



Montana Aviation Conference Celebrates Silver Anniversary in Billings!

The current state of the economy certainly did not affect the success of this year's Montana Aviation Conference. The Exhibit Hall was overflowing; sponsors were generous (as always) and speakers outstanding!

Thursday kicked off with luncheon speaker James Coyne, president of National Air Transportation Association. Jim's talk on "Aviation in a Time of Strong Headwinds" was informative, entertaining and really got the conference off to a great start. His trip to Billings was sponsored by Edwards Jet Center, and we thank them for their great support each year.

The afternoon was busy for all with John Warner, acting deputy regional administrator, holding the always popular "FAA Open Forum." Sessions were packed with interesting topics on survival; current state of LM AFSS; traveling internationally; spatial disorientation; weather and aviation accidents.

Thursday evening the Exhibitor Awards were held and sponsored by our generous friends Ed Croymans and Breezy Burlison of City Service Valcon/Phillips 66 Aviation. This being the 25th anniversary of the conference, special Exhibitor Awards were given to Rich Broberg of Omaha Airplane Supply and Steve Vold of Aerotronics Inc. who have stuck with us for the past 25 years. Congratulations to both Rich and Steve, and we look forward to another 25 years of great success! And most importantly, thank you to Ed and Breezy for the amazing generosity.

Friday morning things got rolling again with more sessions and the awards luncheon. This year's speaker was Astronaut Frank Borman (a Montanan). Col. Borman was one of the most popular speakers with a packed house of more than 300 attendees (the biggest luncheon in 25 years!). His presentation and story was remarkable. He is such a humble person with an amazing life. He has certainly earned his spot in the International Aerospace Hall of Fame, the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame and the National Aviation Hall of Fame.

Friday afternoon wound down with more concurrent sessions; a spouse/guest tour of the Moss Mansion in Billings (rave reviews) and a tour of the Rocky Mountain College training fleet. Dinner that evening included entertainment by the Ringling 5 whose humor and great talent was enjoyed by another sold out crowd!

The crowd did not diminish on Saturday, the final day of the conference. Sessions began that morning with a lunch in the exhibit hall with many great door prizes thanks to the generosity of our exhibitors. The closing banquet started with the very talented Barbershop Quartet, and we welcomed Dr. Jerry Cockrell aviation humorist back as a grand finale. Jerry has been a guest speaker at the Montana Aviation Conference for 15 years, and we were honored that he came back to make this year's conference another success story.

A big thank you to our sponsors Billings Logan International Airport; City Service Valcon/Phillips 66 Aviation Fuels; Covenant Aviation Security; Edwards Jet Center; Great Lakes Airlines; Horizon Airlines; Kadrmars, Lee & Jackson; Morrison Maierle, Inc.; Potomac Aviation Technology Corp.; RS & H; Stelling Engineers, Inc.; Aerotronics Inc.; CH2M Hill; Cross Petroleum Service; Mead & Hunt; Minuteman Aviation Inc.; and Robert Peccia and Associates. Without the support of the sponsors this conference would not be possible!

And last but not least thanks to all who attended and to our exhibitors. We appreciate the support of our regulars and welcome the new faces – we hope to see you all again at next year's conference, which will be held in Missoula at the Hilton Garden Inn, March 4-6.

See conference photo's on page 5 of the newsletter.



Administrator's Column

Tragedy strikes Montana

aviation: It is with a heavy heart that I offer condolences to many families, friends, colleagues who have recently suffered a loss due with three aircraft accidents that shook Montana and many others across this county. On March 19, searchers located the wreckage of Sparky Imeson in his Cessna 180, two days after he departed Bozeman for Helena.

Sparky, a well-known mountain flying instructor and author, had relocated to Helena in recent years. On March 22, a Pilatus PC-12, carrying 14 persons; 7 adults and 7 children crashed into Holy Cross cemetery adjacent to the Butte airport killing all on board after diverting to Butte from Bozeman as originally filed in its flight plan that originated in Redlands, CA. On April 1, Dr. Hugh Rogers lost his life in an aircraft accident on his 50th birthday on the Hungry Horse Reservoir while flying his Maule M-4 on a local flight. Dr. Rogers was a highly respected veterinarian who owned Alpine Animal Hospital in Whitefish. To MDT staff, the many MDT volunteers, numerous first-responders, airport staff, Lewis and Clark, Broadwater and Flathead County sheriffs, their deputies and search and rescue units, our many federal partners words are not enough to thank you for the job that you performed in all three incidents and that you perform during normal operations. Many lives have been touched – my thoughts and prayers are with each and every one of you.

FAA Administrator: President Obama has selected **J. Randolph “Randy” Babbitt**, former president of the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA), to lead the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). A former pilot, Babbitt served as President and CEO of US ALPA, the world’s largest professional airline pilots’ union representing more than 50,000 pilots in the United States and Canada. Babbitt currently is a partner of Oliver Wyman Group, a worldwide aviation consulting firm.

FAA Region Administrator:

Kathryn Vernon has been named administrator for the Northwest Mountain Region. Kathryn has been the director of western terminal operations, based in Seattle. She served in Iraq for a year as deputy transportation counselor at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad and deputy senior consultant for aviation affairs in the Iraq Reconstruction Management Office. I had the pleasure to meet Kathryn briefly at the FAA airports conference in Seattle and look forward to working with her and welcoming her to Montana in the future.

Transportation Security Administration Liaison:

Juan Barnes, TSA is the new general aviation liaison in the Office of General Aviation and available to address concerns to GA stakeholders. He has asked for concerns regarding TSA programs, policies and security directives. Mr. Barnes has stated your inquiry will be reviewed and forwarded to the appropriate office to ensure a prompt and accurate response. TSA heard from the industry loud and clear relative to the Large Aircraft Security Proposal (LASP) and plans to meet with industry stakeholders to discuss this NPRM. You may contact Juan at TSAGeneralAviation@dhs.gov. Governor Brian Schweitzer has written a letter to the Honorable Janet Napolitano, Secretary for the Department of Homeland Security expressing his concerns over Security Directive (SD) 1542-04-08F that requires badges for those desiring unescorted access to the Air Operations Area (inside the fence) at your home airport. I am continuing communications to stay actively engaged with the TSA, airport directors and staff and general aviation pilots.



Montana and the Sky

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Calendar

May 23-24 – Spotted Bear Work Session.

May 30-31 – Rocky Mountain West Aviation Expo, Boise, Idaho. For further information or to participate, contact Lee Hudson at (208) 323-4464 or league@idahobusinessleague.com.

June 12-13 – 5th Annual Lewistown Airport Fly In and Pancake Breakfast. Friday, June 12 – 6:30 p.m. – Steak fry, sponsored by MPA Central Hangar – RSVP requested, Sandi Chamberlain at schamberlain@lewistown.k12.mt.us. Saturday, June 13 – 7:00 a.m. to noon – Fly In and Sourdough Pancake Breakfast. For further information, contact Jerry Moline, (406) 535-3264.

June 12-14 – Winifred/Breaks Fly In – 12th - camp/cookout Cow Creek (RSVP on the cookout), 13th – Morning breakfast at Lewistown Fly In, Fly the breaks, hamburger feed at Winifred hangar, 14th – departure. Call Ralph Rogers for more information (406) 462-5487 or nafanew@ttc-cmc.net.

June 20 - Plains Airport Fly In Pancake Breakfast. 8:00 a.m. to noon. For further information, contact Randy Garrison, (406) 826-3605 or printery@plainsmt.net.

June 20-21 – Fathers Day Fly In Sourdough Pancake Breakfast, Fort Peck Airport. Steak fry Saturday evening and pancakes Sunday morning. Canoe trips down Missouri for those who call and schedule in advance. For further information or to schedule canoe trip, call Lanny Hanson, (406) 526-3535 or (406) 263-1154.

June 20-21 – 6th Annual Fathers Day Fly In, Twin Bridges Airport. Events start Saturday morning with Young Eagle Rides and end Sunday afternoon. Skydiving, family potluck barbeque (bring a side dish), games and prizes for kids, aircraft display, games for pilots, food and more. Visit www.rubyvalleyavition.com for more information or call Kendra at (406) 684-5335.

June 25-27 – Aviation Career Academy for students in grades 6-8 (for the school year 2008/2009). Flight Simulator; Survival Skills; Field Trips. For further information contact Jeanne MacPherson (406) 444-9568 or email jemacpherson@mt.gov or visit our web site at www.mdt.mt.gov/aviation/.

June 27 - Airport Heritage Day, Ravalli County Airport (6S5). Sponsored by the Ravalli County Pilots' Association, the Ravalli County Aviation Safety Foundation and the Ravalli County Museum. Pancake breakfast 7:00 - 11:00 a.m.; static display of antique aircraft and warbirds, historical information booth, skydiving demonstration, radio controlled aircraft and EAA Young Eagle Flights will continue into the afternoon; and finally, 7:30 - 11:00 p.m., a USO Hangar Dance.

June 27 - 2nd Annual Seeley Lake Flying Club Fly-In and Community Barbeque Dinner, Seeley Lake Airport (23S). Flame broiled burgers and dogs, salad, beans and dessert, raffle prizes and fun for all ages. Contact Calvin Kovatch, (406) 677-2932 kkovatch@blackfoot.net

June 27 – North Central MPA Hangar – Fly In breakfast, Havre. For further information, call Darren Huestis (406) 945-1861.

June 27-28 – Meadow Creek Work Session.

July 11 – Del Bonita Work Session.

July 19 – St. Ignatius Fly In. For further information, contact Steve Allard steve@allardauctions.com.

August 2 – Hysham Airport Lions Club Fly-In, Drive In Breakfast, 7:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. For further information, phone Bob Miller at (406) 342-5252.

August 6-8 – Montana Antique Airplane Association Three Forks Fly In.

August 14-16 – Montana Fun Weekend, Cut Bank. Car show, airplane rides, fly in for general aviation (60 aircraft last year) and drag racing. For further information, contact Roy Nollkamper (406) 450-1078 or email nollkamper47@hotmail.com.

August 15 – Polson Fly In.

Teaching Children the Wonder of Flight!



“Takeoff with aviation” is about reaching out and exploring the wonders of flight with children. MDT Aeronautics Division presented the youth program “Take off with aviation” in Billings as a part of the Montana Aviation Conference. This year’s program was attended by 21- Laurel Middle School 5th graders and their teacher, Lisa Reimer. The Helena Flight Standards District Office and the teachers who attended the aviation teacher workshop guided the “hands on” aviation activities for the students. Pictured, Clifford Carpenter of Helena FSDO using the FAA’s flight simulator to instruct the new pilots on the fine points of a takeoff.



Jared VanVleet a teacher from Noxon showed the way with a lesson on thrust, “how many revolutions do you turn the propeller?”



Teachers John Spurzem of Ulm and Judi Harris from Simms are assisting the students with dihedral for the paper airplane contest.



Mary Feik, the first woman engineer in research and development in the Air Technical Service at Wright Field in Dayton, Ohio and the first woman to receive the FAA’s Charles Taylor Master Mechanic Award and Dr. Ben Millspaugh, regional director of aerospace education for the Civil Air Patrol participated fully and enthusiastically in “Take of with aviation” with both the teachers and the students.



Liane Wilson a teacher from Missoula is leading the final approach station.

2009 Conference Photo Ops!



Pictured is Parrott Family Scholarship winner (l) Cole Broadus of Big Timber with Friday's luncheon speaker Frank Borman. Not only did Cole have the opportunity to meet this aviation hero he also was presented with a \$1,000 scholarship to attend Rocky Mountain College from Doug Parrott, retired Northwest airline captain. Congrats, Cole!

Lewistown airport received this year's airport of the year award. This award was given in recognition of Lewistown's outstanding achievements over the past several years with airport development, management and future endeavors.



Our faithful followers for 25 years (l-r) Steve Vold of Aerotrionics Inc. and Rich Broberg of Omaha Airplane Supply were "crowned" during the exhibitor awards on Thursday evening by Breezy Burlison of City Service Valcon/Phillips 66 Aviation, sponsor of this fun event.



Conference planning co-chairs got a chance to visit with James Coyne, president of National Air Transportation Association in the Exhibit Hall; pictured (l-r) are Steve Tostenrud, Scott Newpower, James Coyne and Steve Vold.



Pictured above is (l-r) Russ Dahl, president of MPA, MPA Junior Pilot and Blue Goose Scholarship recipient Katie George of Bridger and Geanette Cebulski, secretary of MPA.



Debbie Alke (r) presents the Harold Hamm Scholarship to Kelli French of Malta (currently a student at Rocky). The scholarship was established by Harold's wife Zola to honor her husband of 19 years. He had a strong passion for aviation as does Zola.



Dr. Jerry Cockrell, Saturday banquet speaker, has participated in many past conferences and what fun to have him come back and entertain us for the 25th annual. Thanks, Jerry!

In Memory

Sparky Imeson



Sparky Imeson touched down Jan. 19, 1945, to Paul and Jennie Imeson in Jackson Hole, Wyo. He grew up in Jackson while it was still a small town, and he had many wonderful memories of family and friends.

Sparky tragically died Tuesday, March 17, 2009, doing what he loved to do — flying in the mountains near Helena.

Sparky Imeson (his real name) was born and raised in Jackson, Wyo. He grew up in the mountains near his grandfather's homestead, enjoying hunting, fishing and camping. As a Boy Scout, he was introduced to flying with a 20-minute ride over Cheyenne, Wyo., in a DC-3.

Like others who have been bitten by the “flying bug,” Sparky waited for the day when he could “spread his wings.” He began flying in July 1966 at Jackson in his father's Piper J-3 and Cessna 205.

Sparky worked as a policeman while attending the University of Wyoming (pre-dental). After being accepted at the University of Oregon dental school, Sparky's father flew from Jackson to Laramie to pick him up for home visits before going to dental school. Sparky decided he liked flying better than looking in someone's mouth. He attended Herrod School of Aviation in Billings and became a professional pilot in 1968.

Sparky and his parents founded Imeson Aviation Inc. in 1968 at the Jackson Hole Airport. He became alarmed at the number of aircraft accidents attributed to mountain flying. Sparky's passion led him to write the original Mountain Flying book and many others.

Sparky received the FAA Northwest Region Flight Instructor of the Year Award in 1974, 1979 and 1995 for providing effective and creative flight and ground instruction. He was named the 2001 Arizona Safety Counselor of the Year for significant contributions to aviation safety. Sparky always shared his knowledge with other pilots and gave many talks for the FAA and other organizations.

He spent one year as editor of Wings West Magazine until he discovered editors don't get much opportunity to fly.

Of his 20,000+ flight hours, the majority was in small airplanes in the mountains. His aviation expertise is the result of being directly involved in every aspect of aeronautics. His career, interests and loves touched every person he ever met. When Sparky looked at you with that glimmer in his eyes and his smile, you couldn't help but smile, too.

Sparky enjoyed making people laugh. His words were original and were packed with insight, humor and innuendos. He knew every day was a gift from God and he lived that way. He was enthusiastic, passionate, personable and extremely generous.

Sparky was always there for us; we could always count on him. No call for help or request was too large — he stepped up to the plate and performed whatever major or minor task we asked of him. We miss him sorely.

Sparky was active in many organizations, as an Eagle Scout, Guardian of Job's Daughters, past master of the Masonic Lodge of Jackson and the Shriners. He was the representative for northwestern Wyoming to the Shriners Hospital in Salt Lake City.

Sparky was meticulous in his work. The goal of his writing and talks was to save lives. We believe Sparky is in heaven with his dad and others who have gone before, and he is flying the great mystery and loving every minute of it. We suspect God needed more laughter in heaven.

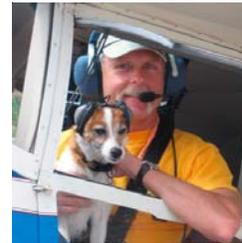
Sparky is survived by his loving wife and biggest cheerleader, Siew Hwa; his mother, Jennie; his daughters, Lori Al-Rawi, Leanne Silvestre and Brandy Ionikh; nine grandchildren; his sister, DD Clearman; many cousins, nieces and nephews; and many, many good friends.

Preceding him in death was his father, Paul Imeson.

Sparky said, “Happiness is an airplane on a clear day — and the time to go flying.”

Blue skies to all of you. Wow — what a ride!

Dr. Hugh Rogers



Dr. Hugh Rogers “reached the end of his earth's journey” on his birthday, April 1, 2009, due to injuries sustained in an airplane accident on the Hungry Horse Reservoir. Dr. Rogers was born in Concordia, Kan., on April 1, 1959, to Dr. Bob and Marjory Rogers.

He earned his Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine from Kansas State University in 1985 and practiced veterinary medicine in Jackson, Wyo., and Driggs, Idaho, before moving to the Flathead Valley and purchasing Alpine Animal Hospital in Whitefish in 1997.

Dr. Rogers was a highly respected and extraordinarily compassionate doctor to all creatures great and small. In fact, it was James Herriot's book “All Creatures Great and Small” that inspired Hugh to become a veterinarian. He had an unwavering commitment to help animals and their owners in need, regularly working on call 24/7 for extended periods of time and often without days off. He frequently used his personal time and resources to help strays and shelter animals.

Dr. Rogers was an avid outdoorsman and spent as much time as possible enjoying the wilderness of Montana. He transitioned out of this life doing one of the activities that brought him the most joy, flying his Maule M-4 plane. Rogers also combined his love of flying with his life's mission to serve those in need by devoting his plane and his piloting skills to Angel Flight, a program providing free flights to children and adults who lack medical access.

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Dr. Hugh Rogers, continued

Albert Schweitzer once said, “therefore search and see if there is not some place where you may invest your humanity.” As his family, friends and clients can attest, Dr. Rogers never had to search. He creatively, graciously and steadfastly invested his humanity in profound and lasting ways. He actively supported The Red Cross, Montana Food Bank, Kalispell Jaycees, Lighthouse Christian Home, Stumptown Art Studio, Whitefish Community Foundation, Backcountry Horseman, Human Therapy on Horseback and The Muttsack Veterinarian Relief Organization.

He is survived by his wife, Roxane Rogers, of Whitefish; his parents, Dr. Bob and Marjory Rogers, of Kansas; and his siblings, Emily Fehr and Clark Rogers. He is also survived by a wide circle of friends and the staff of Alpine Animal Hospital; and, of course, leaves behind his beloved pets, Dusty, Chester, Prince, Slick and Bambino.

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 2,200 copies of this public document at an estimated cost of 39 cents each, for a total cost of \$858. This includes \$465 for postage.



Administrator's Column, continued

Allegiant to connect Billings and Missoula with Los Angeles service: Beginning May 2, Allegiant Air will operate twice weekly between Missoula and Los Angeles International Airport and beginning May 20 between Billings and Los Angeles. Both communities currently receive Allegiant service to Phoenix-Mesa and Las Vegas. In February, for the second month in a row, Montana airports suffered a decrease in passenger numbers and it was expected for the trend to continue through March boardings.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009: The final version of the stimulus bill included \$1.1 billion to airports to be distributed as discretionary grants by FAA to airports with priority given to projects that can be completed within two years. As of March 27, funds have been programmed for seven Montana airports: Anaconda, \$1.5 million, runway rehab; Billings, \$1.4 million, taxiway rehab; Butte, \$358,933, runway lighting rehab; Great Falls, \$2.4 million, taxiway rehab; Helena, \$1 million, taxiway lighting rehab; Kalispell, \$250,000, taxiway rehab; and White Sulphur Springs, \$1.8 million, runway rehab.

2009 Montana VFR Aeronautical Chart

The 2009 edition of the Montana VFR Aeronautical Chart is now available from the Montana Aeronautics Division. The Chart provides detailed information on both public and private airstrips in Montana.

The current edition lists significantly more private airstrips than the previous version. A legal advantage for charting private use airports on the Chart is that an airstrip clearly listed on flight publications as being privately owned, not for public use without permission, having possible unreported hazards and landing at your own risk has less liability for the owner than an airstrip that is not charted but clearly identifiable from the air as an airstrip. An uncharted airport visible from the air could be construed as an invitation for public use.

Also new for this edition is a listing of private airstrips and contact numbers, with owners approval, on the reverse side of the Chart. This information is obtained primarily through the Private Airstrip Charting Form which is completed by private airstrip owners and submitted to the Aeronautics Division.

The MDT Aeronautics Division has already begun the task of gathering information for the next update of the Montana VFR Aeronautical Chart which is scheduled to come out in the year 2013. In order to accomplish this task accurately, the Division relies heavily on you to create the most accurate chart possible. To submit new or updated information for the next edition of the Chart, please let us know of any changes that need to be made by calling (406) 444-2506.

The Montana VFR Aeronautical Chart is published every four years. It is a supplement to, but does not replace, the civil aeronautical charts published by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) National Aeronautical Charting Office (NACO). NACO Charts are typically available for purchase from your local FBO, chart sales agents, or the FAA. Aeronautical information changes rapidly, and it is very important that pilots check the effective date on each aeronautical chart and other publications used. In addition, pilots should also check Notice to Airmen (NOTAMS) for changes essential to flight safety that may occur during the effective dates of charts or publications.

The MDT Aeronautics Division has Montana VFR Aeronautical charts for sale for \$5 each, which includes postage. To purchase a chart please send a written request along with payment MDT Aeronautics Division and mail it to MDT Aeronautics Division, PO Box 200507, Helena, MT 59620-0507. If you are in the Helena area, you are welcome to stop by the Aeronautics Division office at 2630 Airport Road to purchase a chart in person. The chart can also be viewed at www.mdt.mt.gov/aviation/. Under Pilot Services, click MT Aeronautical Chart.

Enjoy flying our Big Sky Country!

406 Helps Find Aircraft Crash in Record Time

The 406 MHz ELT was the important link in finding the aircraft crash site at Hungry Horse Reservoir on April 1-2, 2009.

This was Montana's first aircraft search using the 406 MHz ELT information. It was by far the quickest alert notice from AFRCC following a crash. The notice included information about the aircraft and the pilot, saving much time and effort as the search got underway. Furthermore, the initial coordinates given allowed searchers to focus their efforts in a much smaller area than previously possible.

MDT Aeronautics received a call from the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center (AFRCC), Tyndall Air Force Base at 4:50 p.m., MDT on April 1. The AFRCC officer informed MDT Aeronautics Division of a 406 MHz ELT signal transmitting to AFRCC at 4:40 p.m. local time. The information included latitude and longitude of the 406 MHz burst, the owners name and contact information, plus aircraft make, model and tail number.

With the information provided, MDT Aeronautics Division was able to immediately put search and rescue efforts in place. Ray Sanders, the volunteer district coordinator in the Kalispell area, was contacted, as was the Flathead County Sheriff's Department. The Sheriff's Department was quick to respond by launching an Alert Air Ambulance helicopter, Flathead County SAR and North Valley Rescue. Montana pilot Perry Brown, with training through the annual Mountain Search Pilot Clinic, responded on snowmobile, as conditions prevented flight by fixed wing aircraft.

Satellite monitoring of the 121.5 frequency ceased operations on February 1, 2009. The international satellite-based search and rescue distress detection and distribution is monitoring the digital 406 MHz, which is more accurate and supplies more information. The high number of false alarms from the 121.5 MHz ELT, plus lack of accuracy, prompted the worldwide SAR agencies to support the 406 MHz frequency.

Accuracy of the position information from a 406 MHz ELT is an average of one to three miles with the first satellite pass. If the 406 MHz is interconnected to the aircraft's GPS, the accuracy is within 300 feet.

This aircraft was found in eight hours within one mile of the 406 MHz ELT latitude and longitude provided. The searchers battled hard winter weather in heavy snow at night in a mountainous area. Travel could only be accomplished by snowmobile and snowshoes. The pilot of the aircraft did not file a flight plan with the FAA and was on a local flight, but the aircraft was equipped with a 406 MHz ELT.

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