

Montana and the Sky



Montana Department of Transportation

Aeronautics Division

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Montana Department of Transportation Aeronautics Division Reaches a Decision Regarding Airway Beacon Program

HELENA — The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) has reached a decision regarding the future of the Airway Beacon Program.

The 84 airway beacons in Montana were installed by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in the 1930s as part of a national airway corridor network to assist pilots with night navigation. As advances in navigational technology became available in the 1960s the FAA began decommissioning airway beacons. The FAA withdrew all support of the airway beacons by the early 1970s.

Montana adopted 17 of the beacons and continued operation in southwest Montana where radio navigational aids did not provide complete coverage for night pilots. As navigational technology has advanced, however, the beacons have become obsolete as a navigational aid to night pilots.

To ensure the opportunity for public participation statewide, MDT Director Mike Tooley executed a charter that established a working group. The purpose of the Airway Beacon Working Group was to make recommendations as to the future of the Airway Beacon Program and to hold public meetings on those recommendations.

Three public informational open house meetings were planned and properly noticed. Meetings were held in Billings, Missoula, and Helena with a total of thirty-six individuals attending the three meetings.

MDT received a total of 125 written comments with 82 comments in favor of decommissioning all beacons and 43 comments in favor of keeping some or all the beacons operational.

After consideration of much input and information, MDT Director Mike Tooley has concluded that it is in the state's best interest to decommission all Airway Beacons except the MacDonald Pass beacon, which is a registered historic landmark. The beacons will be decommissioned using a phased approach that will allow the Strawberry Beacon and Spokane Beacon to remain operational not longer than June 30, 2019. A search will be conducted to identify an entity willing to adopt the MacDonald Pass beacon no later than December 31, 2021.

The Aeronautics Division will assist the Airway Beacons Working Group to determine if private individuals or foundations would like to assume ownership and responsibility for any beacons.

Administrator's Column

Retirement: After 31 years of service to the State of Montana, I'm happy to announce my upcoming retirement. I've been blessed with a 27-year career with the Aeronautics Division, the last 16 as your Administrator. The friendships I've made and relationships I've formed are too numerous to count. It's because of my friends in this industry and department that I was able to endure and accept the rewards and challenges that we faced together. I cherished my time with you -- thank you for your great work and support.

One-Year Extension Granted: Montana's Department of Justice's Motor Vehicle Division (MVD) received an extension from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, for the implementation of the federal identification law, REAL ID. The extension expires October 10, 2018. During this time, Montana drivers' licenses are accepted by the Transportation Security Administration to board domestic, commercial flights and access federal facilities. The extension will give time to develop processes, hire staff and equipment to implement REAL ID.

Super Constellation Moved: Worldwide Aircraft Recovery left with the Super Constellation as Helena airport staff escorted the large load down the taxiway to exit the airport. As mentioned last month, the U. S. Air Force arranged for a loan with the Castle Air Museum and the plan is to restore it and display the Connie at the museum in Atwater, California. The aircraft is NOT being scrapped, but will be re-assembled, restored and preserved for aviation history. It's the end of an era for the Helena airport, but great that the aircraft will have a new home and will be preserved for aviation history.

Neptune P-2 V Celebration: Since its founding in 1993, Neptune Aviation's P-2 V tankers have flown thousands of wildfire missions all over the country. The aircraft was designed for the U.S. Navy to be used for anti-submarine missions and maritime patrols. Seven of the 12 aircraft still in use today are owned by Neptune Aviation. The fleet will be replaced with converted jet airliners (Bae-146-200), adding a 3,000-gallon retardant tank. The retirement celebration was an emotional day for many of the pilots, crew and mechanics that admired these aircraft for their toughness. Several water drops, including a sequential drop with red, white and blue water, a formation flyover of the last four P-2 V's on contract, prizes and food were part of the retirement celebration. **One week later,** Neptune pulled two of its aircraft out of retirement to help fight the devastating wildfires in California. Although officially retired, Neptune has an "as needed" contract with several states including California. This arrangement will only last through the end of the year. At that time, five of the aircraft will be taken out of service and displayed at aircraft museums around the country and Tankers 5 and 14 will remain airworthy under Neptune's control for use at air shows. Tankers 5 and 14 will be joined by Neptune's entire fleet of modern, larger and more powerful jet tankers to assist California. Thanks Neptune for all you do.

AOPA 2018 Fly-ins: Locations for the 2018 fly-ins have been announced and **Missoula** has been selected. Congratulations to Cris Jensen, Airport Director and the teams successful bid that secured the event. The two-day event will kick off June 15-16 in Missoula, Montana, then head to Santa Fe, New Mexico, Sept. 14-15; Carbondale, Illinois, Oct. 5-6; and Gulf Shores, Alabama, Oct. 26-27. Each location has been designed to provide gateways to explore the chosen locations and surrounding areas. The fly-ins host workshops on Fridays that will offer hands-on experiences for pilots to improve their aviation knowledge, safety and skills before the main Saturday event. Make plans now to join AOPA and its host city of Missoula next June 15-16, 2018.



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Department of Transportation

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Phil Petrik's P-51 Dream Machine Will Make its Final "Landing" at the Warhawk Air Museum in Nampa, Idaho



Photo Credit: Bill Vander Weele, Sidney Herald. Original sized to fit document.

It was his dream machine, and aviation enthusiasts had the opportunity to take a look at Phil Petrik's P-51 in Sidney. The Petrik family held an open house at Richland Aviation on the Sidney-Richland Airport from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sept. 30 for people to view the World War II fighter. "We've just had so many people ask about it," Patty Petrik said of why the open house took place, "He was talking about this airplane his whole life."

Legendary local pilot, Phil Petrik, passed away in 2014. Patty remembers one of her first dates with the man who was going to be her husband. "He said he was going to own a P-51," Patty said. "I didn't know what a P-51 even was."

The plane was the fighter that changed the tide for the Allies in World War II. Because it had a longer range than previous models, it wasn't only able to operate as a fighter but also as an escort for the Allied bombers. The P-51 was first developed in 1940 and remained in service during various wars and conflicts into the 1980's.

Patty explains that this P-51 participated in the Reno Air Races for several years under the name of Cloud Dancer. When Phil purchased the plane from Jimmy Leeward, the name stayed with the Leeward race team. After Leeward died racing his new highly modified P-51 in Reno, Phil selected the name Blood Brother to honor his friend.

"It's beautiful and...I just feel he should be the one in the cockpit" Patty said, "I think he couldn't have realized his dream without the tremendous support he had for his business throughout the years."

Each of Phil and Patty's children were to have received rides in the plane the weekend of the open house. "I wanted each of the kids to have a ride before I sell it" Patty said.

After the weekend, Blood Brother will be moved to the Warhawk Air Museum in Nampa, Idaho. "It's a beautiful place. It really focuses on the people, the veterans and the stories of the wars" Patty said of the museum. "It's the coolest air museum I've been to."

Article adapted with permission; Vander Weele, Bill, "People can view Petrik's P-51 during open house Sept. 30" *Sidney Herald*, 23. Sept. 2017 Web.16, Oct. 2017.

Bernard Robert Gregoire, passes away at 88



Photo Credit: www.egacy.com/obituaries/greatfalltribune. October 17, 2017 4:55 p.m.
Sized to fit.

Bernard Robert Gregoire, "Bernie" or "BR," peacefully passed away in his sleep with his daughter by his side on Sept. 7, 2017, in Bigfork. He was 88 years young.

He was born April 21, 1929, in Great Falls to George and Florence Gregoire. He was the youngest of four boys.

At the age of 16 he began his journey as a pilot. He got his license at the age of 17 and bought his first airplane at 19! In 1949 he served in the Navy for a few short months before joining the Air Force from 1949 to 1952. Bernie worked for and eventually took over G.G. Gregoire & Sons as a Texaco consignee.

In October of 1965, he married Karen Fahey and had three children, Rob Gregoire, Renee Gregoire-Serr, and James Gregoire.

His true passion was flying. In his 40's he flew every weekend he could from Great Falls to his "cabin" on Swan Lake, announcing his arrival with a low fly-by that thrilled his kids and annoyed his neighbors. In 1988, he moved permanently to his Swan Lake residence, and eventually to a home on the Ferndale airstrip. In his 70's he became a certified flight instructor, and in his 80's he was giving his children ulcers by still doing loops and rolls in his high performance "experimental" RV-8 airplane. He frightened and excited many people by taking them for rides in the RV-8 and most said the ride was the highlight of their lives. He was still flying

just weeks before his passing. During his 70-plus years of flying, he piloted over 60 types of aircraft. He was a long standing member of the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) and a member of the United Flying Octogenarians (UFO).

His other passion was his children. He taught them all the fun things in life including skiing (on snow and water) snowmobiling, driving, flying, camping, riding horses in the Bob Marshall wilderness, fishing and much, much more. He is survived by two sons, a daughter, four grandchildren and his longtime love Punky. He had a fun-filled and exciting full life all the way until the end. He was a son, a dad, an uncle and a friend to so many and is missed dearly.

Richard "Rick" Isle, Passes Away on September 30, 2017

Richard Isle, age 64, passed away September 30th in Bozeman. He was born in Wolf Point, MT and was well known for his strong work ethic. Throughout his youth he worked in the newspaper business, working at the Herald News which was owned by his maternal grandparents. He attended the University of Montana-Western in Dillon, returning to Wolf Point after one year and took a job at a local service station. In 1975, he purchased the station, "later Ricks Exxon and Rick's Tire and Service" a staple in the community. The family added a second business, a bulk fuel plant known as Isle Oil Company. He was a long-standing member of the Montana Petroleum Marketers Association and served on their Board of Directors at various times over the years.

In 1977, Rick joined the Wolf Point Volunteer Fire Department. By the time he retired from the department in 1997, he had served as Fire Marshall, three terms as Captain, and was an Officer on the Fire Relief Association Board. He was elected to the Wolf Point City Council as an alderman for Ward 3. He served two honorable terms and was then elected to the office of Mayor in 1993. He was re-elected to the mayor's office in 1997. In 1999 he resigned from the mayor's office to assume the role of Public Works Director (PWD) for the City of Wolf Point. Rick proudly served as the PWD until May of 2017 when he retired due to his rapidly declining health. In this role he was responsible for the Wolf Point Airport and served as a member of the Montana Essential Air Service Task Force and worked hard to maintain air service in Eastern Montana. Rick is survived by his wife Shelli; son and daughter-in-law Chris and Carla Isle of Henderson, Nevada; son and daughter-in-law Chase and Sheryl Isle of Bozeman, Montana; grandson Brent Michael, a freshman at UMary in Bismarck, ND; and sister Ruth Ann Boysun of Wolf Point. He leaves behind numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, and nephews.

We will miss you Rick.

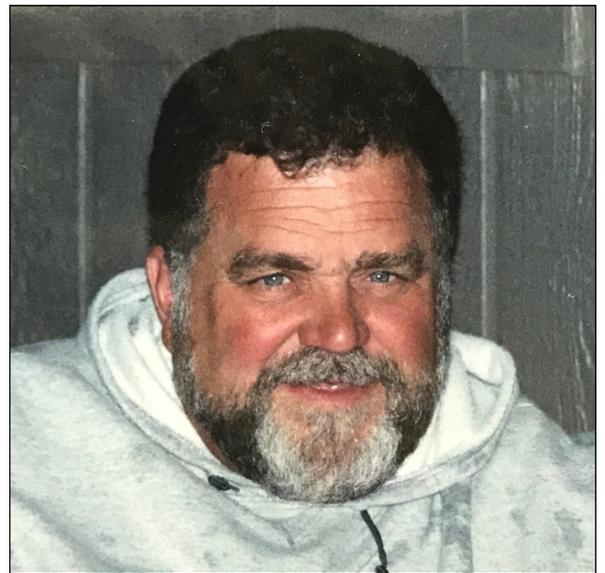


Photo Credit: www.claytonstevensonmemorialchapel.com, October 17, 2017 4:53 p.m. Sized to fit.

99's Big Sky Chapter Airplane Wash Raises Nearly \$1,000



Photo Credit: Patty Mitchell. Pictured left to right; Trena Boyd, Stephanie Horton, Danelle Jackson, Patty Mitchell, Bobbi Powers, Chelsea Wagner, Andrea McCaffree, Ossie Abrams, and Tammy Kantorowicz

The Northwest Section of the Ninety-Nines Big Sky Chapter held their first ever fund raiser Saturday, September 30th, 2017 on the ramp at Edwards Jet Center at Billings Airport, in Billings, Montana.

The day started out cool with intense winds from the south which kept some aviators from surrounding airports at home base. Not the tough women of the Big Sky Chapter! The crew of eight women showed up with sweatshirts and jackets and started their airplane wash promptly at 10:00 a.m. Several airplanes taxied up from hangars on the west end of the airport.

The lady Ninety-Nines attacked each airplane with buckets of soapy water, long handled brushes and lots of water. They cleaned the windows inside and out and placed in each airplane an air freshener which read "Thanks, from the 99s". An airplane wash only cost \$25 for a single engine, and \$50 for a twin engine. Most customers paid more than that as a donation. In total, 18 airplanes were washed including three Beechcraft King Airs and a Cessna Citation.

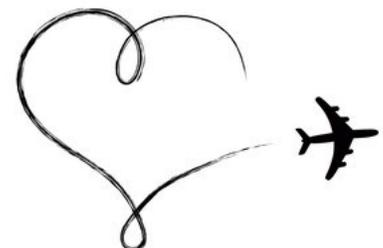
In addition to the aircraft wash, the Big Sky Chapter also raffled 50 gallons of Avgas generously donated by Edwards Jet Center and sold meals for \$7 that included cheeseburgers (cooked by Robert Mitchell), chips, drink and cookie.

The tired and wet group of Ninety-Nines counted the money, loaded up the grill, chairs, tables, coolers and looked forward to hot showers, grateful for the support and generosity of the aviation community.

More information about the Ninety-Nines Organization of Women Pilots can be found at www.ninety-nines.org.

*Please join us for a reception to celebrate
Debbie Alke's upcoming retirement upstairs at
Helena Regional Airport terminal on
December 2nd from 4-6 pm.*

*Please RSVP by November 20th to
dan@execairmontana.com or call 459-9168.*



Aviation Scholarships

Montana is very fortunate to have many generous individuals and organizations that believe in promoting aviation by offering monetary assistance to qualified persons. The Aeronautics Division assists in administering some of these scholarships and encourages participation. The scholarships are offered to Montanans to help defray costs of education (e.g., flight instruction, A&P, etc.) and will be presented during the 2018 Montana Aviation Conference in Missoula.

A Love of Aviation (ALOA) Scholarship

An anonymous donor established this scholarship of \$250 in 1997 and in 2010 two more anonymous donors contributed an additional \$250 each, creating a \$750 scholarship.

AOM Flight Training Scholarship

Aviation Organizations of Montana (AOM) has established this \$500 scholarship to financially assist a student pilot in obtaining their private pilot certificate.

Bob Redding Memorial Scholarship

The Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Chapter 57 in Billings is offering a scholarship in memory of Bob Redding who was a lifetime advocate of general and experimental aviation. Building aircraft was as important to Bob as flying them and, given his tenure as a college math professor, so was education. Consequently, this \$250 scholarship is offered to those working towards their A&P license, first generation pilot training, or any post-secondary STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) degree.

Charles Taylor/Rosie the Riveter Scholarship

The Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Chapter 344 of Helena is sponsoring a \$500 scholarship to be awarded to the worthy second year airframe and power plant student enrolled in the Aviation Maintenance Technician program at the Helena College. Selection of the awardee will be made by the Chapter 344 membership in January.

EAA Missoula Chapter 517 Scholarship

The Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Chapter 517, Inc. in Missoula will provide three \$1,000 scholarships in 2018. One will be for a post-solo student, one for a second year A&P student, and one to be used for any type of aviation career training such as commercial, flight instructor, multi-engine, dispatcher, etc.

Edwards Jet Center Scholarship

Edwards Jet Center, a full-service fixed based operator and Part 135 charter operator, based at Logan International Airport in Billings is offering a \$500 scholarship to help defray the costs of flight instruction or A&P school.

Montana Antique Aircraft Association (MAAA) Scholarship

The Montana Antique Aircraft Association is dedicated to the preservation, restoration, use, and knowledge of antique airplanes. Their motto is: "Keep the Antiques Flying." Their \$1,000 scholarship is to help defray the cost of flight instruction, or help defray the cost of A&P mechanic school.

Montana Airport Management Association Scholarships

The Montana Airport Management Association (MAMA) is a professional organization dedicated to promoting and developing best practices in the management of Montana airports. MAMA will present two scholarships of \$2,500 each to Montana high school seniors or graduates who are enrolled in a Montana college or university, majoring in either Aviation or Business Management. The scholarship requires the completion of an application and essay questions, which may be obtained by contacting Shane Ketterling at ketterlingS@ci.billings.mt.us or Patricia Trooien at ptrooien@mt.gov.

Montana Pilots Association Air Safety and Education Foundation (MPA ASEF) Flight Training Scholarship

This \$1,000 scholarship is open to an active pilot who has considerable interest in aviation and is seeking advanced flight training or a pursuing a profession in aviation. Applicant must be a Montana resident.

Montana Pilots Association (MPA) Junior Pilot Scholarship

The recipient of this \$1,000 scholarship is chosen for outstanding interest in aviation, citizenship in their community and demonstrated academic achievement. The recipient must be a Montana resident and previously soloed. Preference is given to younger applicants who are new pilots or pursuing a profession in aviation.

Parrott Family Scholarship

The Parrott Family offers a \$1,000 scholarship to be used over a one-year period for pilot training programs for students enrolled in the Rocky Mountain College (RMC) aviation program. The funds may be used for tuition in the RMC aviation program, and/or flight training expenses leading to a Private, Commercial, or Flight Instructor certificate, and may include Instrument and Multiengine simulator training, and the purchase of aviation related materials and related supplies.

Scholarship information continued on page 7

Theresa (Nistler) Colley Scholarship

Mountain AirDance Flight Instruction offers this \$1,000.00 scholarship in memory of Theresa Nistler Colley. Theresa loved flying and was working toward her private pilot certificate. This scholarship will be awarded to a student pilot who is working on getting their private pilot rating.

Tyler Orsow and Chuck Kimes Forever Flying Scholarship

This scholarship is a fully-funded seaplane rating provided by Backcountry Flying Experience of Bigfork. The scholarship honors the memory of seaplane pilots Tyler Orsow and Chuck Kimes who were lost in a crash of a one-of-a-kind seaplane on a ferry flight in the Mideast in 2011. To be eligible, the applicant must possess a private pilot certificate, a current flight review and at least a third class medical, be a U.S. citizen, between the ages of 17 and 35, a member of the Seaplane Pilots Association, and actively pursuing a career as a professional pilot. The scholarship must be used within 12 months. Those applying for the scholarship must include a color copy of their airman's certificate, front and back, a photocopy of their medical certificate, and a copy of their birth certificate or U.S. passport. A scholarship application is required and may be obtained from Terry Hayes via email at flyames@gmail.com or Patricia Trooien via email at ptrooien@mt.gov.

How to Apply

Awarding of the scholarships is based on a letter explaining the reasons for applying; future career goals; past aviation experience (if any); and outstanding achievements. The same letter can be used, but applicant must submit one copy addressed to each individual scholarship. Each letter must include your mailing address and daytime phone number.

If you are awarded a scholarship, your photo will appear in the 2018 Montana Aviation Conference program. Please include a photo with your letter of interest for this purpose (only one photo is necessary). Call [406-444-2506](tel:406-444-2506) for more information.

Letters must be postmarked on or before December 15, 2017. Mail your letters to: Montana Aeronautics Division
PO Box 200507
Helena, MT 59620-0507

Calendar of Events

December 15, 2017 – Aviation Scholarship Application Deadline- Letters must be postmarked on or before December 15, 2017. Visit this site for detailed information www.mdt.mt.gov/aviation/scholarships.shtml.

January 10 & 11, 2018 - Inland Search Planners Clinic - The MDT Aeronautics Division will be hosting a two-day Inland Search Planners training class at the Wingate Hotel, located at 2007 N. Oaks Street, Helena, Montana from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Montana Search & Rescue Coordinator and Co-ordinators are invited to attend this valuable training event conducted by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center (AFRCC) from Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida. For more information call Patricia Trooien at (406) 444-2506.

February 9 & 10, 2018 - Flight Instructor Renewal Course (FIRC) - The MDT Aeronautics Division will conduct the 2018 FIRC February 9th and 10th at the Wingate Hotel, located at 2007 N. Oaks Street, Helena Montana. The two-day, FAA approved course will run from noon on Friday until 9 p.m., and from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Saturday. This course meets the FAA's renewal requirements for certified flight instructors (CFI & Chief CFI). This course is open to anyone with an interest in aviation, and specifically geared toward the professional flight instructor to promote a culture of safety in general aviation. For more information call Patricia Trooien at (406) 444-2506.

March 1-3, 2018 - The 34th Annual Montana Aviation Conference - Will be held in Missoula, Montana at the Holiday Inn Missoula Downtown located at 200 South Pattee, Missoula, Montana. Rooms have been blocked at prevailing government rate plus tax. Reserve your room by calling (406) 721-8550 and reference rooming block **Montana Aviation Conference 2018**. Reserve your room prior to January 29, 2018 to receive the reduced rate. For more information, contact Effie Benoit at (406) 444-9580 or efbenoit@mt.gov.

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Vision Zero: A Goal for Everyone

In 2016, there were 190 fatalities on Montana roads.

What does that mean? 190 parents, children, grandparents, friends, siblings, spouses, and other loved ones had lives that were cut short. It also means countless tears and shattered lives of those left with the aftermath of unsafe driving behaviors. Which loved one are you prepared to lose? If your answer is none, then Vision Zero is also YOUR goal.

It will take every one of us to work towards the day that Vision Zero is met, and the fatality total reads "ZERO." Two of the highest contributing factors to traffic fatalities in 2016 were alcohol and no seat belt.

These are behaviors that can be changed! Start by always wearing your seatbelt and planning for sober transportation. Remind your loved ones and those around you to do the same.

-Director Mike Tooley, MDT

Visit www.mdt.mt.gov/visionzero for more information.

VISION ZERO
zero deaths · zero serious injuries

**MONTANA DEPARTMENT
OF TRANSPORTATION**

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