



MSO GA NEWS



MSO GA NEWS • Fall 2006 • Electronic edition

Editor's note: This "electronic edition" is unedited, compared to the edited version for print publication.

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New Airport Website Up and Running

Chris Hart – Flymissoula.com

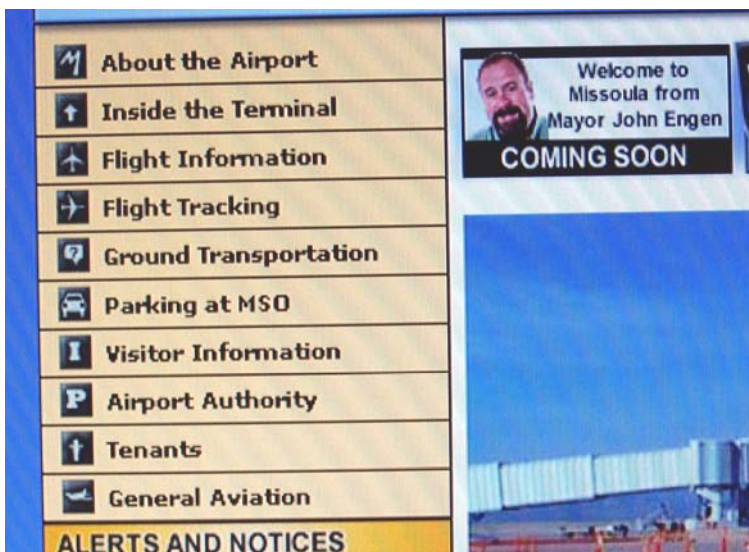
Missoula International Airport officially unveiled its new website this summer, providing travelers, pilots, and aviation enthusiasts with a vastly improved internet resource for information about the airport, airlines, terminal services, and businesses. The new site, www.flymissoula.com, features all new graphics, a video greeting from Missoula Mayor John Engen, and a live webcam that users can control from the comfort of their own homes. The Missoula Airport Tower Cam features full pan and tilt capabilities, a 26 power optical zoom, and infrared night vision.

Looking for web links? Flymissoula.com has a growing collection of links for the City of Missoula, major aircraft manufacturers, Montana airports, aviation newsletters, local and national media, FBO line service departments, air traffic control, state and federal aviation offices, and even the new Microsoft Flight Simulator X for all the virtual pilots out there.

Aviation enthusiasts will enjoy reading a detailed chronological account of Missoula's fascinating aviation history. The new site also provides users with quick facts, answers to frequently asked questions, a media guide, parking information, a tenant directory, and downloadable forms and publications, including the recently completed Hanger Lease Agreement. For young aviators, Flymissoula.com even allows children to download and print airplane coloring pages or learn about the Missoula Airport.

Local and transient pilots will find the new website much more informative with the addition of an entire section devoted to the general aviation community. Pilots can now look up communication frequencies, find useful information about the airport, and even listen to the Missoula air traffic control tower live on the web. Pilots new to the Missoula area can learn about our FBO's, find a hotel room, and learn about Missoula's recreational and business opportunities.

Although the new website already has plenty of new features to offer, the Airport plans to continue to make additional improvements throughout the fall and winter months. There's a lot more yet to come, and Flymissoula.com would enjoy hearing from you. To report any errors or problems, or to make a suggestion to help improve the site, please send an email to askmso@flymissoula.com.



Airport Director Updates Ongoing Projects at MSO

From a 10/26/06 phone interview with Cris Jensen, Airport Director

1. Runway 29-11. The **localizer antennas** are being relocated, by FAA mandate. They will be moved outside the 1000 foot runway safety area. The area east of the approach end of Runway 29 is being excavated and filled so the antenna can be installed at the same elevation as the runway. Excavation will be completed this year. Antenna relocation will be done when the resurfacing of Runway 29-11 takes place next year (summer 2007).



Localizer relocation.

Judy Matson photo

2. The new **self fueling area** is ready for use at the “weather pad” near Taxiway Golf. Pilots may bring their own fuel onto the airport in an approved container and transfer it in the self fueling area using approved methods (*Remember not to confuse your aircraft fuel tank with the one for your chainsaw!*). The Airport offers orientation and instruction for new users. Interested pilots are invited to contact the Airport office.



Self fueling area.

Judy Matson photo

3. **Terminal Expansion.** The purpose of the expansion is to relocate the security checkpoint and reduce the bottleneck caused by passengers emplaning and deplaning at the same spot, as they do currently. Passengers will go from ticketing to the security checkpoint in the new addition and from there directly to their gates. The new facility is expected to be completed by January.



Photo courtesy of Chris Hart, www.flymissoula.com

4. **Ramp paving** near Minuteman maintenance is done.

5. A major share of the funding for the **new control tower project** has been obtained, and additional funding proposals are being pursued. The tower may be in design stages by summer, 2007.
6. **General aviation hangars.** Once Airport Primary Guiding Documents revision is complete and accepted by the Authority, GA pilots will be able to know the terms and costs that will apply to constructing and maintaining GA hangars at MSO. This winter may be the time when pilots can finally gather and evaluate costs and building options. Summer 2007 may be the time when construction can begin.



Photo courtesy of Chris Hart, www.flymissoula.com (terminal expansion link)
Cris Jensen, Missoula Airport Director, explains where airplanes go when they leave Missoula.

News from Nearby Airports

From the Montana Division of Aeronautics Newsletter *Montana and the Sky*

For the complete online library of Aeronautics newsletters, go to <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/mdt/organization/aeronautics.shtml>, select “Publications” and “Newsletters”

September 2006 edition: **Lincoln airport** dedication; **Kalispell City Airport** new noise abatement procedures.

October 2006 edition: **Plains** has a new runway and a new “Super AWOS” for current weather information by aircraft radio, telephone, or Internet <http://www.superawos.com/>

MSO Board General Aviation Committee

From notes by Paul Stafford, GA Committee Chair

The GA committee continues to make progress on several fronts:

- 1) Airport staff, counsel and the GA committee met with the GA Pilot Advisory Committee to discuss the updating of the General Guiding Documents. This is necessary to make it conform to the principles and structure of the Lease agreement we have already finished. We anticipate that after one or two more meetings we will have a draft ready for legal and commission review and sign off. Once that happens, we will be able to lease land to hangar builders! With two months left in the year, my goal is to have it approved by the end of this year.

- 2) Cris and I are meeting with the Forest Service to discuss a potential campground on the airport grounds, located on FS land near Butler Creek and Alpha taxiway. We are in very early stages, but we are hopeful.
- 3) I am now co-chair (with Cris Jensen) of the 2007 Montana Aviation Conference to be held at the new Hilton garden Inn. We are working on speakers, themes and logos. It promises to be a great event, watch for details soon.
- 4) On other fronts, not as much progress. We still don't have ATIS after hours. We're working with the FAA to get a switch installed that will allow ASOS weather (now available by phone 728-3743) to be broadcast after the tower closes. As for the new approaches, we are still on the FAA's schedule for review next spring. We hope to get some new missed approach procedures which, utilizing LOC BC guidance, will allow a lower DA on the std ILS, and perhaps some WAAS approaches. My secret FAA agenda (idea courtesy of Rob Bell) is to get KONNA or NAGOZ renamed GRIZZ!
- 5) We had a great showing at the Plains Airport event a week or two ago. The place looks great.
- 6) Cris and I are planning a tour of GA airports for the Airport Commissioners so they can see what is happening at more active GA airports such as Bozeman and Helena (where successful commercial development of airport land is happening today). We hope to accomplish this using several GA airplanes- a sort of commissioner airlift. This field trip will let the Commissioners see for themselves how it all works.
- 7) Personally, I am flying a good deal, and remarkably, not encountering much weather. I'll need to get some actual soon to be ready for winter.

The Art of Flying: "Where have all the Pilots gone?"

By Art Dykstra, CFII

The latest FAA numbers show a 31% decline in Student Pilot startups since last year. The numbers have me wondering, is it because of a lack of interest in Aviation? I don't think so. Try this at the next party you attend. Mention that you are a pilot, and see what kind of response you get. I would bet that you will have several people asking you questions about flying and how you got started. Even the people that are afraid of flying will be interested.

So, that tells me that we (us Pilots) haven't done a very good job of promoting aviation to our friends and neighbors. I think a big part of the problem is that Aviators fall into two very distinct groups. Those that just want to be Pilots, and those that want to learn to fly.

The first group is more concerned with the title of being a pilot, than actually learning how to fly. You can spot them early in the flight training process, they show up with every excuse you can imagine why they didn't read their Flight Training manual, can't remember anything from the last lesson, and the most asked question is "When will I solo?". Group number two, the "learn to fly group", is a joy to fly with. Quite often they are not the most "natural" pilots, but they show up ready to fly. They are self starters, have read through all of the books and understand that ultimately they are responsible for their own success.

The problem with these two groups is the wrong one is more apt to invite a friend of neighbor to go flying. And that's what we need to fix.

Scenario #1: Joe (or Jane) Pilot, loads up the neighbor and his kids for their first small airplane ride on a hot summer afternoon. He will skip the weather brief and the preflight, and launch for the \$150.00 hamburger 100+ miles away. Half way there the kids are nauseous from the heat, up drafts and Pilot induced yaw (he never really understood those stupid rudder pedals). But at least they have a greasy burger waiting for them when they get there. On the way back, he

buzzes their house and then executes a bone jarring carrier landing to finish off the flight. It's no wonder the neighbor won't be back!

Scenario #2: Our true Aviator watches the weather for a calm morning or late evening departure, picks a route that is of interest to the passengers and keeps the flight short. A good briefing on the ground, shallow coordinated turns, along with basic information on how the airplane works, gives passengers a great ride and leaves a positive impression. Save the "War Stories" for someone else and check with your passengers to see how they are doing.

You may only have one chance to make a good impression on a prospective pilot, so do every thing you can to make the flight as perfect as you can. I think the best compliment a pilot can receive is for someone to say "That looked pretty easy!" And it's true. If you do your homework and fly the airplane the way it is supposed to be flown, it really is not that difficult.

The EAA and AOPA both have great programs that encourage people to start flying. You can also be an Ambassador to Aviation by finding people who are interested in flying, and helping them to enjoy it as much as we do.



Be the Mentor you wish you could have had (or, are glad you had)!



Missoula Pilot Receives International Award from Helicopter Association International

From notes received from John Quackenbush

John Quackenbush has lived in Missoula for the past 18 years and flew for Life Flight at St. Pat's for 10 years from 1989 through 1999. He now fights fires in the summer and flies Heli-skiing in the winter. He received an international award from HAI.

"Alexandria, Va., December 22, 2005 – HAI is pleased to announce that Mr. John Quackenbush, Pilot, Hillcrest Aircraft Company, Lewiston, Idaho, and Helicopter Express, Atlanta, Georgia, is the recipient of the 2005 Robert E. Trimble Memorial Award. This award honors pilots who have displayed exceptional ability and good judgment, and have distinguished themselves in mountain flying."

"Quackenbush has logged over 16,000 total flight hours in mountainous terrain in the western United States, over 13,000 of those hours in helicopters. He flies with a demonstrated commitment to safety, and HAI is proud to present him with the Robert E. Trimble Memorial Award."



Mann Gulch DC-3 Dedicated by the Museum of Mountain Flying

By Gary Matson

Fire etched an indelible place in history for the "Mann Gulch DC-3," NC-24320. The airplane dropped 15 smokejumpers on the fire near Gates of the Mountains, by Helena, on

August 5, 1949. Ten of the jumpers died when the fire blew up, creating the tragedy recorded in Norman Maclean's book *Young Men and Fire*. The sacrifices of these men were honored in a ceremony on Sunday, October 15th, 2006, when Museum of Mountain Flying President John Seeberger dedicated the airplane to them.

The ceremony gave the public a chance to admire the restored DC-3, which sported a polished exterior and its original paint scheme. Sharing in the admiration were not only former pilots and mechanics who kept the airplane flying for Missoula-based Johnson Flying Service but also many of the volunteers who labored long and hard during the restoration.

Although the DC-3 is best known because of the Mann Gulch fire, it has a rich lore of other stories. On December 22, 1954 it ran out of fuel and was ditched in the Monongahela River, near Pittsburgh, killing 10 of the 23 soldiers being transported home for Christmas. Johnson Flying Service mechanics pulled the airplane from the river, repaired it, and returned it to service.

Mo and Esta Owen were present for the airplane's dedication. Mo piloted the DC-3 on a charter that departed from Williston, North Dakota, and was served in flight by its stewardess, Esta. Engine preheating had been difficult in the forty below zero weather, and without enough preheat the oil congealed in one engine, causing it to fail. The prop could not be feathered, because the mechanism was in the wheel wells and inoperative in the cold. The loaded airplane struggled to remain aloft with its full load and a windmilling, drag-producing prop. Esta recounts their very good fortune to be able to make Bismarck and a safe landing. Johnson Flying Service mechanics brought a new engine from Missoula, and restored the airplane to service.



Mo and Esta Owen attended the October 15th dedication

Other stories abound, but a surprising one had a back country destination with MSO hay as a cargo. Hay baled at the airport grounds was loaded onto the DC-3 and hauled to the backcountry airstrip at Moose Creek. The Forest Service needed the hay for their stock. Mechanic Don Micknak describes worming his way from the cargo door forward along the stacked bales to reach his post in the cockpit.

The list of contributors to the airplane's restoration is long. Perhaps it begins with Dick Komberec's incidental discovery while he was piloting a Delta Airlines flight to Memphis, Tennessee. Dick saw from the air an unidentified DC-3 across the river in West Memphis, Arkansas. He later discovered, to his great surprise, that it was NC-24320, which he had himself flown. Museum of Mountain Flying members enthusiastically received Dick's news, and helped by some large donations were able to raise the \$125,000 purchase. Dick Komberec, Gary Coleman, and Stan Cohen traveled to Memphis and purchased the airplane from McNeely Charter Service, who has used it to haul cargo. Subsequently, Dick, Rick Nash, and Ian Marquand made a round trip to West Memphis and returned in the DC-3 flown by 2 McNeely pilots. Beginning in the summer of 2002, Chub Riggelman and El Williams ramrodded the first years of restoration work, which has been carried forward more recently by Rick Nash. The airplane has undergone a thorough nose to tail cleaning and polishing, replacement of hundreds of screws, and paneling of the interior. Repairs have been made to cowlings, ailerons, hydraulics, and other systems. The engines were low time when the airplane was purchased, and

no major work on them is expected.

Along the way, there have been ups and downs (literally, some of them on very high ladders) but Stan Cohen surmises that the best experience of all was the dedication, when all those NC-24320 restorers, pilots, and mechanics got together to share with the rest of us in celebrating the uniquely rich history of this workhorse Douglas aircraft. The future? Well, the hope is to fly the airplane but a lot of “preheating” will be required in the form of operating costs and insurance. One idea is to put the airplane on the air show circuit, advertising Montana at each stop. Although resources might be a little scarce, there is no scarcity of Missoula pilots who want to fly it and likely plenty of eager passengers as well.

The author thanks Stan Cohen, John Seeberger, and Zane Rebenstorff for helping with this story. The Missoulian has an excellent story in the Monday, October 16th, 2006 edition (www.missoulian.com). Honored smokejumpers, donors, and restorers are listed on the plaque by the aircraft.



Restoration crew, NC-24320. Standing, front row: Mel Guerrero, Don Micknack, Ken Roth, Ron McCann, Mo Owen, Dale Gyles, Bill Bordner. **Stairs, top:** John Gisselbrecht. **Stairs, 2nd row from top:** Chub Riggelman, Alex Polakow. **Stairs, 3rd row from top:** Rick Nash, Jim Corn. **Not pictured:** Ron Anderson, Ron Bedwell, Art Dykstra, Ralph Johnson, Don Miser, Doug Ruffatto, Zane Rebenstorff, Steve Schwartz, Bob Snebereger, Frank Tremper, Ellis Williams



Pilots, crew, mechanics of NC-24320, present at the October 15th, 2006 dedication. L to R. Mel Guerrero, Fred Gerlach, Chuck Breslin, Bernie Wryn, Esta Owen, Mo Owen, Dick Komberec, Max Meltzer, Don Micknak, Chub Riggleman, Garth Good, Ken Roth, Chuck Burruss, Dale Gyles

Missoula EAA Chapter 517 and MPA Five Valleys Hangar News

Notes from Sherry and Steve Rossiter

Monday, November 20th – **EAA meeting**; 7:00 PM; MSO conference room. **MPA** will not meet in November.

Sunday, December 17th – **EAA/MPA Christmas party** at The Inn on Broadway (1609 W. Broadway) in Missoula (EAA 517 had their holiday party here last year and the food was positively outstanding). A no-host bar opens at 6:00 PM and dinner will be served at 6:30 PM. The dinner, which will be served buffet style, consists of roast pork loin with cranberry stuffing, chicken Marsala, roasted vegetable medley, rosemary garlic potatoes, and a green garden salad. The cost of the dinner is \$20 per person. Please mail your check to Sherry Rossiter, P.O. Box 16446, Missoula, MT 59808, **by December 11th**.

Entertainment at the **Christmas party** will again be a voluntary "white elephant" gift exchange. Examples of coveted (i.e., desirable) gifts from the past included a plate of freshly baked cookies or homemade fudge, a book about aviation, or a bottle of wine. Examples of less desirable or gag gifts include a copy of last year's calendar, tacky earrings, and broken airplane parts. Everyone choosing to participate in the gift exchange will draw a number. When your number is called, you will come forward to select the gift package you want to open. If you are happy with your gift, you can sit down. If you are not happy with your gift, you may exchange it for another gift that someone else has already opened. Believe it or not, this gift exchange never fails to provide plenty to laugh about.

Monday, January 8 – **Five Valleys Chapter election of officers** 7:00 PM, MSO conference room: MPA.

Saturday, January 27 – 12:00 to 3:00 PM; EAA chapter hangar on the Stevensville Airport; **3rd Annual Mid-Winter Chili Feed & Silent Auction**. Over 10 different varieties of chili will be offered to excite the palate and many non-aviation items will be available for silent bidding. Proceeds from the Silent Auction help support the chapter's aviation education programs for both youth and adults. At least one homebuilt child's "pedal plane" will be auctioned off at this event. If you have new or used items, such as hand-crafted items, framed artwork, or gift certificates for dining or services to donate for the auction, please contact Sherry Rossiter at ssrossiter@aol.com or call 542-5177.

Summer, 2007 – EAA will once again offer two weeklong sessions of the **Aviation Youth Academy** for children ages 10-13. Session 1 will be July 9-13 and Session 2 will be July 16-20. On the last day of the Academy, each child will be given a complimentary airplane flight by an EAA member. More information will be available after January 1 at www.eaa517.org

Fly the Big Sky license plates are now available through regular county motor vehicle licensing departments. For each license purchased, EAA Chapter 517 receives \$20 to further its activities promoting aviation. The additional cost for the specialty plate with standard numbers is about \$30, and for the personalized plate about \$60. Plates can be ordered at any time without affecting the renewal cycle. Standard renewal rates apply, with the specialty plate cost being added.



Saturday Fly-outs

Notes from Gary Weyermann's EAA Chapter 517 October Newsletter

For the last couple months the Saturday Fly-outs have been few and far between because of weather, TFRs, and other reasons but Saturday, September 30th was to be the exception. The weather forecast looked very good, no home Grizzly game, a Short Wing Piper Fly-out to West Fork Lodge for breakfast and a visit a Fly-out to Priest River for breakfast followed by a flight to Dr. Forrest Bird's airport to tour his very interesting aircraft collection and hear him speak about some of his many experiences, projects, and life.

In all about 6 aircraft bounced and clawed their way across the Montana Idaho boarder to Priest River (1S6). Following breakfast, the group flew 24 miles east to Dr. Forrest Bird's airport (ID 19) on Lake Pend Oreille, where he keeps his collection of aircraft, Bird medical respirator factory, training headquarters, and soon to be completed aviation, medical and inventors' museum.

Dr. Bird has had a fascinating career. In the military he flew every type of aircraft in the inventory from 1940 thru the F4, and remained on flight status until he was 65. He Studied Aeronautics in college (this was before there was Aeronautical Engineering) and later got a medical degree and A&P license. He developed, patented, and manufactured the Bird respirator. Now at 85 he is still going strong and doing more than you would believe – and he still has time to spend a Saturday afternoon with a bunch of weekend fliers! After all the tours, he took us down to his Lodge and served us snacks, and told more stories about all the memorabilia in that building. What a bunch of really nice people, Dr. Bird, his wife, and a couple employees, and

neighbor volunteers who were there just help while we were there. Really sorry for those who were not there three years ago or this year, but you still have an opportunity coming up.

All good visits have to come to an end and it was time for all to head back home with memories.

Mark your calendar for 7/7/07 (NOW!) and keep it open for a “Do Not Miss Fly-out Opportunity”. Details will be coming later.

WE'RE ON YOUR FREQUENCY

MSO GA News thanks Chris Hart, Art Dykstra, Sherry Rossiter, Steve Rossiter, Gary Weyermann, and Paul Stafford for contributing to this newsletter! If you'd like to earn cash in your spare time, write for something else. But... if you have something interesting to write about for free we'd like to put it in the newsletter and share it with the Missoula aviation community! Long (about 500 words), short, funny, serious... whatever. The next issue will be coming in the fall quarter. Interested in contributing? Contact the editor (see below).

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MISSOULA AVIATION WEB SITES

Missoula International Airport: <http://www.flymissoula.com>

Minuteman Aviation: <http://www.minutemanaviation.com>

Neptune Aviation: <http://www.neptuneaviation.com>

Northstar Air Express: <http://www.northstarmso.com>

Life Flight: <http://www.saintpatrick.org/index.php?view=lifeflight.main>

EAA Chapter 517: <http://www.eaa517.org>