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INSIDE THIS EDITION

- 2 | *Passenger Appreciation Days...Our Way of Saying "Thanks!"*
- 2 | *Sharing Has Its Benefits*
- 3 | *Now Arriving: GFIA Welcomes New Marketing Manager*
- 3 | *TSA Replaces Screening Equipment*
- 4 | *News In Brief*
- 4 | *Did You Know?*

It's A Capitol Idea! United Airlines Begins Service to Washington–Dulles

Beginning May 1, United Airlines is offering twice daily service to our Nation's Capital with nonstop service to Washington Dulles International Airport (IAD).

Scheduled weekday departures from GFIA at 9:15 am and 2:30 pm will operate on 50-seat Embraer regional jet aircraft. United currently serves Grand Rapids to hubs in Chicago, Cleveland, Denver, Houston and New York. The addition of this new service will bring to 22 the number of nonstop destinations available at GFIA.

"We are very pleased to be a part of United Airline's expanding network," states Airport Executive Director, Brian Ryks. "The addition of service to Washington–Dulles International not only offers our West Michigan flyers a nonstop flight to our nation's capital, it also provides



excellent domestic and international connections through another major hub airport."

Visit United.com to book your ticket or for additional information.



28th St. Construction Could Impact Your Trip To The Airport

Travelers headed to GFIA will want to plan their driving route carefully. Beginning in March, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) kicked off a \$9.75 million construction project on 28th Street SE between Breton Ave. and I-96. While the resurfacing work is completed a minimum of one lane each direction will remain open at all times. This construction project is expected to last through late November 2013. For up-to-date information on this project, visit Michigan.gov/drive.

Airport patrons are encouraged to plan their route to the airport accordingly and allow extra time as alternate routes will see heavier traffic loads as well.

When approaching the airport on I-96, we recommend exit #44 for 36th Street. Take 36th St. west one mile to Patterson Ave. and Patterson Ave. south to the airport entrance at 44th Street.

Quick Tip: When using online mapping tools, you can simply enter airport code GRR into the destination field.



Report To The Community Now Available

Hot off the Press! The 2013 *Report to the Community* is now available. The *Report* is an annual publication of the Gerald R. Ford International Airport that recaps the previous year's activities and shares information about the coming year's projects, goals and services.

This year's *Report*, titled "Fly Smart. Fly Ford." will bring you up to speed on what's new at the airport and give you a sense of how we are working to continually improve the travel experience for West Michigan travelers. Check out some of the exciting customer service amenities that were added throughout 2012; and find out what's ahead in 2013.

The *Report to the Community* is now available on the airport website at FlyFord.org. If you would like to receive a printed copy of the *Report*, please contact the Department of Aeronautics offices at (616) 233-6000.



Passenger Appreciation Days...Our Way of Saying “Thanks!”

For three days each spring, we transform the Grand Hall into an oasis of fun for passengers and greeters, and this year those days were March 28-30. With tropical decorations all around and beach tunes playing, the mood was as festive as it was exciting! A hospitality station with complimentary refreshments, coffee and lemonade was available for folks to sit and enjoy or to grab and go as travelers headed to their gates. One parent stated, “Our kids look forward to this so much each year that they don’t even complain when they have to get up early to come to the airport! We plan ahead, arrive early and have breakfast here before we board.”

Patrons could also pick up give-aways like pens, activity books and crayons, can and bottle coolers, stress relievers, tote bags, and much, much more. But the fun didn’t end there. There was a drawing for a \$150 travel voucher (one name drawn each day) compliments of the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Board, and this year’s winners were:

- Bob Kilinski of Zeeland, MI,
- Amy Elvey of Ada, MI, and
- Gayle Janasik of St. Louis, MI.

And, Passenger Appreciation Days at GFIA would not be complete without the ever-popular paper airplane flying contest! Budding pilots of all ages enjoy creating their own aircraft and then launching it down our indoor “runway” in hopes of being entered into a drawing for one of three \$100 gift cards to Rivertown Crossings Mall, compliments of the Airport Board. Our lucky pilots for 2013 were:

- Martha Adams of Grand Rapids, MI,
- Mackenzie Fuglseth of Bettendorf, IA, and
- Ron Riebschleger of Rockford, MI.

CONGRATULATIONS to all our winners!

Many thanks to airport tenants Delta Air Lines, United Airlines, Allegiant Travel, Universal Forest Products, Rothbury Executive Air, AeroMed Aviation, Amway Aviation, and HMS Host.

Most of all, we offer our sincere thanks to all our passengers who include Gerald R. Ford International Airport in their travel plans throughout the year. We sincerely hope that Passenger Appreciation Days was just the beginning of a wonderful Spring Break vacation. We know you have choices for your air travel arrangements, and we thank you for choosing to Fly Ford!



Sharing Has Its Benefits

If you do much traveling by air at all, you’ve probably heard the term “code share” at least once or twice. You may have even flown on a code share flight. But, what exactly is a code share, and how does it impact your travel?

One of the simplest definitions reads: “A code share is a two or more leg flight, covered by one ticket and sold by one airline, for a destination served not directly by it but through an affiliated airline. A code share flight uses the same two-letter carrier code during all legs of the journey.” (*courtesy of businessdictionary.com*).

Most airlines have code share partners. These partnerships allow airlines to offer flights to more destinations than they fly with their own equipment. With both airlines being major carriers, safety is not a concern, and, since you had the convenience of purchasing one airline ticket for your trip, you’re not likely to notice. So, what is the benefit?

For the airlines, they have the potential to increase brand loyalty with their customers by being able to sell tickets to destinations not directly served by their own route schedule. For the traveler, you benefit by building more frequent flier miles with your preferred carrier, purchasing one ticket for your entire trip, and you still get to where you want to go.

Recently, Southwest Airlines and AirTran Airways announced that they have initiated code sharing between the carriers as the next step in their merger process. So what does this mean for you?



sharing
continued on page 4

Now Arriving: GFIA Welcomes New Marketing Manager

The Kent County Department of Aeronautics is pleased to announce that, effective May 28, Tara Hernandez is the marketing and communications manager for Gerald R. Ford International Airport! West Michigan residents may recognize Tara from her time with FOX 17; for the past five years, she has been their sports anchor.



A West Michigan native (Tara graduated from Fruitport High School) and graduate of Michigan State University's School of Journalism, Tara indicates that she is looking forward to the challenge and professional growth potential of this new position. "I am excited to bring my experience in marketing and communications to the airport community, to enhance the airport brand and make our name known throughout social media" states Tara. "I'm also thrilled about joining a staff of people who are enthusiastic about their work!"

In her new position, Tara will be overseeing the production of advertising and marketing activities, the airport's online presence and social media, special events, and she will be in charge of public relations and media activities.

"I am very pleased to have Tara join the GFIA team," states executive director Brian Ryks. "The experience she has gained at FOX 17, along with her past employment and education, has prepared her well for the breadth of responsibilities she assumes at the airport. I am very excited about the enthusiasm and new dynamic Tara brings to the airport team."

Please join us as we offer a warm welcome to Tara!

TSA Replaces Screening Equipment

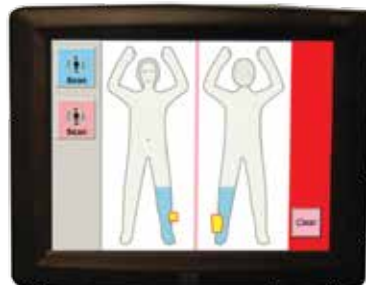
Travelers at GFIA will begin to see new Advanced Imaging Technology (AIT) units at the passenger security screening checkpoints as the current "backscatter technology" units are replaced by "millimeter wave" units. Backscatter technology projected low level X-ray beams over the body to create a reflection of the body displayed on a remotely located monitor. While deemed safe for travelers, this screening method raised many privacy questions.

TSA recently installed new software on all millimeter wave imaging technology machines that eliminates passenger-specific images. Instead, the software automatically detects potential threat items and indicates their location on a generic outline of a person that will appear on a monitor attached to the unit.

Millimeter wave technology bounces harmless electromagnetic waves off the surface of the body to create the same generic image for all passengers. All millimeter wave technology units are equipped with Automated Target Recognition software that detects any metallic and non-metallic threats concealed under a passenger's clothing by displaying a generic outline of a person on a monitor attached to the AIT unit highlighting any areas that may require additional screening. The generic outline of a person will be identical for all passengers. If no anomalies are detected, an "OK" appears on the screen with no outline (*see image below*).



Millimeter wave technology machines similar to this L-3 model will soon be seen at GFIA.



Any potential threat items that are detected are indicated on a generic outline of a person.



If no potential threat items are detected, an "OK" appears on the monitor with no outline.

AIT looks for metallic and non-metallic items that might be located anywhere on the body. Before you go through this technology, we strongly recommend removing ALL items from your pockets and certain accessories that you might be wearing, including your wallet, belt, bulky jewelry, money, keys, and cell phone. Removing all of these items will reduce your chances of needing additional screening after you exit the machine. To avoid the chance of leaving any of your personal items behind, TSA recommends that you place them in your carry-on bag prior to entering the checkpoint.

To learn more about this and other technologies used by TSA to keep our skies safe please visit tsa.gov.

Fly Smart. Fly Ford.

Connect with us on Facebook!



Facebook.com/GeraldRFordInternationalAirport

News In Brief

- » The next three meetings of the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Board will be held May 29, June 26, and July 31, 2013 at 8:30 am. All meetings will be held in the International Room at the passenger terminal building unless otherwise posted on our website at FlyFord.org/AeroBoard.php and are open to the public.
- » Frontier Airlines has announced that it will no longer serve the Grand Rapids market effective September 8, 2013. Denver-bound travelers will still be able to choose from three daily nonstop flights offered by United Airlines and Southwest Airlines.

Did You Know?

A commercial aircraft door will not open in flight because it is actually bigger than the door frame itself, and the door opens inwards towards the cabin. To open, it must be opened inwards, rotated, and then slipped sideways out of the frame. Even if the door could somehow be opened, it would be like lifting a 2,200 pound weight. If you aren't sure how much that would be, a Volkswagen Beetle (or "Bug") weighs in slightly less at 2,100 pounds.

sharing

continued from page 2

Travelers from the Ford can now access more than 20 destinations on the Southwest network that were previously unavailable through AirTran with just one stop. Travelers can now fly with a single connection to places like Hartford, CT, Charlotte-Douglas and Raleigh/Durham, NC, Charleston, SC, Norfolk, VA, and even San Juan, Puerto Rico! And, these are all possible even before Southwest begins flying their own brand at GFIA.

To book your travel on Southwest Airlines to one of these destinations, simply visit Southwest.com today.



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

Facebook: [GeraldRFordInternationalAirport](https://www.facebook.com/GeraldRFordInternationalAirport)

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