued:** In a *final* rule the FAA decided: 1) that instrument-rated pilots won't need to perform more tasks to maintain currency; 2) to extend the duration of student pilot certificate to match the duration of a third-class medical certificate – if under 40-years old, valid for 60 calendar months; if over 40-years old, valid for 24 calendar months; and 3) changed the definition of "cross-country" from at least 50 nautical miles to more than 50 nautical miles. The changes go into effect 60 days after publishing – around mid-October.



## *Montana and the Sky*

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Brian Schweitzer, Governor  
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[www.mdt.mt.gov/aviation/](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/aviation/)

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# Calendar of Events

**September 26-27, 2009** – Sidney Montana Airshow with the Canadian forces Snowbirds. Questions, call Bryan Prevost at (406) 774-3033 or email [bprevost@middrivers.com](mailto:bprevost@middrivers.com).

**October 2, 2009** -- Open House at Rocky Mountain College Aviation Program in Billings. Meet the people, learn about the program, go on a free flight. Learn how to prepare for a career in aviation. Call Dan Hargrove, director of Aviation, at (406) 657-1060 to make your reservation.

**October 3, 2009** – Alvin and Barb Hirsch will be having their annual fly in at their ranch. It will begin at 8 a.m. with coffee and rolls and will continue until everyone is gone. Lunch will be served at noon. Games will be held throughout the day. If you would like to bring a salad or dessert it would be great. For further information, phone (406) 354-6009 or (406) 853-9955.

**October 24, 2009** – AOM meeting, 2630 Airport Road, Helena; 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. For further information, phone (406) 444-2506.

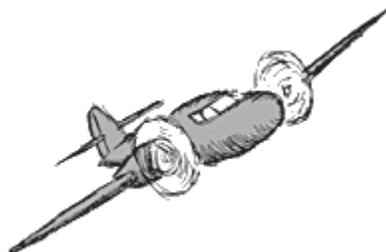
**November 14, 2009** - Open House at Rocky Mountain College Aviation Program in Billings. Meet the people, learn about the program, go on a free flight. Learn how to prepare for a career in aviation. Call Dan Hargrove, director of Aviation, at (406) 657-1060 to make your reservation.

**January 15 -17, 2010** – Winter Survival Clinic, Helena. For further information, phone Jeanne MacPherson at (406) 444-9568 or email [jemacpherson@mt.gov](mailto:jemacpherson@mt.gov).

**February 12-13, 2010** – Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic, Helena. For further information, phone Jeanne MacPherson at (406) 444-9568 or email [jemacpherson@mt.gov](mailto:jemacpherson@mt.gov).

**March 4-6, 2010** – Montana Aviation Conference, Hilton Garden Inn, Missoula. For further information, phone (406) 444-9580 or [pkautz@mt.gov](mailto:pkautz@mt.gov).

**March 19, 2010** - Open House at Rocky Mountain College Aviation Program in Billings. Meet the people, learn about the program, go on a free flight. Learn how to prepare for a career in aviation. Call Dan Hargrove, director of Aviation, at (406) 657-1060 to make your reservation.



# Airport of the Year Nominations Requested

Are you often heard telling your friends that your airport is better than theirs? Do you feel an insatiable need to brag about your airport? Do you have dreams picturing your airport manager standing atop a three tiered podium with Olympic theme music bellowing in the background? If so, why don't you nominate your favorite airport for our annual "Airport of the Year" award? To nominate an airport, simply send us your nomination with an explanation of why you think your airport is the Airport of the Year. Nominations can be made by anyone on behalf of any Montana airport, can be as short or lengthy as you wish, and will be accepted through the end of December 2009. MDT Aeronautics will collect and review all information, and the winner will be selected and notified. Formal public recognition and an award will be given to the airport representatives during the Montana Aviation Conference awards banquet in Missoula on March 5. Nominations can be sent to any of the following: by mail to MDT Aeronautics Division, attn: Jim Greil, P.O. Box 200507, Helena, MT 59620-0507; by email to [jgreil@mt.gov](mailto:jgreil@mt.gov); by fax to (406) 444-2519

## Aviation Sayings

**A fiberglass port-a-potty at Oshkosh with the message "I could have been a Glassair!" written on it?**

**"I would like to die in my sleep like my father did, not in screaming terror, like his passengers."**

**If God had meant man to fly, He would have given him more money or airplane tickets.**

**"Gravity always wins!"**

**You know you're flying a Cessna when you have a bird strike and it is from behind!**

**747 on final approach at 1000' off the deck: First Officer asks Captain, "Are you happy with the position of the landing gear, sir?" Captain reaches down, lowers the gear and lands safely.**

**Lost Cessna pilot: "Big airport with a little Cessna 150 overhead, please identify yourself!"**

**A landing is just controlled mid-air collision with a planet.**

# Much Accomplished at Schafer Work Session

The Schafer Meadows Work Session was held July 17-19. Work included installation of a new pilot "sign-in" box; a new gate at the campground entrance, hauling and spreading of gravel to runway low spots, fencing, cleaning of bear boxes and outhouses, painting of top fence rail, and new windsocks.

Dinner was provided by Loren Smith and Jane Mart, Prairie Kraft Specialties, Great Falls. It was prepared by Loren's sister Robin, her friends Mary Rose and Andy of Helena, and Darren Huestis of Havre. Dinner was marinated/barbequed chicken breasts, delicious baked beans, corn on the cob, rolls, homemade ice-cream (with all the toppings), and brownies. Thanks to all the volunteers who participate in these work sessions and keeping Montana's backcountry strips safe for all to enjoy!



*Landing on Schafer Runway. Photo courtesy of Robert Shropshire.*



*A little R & R in the campground at Schafer. Photo courtesy of Robert Shropshire.*



*Frog catching is always a popular sport for the younger crowd at Schafer.*



*A few of the hardworking volunteers at Schafer!*



*Maintaining Schafer Meadows is a group effort of volunteers and Forest Service employees.*

# Hosting the President: The Non-Towered Perspective

*By: Tony Bean, Yellowstone Airport Manager*

As most of you know, the Yellowstone Airport hosted and supported President Obama on August 15 during his visit to Yellowstone National Park. We shared the duties of hosting the President with Belgrade's Gallatin Field, who also had a major role in the President's multiple-stop trip through the Western U.S. For a smaller airport operation with only three staff and an FBO normally staffed by four people, I am very proud that we successfully supported the President's trip as well as our normal operations with minimal disruption. Here is a short account of what happened and how we managed to get it all done.

Operations started here with Marine Helicopter Squadron One (HMX-1) staging for the airlift into Yellowstone when the Presidential Motorcade arrived from Big Sky. The motorcade arrived and President Obama and family boarded Marine One and left for the Park. We then landed our first scheduled SkyWest flight which off-loaded and loaded during the Special Air Mission (SAM). The SAM is the 747 known as Air Force One when the president is on board. Once parked, we had the first SkyWest flight depart and the next one inbound to land and depart. To make things more interesting, actor Henry Winkler was scheduled for our second SkyWest flight and was easily recognized by the Secret Service as "the Fonz." Mr. Winkler was escorted onto the ramp and well received by the crew of Air Force One. SkyWest departed the area for Salt Lake City soon after arrival, and the fueling work for Air Force One started.

Fueling the SAM is extremely complicated. The Air Force comes to test the fuel at the truck, and in our case, the entire farm. The farm was tested because Yellowstone Aviation's fuel truck made multiple trips to deliver the quantity of fuel needed. Once tested, the fuel truck and the fuel farm are locked up and under guard until needed by Air Force One. The fueling operation was secured for 24-hours. Yellowstone Aviation could take fuel out of the farm but not refill until fueling of the SAM was complete. When you only have two Jet trucks and one is locked up, it can tend to strain your operational capability. Yellowstone Aviation took the requirement in stride and accommodated not only the Air Force's support request but went above and beyond by borrowing another truck and driver from Aeromark Aviation in Idaho Falls for the Marine Corps. The additional truck capability was able to take tested fuel from Yellowstone Aviation for use to support the helicopter lift operations in Big Sky as well as Old Faithful. Finally finished with the servicing of the SAM, we waited for Marine One to return.

Marine One finished the missions in Yellowstone National Park and brought the First Family back to Yellowstone Airport to board Air Force One for a flight to the Grand Canyon National Park. Upon arrival, the Secret Service allowed the press to view the departure as well as some people to meet and greet President Obama. Security ratchets up quickly for any



*President Obama waves to the crowd at Yellowstone Airport departing from his trip to Yellowstone National Park. Photo courtesy of Tom Langlais, TSA.*

arrival and departure window and does result in some inconveniences. The Secret Service was excellent to work with and made the least amount of intrusion as conditions would allow. Yellowstone Airport was a closed event to the public for this portion of the President's trip so outside viewing was minimal when he was in the area. He did greet the military folks that were here to support Air Force One and he did wave before boarding Air Force One for departure to the Grand Canyon. The Marine's with HMX-1 and the Air Force support graciously stayed around for about 30 minutes for photo opportunities. The Marine Corps also did a formation fly-by on their departure from the area. This is when all of the big aircraft comes into play.

We needed to load all the Secret Service personnel, motorcade, and support equipment to send back to Andrews Air Force Base. We had a C-5 Galaxy and two C-17 Globemasters arrive to finish that task. From 4 until 9 p.m. aircraft were loaded and departed the area.

Yellowstone Airport, to my knowledge, has hosted or supported the visits of the following U.S. Presidents: Ford, Carter, Bush Sr., Clinton, and now Obama. We have had a long history of this type of support. The previous Presidential visits to Yellowstone did not include an aircraft as large as a Boeing 747. We easily accommodated the 747 but one concern did

*continued page 6*

# Hosting the President, continued



*One of the first questions Airport Manager Tony Bean was asked by the Secret Service was about his Air Traffic Control Tower. Since the Yellowstone Airport does not have a control tower, Tony got to serve in that capacity, also! Photo courtesy of Greg Webber, SkyWest Airlines.*



*Air Force One. Photo courtesy of Tony Bean*

materialize. The possibility of hot brakes upon landing and damaging aircraft tires as a result. To mitigate that concern, the Air Force sent us five 747 tires in case they needed to be replaced. Thankfully we had no problems at all.

Time was spent securing items to adequately support the necessary requirements. We needed more fire support, an ambulance, an extra fuel truck, aviation ground equipment, blocking vehicles, a press area, among other details. I would like thank the following entities on behalf of the Yellowstone Airport and Yellowstone Aviation as we could not have accomplished it without your help: Helena Regional Airport and Rocky Mountain Emergency Services Training Center for providing two fire vehicles with crews; the Hebgen Basin Fire District for providing fire and ambulance support with crews; the US Interagency Fire Center (SmokeJumpers) at Yellowstone Airport for the assistance in ramp space and off-loading equipment; Aeromark Aviation of Idaho Falls for assistance in loaning a fuel truck and driver; Montana Department of Transportation Highways Division for transporting Helena Regional's fire truck; and especially the Duck Creek Section House for helping us set up and providing blocking vehicles; the Town of West Yellowstone for providing additional blocking vehicles; Montana Department of Livestock for literally providing a "Press Pen"; all state,

federal, county, and city law enforcement officers for their support; and last but not least, Brian Sprenger and the staff of Gallatin Field for support.

I am deeply respectful of the job that our US Armed Forces, the Secret Service, and the White House Staff do in support of these operations. I can tell you from experience that these folks are consummate professionals, and they are extremely proficient in their jobs. After what I witnessed here I am very confident in their capability to keep our President safe in his travels. They were awesome to work with, and we would be glad to host them again.

Now a few trivial items: To show how small the world really is, the crew chief on Marine One is a friend of mine. We served together on a deployment in 1998 with one of the Secret Service agents. One question to anyone that can answer: Has Air Force One ever been at two airports in the same county (Gallatin) in one trip? If anyone knows I'd be interested to hear about it and I'm sure Brian in Belgrade would, too.

# Some Tips for a Safe and Enjoyable Mountain Flight Adventure

*By: Jeanne MacPherson, Chief Pilot MDT Aeronautics Division*

Many pilots look forward to this time of the year when they can fly to remote airstrips to picnic, fish, hike, and camp in the backcountry. Backcountry airstrips offer quality time. My husband and I were married at Meadow Creek Airstrip (0S1), a Montana mountain airstrip on the South Fork of the Flathead River. We have heard owls hooting, heard wolves howling, and seen both black and grizzly bears, and mountain goats. We have fished the rivers, hiked the trails, and eaten wild strawberries and huckleberries along the way.

I have been flying the backcountry airstrips of Montana and Idaho for 17 years, yet at the beginning of each season I practice my mountain flying skills to help assure a safe and rewarding experience.

Plan for the environment you will be flying in by reviewing your aircraft performance charts, including the effects of density altitude. Write down the critical airspeeds and know how they vary with changes in altitude and aircraft weight.

Before flying in the mountains, be sure to practice your flight skills. Start with coordination maneuvers and slow flight. Move on to the full stall series to really master control of your aircraft. Practice flying when configured for sight-seeing; powered back, perhaps, with partial flaps. Do steep turns in this configuration. All this will sharpen your skills and increase your margin of safety. Go with an instructor if you are uncomfortable doing this alone.

Practice your soft field and short field landings and take-offs. Even if the ground is dry and firm, most backcountry strips are grass-covered and rough compared to your usual paved surface. This will increase drag on the take-off roll and calls for soft field technique to maximize performance. Most backcountry strips are shorter than your home airport, and utilizing short field technique will increase your margin of safety. Therefore practice your short field and soft field techniques together. Remember: consistently achieving the correct airspeeds is critical to success!

Know where you are going. Become familiar with the lay of the land. Develop a mental picture of the major drainages and the tallest peaks. I find it helpful to have in my lap not only the current sectional chart, but also a Forest Service or BLM map of my area. Navigation should be first by pilotage. Use your GPS to back you up. Get all the weather information that is available to you, but remember that mountains make their own weather. Plan a flight route that will place you over the best emergency landing spots by flying major rivers and tributaries. Become familiar with the practices for each specific airstrip, and seek the advice of experienced flight instructors.

Once you are ready to go, remember that your airplane is subject to much more vibration in the backcountry airstrips. Do a particularly thorough pre-flight. Tighten anything loose on your airplane. Secure everything inside your airplane. Know how much fuel you have in your tanks and know your



*Pentagon Mountain, photo courtesy of Robert Shropshire*

aircraft's fuel consumption. For backcountry flight, keep your aircraft as light as possible without sacrificing fuel. Keep your windscreen clean!

Remember that your survival kit is what you have on your person. So carry the most important items in a flightsuit or vest you are wearing. Keep useful but less critical items in a backpack in the back of the airplane. Consider carrying a PLB and/or a tracking device.

To preserve the backcountry airstrips for the future we must show respect for everyone's backcountry experience. We need to help promote a good aviation image to non-aviators. We can do this by keeping the number of take-offs and landings to a minimum. Practice for proficiency at non-wilderness airstrips. Power back to keep the noise level down. Don't be in a hurry; you are flying in the mountains to see the beauty.



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

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## **A New Temporary Exhibit at Seattle's Museum of Flight**

The Museum of Flight has brought together resources from around the country for its new exhibit about the remarkable life and times of famous American pilot, Amelia Earhart. Opening October 24, "In Search of Amelia Earhart" will feature many of her original personal artifacts on loan from Purdue University, the International Women's Air and Space Museum, and others. The Museum will also offer programs and events on the subject, which will take place throughout the run of the exhibit. Please check the Museum website for up-to-date listings. The exhibit will run until May, 2010.

For more information: call (206) 764-5720 or visit [MuseumOfFlight.org](http://MuseumOfFlight.org).



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