



# MISO GA NEWS



Spring, 2007

## Airport to Close Runway 11-29 This Summer

*“Rolling closures” in effect while runway gets upgrades after 15 years of heavy use*

By Chris Hart—flymissoula.com

The Missoula County Airport Authority will close one of the two runways at Missoula International Airport this summer in order to complete a major pavement reconstruction project. Beginning Monday, Aug. 27, Runway 11-29, the primary arrival and departure runway, will experience a series of three rolling closures until construction is complete in September.

### *Due for rehab*

Constructed in the 1940's, Runway 11-29 was last rehabilitated in 1992. Now, after 15 years of heavy use and weathering, the facility is scheduled for another major rehabilitation.



*Constructed in the 1940's, Runway 11-29 was last rehabilitated in 1992.*

### *Extensive work planned during closures*

The \$6 Million Runway 11-29 Reconstruction Project will involve milling off the existing surface and repaving the entire 9,501 foot length of the runway with an estimated 31,000 tons of asphalt. Construction will also include relocation and replacement of several navigational aids, as well as utilities, signage, grading and drainage. Finally, an advanced new high intensity runway lighting (HIRL) system will be installed.

Runway 7/25 will remain open during the construction cycles but with the necessary intermittent short term closures. The ILS and VASI will be operational during hours of airport ops and there should be no need for displaced thresholds.

Runway 11-29 will be closed to all aircraft during the week as construction progresses; however the runway will re-open for the weekends and Labor Day. Upon completion, Runway 11-29 will resume normal operations at 6AM on Friday, September 14. To meet this schedule, construction crews will be working 24 hours a day. There will be an additional 6 night closures needed in mid Oct. to accommodate grooving operations.

### *Airline flights to be cancelled; light aircraft moved to 7-25*

The runway closure will result in the cancellation of many regularly scheduled airline flights during the rolling closures. All passengers are encouraged to monitor the status of their flights with the airline upon which they are traveling, or make alternate travel plans. All light aircraft flight patterns into and out of the airport will be shifted to Runway 7-25 during the first and third closures, and helicopters will still be able to use the airport during this timeframe. Pilots are encouraged to check NOTAM's daily regarding runway closures during the entire construction project. Pilots can also receive information by listening to Missoula ATIS on 126.65 MHz.

### *There's never a good time to close an airport.....*

Airport officials realize there's never a good time to close an airport, and as part of the effort to keep the public informed and minimize inconvenience to travelers, the airport has launched a major multi-media campaign. The Airport is also working closely with community leaders to keep them informed of progress on the project. Airport users are encouraged to monitor local newspapers

and television media for current information. For more information about the Runway 11-29 reconstruction, as well as other upcoming projects, go to <http://www.flymissoula.com>.



Construction is scheduled to begin at 8PM on Monday, August 27, 2007 with a series of three rolling closures over the following three-week duration of the project. This will consist of 3 days on and 3 days off for 3 cycles. The schedule will be:

Aug 27 close at 8pm	Sept 4 close at 8pm	Sept 10 close at 8pm
Aug 31 open at 6am	Sept 7 open at 6am	Sept 14 open at 6am

Runway 7/25 will remain open during the construction cycles but with the necessary intermittent short term closures.

## FLIGHT SERVICE STATION CHANGES

Reported in the Aeronautics Division newsletter *Montana and the Sky*, April edition

Great Falls FSS services are being transferred to Denver (6AM to 10PM) and to Prescott, Arizona (10PM to 6AM). Phone numbers and frequencies remain unchanged. Pilots may either make their radio calls as before (for example “Great Falls radio...”) or may simply call flight service using the appropriate frequency from a chart or airport guide and giving the current location of their aircraft. Without a location, Flight Service will not be able to respond with a specialist familiar with that area.

## New MSO Aviation Web Page Online

By Hank Butzel

The Missoula Weather Service has a new aviation web page on their internet site. Check it out! We can now access all our weather observation and forecast needs via our own local weather service. There are links that take you to the National Aviation Weather Center, the ADDS (Aviation Digital Data Service) and other weather info. There's even a soarcast for glider pilots.

I visited with forecaster Andrew Church who has put together this web service for us. Andy transferred up to Missoula several years ago from SLC. While at the WX Service in Salt Lake he had worked with forecasters who were also pilots and became familiar with the aviation weather needs of the pilot community. Thinking that the new weather page could be related to FAA's budget tightening, I asked if this is a national trend for the NWS to be providing more aviation services. Andy says no; this was a local idea to support the aviation community.

Mr. Church, who also happens to be the Missoula Weather Service webmaster, is looking for input and any ideas from pilots who'd like additional info added to the aviation page. He can be contacted at the webmaster link at the bottom of the web page or at 329-4840. The URL for Missoula Wx Service is <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/mso/aviation/>

With the continuing consolidation of FAA's Flight Services and the loss of GTF FSS, we're lucky to have these folks working for us. There's a great crew working at the Missoula NWS and I'd recommend a visit. There's a lot of cool equipment and stuff out there to check out and I'm looking forward to my next visit.

Local and Regional Terminal Aerodrome Forecasts (TAFs)

<a href="#">Missoula (MSO)</a>	<a href="#">Coeur d'Alene (COE)</a>	<a href="#">Helena (HLN)</a>	<a href="#">Havre (HVR)</a>
<a href="#">Glacier Park (GPI)</a>	<a href="#">Spokane (GEG)</a>	<a href="#">Bozeman (BZN)</a>	<a href="#">Lewistown (LWT)</a>
<a href="#">Butte (BTM)</a>	<a href="#">Spokane-Felts Field (SFE)</a>	<a href="#">Livingston (LVM)</a>	<a href="#">Billings (BIL)</a>
<a href="#">Salmon (SMN)</a>	<a href="#">Great Falls (GTF)</a>	<a href="#">Cutbank (CTB)</a>	<a href="#">Glasgow (GGW)</a>

The TAF section of the new weather site allows the user to quickly get a TAF by clicking on any of these nearby airports. Under the table of choices, there is a section explaining TAF and METAR terminology.

# And Now: Flight Simulator X

By Larry Hart

Human flight. An amazing concept. Flight Simulators. A newer amazing concept. Flight simulators began in France 1910. Scaled down versions of real aircraft were used to put a pilot into the cockpit of a warplane to give them the feel of the controls. Then Bruce Artwick in America introduced us to a shocker in 1979. If you had a primitive Apple 2 computer, you could fly airplanes (sort of) on your desktop! No gravity! If you crash; you're fine. Hmm, good. It was called Flight Simulator 1 (FS1). A big celebration for pilot wannabe's on a budget. Now your likelihood of realism at the time, with the probable 1 or 2 frames per second, and simple line drawings of the ground and mountains was a bit slim; but it got us off the ground, so to speak.

Microsoft has been the undisputed leader in FS for the masses with the rapid development of 12 (some say 13) total versions of it since 1979, each one better than the one before. Today, after 28 years of development, we have a truly good new Flight Simulator for our dual core computers, FSX; called so because they decided it was the X or 10<sup>th</sup> version, or FS10, even though it was actually the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> version.... go figure these guys, I mean, if they can't get their numbers right, how am I supposed to trust the altitude and heading on their instruments, huh? But I can, because the new version is quite good, and if you're a wannabe, or a real world pilot, you will be very impressed. But be warned, have a very fast new computer, with a top of the line video card, because they "forward-engineered" this one so we can push it to it's fullest in about 2 or 3 years from now.

I've been in Delta Virtual Airlines, ([www.deltava.org](http://www.deltava.org)) an online flight simulator enthusiast group, for 6 years, and over 4,300 members have joined us so far. There are many virtual airlines online, anyone can join them, some are friendlier than others, and all were made possible only because of Flight Simulators. Virtual airlines are sim-pilot heaven. Those who join are everyday folks, real world private or commercial pilots, some military, some going into NASA shuttle training and need the practice. We all share the same joy of flight. You can take it very seriously too. In a virtual airline, you can train, test, browse a flight schedule and fly it by yourself, or join in a group flight online, you can even use a headset with microphone and talk to air traffic controllers real-time, or to your pilot buddies during a flight, then turn in a pilot report when you're done. You can post messages about any sort of sim or piloting comment or question. You can also have a lot of fun, and get a lot of help. It's a rare, unusual, quality bunch of folks and pilots who have a lot on the ball, and are very passionate about their lives.

For the most part, FSX is highly praised. It is a good improvement over FS2004, and extremely realistic in all respects: the ground scenery is stunning, there's default or downloadable real-time weather, flight training lessons in the Deluxe version, 24,000 airports worldwide, and a wide variety of very realistic aircraft ranging from a sailplane to helicopters to twin engine Beechcraft to Boeing and Airbus jets. The aircraft models are highly detailed; I've found myself staring at some of the screen shots the guys have posted and taking some time to realize it was actually the simulator and not a real aircraft scene. It's that good. The cockpits can be viewed in 2-D where you have a static panel always in front of you and you click open different panels as needed... or you can view a cockpit as "virtual", where you can pan around to all parts of it with a hat switch on your yoke or joystick. You can also view from several positions outside the aircraft, or see a "flyby" of your plane in action. This new sim also includes 50 + missions you can use to hone your skills, such as rescuing workers on a burning oil platform, or flying the Grand Canyon.

If you fly into your neck of the woods, say Missoula, Montana; you will definitely recognize it as Missoula; the satellite imaged hills, mountains, rivers, roads, are all there, although your own house and barbecue may not. The larger city airports are done in a fashion to render them almost exactly as the real thing. They have moving road traffic of cars and trucks on the highways, and at the airports, there are baggage and fuel trucks, pushback vehicles that actually hook up and push the aircraft back, the jet ways extend out and move up to the door of your 737, and the fuel truck will come right to your plane when called. Simulated ATC is always available. There is also moving boat traffic over water, not to mention large flocks of birds that scare you once in awhile. The detail in the scenery is great, and looking out the window of your sim plane in flight is not too much different than the real thing... you see detailed trees, farms, roads, moving traffic... if you have a good computer and video card that is.



Larry Hart photo

*Simulated view of MSO arrival.*



Larry Hart photo

*Simulated view of a Delta Air Lines 737 at MSO .*

I have used all of Microsoft's FS versions since FS95, and I am amazed at how much more realistic each new version has gotten. This new FSX is no exception. When it came out a few months ago I decided I had to get it simply due to the fact it's my main hobby and then there's the virtual airline attachment, but I wasn't sure if it was going to be that much better. I was pleasantly surprised at how many new features and details they had squeezed into it since the last version. After trying it out for a few days, I was hooked. Aside from all the visual improvements in all areas; the water looks great now, the detailed animation of the flaps, landing gear, etc., but I think the single most improved upon thing to a veteran flight sim user is the flight dynamics of the aircraft, the way it feels to fly the planes. I'm not sure if it's the way they push the scenery and clouds past you, or the simulated collision of air molecules on the plane's skin, but it has a very realistic feel to flying and turning, taking off, and landing, all enough to raise the heartbeat and call the stewardess to address the passengers for takeoff procedures. It is the biggest improvement in accurate flight dynamics of any flight sim so far. When your plane is bouncing around in the clouds, or you have windshear or a cross wind on landing, you watch your wings flex from turbulence, real pilots know what this means for realism.

The FSX program itself is just the beginning. For those seeking even greater realism, there are many companies and free downloads offering add-on packages. You can add on more and better aircraft, airports, Missoula included; you can get better weather modifications, more moving traffic on the ground and in the air, you can even add passengers to your airplane that scream when you are a bad pilot. You can get navigation programs, more realistic engine sounds, better contrails, even guys who flag your airplane as it pulls up to the gate.... the list is almost endless.

When people ask me why I like flight simulator over other computer based programs or games, I say that it just never gets old, never wears itself out. There's always something new to learn, and it's good clean fun. Most computer games are likely to give you a few weeks or months of your money's worth, but flight simulator never stops giving. I never get tired of jumping into a Boeing jet and flying, navigating, talking to ATC, always learning. Every flight is a whole new experience. I recommend Microsoft FSX to anyone having a very fast computer, it is by far the best flight sim ever produced. If you don't have the fast computer, then FS2004 is your next best buy, and still a very good sim. In any case.... get your wheels off the ground!



## THE ART OF FLYING: *Big City vs Small Town*

By Art Dykstra

Where is the best place to learn to fly, complex busy airspace or a quiet grass strip? The debate could use up a year of rainy day hanger flying and proponents on both sides of the fence are almost as opinionated as the Democrats and Republicans. Which side of the aisle do I sit on? To answer that, I will bore you with the story of how I learned to fly.



*Art flying a float-equipped Maule*

I am proud to say that I am a native Montanan, born in Hot Springs and raised in Thompson Falls. You could assume then, that I learned to fly hand propping a J3 Cub after my chores were done, and fine tuning my "3 point" landings in my Uncle's cow pasture with the only "traffic conflicts" coming from the gophers popping up out of their holes.

Not so. 90% of my flight training was done in the Los Angeles area: Private and Instrument at Brackett Field (POC) with addition ratings at Cable, Long Beach, John Wayne and French Valley Airports. Looking back at the complexity and congestion of those areas, I could have started out in a less stressful environment. But at the time I had no preconceived notions of flight training and lots of other people were handling it just fine.

So why not jump right in? It did require a bit more attention to radio work and airspace; I remember spending time on the outside deck of "Norm's", the airport restaurant, listening to a hand held radio and making notes on how the traffic pattern worked. It was a cheap, no stress way to hear what worked and what didn't. I soon realized the Air Traffic System is just like dancing the Tango; either partner can toss in a few twists and turns, as long as they both know the basic framework and are aware of each other's

limitations. The benefit of learning in that environment is you now have the confidence to fly in any type of airspace and not have “Mike Fright” when you need to talk on the radio.

So now you are thinking, “AH-HA, he DOES think towered airports are better!” Nope, when I started flying here in Montana, the mountains, fast changing weather, absence of good Radar coverage and no one telling me where to go were a little unnerving. Did that mean I had wasted thousands of dollars on my previous training? Not at all, it only meant that I was not prepared for this kind of flying. After doing some more reading and talking to a lot of local pilots, I slowly ventured out of my comfort zone. Pretty soon, all of the “scary unknowns” were just routine and I started enjoying the new challenges.

If I had learned at my Uncle’s fictional cow pasture, the reverse would be true, mountainous terrain, non-towered procedures, and uncontrolled airspace would seem normal, while the thought of class B airspace navigation and radio use could produce chronic stuttering and the onset of cold sweats.

Is one pilot better than the other? Absolutely not. Flying is flying; aerodynamics work, regardless of location. What we need to do is fill in the gaps in our training. Does that imply that your Instructor was derelict in his/her duties and you should sue for pain and suffering? No, first, Instructors have no money, and second, if we all had to fly with an Instructor until we learned everything about flying, Chuck Yeager would still be logging Dual Received.

How do you get started filling in the gaps? Step one is to have a heart to heart talk with yourself. What makes you uncomfortable, what do you avoid, what type of flying would you like to do but, don’t feel confident enough to try? Once you have your list, it is just a matter of finding the answers.

No one wants to look or sound like an idiot, but just keep in mind that everyone had to start out somewhere. Pilots aren’t born, they are taught, that even goes for Controllers and “Know-it-all” Instructors! Luckily we don’t have to reinvent the wheel. Ever since Orville and Wilbur “took ‘er around the patch,” pilots have been documenting the good, the bad and the ugly of flying. The AIM section of the FAR/AIM is a great resource, and there are endless books and web sites on all aspects of flying, so start out easy, and try to expand your flying knowledge. If you don’t, you are missing out on the true flying experience.



## Legal Heads Up: Easily Overlooked Regulations

by Paul Stafford

This month’s topic is awareness of regulations that are easily overlooked and forgotten. GA pilots enjoy great freedom to exercise their flight privileges, and remembering the rules could avert a problem if the rare enforcement action occurs.

**Ramp checks:** The FAA, law enforcement officers and TSA are empowered to inspect your airplane and your documentation. While you must present documents (pilots license, medical and photo ID, registration, A/W certificate etc.) when asked, you should prudently hold the documents for inspection, and not actually hand them to the officer. Believe it or not, doing so can and has been construed as “surrendering” them. You probably know that you can get a citation for having out-of-date materials (sectionals, approach plates) in the airplane. It’s better to not have them at all than to have old ones.

**Documentation:** How many times have you had work done on your airplane, and assumed the shop has made the proper entries in the logbook? FAR 91.405 holds the PIC responsible for ensuring it is entered. Thanks to both TSA/9/11 and the war on drugs, it is a federal crime to operate an improperly-registered aircraft in US airspace. Violations have actually resulted in the forfeiture of an aircraft (see AOPA 3/05).

**Known icing:** The definition of this has evolved from rational (known icing is actual, recent pireps) to difficult (visible moisture and below freezing) to prohibitive (below freezing and simply high moisture content). Now, forecast = known. If you never end up with an emergency it won’t matter, but if you ever need to ask for help, know the magic words are “I need an immediate turn, any altitude”, but if your plane is not approved for FIKI (flight into known icing), expect a phone call.

**Currency of experience and equipment:** There are many FARs regarding pilot recency experience- carrying passengers (3 T/O and landings in last 90 days), carrying passengers at night (same, but to a full stop, and well after dark), and instrument experience (6 approaches, with holding and tracking nav signals in last 6 months). The avionics also have requirements. Every 24 months the pitot-static check and transponder check are due, ELT check every year, and for IFR flight, the VOR 30 day check, and database updates. A ramp check could prove embarrassing and expensive. US Code 46301(a)(1) provides for civil penalties! Make sure these items are complied with and properly documented.

Something more you can do is sign up for AOPA’s legal defense plan. It’s cheap and can save your ticket. If you have had a run-in with ATC, and you think you’re in the right, don’t get into it with them on the radio. Simply request “say initials, say date, say time” to make sure the event gets saved on the recording. If you think you might have made a mistake, be sure to fill out a NASA ASRS form (keep them in your flight bag) within 10 days of the event. Lastly, you may have earned your license so long ago that your SSN is your license number. New licenses are issued with random numbers. Because of the latest FAA abuses of privacy and database matching, I highly recommend you request a new license with a new number if yours is your SSN. Happy flying!



# Economical Hangars a Goal for Some GA Pilots

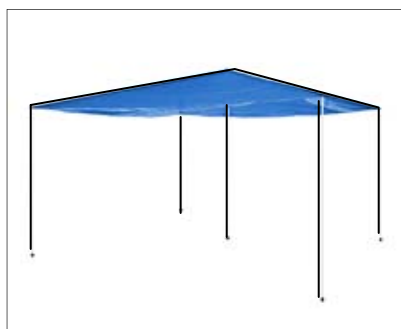
By Gary Matson

“Slow and steady” are the best descriptors for GA hangar planning at MSO. Two pilot surveys have shown strong interest in hangars, the most recent one included building preference: T-hangar or stand alone hangar. When can hangar building get started? To answer that question, the “GA Steering Committee” began meeting with Airport management and Board two years ago, and has helped produce revisions of the hangar lease agreement and the primary guiding documents that are acceptable to both the Airport and pilots. The final planning step will be the Board’s adoption of an Airport Master Plan, which will inventory resources and forecast the demand for them.

Meanwhile, preliminary planning will continue by pilots meeting as two different interest groups, T-hangar and stand alone hangar. Utilities are in place at the northeast end of Golf Taxiway where stand alone hangars could be built now. A new taxiway and utility connection are needed for T-hangars. All agree that we want GA hangars to be sturdy, permanent structures in a visually attractive layout. Pilots recognize that a common use area near the hangars and featuring a “clubhouse” and recreation “mall” would not only enhance the experience of local pilots but also would stimulate commerce and tourism by visitors. Facilities such as these will be included in planning.

Hangar affordability is an issue for many of us. An example of an “affordable” hangar is one made by Summit Metal Systems in St. Louis, Missouri. The 42 X 34 unit fits most models of single engine piston aircraft. Construction is uncomplicated and can be done with or without the services of a building contractor. For stability, the building is anchored on either a concrete slab or concrete footings. Complete cost for one of these T-hangar units is presently estimated at \$25,000 (see table page 5). *It must be noted that both Airport Board approval and County building permit compliance are needed before these hangars could be built at MSO.*

MSO pilots will be getting together soon to continue planning. There will likely be two groups interested in T-hangars, the “bare bones” group and the group wanting more. Pilots with a stand alone hangar preference will have widely varying individual interests. The GA Steering Committee will be in touch with MSO area pilots. Please stay tuned as we move ahead, looking forward to the day we’ll see a new GA hangar development at Missoula!



*This most economical hangar unit is available for immediate installation*



*Summit Metal Systems nested T-hangars*

## Approximate onstruction cost:

**Summit Metal Systems 42 X 34 T-hangar, single unit constructed in a nested group of 10 hangars**

Grading & Concrete	5,000
Building materials kit	15,000
Freight	800
Construction	1,600
Electrical	1,600
Utilities hookup	1,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>

## Estimated Monthly cost at MSO, single unit in 10-unit nested group

Mortgage (\$25,000, \$5,000 down, home equity,	\$120
Land lease (1/10 of footprint with 5 foot setbacks)	36
Real property tax (building too large for personal)	32
Insurance; \$600 minimum annual premium, at-	50
Airport Common Area Maintenance fee (est.)	10
Utilities	20
<b>Monthly total</b>	<b>\$268</b>

## FLYOUTS

Western Montana pilots enjoy many flyout activities year-round. As an example, May 19<sup>th</sup> featured these possibilities: Stevensville EAA "Breakfast at the Airport"; Felts Field (KSFF) breakfast, poker run, BBQ; Sandpoint (KSZT) "lost in the 50's"; and Malmstrom Air Force Base Open House.

If you'd like to get in on schedule announcements, contact flyout coordinator Gary Weyermann [gweyermann@msn.com](mailto:gweyermann@msn.com)

### Aviation Youth Academy Summer, 2007

EAA will once again offer two week-long sessions for children ages 10-13.

Session 1 will be July 9-13

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 is available at [www.eaa517.org](http://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.

### 1st Annual Stevensville Airport Fly-In

By Steve Rossiter, EAA President

Please mark your calendar for June 30 and July 1, 2007, when the Stevensville Airport businesses and users will be hosting a Fly-In. Provisions will be available for anyone interested in flying in and camping with their airplane. More information will be available on EAA Chapter 517's web site at: [www.eaa517.org](http://www.eaa517.org) as the date gets closer.

**EAA meets every 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday**, with meeting location alternating between the Chapter Hangar at Stevensville and the Missoula Airport Conference Room. More information is available at [www.eaa517.org](http://www.eaa517.org)

**MPA Five Valleys Hangar** will meet on Monday, June 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:00PM and tour the NOAA Weather Station. The NOAA facility is located at the Missoula Smokejumper Center. There is plenty of parking in the front lot of the new Forest Service Hangar. It's important to be on time since we are going on a formal tour of the weather center, a building secured by controlled access. After the tour, some MPA and EAA pilots are planning to take a moonlight flight by following the old airway beacon system. The MPA web site includes a complete list of summer flying activities!  
<http://www.montanapilots.org/>

### Museum of Mountain Flying

*"Tough Planes, Tough Pilots, Tough Flying"*

**Hours:** Open 10 AM - 4 PM seven days a week, May to Oct.

**Admission:** Adults, \$4; Military/Seniors, \$2; Student thro HS, \$1; Family (maximum), \$10

**Membership Dues:** Single, \$25; Couple, \$35; Family, \$50

**5525 W Broadway  
Missoula, MT 59802  
(406) 721-3644**

### We're on Your Frequency

*MSO GA News thanks Chris Hart, Larry Hart, Mark Hart, Paul Stafford, Hank Butzel, and Art Dykstra 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 spring quarter. Interested in contributing? Contact the editor (see below).*

*MSO GA NEWS is published in Missoula Montana by Missoula International Airport and The Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Chapter 517.*

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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>

MPA: <http://www.montanapilots.org/>

Smokejumper aircraft: <http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/people/smokejumpers/aircraft.html>

