



Billings Pilot Lands at Every Public Airstrip in Montana

By: Brett French, Gazette Staff. Story originally appeared in the Billings Gazette on October 26, reprinted with permission.

Growing up, Steve Kriner had a burning passion to learn to fly airplanes, but life — including medical school, his work as an anesthesiologist, marriage and children — delayed his dream.

So, three years ago when Kriner, 50, finally decided to pursue his childhood ambition, he went all out. In 11 weeks he received his pilot's license. Most people take 11 months.

In the three years since then, Kriner set and achieved a goal of landing at all 125 public airports in Montana. His trip to Schafer Meadows, in the Great Bear Wilderness, was the finale last month.

"Everyone had spoken so highly of Schafer that I wanted to save that for the last one," Kriner said. "That is by far the gem in Montana. Benchmark is also rather impressive. All of the ones that really impressed me didn't have blacktop, except for the one at Benchmark." Singular accomplishment?

There's no record of whether any other pilot has accomplished such a feat in Montana, said Debbie Alke of the Montana Aeronautics Division, although she added that some of her co-workers may have landed at all the public airstrips to inspect them.

A representative of the Montana Pilots Association said most of its membership hears about the achievements of pilots through newspaper articles.

Whether Kriner's achievement stands alone is unknown, but he doesn't care. He said setting the goal wasn't about notching a record, it was about compelling him to become a better pilot.

"By forcing yourself to reach a goal, you have to expose yourself to do some things you wouldn't normally," he said. "It forces you to stretch yourself and do something outside your comfort zone."

Veteran instructor

Dan Liudahl, 80, who taught Kriner to fly, is impressed by his former student's dedication.

"He's the only student I've had who's taken enough interest in flying that he's practiced and become really proficient. It's nice to see," Liudahl said.

Kriner returns the compliment, saying Liudahl was key in showing him what his 1951 Cessna 170 airplane could do.



Billings pilot Steve Kriner flies his 1951 Cessna 170 near Billings on Sunday, October 10, 2010. After receiving his pilot's license, he made it his mission to visit every public airport in Montana. An avid fly fisherman, Kriner packed his fly rod to the more remote airstrips. Photo by Larry Mayer, Gazette Staff



Steve Kriner flies his 1951 Cessna 170 near Park City. Photo by Larry Mayer, Gazette Staff.

Administrator's Column

Fight against 3rd class medical:

David Wartofsky, the controversial owner/operator of Potomac Airfield, closest of the Maryland 3 airports to downtown Washington D.C., has filed a formal petition with the Secretary of Transportation (FAA 2009-0481), and the Transportation Committee, proposing to replace FAA's 3rd class medical with a driver's license for private-use aircraft under 6,000 lbs. "Every pilot's eventual loss of their 3rd class medical remains the greatest threat to aircraft ownership," he said. In his petition, Wartofsky notes the medical requirements to fly a small private family airplane are remarkably similar to those required to drive a 65,000 lbs. commercial passenger or cargo carrying truck, also known as a Commercial Driver's License (CDL). Wartofsky encourages all pilots and aircraft owners to submit comments to the petition online. Links to the comment submission site on Regulations.gov are available at Potomac-Airfield.com.

Aviation bill priority: It is expected that Rep. John Mica (R, FL) is in line to take over the House Transportation Committee and he has said his first priority next year will be to pass a long-delayed bill to finance an overhaul of the nation's aging air-traffic navigation system. Rep. Mica said he will remove union-backed measures pushed this year. Both the airline industry and the Obama administration want action on the measure to pay for upgrading the air traffic control network to a satellite-based air-navigation system. The House and Senate have each passed a version of the bill, but efforts to merge them stalled this year amid debates over several controversial provisions.

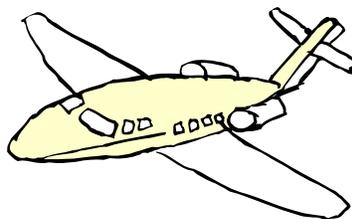
More eAPIS, beware: It's been almost one and a half years since pilots started using the Electronic Advance Passenger Information System (eAPIS) for international flights, and Customs and Border Protection officials have decided it's time to remove the training wheels. The agency had been lenient when it came to minor violations using the

system, reaching and educating pilots, but not anymore. Customs will soon issue its first penalty against a pilot and will start issuing penalties on a monthly basis. The penalty for the first violation is a \$5,000 fine, while each subsequent violation carries a \$10,000 fine. Since May 18, 2009, pilots flying internationally have had to electronically submit a passenger list (manifest) and arrival/departure notification at least 60 minutes prior to leaving or entering the United States.

Aircraft Re-registration Reminder:

FAA clarified the expiration date for re-registered Certificates of Aircraft Registration. New regulations require aircraft owners to re-register their aircraft over the next three years and renew the registration every three years thereafter. The first re-registration notices were sent on Oct. 1, 2010, for aircraft registered in March of any year. Registration certificates for those aircraft will expire on March 31, 2011. However, once an aircraft owner submits his/her re-registration application and is issued a new certificate, that certificate will expire three years from the month it was issued regardless of when the original certificate was set to expire, e.g., a certificate originally due to expire in March 2011 that was re-registered in January 2011 will expire on Jan. 31, 2014. Complete information on the current aircraft registration procedures can be found at: www.faa.gov/licenses_certificates/aircraft_certification/aircraft_registry/

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Calendar of Events

November 13, 2010 - Rocky Mountain College Aviation Program Open House, in Billings. Learn about getting your 4-year degree as a professional pilot or in Aviation Management. Contact Dan Hargrove at (406) 657-1060.

November 16, 2010 - Pilot meeting, Great Falls Airport from 5:30 p.m. -7:30 p. m., in the airport "prairie" conference room. The theme of this meeting is Flight Safety and Winter Refresher Training, however, the opportunity to build relationships and provide accountability to airmen and pilots is the mutual goal. Lt. Col. Dickson from the Montana Air Guard will also provide an informational presentation on Tactical Air Safety, as well as the FAA safety focus on winter flying.

January 14 – 16, 2011 – Surratt Memorial Winter Survival Clinic. For further information phone (406) 444-2506.

February 11 – 13, 2011 – Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic. For further information phone (406) 444-2506.

March 3-5, 2011 – Montana Aviation Conference. Red Lion Colonial Hotel, Helena. For further information phone (406) 444-9580.

March 18, 2011 - Rocky Mountain College Aviation Program Open House, in Billings. Learn about getting your 4-year degree as a professional pilot or in Aviation Management. Contact Dan Hargrove at (406) 657-1060.



WANTED:

Interested party to start a FBO and Fuel Sales; possibly a Flight School and /or Air Craft Rentals at the Anaconda, Montana, Bowman Field Airport. Some assistance may be available.

If interested, please call the Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Planning Department at (406) 563-4010 or (406) 593-1702.

The Montana Aviation Conference will be held in Helena March 3-5, 2011. Rooms have been blocked at the Red Lion Colonial Hotel at a conference rate of \$89 + tax. Please phone (406) 443-2100 or 1-800-733-5466, reference **Montana Aviation Conference** to make your reservations. Reserve your room today, reservations must be made prior to **February 2, 2011** in order to guarantee the group discount. Stay tuned to future newsletters for further conference information!

Administrator's Column, continued

Private Use Airport Verification: The FAA has hired GCR & Associates to assist in the collection and verification of airport data on private-use airports and has tasked GCR with attempting to ensure that the information on record with the FAA for private-use facilities is up-to-date. Part of that effort will be to contact private-use airport owners directly. Should you receive a mailing from GCR this is your chance to make sure your airport is represented accurately in all aviation websites and publications using the most current data. If you have any questions please feel free to call our office or you can contact GCR at PrivateArptSupport@gcrconsulting.com or support phone line at (504) 304-0785.

Life is Good In Montana



Don Misevic of Stevensville has a beautiful home setting near the Stevensville Airport. Pictured is Don's Enstrom Helicopter parked in front of his house.

Montana Governor Recognizes Aviation

In response to recent contact from Recreational Aviation Foundation president John McKenna acknowledging November as Aviation Month, the Governor of Montana issued an official Letter of Recognition of Montana's Aviation industry and its contribution to the state.

The letter states in part, "Montana's airports provide mobility for business, recreational, and family travelers and provide facilities for vital services such as commercial freight handling, flight training, agricultural spraying fire protection and military activity . . . Our aviation assets are essential for public safety and emergency preparedness efforts."

Montana pilots are well aware of the benefits airports and aviation provides to our quality of life here in Big Sky Country, but Governor Schweitzer's official dispatch should be a source of renewed pride for anyone involved in aviation.

The letter concludes, "I congratulate Montana's pilots, aircraft maintenance professionals, airport managers and personnel, safety and security specialists and aviation and aerospace businesses for your record of success. Please join me in thanking these fine folks for their commitment and dedication"

The Recreational Aviation Foundation is a national non-profit organization based in Bozeman with supporters in 49 states. Its mission is "Keeping the legacy of recreational aviation strong by preserving, maintaining and creating public use recreational and backcountry airstrips nationwide." www.theraf.org

Billings Pilot, continued

"He had me landing at private strips in Park City that were insane," Kriner said.

One airstrip had waist-high grass that, when the plane's propeller plowed through it, covered the plane in green grass trimmings.

He also had Kriner landing in 24 mph winds with 40 mph crosswind gusts.

"He told me, 'If you can't fly in the wind, you can't fly in Montana,'" Kriner said.

Air tests

Kriner's tour of the state's public airstrips wasn't without trials. One day, he flew 650 miles and landed at 15 airstrips.

"At some of them, I would land, look around and say, 'OK, this is neat,' and take off," he said. "Unfortunately, a lot of them were brief stops. I'd like to go back to some spots and spend more time."

When he visited the airstrip in Circle, he stopped to chat with someone only to return to his plane and discover it wouldn't start. Luckily, the man helped Kriner get airborne by "flipping the prop" — grabbing onto the plane's propeller and swinging it to turn over the engine.

"That's a dangerous proposition," Kriner said. "But it started right away."

While other pilots may log about 50 hours a year on average, Kriner was flying about 170 hours annually to reach his goal.

"It took more effort than I thought," he said.

Some of the mountain airstrips require precise maneuvering, such as 90-degree turns immediately after takeoff.

"Flying in the mountains is particularly challenging," Kriner said. "In many places, you can't fly over them. You have to fly between them."

The long distances between some strips makes pilots from back East a little panicky, Kriner said. But he'd rather have the wide open spaces than the continuous traffic found in more populated areas.

"Back East, holy smokes, what a nightmare," he said.

Small strips

It doesn't take much to create a public airstrip in Montana. Many are simply grass strips that aren't even mowed.

"Some of them have nothing at all — no fence, lights, runway cones or services," said Alke, of the Montana Aeronautics Division.

The strips are often created by a city or county as a place for aerial applicators to land their planes for crop dusting, for air ambulances or for wildland firefighting planes and crews.

"Most of them are a community effort," she said.

If the airport accepts federal funds, then it has to meet more stringent federal standards.

"Each place has its own nuances," Kriner said.

The fact that the airstrips are so spread out adds another benefit to the visits.

"It's also a good way to see the state," Kriner said. "It's hard to see Montana by car. I've been here 17 years and hadn't even begun to see the state before I started flying."

Even though he has reached his benchmark, Kriner has no plans to let up now. He likes to fly to places where he hunts coyotes and often jumps in his plane after work to motor south to the Bighorn River and fish.

"We all have to have our hobbies," Kriner said. "This has been a lifelong dream."

Scholarship Opportunities

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 a Montanan to help defray costs of education (i.e., flight instruction, A&P, ect.) and will be presented during the 2011 Montana Aviation Conference in Helena. Awarding of the scholarships will be based on a letter explaining the reasons for applying, future career goals, past aviation experience, if any, and any outstanding achievements. **The same letter can be submitted but applicant must submit one copy addressed to each individual scholarship they are applying for.** Letters of application **must** include a **mailing address and daytime phone number.** If you are selected to receive one of the scholarships your photo will appear in the 2011 Montana Aviation Conference Program, **please include a photo with your applications for this purpose (only one photo necessary).** Letters should be mailed to: Montana Aeronautics Division, PO Box 200507, Helena, MT 59620-0507 or call (406) 444-2506 for further information. **Letters must be postmarked on or before January 7, 2011.**

A Love of Aviation (ALOA) Scholarship – An anonymous donor established this scholarship of \$250 in 1997 in 2010 another anonymous donor contributed an additional \$250 creating a \$500 scholarship.

AOM Flight Training Scholarship – AOM has established this \$500 scholarship to financially assist a student pilot in obtaining their private pilot certificate.

Blue Goose First Generation Flight Scholarship – This \$250 scholarship is awarded to a first generation pilot to assist with flight training. This scholarship is designed to assist a person who has a love of aviation, yet had limited exposure to aviation, someone from a non-aviation background/family.

Harold Hamm Scholarship – Harold and Zola Hamm were the anonymous donors that established the first \$250 A Love of Aviation (ALOA) Scholarship in 1993. With the passing of Harold on September 1, 2006, Zola decided to rename the scholarship the “Harold Hamm Scholarship” in honor of her husband of 19 years. Harold had an extremely strong passion for aviation. Together he and Zola completed two airplane projects: the restoration of a J-3 Piper Cub, and an experimental RV-6 aircraft. In 2008 Zola graciously increased the amount of the Harold Hamm Scholarship to \$500.

Montana Antique Aircraft Association (MAAA) Scholarship – MAAA offers this \$500 scholarship to help defray the costs of flight instruction.

Montana Pilots Association Air Safety & Education Foundation Flight Training Award - This scholarship is open to a person who has a considerable interest in aviation. The \$750 scholarship is to be used for flight training.

Montana Pilots Association Junior Pilot Award – This recipient is chosen for outstanding interest in aviation, citizenship within their community and demonstrated academic achievement. The recipient must have soloed and be actively involved in flight training. This is a \$750 scholarship.

Morrison Aviation Appreciation Scholarship – Jeff Morrison, retired former owner of Morrison Flying Service in Helena has established the \$500 scholarship as a token of appreciation to the aviation community.

Mountain AirDance Flight Training Scholarship: Jeanne MacPherson and Bill Gallea offer this \$750 scholarship to an active pilot who desires to pursue advanced training, such as tailwheel endorsement, mountain flying, aerobatics, or a higher rating.

Parrott Family Scholarship – The Parrott Family offers this \$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.

Blessings of Schafer Meadows.....

(Schafer Meadow, Great Bear Wilderness, Bob Marshall Complex, MT)

By: Will Stene, story originally appeared in the Sept./Oct. issue of *Heading Bug*, reprinted with permission.



I've been flying throughout Montana with my father since my earliest memories as a child and have been flying throughout the state and elsewhere since I was 17. Like all aviator fathers, I search out opportunities to share that passion with my kids. This weekend for me posed the most fortunate opportunity to collage an experience and set of memories, I believe, that not even the grips of something like Alzheimer's could steal.

I'd been planning on attending the MT Schafer Meadow work session since early spring, and the initial plan was that only I would be able to attend. In the early AM on the departure date my oldest son, 11 years old, was getting quite stirred that I was going camping and was persistently indicating he wanted to come too. He began packing a bag and before I knew it was in the truck on his way to go airplane camping with his father in Schafer Meadow.

Now to preface: My oldest son was born with Down Syndrome and has never liked airplanes. We had attempted

endless times since he was a wee little boy just to get him to sit in an airplane let alone fly in one. We took him on a trip to Idaho three years ago and it led to having to land in McCall and getting a hotel room as he was terrified by flying in slight turbulence. Needless to say this was the first time he had willingly been near or flown in an airplane since.

This trip was a new beginning for Dothan. He was excited to open the hangar door, load the airplane, and he even independently jumped into the passenger seat and said "LETS GO DAD". Heck, I was so amazed that I forgot to check the baggage door and had to stop on the ramp to close it. When in route to Schafer we once again encountered some slight turbulence and Dothan proceeded to look over at me and said "ITS ALRIGHT DAD", wow!! In the eleven years with our son I wouldn't trade any of them and this was surely one of those joyful moments that brought a tear to your eye.

We proceeded to land at Schafer 25 minutes after taking off from Polson and had a wonderful time as told by Dothan in his own utterances; "Airplanes, Piling Wood, Hikes, Cabins, Cookies, River, Treasure (dugout fire pit), Sleeping Bag, Tent, Soup (Jambalaya), Ice Cream". He had a wonderful time with all there and wanted to thank everybody for making it so much fun. He was so excited to come home and tell the rest of the family of his adventure.

Overall the trip was a blazing good time and a sensational success. Even though it wasn't a trip of a memorable take-off or landing (all could have been better) it was a trip that will never be forgotten as it was an opportunity to see our son who continues to work on overcoming tall obstacles knock a big one down. Taking to flying again and experiencing the wilderness MT has to offer. It would have never happened if it was not for that stirring of interest for camping in the wilderness to enable him to overcome his own personal barriers.

Note: "Keep Them Accessible and Open" I want to emphasize to everybody to support their state aviation association (membership and work parties) as well as the RAF. Our son most likely would have never had the chance to experience the wilderness if it were not for the access granted by these airstrips. So assist these groups and organizations in their continued work to "Keep Them Accessible and Open".



America and Montana Have Lost a Hero

By: Jerry Hover



One of our “Greatest Generation” members has passed away. William W. Hewitt, Lt. Col., USAF (Ret.), and Colonel, Civil Air Patrol (Ret.), has taken his last flight. Bill Hewitt lived a long and eventful life, filled with adventure and service to the country he loved so dearly. Bill died at home in Bigfork on 22 September 2010.

Bill was born in Sykeston, North Dakota on 23 August 1922, where his family farmed. The depression inspired Bill to move to greener pastures in Anaconda, MT, where he married a local girl, Gladys Siebenaler. Bill joined the Army Air Corps Cadet Program in Butte in 1942, and was sworn into the Army Air Corps as 2/Lt pilot in 1943. After basic pilot training Bill was sent to Williams AFB, AZ for advanced training, there he flew the P-38. Hoping for combat, Bill was disappointed when assigned to stay at Williams and be an instructor in B-17’s and B-29’s. The war ended before he could get a combat assignment. After the war Bill settled in Butte, MT flying as a USAF Reserve Officer as well as a CFII and charter pilot for Butte Aero sales. He then took over Ruby Valley Flying Service at Twin Bridges, MT. During this time he joined the Civil Air Patrol and flew search and rescue missions throughout the northwest. Bill went back on active duty with the USAF in 1951 and stayed on active duty until his retirement in 1974. During his career he flew combat missions in Korea and in Vietnam (two tours), was stationed in Europe, was a Combat Search and Rescue Squadron Commander, flew as a Flight Instructor, Flight Examiner and Chief Pilot in aircraft too numerous to list. Throughout this time, he maintained his relationship with the Civil Air Patrol (CAP), and upon his retirement from active duty resumed his leadership role. Bill served as Squadron

Commander, Wing Commander, Region Chief Check Pilot and many other positions. Until failing health dictated he slow down, Bill was very active in the general aviation community in Montana, serving as FAA Accident Prevention counselor, CFII and in the Montana Pilots Association. If it had to do with flying, you were sure to find Bill Hewitt not only involved but leading the way. There is no such thing as a “natural born pilot”, but there are a few people who totally understand how an aircraft flies and can not only use all that an aircraft can give, but can teach it to others as well. Bill was the master at both.

Bill and Gladys had four children who grew up running around the world to his various assignments. To their great credit, all have grown to be successful, have strong families and have produced 13 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren, who have been the light of Bill’s life. Bill lost Gladys to cancer in 1978. Bill met Ann through the CAP and in 1980 they were married and have been lovers and partners ever since. Ann brought three children to the marriage who were immediately incorporated into the “Hewitt” clan. Both Bill and Ann have worked exhaustively within the Montana aviation community and the CAP to promote general aviation and the CAP missions.

Bill Hewitt was an honest to goodness Hero of the Greatest Generation. He spent more than 60 years in service to his country, flew in three wars, was decorated with the highest honors from both the USAF and the CAP, taught numerous pilots how to really fly an airplane, influenced untold number of young people to careers in aviation and the military and raised a wonderful family. All who knew him were so very proud to have the honor of his friendship. Throw a nickel on the grass.

Happy landings Bill - Gear down – Cleared to land - God Bless.

Yellowstone Airport Closes for the Season

The Yellowstone Airport has closed for the 2010 season. Thanks to all who supported the various fly-ins and other events here this year. We hope to provide an even better experience next year and are welcoming any ideas for improvements on the GA side that the pilots out there may have. The Yellowstone Airport is now fully capable of ILS on Runway 1 and WAAS approaches on both runways for next season. With the addition of the AWOS IIIP this year we hope to be better equipped to provide the service that you expect. We will start snow removal operations in April of 2011 and hope to be back open by May 15. Thanks to all for a really good year and we hope to see you next year. Any questions or suggestions next year can be sent to Tony Bean at abean@mt.gov or (406) 459-9825. For up to date information visit the airports website at www.yellowstoneairport.org.



Winter at Yellowstone Airport, 2009

Aeronautics Division
Montana Department of Transportation
2630 Airport Road
PO Box 200507
Helena, Montana 59620-0507

November, 2010

Pre-Sort Standard
US Postage Paid
Helena, MT 59620
Permit No. 141



Great Lakes Airlines Announces New Service

Great Lakes Aviation, Ltd. announced they will add service to Denver International Airport from Havre beginning November 1, 2010 and continue service to Billings Logan Airport, Sunday only.

“Great Lakes is pleased to be serving Havre with service to Denver and Billings. The new service to Denver will be with our 30 seat Embraer-120 aircraft equipped with a lavatory and Flight Attendant. Denver International having over 850 daily departures will fulfill the increasing need for connectivity,” said Kassi Mohlenkamp, Regional Sales Manager for Great Lakes Airlines.

To purchase tickets on Great Lakes Airlines, visit www.flygreatlakes.com, call the Great Lakes’ reservation center at 800-554-5111 or through your travel agent.

Great Lakes is providing scheduled passenger service at 59 airports in fifteen states with a fleet of Embraer EMB-120 Brasilias and Raytheon/Beech 1900D regional airliners. A current route map may be viewed at http://www.flygreatlakes.com/route_map/route_map.htm

All scheduled flights are operated under the Great Lakes Airlines marketing identity in conjunction with code-share agreements with United Airlines and Frontier Airlines at their Denver, Phoenix, and Billings hubs. Code-share agreement with only United at their Kansas City and Ontario hubs; and only Frontier at their Las Vegas, Albuquerque and Milwaukee hubs.

Additional information is available on the company web site that may be accessed at www.flygreatlakes.com

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