

Vote YES! On This Ticket

Starting April 4, West Michigan travelers have another new option for air travel as American Airlines began nonstop service to Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA). In addition to doing business or vacationing in our nation's capital, you can also catch a flight to any of 70 other U.S. destinations through DCA. The service, which is operated by American Eagle, features 13 weekly round trips.

“Nonstop service to Reagan National Airport has been a target market of ours, and we are happy to see American Airlines continue to invest in the Grand Rapids market,” said Gerald R. Ford International Airport President & CEO Jim Gill. “American has grown 74% at the Ford Airport since 2015, nearly tripling its seat capacity – that says a lot about American’s desire to expand here, and our community’s response to supporting new routes.”

American Airlines has served Gerald R. Ford International Airport passengers for over 25 years, and also offers nonstop service to Chicago–O’Hare, Dallas Fort Worth, Charlotte, and Philadelphia. Rounding our service line-up United, Southwest, Delta, and Allegiant Air provide nonstop flights to Atlanta, Baltimore, Chicago–Midway, Denver, Detroit, Ft. Lauderdale, Ft. Myers, Houston, Las Vegas, Minneapolis, New York–LaGuardia, New York–Newark, Orlando, Phoenix–Mesa, Punta Gorda, St. Pete/Clearwater, Tampa, and Washington Dulles.

With all these options it’s true...*Getting there is better here.*



Hot Off The Press!

The 2017 Report to the Community is hot off the press. The Report is an annual publication of the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority that recaps the previous year’s activities and shares information about upcoming projects and goals.

This year’s Report offers a summary of our transition to becoming an Airport Authority and welcoming a new President & CEO, as well as an overview of our many celebrations throughout the past year. Also included is a look ahead to exciting new developments and construction plans.

The Report to the Community is available on the airport website at FlyFord.org. If you would like to receive a printed copy of the Report, please contact the Airport Authority’s administrative office at (616) 233-6000.



Busy, Busy, Busy

It has been a season of unprecedented growth for the Gerald R. Ford International Airport. After closing out 2016 4.06% ahead of 2015 and breaking another passenger record, some may have expected a slower start to the new year. They would have been wrong.

Each of the first three months of the year have broken records—January by 5.86%, February by 9.59% and March by 11.17%—so it is no surprise that we also set a new record for the busiest first quarter ever, serving 685,278 passengers. That is nearly three times more passengers than we served in the entire first full year of service at this location!

Will this growth continue? No one can say what the future holds. However, the addition of service to Reagan National (DCA) in April is one factor that bodes well by adding capacity to the market.

What we can say is, thank you West Michigan fliers for including GFIA in your travel plans!

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Passenger Appreciation Days: A Send-Off Party Before Spring Break!



Spring break is always an exciting time. The kids are out of school, mom and dad get some time off from work, and maybe you're among those lucky enough to be getting out of the Michigan cold weather for an all-too-brief respite. That's a great reason to celebrate right there, isn't it? Now, imagine that you arrive at the airport and, after you check in for your flight, you start to hear the faint sounds of beach music in the background, and...is that cheering?

For three days, as you entered the Grand Hall you were greeted with the sights, sounds, and smells of a spring break send-off party that has become a mainstay for GFIA travelers over the past 15 years—our Passenger Appreciation Days. “Our Spring Break travelers who return year after year know how much fun you can have prior to your vacation with our Passenger Appreciation Days,” said GFIA President & CEO Jim Gill. “This is one of the ways we are thanking our community for supporting our airport, and our passengers will have some fun before heading out on their trips.”



Izzi and Ellie headed to Italy for spring break to play with the West Catholic High School Band.

party
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Stormwater Project Continues to Receive Recognition for Excellence

Each year the American Council of Engineering Companies of Michigan (ACEC/M) honors outstanding engineering and surveying projects. The Engineering and Surveying Excellence Awards Program recognizes outstanding efforts of professional design firms to meet their clients needs through exceptional projects.

This year the Gerald R. Ford International Airport's Drainage Improvement & Natural Treatment System project received the 2017 ACEC Merit Award. This \$20 million project treats stormwater deicing fluid runoff at the airport using detention, natural bacterial treatment, filtration, and natural aeration to transform nutrient-laden stormwater into clean water before discharging it into the Thornapple River. The system is completely self-sustaining. It utilizes gravity and engineered siphons to feed stormwater into and through the natural treatment beds. The only energy used in the system is provided by solar panels that power stormwater testing equipment.



This project is a once in a lifetime project. It included many unique components not typical of airport projects. The project included coordination and/or permitting with many federal, state, and local agencies. There were many challenges in the environmental approval, design, and construction of the project. The project is the only of its kind in the State of Michigan, and one of only a few in North America. The system is performing as designed, meeting the limits prescribed by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ).

[Editors Note: Shortly before going to press, we were notified that the project has earned a National Recognition Award from the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) 2017 Engineering Excellence Awards (EEA) competition. The National Recognition Award is a prestigious distinction honoring projects that demonstrate exceptional achievement in engineering.]

Helping Dreams Take Flight

Granting wishes is a mission that Make-A-Wish Michigan thrives on, but staff the Gerald R. Ford International Airport (GFIA) had a chance to make one young man's wish of being a pilot come true - by bringing him up close and personal with a behind-the-scenes tour.

Anthony Cook, a 15-year-old Hillsdale boy, dreams of being a commercial pilot one day. When Make-A-Wish Michigan approached the airport about the possibilities of extending Anthony's dream beyond the runway, they made it happen.



Anthony enjoyed his tour of the AeroMed helicopter and facilities.

Anthony started with a tour of the airport terminal building, seeing how the airport and airlines operate on a 24/7 schedule. He then made his way to the Air Traffic Control Tower, where he and his family could see how Air Traffic Controllers manage the airfield and the radar facilities. Anthony's favorite part of the Control Tower was the view from high above the airfield!

From there, Anthony toured the Airport Fire Department where he suited up in firefighter gear, and got to take a ride in one of the trucks. Anthony also enjoyed lunch with the firefighters around their kitchen table where he heard stories about some of the situations firefighters deal with, and how medical calls are their most frequent calls.

Anthony ended the day with tours of AeroMed, and Amway Aviation. At AeroMed, Anthony had a chance to sit in the cockpit of one of their helicopters. He also met mechanics, nurses, doctors, pilots, and dispatchers who all make up AeroMed's team. At Amway, Anthony sat in the cockpit of several planes with the team's captain, and asked lots of questions about what it takes to make his career fly high.

When asked what his favorite part about his behind-the-scenes day at the airport was, Anthony could not choose one thing.

"I want to stay here all day, even though I've been here all day," said Anthony. "This helps me see what I have to do to be a pilot."

Thank you to our friends at the FAA-Air Traffic Control Tower, AeroMed, Amway Aviation, and our GFIA Staff - you helped make Anthony's dream take flight!



Anthony's sister Tessa, dad Robbie, and mom Angela join Anthony - decked out in full bunker gear - and the firefighters from Crew A under the leadership of Captain Phil Scarbrough (far right) for a great photo op to remember his day.



Captain Pat Rollins gave Anthony a tour of the Amway Aviation facilities.

party

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Our hospitality station was fully stocked with complimentary refreshments and give-away items for all ages. We held a drawing for three \$150 travel vouchers (one name each day) compliments of the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority Board, and this year's winners were Deb Powell of Kentwood, Jamie Dusendang of Wyoming, and Brian Meeusen of Zeeland.

The ever-popular paper airplane-flying contest brought out pilots of all ages who folded and flew their aircraft in hopes of landing in the drawing for a \$100 Tanger Outlet gift card (one name each day). This year's winners were Olivia Gaudrea of Middleville, Zach Bailey of Martin, and Jon Champion of Rockford.

The Airport Authority Board would like to thank our partners American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Envoy, Metro Cab, Southwest Airlines, and Universal Forest Products for their generous donations of give-away items. We also want to offer a huge thank you to food and beverage concessionaire HMS Host for their coordination of refreshments.

Most of all, we thank you, our passengers, for including Gerald R. Ford International Airport in your travel plans throughout the year. We know you have choices for your air travel arrangements, and we thank you for choosing to fly to and from Ford International Airport!



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News In Brief

- » The next three meetings of the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority Board are currently scheduled to occur on May 31, June 28, and July 26. Board meetings begin at 8:30 AM and are held in the International Room in the passenger terminal building. All meetings are open to the public.
- » We are hosting our 5K on the Runway on Saturday, October 7. The airport has selected Make-A-Wish Michigan as its charity of choice to donate the proceeds. Keep an eye out on social media for more information coming soon! (@FlyGRFord and Facebook.com/GeraldRFordInternationalAirport).

Employee Information Corner

Rain and snow can create stormwater runoff when they fall on pavement and other impervious surfaces. Pollutants can be picked up and carried with this stormwater, possibly creating adverse effects in streams, rivers, and lakes. In fact in some places, these 'non-point' sources of pollution can be significant contributors to the impairment of our waterways.

GFIA's stormwater is conveyed to local surface waters by the airport's storm sewer network. While much of the airport's stormwater is now routed through the new Natural Treatment System, the airport and its tenants are still required to employ good housekeeping practices for all outdoor activities to minimize and prevent the potential for stormwater to come into contact with polluting materials. Good housekeeping practices include making sure dumpster lids are closed. This simple practice minimizes the potential for rain and snow to accumulate and come into contact with potential pollutants. Other practices used as part of GFIA's stormwater management program are described in the airport's Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, which is available on the airport website (FlyFord.org/environment-zoning.php).

The continued participation of GFIA staff and tenants is important to our stormwater management program. If you observe practices or situations that may have the potential to negatively affect the quality of stormwater at the airport, call Airport Communications at 233-6055 to report your observation(s). These situations could include the improper disposal of wastes, improper discharges to the storm sewer system, or any other activity that appears to have the potential to introduce pollutants into the storm sewer system.

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 Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority office:

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