



volume 19 | no. 1
Winter 2011

We Our Passengers!

With 2010 officially behind us, it will go on the books as a RECORD BREAKING YEAR! Following several years of passenger traffic mirroring the economy and trending down, Gerald R. Ford International Airport set a new passenger record as **2,185,924 travelers** came through last year! In addition, monthly passenger records were set every month from May through December; and July 2010 was the busiest month ever at GFIA.

A key contributor to this increased airport utilization is the expanded air service in 2010. The arrival of low-fare carriers AirTran Airways and Frontier Airlines provided new service to five destinations; and Allegiant Air expanded its operation to include seven destinations and established a base of operation at GFIA. Other carriers serving the GFIA traveler also increased capacity and reduced fares. Airport Executive Director Jim Koslosky states, "Airfare reductions and increased seats, and signs of economic recovery, helped fuel our passenger growth and our effort to recapture those customers who were driving to other airports outside of our catchment area for lower cost air service."



Elizabeth Knoblock of Muskegon is congratulated by Bruce Schedlbauer as the Grand Prize winner.

To say thanks to its customers, the airport declared February 14, 2011, *We Love Our Passengers* day. The celebration included airport ambassadors greeting both inbound and outbound passengers with refreshments, and a Grand Prize drawing for a prize package valued at \$2,000. The prize package included a travel voucher, compliments of the Kent County Aeronautics Board, a Romance Plus Get-Away package, compliments of the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, a car rental voucher, compliments of National Car Rental, and a Tumi wheeled carry-on bag, compliments of HMS Host, filled with a variety of additional items. The winner of the Grand Prize was Elizabeth Knoblock of Muskegon, MI. Congratulations, Liz!

Most importantly, we want to thank all of the passengers who include GFIA in their travel plans. We know you have a choice; and we thank you for choosing Gerald R. Ford Int'l Airport.

More Technology Arrives At GFIA

Many tech-savvy travelers will tell you that their smart phones have transformed their travel habits. From online maps and travel guides to ordering room service, smart phones provide travelers with a wealth of information and capability in the palm of their hand.

Now, travelers on Delta Air Lines and Continental Airlines/United Airlines may also use their smart phones in another way – electronic boarding passes. When checking in online, a traveler may opt to have the barcode boarding pass emailed to a smart phone. This 2D barcode, also known as a QR Code (Quick Response Code), is then scanned at security checkpoints and gates instead of a paper boarding pass. As part of the auto check-in process, some airlines also automatically email a boarding pass barcode a day before the flight for customers on the return leg of the trip, as long as they chose the option prior to leaving for the trip.



So, travelers with smart phones may want to give this new streamlined option a try on their next trip through GFIA. For updates on when other airlines add this service at GFIA, visit the airport website at www.flygrandrapids.org and review your airline's information page. Or, for ultimate convenience, scan the QR Code below with your smart phone to go directly to our home page!



Aeronautics Board Arrivals and Departures

The Kent County Aeronautics Board comprises three Kent County commissioners and three citizen members appointed by the County Commission, each serving staggered three-year terms. For the past 36 years, one member has not changed. He served alongside a total of 30 other Board members. He was elected as Chairman in 1999, a position he maintained for the duration of his service. This long-standing member of the Board is John Van Laar.

When announcing his retirement at the November 24 meeting, Van Laar stated, "I have served alongside some of the finest people I have ever been associated with, in an industry I have been passionate about since the early years of my life. I thank my fellow Board members, both those here and those with whom I've served over the years, for your friendship, your support, and your wise counsel. I thank all of you for all you do in contributing to the success of this airport."

Departing



John VanLaar

In addition to the vacancy left by Van Laar's retirement, the Board had another vacancy for a County Commissioner seat as a result of Dean Agee's decision to not run for re-election for the term beginning January 2011.

"I have served alongside some of the finest people I have ever been associated with. I thank all of you for all you do in contributing to the success of this airport."

John Van Laar, retired chairman Aeronautics Board



Dean Agee

At its January 2011 organizational meeting, the Kent County Commission appointed Commissioner Roger Morgan to fill one of the vacancies. Morgan has been a county commissioner for the 3rd District since 2001 and has served on the Pension Board and the Human Services Committee, as well as Commission Chairman from 2007 – 2009. The Commission also appointed former Michigan Secretary of State and former Kent County Clerk Terri Lynn Land as the new citizen member on the Aeronautics Board. Both were appointed for three-year terms.

At its January organizational meeting, the Aeronautics Board elected citizen member Joseph Tomaselli as Chairman and Commissioner Richard Vander Molen as Vice Chairman. These appointments are for a one-year term.

The next Kent County Aeronautics Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 30, at 8:30 am in the International Room, located in the passenger terminal building at the Gerald R. Ford International Airport. All meetings are open to the public.

Arriving



Roger Morgan



Terri Lynn Land

ARFF Chief Retires After 32 Years

Wednesday, November 24, 2010 – Chief Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighter Bryan Kimble logged his last shift at the Gerald R. Ford International Airport fire station. It was a day he viewed with mixed emotions. "After all these years, this place – these people – have become like family. I'm going to miss this place terribly!" said Chief Kimble. He was the epitome of a career firefighter, a career that spans 37 years – 32 of which were at the airport. Even in his "off time," Chief Kimble volunteers with the Lowell Fire Department, where he still serves today.

In 1979, Chief Kimble was one of the first Kent County International Airport. He was one served under two Airport Directors, two previous firefighters.

But, with all that history, what makes this position stand out in his mind? Chief Kimble replies, "For the past 32 years, I have been a part of the crews that make daily checks of the trucks and equipment, making sure they are in complete their ultimate mission." That is because the airport, in operation since 1963, has never had part of the crews that make daily checks of the top working order, yet they have never had to



arff chief
continued on page 3

Sounds of the Season

While the mild weather outside may not have been seasonal for the first week of December, inside the Grand Hall, the air was filled with the warm harmonies of seasonal favorites. That is because December 6-10 was the 16th annual Airport Holiday Music Festival.

This year, the airport hosted 15 area middle and high school choral groups, including two new groups – Bella Voce of East Grand Rapids High School and the Plymouth Christian High School Senior Choir. Each choral group, ranging in size from 12-75 students, brings the holiday spirit to life in its own unique way. One student, a senior this year, stated, “I have been here every year for six years now with different choirs. I’m going to miss it next year.”

Airport patrons and employees alike were treated to a wide variety of musical stylings from classical Latin arias to classic carols to some new twists on old seasonal favorites.

The Department of Aeronautics would like to thank the following schools for sharing their very talented music groups with us this year:

- ♪ Caledonia High School
- ♪ East Grand Rapids High School
- ♪ East Kentwood
- ♪ Grand Rapids Christian High School
- ♪ Grand Rapids Public Schools
- ♪ Legacy Christian Middle School
- ♪ Moline Christian Middle School
- ♪ Northpointe Christian Middle School
- ♪ Northpointe Christian High School
- ♪ Ottawa Hills High School
- ♪ Plymouth Christian High School
- ♪ South Christian High School
- ♪ The Potter’s House

If you would like your middle or high school choral group to be invited to participate in a future Airport Holiday Music Festival, please contact us at gfiainfo@grr.org or by calling (616) 233-6031.



The Northpointe Christian High School Dayspring Chorale under the direction of Lisa Spangler.

It’s All Good

On October 26, the Department received the 2010 Award of Excellence for Parking Structure Construction from the Associated Builders and Contractors Western Michigan Chapter (ABC-WMi) at their 25th annual event. ABC-WMi’s awards program allows contractors to nominate projects from 36 different categories. Three judges make site visits to score each nominee on a wide variety of criteria that evaluate the overall quality of construction. For more information on ABC-WMi, visit their website at www.abcwmc.org.

The recently completed reconstruction of Taxiway Z project has been selected the winner in the Airports category of the Michigan Concrete Association’s Michigan Awards of Excellence. The GFIA project was one of three airport projects nominated in 2010. Award selection is based on smoothness, quality, complexity, and innovation. Judges include a mix of engineers, transportation officials, and industry experts. For more information on the Michigan Concrete Association, visit their website at www.miconcrete.org.

In November, 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.

The Department of Aeronautics’ Comprehensive Annual Financial Report has again been awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government unit and its management. This is the 17th consecutive year that the Department has received this honor.

arff chief

continued from page 2

a major aircraft incident. Regardless of that record, the Department of Aeronautics provides ongoing training and certification, has invested in state-of-the-art firefighting and rescue technology, and performs triennial emergency drills. “But, that’s what’s so great about it,” Chief Kimble continued. “This airport administration is the most pro-safety group I’ve ever had the pleasure to work with.”

So, as Chief Kimble moves on, the airport has begun the process of interviewing for a new Chief Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighter. Check back in future editions of *Airport Connections* for an introduction.

News In Brief

- » Jim Koslosky, GFIA executive director, has been reelected as Chair of the Grand Valley Metro Council Transportation Policy Committee for 2011.
- » Phil Johnson, GFIA deputy executive director, was elected to the Experience Grand Rapids Board. Johnson will serve a three-year term.
- » The GFIA Marketing and Communications division welcomes the opportunity to present an overview of the airport and updates on ongoing airport development projects at an upcoming meeting of your service club or community group. For more information, or to request a speaker for your next meeting, please call (616) 233-6053 or visit the website at www.flygrandrapids.org.
- » The next three meetings of the Kent County Aeronautics Board will take place March 30, April 27, and May 25, 2011, at 8:30 am. All meetings are held in the International Room in the passenger terminal building and are open to the public.

Airport Employee Information Corner

Safe wintertime air travel operations depend upon aircraft and airfield pavement deicing activities, which are strictly regulated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The GFIA Deicing Management Program controls and manages spent deicing materials at the airport through the use of best management practices, recycling, and other mechanisms designed to help protect the environment. GFIA's program requires organization, teamwork, and implementation of specific structural controls, practices, and procedures to manage deicing materials. GFIA analyzes its Deicing Management Program on an annual basis and makes appropriate modifications and improvements in a constant effort to decrease the net amount of deicing materials that might reach the environment.

GFIA's Mobile Collection Units (MCUs), operated by GFIA airfield maintenance personnel to collect deicing fluid from pavement surfaces for recycling, is arguably the component most noticed by airport patrons and employees. The MCU uses a squeegee/vacuum head to lift deicing fluid from the pavement surface into its storage tank. GFIA owns three MCUs that are in use when aircraft deicing operations are being conducted. GFIA staff, in cooperation with airport tenants, coordinates collection activities to efficiently collect aircraft deicing materials. The MCUs transfer collected deicing fluid to temporary storage tanks before it is sent to a recycling operation. The airfield maintenance division also has installed "catch basin inserts" into the airport's storm sewer drainage system to assist collection operations.

To enhance and facilitate recycling of deicing chemicals, GFIA has restricted the commercial air carriers and other airport tenants to use only specific aircraft deicing products. This approach promotes recycling, even though it limits the product selection and options for GFIA's tenants. Also to protect the environment, GFIA has banned the use of nitrogen-based deicing products and airport tenants are reminded that materials containing urea are not allowed for use anywhere at the facility.

Through constant refinement to its Deicing Management Program, the cooperation of airport tenants, and the hard work of its employees, GFIA is working to help ensure the safety of the traveling public while also taking necessary steps to protect the local environment. Any tenant needing information on approved deicing products should contact Roy Hawkins, planning engineer, at (616) 233-6022 or via email at rhawkins@grr.org.

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

Fax: 616.233.6025

Web: www.flygrandrapids.org

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

* *County Commissioner*

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

Editor | Bruce Schedlbauer, APR, Marketing and Communications Manager

Associate Editor | Susan Sherman, Community Relations Coordinator, ssherman@grr.org

Kent County Department of Aeronautics

Gerald R. Ford International Airport

5500 44th Street SE

Grand Rapids, MI 49512-4055

PRSRT STD MAIL U. S. POSTAGE PAID GRAND RAPIDS, MI PERMIT NO. 1



The World's Gateway to...