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## Airport Executive Director Scheduled for Departure

December 31, 2011 will close out another year, but will also be the end of an era at Gerald R. Ford International Airport as Jim Koslosky serves his final day as executive director. While he arrived in Grand Rapids in March 1991, his aviation career began in 1968 serving four years active duty in the United States Air Force (USAF).

While in the USAF, Koslosky trained as an Air Traffic Control Specialist working both Control Tower and Radar Approach Control Facilities. While on base, he also attended flight school and obtained his pilot license. He then worked for Northwest Airlines, Wisconsin Department of Transportation Bureau of Aeronautics, Dane County (WI) Regional Airport, and Fort Wayne (IN) – Allen County Airport Authority.



On a recent fall day, I sat down with Jim to chat about his tenure at GFIA.

**Q:** *What drew you to Grand Rapids/Kent County International Airport (now GFIA)?*

**J:** The position was attractive because it was not only a move up for my career but also an opportunity to grow an airport in a supportive region. The larger draw was the entire West Michigan region, which was so attractive to my family. This is a great place to raise a family. When I met with the Aeronautics Board during the interview process, it was obvious that the Board and the Airport were supportive of progressing and growing the airport in support of the region. The 1991 Master Plan Update was just being completed when I arrived, so I could see the dedication to development in black and white.

## Another Annual Record On The Horizon

That's right! As we approach the holiday travel season and the end of calendar year 2011, passenger traffic at GFIA continues on pace to set a new annual record. At the end of the third quarter, total passenger activity was up more than 7% despite the challenging economy and increasing fuel costs. Current projections indicate we will end the year approximately 5% above the 2010 level – or close to 2.3 million passengers.

The key component in this growth is you, the loyal travelers who include GFIA in your travel plans. "In order to maintain and increase air service, airline route planners need to see that there is demand in the market," says Jim Koslosky, aeronautics executive director. "We thank each of you for your continued patronage."

**"Jim is a recognized industry leader in the aviation world. He is held in high esteem by his industry colleagues. The Board members salute Jim and wish him the very best in his retirement."**

**Joseph Tomaselli, chairman  
Aeronautics Board**

**Q:** *What do you consider to be the most significant changes that you have seen in the aviation industry over the years?*

**J:** I see four significant areas. The first would be the advent of the jet age. The change from prop aircraft to turbo-jet aircraft allowed travelers to go further and faster than ever before. Airline deregulation, which occurred in the late 1970s, removed federal government control over fares, routes and market entry of airlines. This allowed each airline to determine when and where they would fly and how much they would charge. The third area would be our U.S. Supreme Court case that allows airports to assert their proprietary responsibility in fee and rate-setting. Our airport played the lead role in this 1994 decision when



## Destination Grand Rapids for USA Today Writer

Recently, USA Today writer Ben Mutzabaugh spent a few days getting to know West Michigan. His trip here was the result of an online poll conducted in June 2011 where Grand Rapids was one of seven possible destinations that readers could vote to send him to. Grand Rapids was the overwhelming winner, garnering 65% of the votes cast, thanks in large part to an aggressive social media campaign encouraging people to vote.

While he was here, Mutzabaugh visited the Lake Michigan shoreline, Grand Haven, and, of course, Grand Rapids. During his visit, Mutzabaugh posted the following update on his *Today in the Sky* blog: "I am lucky enough to be in town during 'ArtPrize,' a signature Grand Rapids event that's meant to promote the arts and inspire creativity. The works range from sculptures to performances, but they really capture an impressive range of ideas and spaces."

When talking about his time in West Michigan, Mutzabaugh said, "I'm going to go back and have a lot to write about when it's time to put together this story. Just from what there is to see and to let people know from outside the region to say 'Hey, there's more here than you may have expected.' This will be a fun piece to put together and to let people know what is going on in this part of the country."

Following his area tour, Mutzabaugh sat down with airport executives to talk about the future at GFIA. To read his complete story, visit his blog at <http://travel.usatoday.com/flights/blog>.



USA Today writer Ben Mutzabaugh enjoys all things aviation, including his "seat" in the engine cowling of a Continental Airlines 737.

## Airport Kicks Off Advertising Campaign

The Kent County Department of Aeronautics has recently launched a comprehensive airport advertising campaign. This multi-media campaign will include television, radio, outdoor, print, online, and venue-based advertising, with a geographic coverage area that includes Greater Grand Rapids and several communities throughout the western half of the Lower Peninsula.

"The purpose of this campaign is to generate additional awareness of, and stimulate demand for, the services and amenities offered at Gerald R. Ford International," states marketing and communications manager Bruce Schedlbauer.

The campaign, which will run through March 2012, will include ads such as the billboard ad shown below.

A follow-up ongoing ad campaign is being planned.



## Pardon Our Dust

Beginning mid-November and continuing through the end of 2011, we will be completing some additional improvements in the passenger terminal facility.

During this time, new flooring will be installed in the Grand Hall, the mezzanine, and the open staircase located behind Starbucks. Concurrently, the infrastructure for the T-coil-compatible hearing loop system will be installed in the Grand Hall.

The bulk of the installation activity will occur during the overnight hours, and we are working to minimize any inconvenience to our customers.

Thank you for your patience.



## Need A Place To Land Your Business?

Are you looking to relocate or expand your business? Are you looking for commercial real estate that can accommodate your business's unique needs?

You may want to consider landing your business at Gerald R. Ford International Airport. We have a number of available properties for lease that can offer: a strategic, centralized location in the Midwest; Foreign Trade Zone eligibility; excellent intermodal infrastructure via air, road, and rail; an extensive passenger and air cargo route network.

We have over 450 acres available for aviation-related development, with additional improved and unimproved properties for your consideration.

For more information about available properties, land use restrictions, or the airport's minimum standards, contact Joel Burgess, properties administrator at (616) 233-6054 or via email at [JBurgess@grr.org](mailto:JBurgess@grr.org).

**departure**

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the U.S. Supreme Court upheld our Airport’s model for calculating rates and charges. The fourth significant area would be aviation security. It all began in the 1960s with hijackings to extort money, then as a means to make a political statement, and now for the purpose of terrorism. With each shift in the threats to aviation security, additional layers of security have been added, unfortunately without reviewing existing procedures for efficacy. A comprehensive review of how we secure our aviation system is required.

**Q:** *What do you consider to be your biggest accomplishment during your tenure with KCDA?*

**J:** Our successful rebuilding of the entire airport system on-site without ever shutting down. From the runways, taxiways, and aircraft ramps, to the terminal building to the new parking facilities and utilities, every major piece of infrastructure has been rebuilt. This would not have been possible without collaboration with all of our business partners, working together and sequencing each project to achieve the best results with minimal impact to the daily operations in a cost-effective manner.

Aeronautics Board Chairman Joe Tomaselli states, “Jim’s contributions to the airport are significant, as evidenced by a tremendous growth of air service and facilities under his leadership of 20 years. Jim is a recognized industry leader in the aviation world. He is held in high esteem by his industry colleagues and the many fine staff members he has developed during his time as airport director.”

**Q:** *What factors have been key to your success in this ever-changing industry?*

**J:** Having Board support in the development of a strong organization in support of our mission. This department is staffed with subject-matter experts that have routinely exceeded the expectations of the Aeronautics Board. They make it look easy and seamless when it’s not. This is an organization that has mentored numerous employees and interns who have moved on to advanced positions throughout the industry across the nation. Also, having an organization and staff that have the flexibility to adjust and change with the times.

**Q:** *Speaking of mentoring, who were your most influential mentors?*

**J:** So many people have influenced my career along the way. I remember a college dean who helped to guide me as I began my area of study. I have had mentoring from my peers, other executive directors who have thrived in this crazy, demanding business and who were willing to share their experiences with me. Most influential as role models would be my parents. They were and are great role models of a strong work ethic and supportive parenting.

**Q:** *What advice would you give to the next generation of aviation professionals?*

**J:** Be prepared. Be flexible, and expect change at ever-increasing rates of speed and be able to adapt.

**Q:** *So, what’s next on the horizon for you?*

**J:** I’m going to start by taking some time to decompress; my wife, Claudia, and I would like to travel a bit. Ultimately, there will be other projects on my agenda because I want to retire to something...not just retire.

**Q:** *Any parting thoughts?*

**J:** I am so grateful to my wife, Claudia, and my sons, Jared and Joel, for their sustained support throughout my career despite the 24/7 nature of the career, the travel and time demands and frenetic pace it sometimes required. I am also grateful to have served under Aeronautics Boards who understood the airport business without politicizing it. At the end of the day, I am proud to be leaving a modern state-of-the-art airport facility with the capacity and services to serve the West Michigan region for the next 30-40 years. Thank you for letting me serve all of you!

Chairman Tomaselli sums it up thusly, “Jim leaves us with many fine contributions and fond memories of his many initiatives and efforts. The Board members salute Jim and wish him the very best in his retirement.”

## Presenting...

Is your group looking for a speaker for an upcoming meeting? Would your organization like to learn more about the airport?

The GFIA Marketing and Communications division would welcome the opportunity to come to your next meeting and provide an overview of the airport, as well as updates on ongoing airport development projects and the state of the aviation industry. Presentations can be timed to fit nicely into a breakfast or lunchtime meeting.



For more information, or to request a speaker for your next meeting, please call the Marketing and Communications division at (616) 233-6053 or visit the website at [www.flygrandrapids.org](http://www.flygrandrapids.org) for more information located under About Us, Newsroom.

## Giving From The Heart

Twice each year, GFIA partners with MI Blood to host a blood drive at the airport. Blood drives in 2011 were held in May and September.

Previous Total	801 pints
Given in 2011	24 pints
Total donated at airport drives	825 pints

GFIA and MI Blood would like to thank all who participated in the blood drive. Special recognition goes out to Joe Gilliam of the airport’s facilities division who received his 1-gallon pin at this drive and Susan Sherman of the GFIA administration division who received her 2-gallon pin at this drive.

Join us for our next blood drive on Friday, May 18, 2012.



## News In Brief

- » On September 15, 2011, airport executive director Jim Koslosky, A.A.E., was recognized and presented with a lifetime service award by the Michigan Association of Airport Executives. Nearly half of Jim's 43 year aviation career was served at GFIA.
- » Mark your calendars! The sixteenth annual Airport Holiday Music Festival is scheduled to take place December 5-9, 2011. Area middle and high school choral groups will perform in the Grand Hall of the passenger terminal building throughout the mornings and afternoons.
- » The GFIA Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighters (ARFF) will once again be a collection center for the Toys for Tots campaign. Please feel free to drop off your donations at the fire station at any time through December 9. The Grand Rapids Santa Claus girls will once again be distributing the toys.
- » The next two meetings of the Kent County Aeronautics Board will take place November 16 and December 14, 2011, at 8:30 am. All meetings are held in the International Room of the passenger terminal building unless otherwise noted on our website at [www.FlyFord.org/AeroBoard.php](http://www.FlyFord.org/AeroBoard.php). Meetings are open to the public.
- » The West Michigan Aviation Academy won the "Interior Architecture Honor Award" from the American Institute of Architecture/Grand Valley. The facility was designed by Integrated Architecture and constructed by Pioneer Construction.

## Certification Inspection

In September, the airport underwent its annual FAR Part 139 Airport Certification Inspection. This extensive inspection, performed by the Federal Aviation Administration, is a requirement for all commercial airport operators, and focuses heavily on Airport Operations, Maintenance, and Fire Rescue.

The inspectors examine everything from airfield conditions to training, response times of the fire rescue team to maintenance standards. GFIA received "zero discrepancies" – that is, there were no issues that required corrective action.



*Airport Connections* is the quarterly newsletter of the Gerald R. Ford International Airport. We encourage our readers to contact us with comments, suggestions, and submissions. If you wish to be added to the mailing list for *Airport Connections*, please contact the Kent County Department of Aeronautics:

**Phone:** 616.233.6000

**Email:** [gfiainfo@grr.org](mailto:gfiainfo@grr.org)

**Kent County Aeronautics Board** | Joe Tomaselli, chair; Dick Vander Molen\*, vice chair; Terri Lynn Land; Roger Morgan\*; Ted Vonk\*; Floyd Wilson, Jr.  
\* County Commissioner

**Executive Director** | James Koslosky, A.A.E.

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Grand Rapids, MI 49512-4055

## 2012 Parking Rates Remain Unchanged

Parking rates at Gerald R. Ford International Airport are as follows:

### Short-term Parking:

\$2 first hour  
\$1 each additional ½ hour  
\$24 daily maximum

### Long-term Garage Parking:

\$2 per hour  
\$12 daily maximum  
\$72 weekly maximum\*

### Long-term Surface Parking:

\$2 per hour  
\$10 daily maximum  
\$60 weekly maximum\*

### Economy Lot Parking:

\$2 per hour  
\$9 daily maximum  
\$54 weekly maximum\*

\* 7th day free

*Complimentary shuttle service is available from bus shelter locations.*

### Valet Parking:

\$18 per day  
\$12 five hours or less

\*\* A \$10 Lost Ticket Fee will be added to parking fee if original ticket is not produced when exiting the parking facilities.

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