



Montana students ACE this year's Aviation Career and Education (ACE) Academy

Fifteen junior high students explored aviation careers in a unique setting. The 2009 ACE camp was scheduled to coincide with the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds "Gateway to Freedom" Air Show.

This year's camp opened with Jim Greil of MDT Aeronautics introducing the students to many of the details that are associated with Montana's airports. The Helena Air Traffic Controllers welcomed the ACE students and informed them of the new job opportunities in air traffic control.

ACE students played a part of survival tactics, including emergency fire building, knot tying and survival signaling under the guidance of Dolan McDonald, US Forest Service lead pilot. Dr. Bill Gallea, an ER Doctor, from Helena set up a wilderness crash scenarios where students determined the survival priorities in an emergency situation. Then students signaled a search aircraft, that Mike Rogan from MDT Aeronautics Division was piloting, using signal mirrors and a distress signal made out of natural materials. The final feature of the day was when all participants were treated to delicious, high caloric, high energy, meals ready to eat (MREs).

Friday was divided between Exploration Works where students flew the glider simulator invented by a former ACE student, teenager, Sam Thompson of Helena and the Army Aviation facilities where the ACE students were treated royally by Jerry Sept and LT Col Tom Malee and the USAF Thunderbirds!

Saturday was like no other day for several of the students when they made their first orientation flight with the EAA Young Eagles flight program with EAA pilots, Jeanne MacPherson, Mike Nagele, Mike Rogan, Lance Seaman and



ACE students visited the Army Aviation Support Facilities in Helena, pictured here in front of a Chinook Helicopter.



Students received a hands on experience in the Black Hawk helicopter. Pictured (l-r) is Jaysen Foote, Lolo, MT and Evan Grabofsky, Malta, MT.

Clayton Wilhelm. Barry Watson was on hand with the Federal Aviation Administration's flight simulator.

Many thanks from the 2009 ACE Students and all of us at MDT Aeronautics Division to all of you who made this all possible! Montana's ACE camp has opened the doors of aviation to many students over the years.

See more photos on page 4 of the newsletter.

Administrator's Column

FAA Reauthorization: The Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee approved FAA reauthorization legislation. Before going to the Senate floor the Finance Committee must act on fuel taxes either at the current level or the increased level that was adopted by the House. Some differences in the bills: house term 4 years; senate 2 years; house AIP from \$3.9 billion to \$4.2 billion/year; senate \$4.0 billion first year and \$4.1 billion second year; AIP match house is 90% for small hub airports and below; senate is 95%; PRC ceiling house increases to \$7.00; senate remains at \$4.50; essential air service house \$175 million; senate \$200 million. If the senate bill passes, both bills will go to a conference committee to reconcile the differences.

Small Airport Relief Act: This legislation is designed to ensure federal funding remains intact at current levels for small regional airports. Airports that currently have 10,000 enplanements each year receive \$1 million in AIP grant funds while airports with less than 10,000 enplanements receive \$150,000 in grant funds. This legislation would provide for and protect the apportionment of funds to airports for fiscal years 2011 and 2012 based on passenger boardings during calendar year 2008 in order to prevent additional harm to airports already hurt by the financial crisis.

Small Community Air Service Development Grants: The U.S. Department of Transportation has announced this years program to provide financial assistance to small communities to help improve the community's air service or assist with airfare issues. Available funding is estimated to be \$8 million. Applications must be submitted no later than August 28. A copy of the order can be found at: http://ostpxweb.dot.gov/aviation/X-0%20Role_files/scasdp/09RFPOrderFinal071709.pdf

Cadillac cowboy: The Nelson ranch is located next to the Canadian border near Opheim. Travis and Cindi Nelson, both raised on ranches, were featured in the August issue of AOPA Pilot. The article tells the story of the efficiencies and necessity of owning and using an aircraft in a ranching operation, particularly when living in an isolated area. Travis also serves as chairman of the airport commission. Thanks Travis and Cindi for participating with AOPA, sharing your story and for all that you do for aviation in state of Montana. This is a must read — be sure to check out the entire story and watch the video at: http://www.aopa.org/members/files/pilot/2009/august/cowboy0908.html?WT.mc_id=ebrief%20

Take Pride in America: The Spotted Bear Ranger District was recently awarded a Take Pride in America Award. Take Pride in America®, is a nationwide partnership program authorized by Congress to promote the appreciation and stewardship of our nation's public lands. Individuals, groups, organizations, programs and federal land managers are honored for their contributions to our public lands and for their efforts in utilizing volunteers in creative and innovative ways. The Spotted Bear District consists of 1.2 million acres and is very remote. In 2008, the Spotted Bear Ranger District was able to attract over 13.5 Full Time Equivalents in volunteers. A remarkable feat considering the district has only twelve full time employees on staff. In order to promote this type of volunteerism the rangers go above and beyond their call of duty. The result is an atmosphere that welcomes public service and a district that plays host to a wide range of volunteers including



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Department of Transportation
Brian Schweitzer, Governor
Jim Lynch, Director

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Telephone - (406) 444-2506
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P.O. Box 200507
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Administrator's Column, continued

retired Forest Service employees, at risk youth groups, the National Association of Smokejumpers, the Back Country Horseman and the Montana Pilots Association. Working at this remote ranger district requires an extra commitment from all employees, it is something they are willing to give and it has truly enhanced the spirit of service and volunteerism. Deb Mucklow and Ted Wehunt travelled to Washington DC to receive the award from the U.S. Forest Service Chief and Deputy Secretary of the Interior. The Spotted Bear District is a very special place and home to the Spotted Bear, Meadow Creek and Schafer Meadows airstrips that we treasure. We are very fortunate to have Deb Mucklow as our District Ranger. Congratulations to Deb and her entire staff.



U.S. Forest Service Chief, Tom Tidwell, Deputy Secretary of the Interior, David Hayes, accepting the award, Rangers Ted Wehunt and Deb Mucklow, joining the Rangers, Executive Director of Take Pride in America, Lisa Young.

You've got to be very careful if you don't know where you are going, because you might not get there. – *Yogi Berra*

Ennis Airport Receives Prestigious Award



The Ennis Airport recently received an outstanding recognition award from the FAA Northwest Mountain Region which culminated with the conclusion of recent construction efforts which capped off over 20 years of outstanding development and planning efforts. Instrumental in the development were Madison County officials, Gary Gates of the Helena FAA Airports District Office and the engineering firm of Robert Peccia and Associates of Helena. Pictured here from left to right are Ennis airport manager Don McCune, Madison County commissioner Dave Hart, Airports Division Manager for the FAA's Northwest Mountain Region Donna Taylor and Helena FAA Airports District Office manager Dave Stelling.



Calendar of Events

September 11-13 – Mountain Search Pilot Clinic. For further information phone Jeanne MacPherson at (406) 444-9568 or email jemacpherson@mt.gov.

September 26-27 – Sidney Montana Airshow with the Canadian forces Snowbirds. Questions call Bryan Prevost at (406) 774-3033 or email bprevost@midrivers.com.

October 2, 2009, November 14, 2009 and 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.

Aviation Career Academy continued



Emergency locator training with Jeanne MacPherson, MDT Aeronautics Division.



ER Doctor Bill Gallea taught the students survival scenarios.



ACE Camp is a great way to meet new friends, pictured is (l-r) Brianna Villafane, Livingston, MT and Sidney Wilhelm, Helena, MT.



Dolan McDonald US Forest Service lead pilot (r) teaches students how to build a fire. Pictured here with Wyatt Lytton of Polson, MT.



Knot tying practice with Dolan McDonald, US Forest Service. The weather cooperated and offered a beautiful day for students to learn in the hands on outdoor activities.



Sidney Wilhelm at Exploration Works flying the glider simulator that former ACE student Sam Thompson invented.

Cascade County Holds Multi-Agency Exercise

Several groups recently held a full scale multi-agency exercise testing emergency response during a mass casualty incident of a Beechcraft King Air 350 that crashed in a remote wilderness area east of Great Falls. The exercise was designed to test and validate response and continuity plans, interoperable communications, command and control functions, unified command and emergency operations processes.

The mock scenario consisted of seven adult passengers on board the King Air. Condition of passengers and pilot was unknown. Witnesses include campers who heard the plane struggling and heard an impact nearby around Many Pines Campground.

An Incident Command Post (ICP) from Cascade County was deployed to Kings Hill Recreational Area parking lot, just off of Highway 89, 7-miles southeast of Neihart with Cascade County Search and Rescue acting as the Incident Commanders.

Aircraft operated out of Great Falls with limited staff. The exercise consisted of multiple missions to provide effective training for the mission staff, aircrews, and ground crews.

Agencies involved included: Civil Air Patrol; Cascade County/Meagher County Search and Rescue Teams; Cascade County/Meagher County Sheriffs Offices; U.S. Customs and Border Protection; Mounted horse posse; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; U.S. Forest Service; City of Belt Ambulance; Great Falls Emergency Services Ambulance; National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB); Search and Rescue volunteers for Montana Aeronautics Division, Department of Transportation; Neihart/Monarch Fire Departments. Cascade County Search and Rescue coordinator, Sam Stanley, organized this exercise. He brought together the agencies with much pre-planning.

The air operations were controlled by the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) high bird that monitored which aircraft would be in the search area. Another CAP aircraft and the Aeronautics aircraft took turns in the search area. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection aircraft monitored the crash site from altitude using specialized equipment. They provided information on the location of victims that had wandered off. CAP co-located their Com Van at the ICP and assisted with communications and agency liaison. The CAP com van was manned by Marty Surdahl and Dave Blakely. Aeronautics coordinator, Hugh Wilkins, was located at the ICP area. Pilot of the Aeronautics aircraft was J.C. Kantorowicz flying his Husky. Aircrews for CAP were Steve Balsom, Ed Olson, and Matt Glaser out of Great Falls and Bob Radcliffe, Al Nash, and Shelly Metzger out of Bozeman and Helena. They were flying C-182's.

A practice ELT was located at the crash site and each aircrew had a chance to locate it. The Becker ELT finder in the CAP aircraft worked extremely well in locating the crash site. Overall the exercise succeeded in establishing better working relationships between agencies and the outcome was very satisfactory. Thanks to all who gave their time to conduct this important event.



An aerial view of the command post.

Paper Pilot Certificates to Expire



Remember that the paper pilot certificates that you have in your wallet must be replaced by the new plastic certificates by March 31, 2010.

FAR 61.19(h) reads: (h) *Duration of pilot certificates.* Except for a temporary certificate issued under §61.17 or a student pilot certificate issued under paragraph (b) of this section, the holder of a paper pilot certificate issued under this part may not exercise the privileges of that certificate after March 31, 2010.

If your Social Security number is your pilot certificate number you can go to this link and download the form to get a new certificate without charge: http://www.faa.gov/licenses_certificates/airmen_certification/media/8060-56.pdf

If your pilot certificate does not contain your Social Security number, you have two options to obtain a new plastic certificate:

1. You can apply on-line by going to this link and the fee is \$2.00: <https://amsrvs.registry.faa.gov/amsrvs/ReqAcct.asp> or,
2. You can fill out the paper form and mail it to the Airman Registry and the fee is \$2.00. Go to this link for the form and address: http://www.faa.gov/licenses_certificates/airmen_certification/media/8060-56.pdf.

If you have questions concerning the process call your local FSDO office. You can also visit the above links by going to www.FAASafety.gov and view this Notice under the "FAASafety Notices" link.

Forest Service Underlines Importance of Backcountry Aviation



Following years of work and discussions, on July 2 Abigail Kimbell, Chief of the US Forest Service, signed a directive acknowledging the long and proud history of aviation use and airstrips on forest service lands, and asked USFS managers at all levels to inventory and maintain existing facilities, and to support aviation as an important recreational activity. This action resulted from meetings between representatives of the Recreational Aviation Foundation and senior Forest Service executives in Washington.

Similar to policy statements regarding other classes of the public and user groups such as hikers, anglers, and boaters, the memorandum states: “Aviation has been part of our country’s heritage, both as a mode of transportation and as a means of access to remote and scenic areas for a wide variety of purposes. Backcountry airstrips are an appropriate use of National Forest System lands as they provide enhanced access for a variety of legitimate recreational activities... Recreational aircraft and

backcountry airstrips can be an integral part of a balanced and efficient transportation system.”

From the earliest days of aviation, backcountry airstrips have provided support for forest managers, fire crews, and medical evacuation aircraft, in addition to recreationists.

Unlike other recreational facilities requiring hundreds of miles of roadways, airstrips require minimal disturbance of the natural landscape, while serving as internal trailheads. Airplanes do not have driven wheels so they do not churn up fragile landscapes the way other vehicles do. They are considered a low-impact use.

In addition the document notes the importance of existing and future mutually beneficial relationships with aviation groups, similar to those with other groups. It says, “Operation and maintenance of airstrips may provide opportunities for cooperative relationships under Challenge-Cost Share and other authorities. The recreation pilot communities are significantly engaged in providing funding, human resources, expertise, and equipment for backcountry airstrips on NFS lands. ... The use of volunteers in joint development of Russian Flat public airstrip on the Judith Ranger District, Lewis and Clark National Forest in Montana is an excellent example of cooperative development.”

The Recreational Aviation Foundation, devoted to the perpetuation and improvement of recreational aviation opportunities on both public and private lands, congratulated the Forest Service for its recognition of aviation’s importance, and also acknowledged the contributions of dozens of state, local, and other aviation groups in building and maintaining strong relationships with land management agencies, creating the foundation for a strong system of backcountry airstrips.

For further information please visit www.recreationalaviationfoundation.org.

NASA Announces \$1.5 Million Prize



NASA announced last week that as part of its Centennial Challenges program, it will fund a \$1.5 million prize for the first aircraft that can average at least 100 mph on a 200-mile flight while achieving greater than 200 passenger miles per gallon. A competition is scheduled for July 2011 in Santa Rosa, Calif., which will be hosted by the Comparative Aircraft Flight Efficiency (CAFE) Foundation. A variety of innovative experimental aircraft using electrical, solar, biofuel or hybrid propulsion are expected to enter, NASA said. Several major universities and aircraft builders have expressed their intention to enter teams in the challenge. The competition is expected to advance the development of technologies that will promote efficiency, conservation, and the use of zero-carbon energy sources, according to NASA’s news release. This is the largest prize ever offered for a general aviation competition, according to CAFE.

A \$150,000 prize for best score by a bio-fueled aircraft is also offered, as well as an honorary achievement prize of \$153,000, which may be awarded to the top competitor if nobody takes the top prize. Teams must pay a fee of \$4,000 to \$8,000 and submit a design proposal to register for the competition with CAFE. Team leaders must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident. CAFE said a maximum of 18 competitors will be accepted. Wingspan for competing aircraft is limited to 44 feet, so they can fit inside the CAFE Flight Test Center hangar for weighing (wing folding or tip removal is an option). The hangar parameters also restrict aircraft height to 13 feet and length to 23 feet.

A Lot Accomplished At Del Bonita Work Session

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



Thanks to the many volunteers that assist in keeping these airstrips in tip top shape. Pictured are (l-r) Wayne Wilderman, Don Althen, Debbie Alke, Wade Cebulski, Jim Greil.

On Saturday July 11, 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 by participants from both sides of the border, and as usual, the Alberta Flying Farmers also provided participants with the always wonderful grilled burgers and hot dogs. It is always so nice to see our good friends

from North of the border. Our administrator Debbie Alke and I flew our Division’s Cessna 206 up there on a fine and sunny day and were happy to see so many other aircraft in attendance. The MDT Aeronautics Division always provides a multitude of tools and “gopher bombs” for the runway maintenance work. After some initial hellos and chit chat, the group traveled down the runway to perform the maintenance. During the middle of our work, we had an unexpected surprise as a very nice looking Pilatus aircraft operated by our friends at the Department of Homeland Security’s Northern Border Air Wing out of Great Falls did 2 impromptu low level passes over the runway. That sure is a nice aircraft! Once again, we filled badger and gopher holes, using poison smoke to kill the pesky rodents, replaced damaged runway cones, cleared weeds, marked and spray painted obstructions and other general upkeep. After working long and hard in an unusually 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 Customs, Alberta Flying Farmers, Nav Canada, Montana Pilots Association, as well as a spiel from our administrator Debbie Alke. Don Althen from Alberta was the emcee for the event. 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. One of the first to depart was our friend Garfield Jermanson who gave us a quick and clean airshow of his own in his RV 8. I know it’s a whole year till the next one, but I’m already looking forward to it again. Our many thanks to the participants this year, including Bram Tilroe, Wayne Wilderman, Jerry Siegel, Tom Wrobel, Dave Ries, Wade and Gennette Cebulski, Jim and Marilyn Lewis and the many, many others whose names now escape me. A very special thank you goes out to Don Althen and his family, who put a lot of time and work into this event and even went so far as to arrange and pay for the mowing of the airport to make our time there especially nice. Thanks again Don! And thanks so much to all of our participants for your time and volunteerism for a great gathering and a wonderful event.

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 from the air can be somewhat daunting as the international border can be harder to find than you think. Landing at 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. Although it sounds easy, it is actually 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 most common mistake is traveling few miles too far north and looking in the Canadian town of Whetstone for the airstrip. 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. There is a unicom located at the customs office, but is only occasionally monitored. 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 apron tie-down side depending on which country you are coming from. Call the Division for more information and we’ll see you there next year...ehh!

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General Aviation Airplane Shipments Continue to Decline

The General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA) released the industry's second quarter shipment and billings figures. In the first half of 2009, total general aviation (GA) airplane shipments fell 45.9 percent, from 1,918 units in 2008 to 1,037 units this year. Industry billings are down 22.7 percent, to a total of \$9.26 billion.

"These are extremely challenging times for all general aviation manufacturers and suppliers. Layoffs continue and our industry has been forced to slow, and in some cases, temporarily halt production lines," said GAMA President and CEO, Pete Bunce. "We are encouraged that the overall economic picture is showing some signs of improvement, which is a crucial condition for recovery in the general aviation market. Flight hours are stabilizing, used inventories are beginning to shrink, and our manufacturers are seeing signs of renewed interest in airplane purchases. We are also encouraged by reports that accelerated depreciation, passed by Congress earlier this year, is stimulating some new orders. Even though it is too early to distinguish these indications as a trend, we are hopeful that this momentum will continue through the second half of the year."

Piston-powered airplane shipments totaled 434 units compared to 1,034 units delivered in the first half of 2008, a 58 percent decrease. Turboprop shipments decreased 13.6 percent from 221 units in the first six months last year to 191 units in 2009. Business jet shipments totaled 412 units, a 37.9 percent decrease over the 663 units delivered during this same period in 2008.

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