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## More Florida Sunshine Now Available

That's right! Allegiant Air has announced new nonstop service to Charlotte County Airport, Punta Gorda, FL. Beginning November 18 with twice-weekly service, Allegiant Air will be connecting Michigan's West Coast with the Southwest Florida Coast. Punta Gorda, located just up the coast from Fort Myers, is part of the Charlotte Harbor & Gulf Islands area of Florida, which promotes itself as the "premier eco-tourism destination" that offers visitors a tranquil getaway that is off the beaten path.



The launch of the Punta Gorda route increases Allegiant Air's nonstop destination count to seven and the total number of nonstop destinations (all airlines combined) from GFIA to 25! (In comparison, the average number of nonstop destinations from airports of similar size and demographics across the nation is just 14.)

For more information about Allegiant Air, or to purchase tickets to Punta Gorda – or any of Allegiant's destinations – you may visit their website at [www.allegiantair.com](http://www.allegiantair.com).

## New Screening Equipment Arrives At GFIA

You may have heard about the new Advanced Imaging Technology (AIT) that is being implemented at airports around the country. With a lot of information out there – not all of it accurate – we went directly to the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for the details.



### What It Is

Advanced Imaging Technology safely screens passengers for both metallic and non-metallic threats, including weapons and explosives. It detects items which may be concealed under a passenger's clothes, allows TSA to screen without physical contact, and works to keep the traveling public safe.

Backscatter imaging technology projects low level X-ray beams over the body to create a reflection of the body, which is displayed on the monitor. The image produced resembles a chalk etching. In March 2010, TSA began deploying 450 AIT units at airports around the country, which were purchased with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds.



### How It Works

AIT is completely optional for all passengers. Those passengers who opt out of imaging technology screening will receive alternative screening, which includes a physical pat-down. One officer will ask a passenger to remove all objects from his/her pockets before entering the portal. This officer never sees the passenger's image. Another security officer in a walled-off location views the black and white image generated by the technology. Once this second officer reviews the image and resolves any anomalies, the image is immediately deleted. The entire process takes seconds.

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## A Well-Coordinated Effort

In an “average winter” (really, do we have those in Michigan?) the GFIA Airfield Maintenance division removes 83.7 million cubic feet of snow from the airfield. That’s enough to fill 20,000 Olympic-sized swimming pools! And moving that much snow takes a lot of coordination, both in advance and when it happens.

To prepare for the snow season, the Airport Public Safety & Operations division conducts a series of meetings with airport staff and tenant employees. This pre-planning is intended to minimize the potential for confusion and delays when a snow event occurs, delineating the policies and procedures that will be in place. The Airfield Maintenance division will perform at least three “dry runs” before the first flakes fall.

When the forecast calls for winter weather (snow, sleet, ice, etc.), the Operations staff begin to keep a close eye on weather reports, radar, and conditions outside, also monitoring pilot communications for first-hand reports of runway and taxiway conditions. They notify the Airfield Maintenance division so that adequate staff is on-site and vehicles are ready to go. Some types of winter weather are best handled by pre-treating the runways to prevent snow-pack and ice from bonding to the pavement. Airport staff also closely monitor the airline schedules to determine a time that would impact the fewest number of flights should a runway have to be closed for snow/ice removal.



Once the decision is made that snow removal must occur to restore the runways to a safe operating condition, the Operations staff notify the Air Traffic Control Tower that they are closing the runway. (At GFIA, there are three runways, with two of these being commercial service runways. The goal is to keep one of the commercial runways open, if possible, for use while the other is cleaned. However, wind conditions may make the second runway an unsafe option.) At this point, the Airfield Maintenance crew hits the pavement with a combination of snowplows, truck-mounted brooms, and/or sanding equipment. The choice of equipment used is largely dependent upon winds, wet vs. dry and packed vs. loose snow, etc.

As you can imagine, this is heavy-duty snow equipment. The plows are 24-ft. wide. The brooms are 20-ft. wide and the industrial-size snow blowers can throw snow up to 150-ft., which is critical because snow piles and drifts next

to the runway can obstruct a pilot’s field of vision and bury the runway and taxiway markers. The formation and action of the equipment clearing the snow and treating the pavement on the runway bring to mind thoughts of a well-choreographed ballet; everyone in their place, all of the movements carefully timed and executed, all the while avoiding the lights and signs that are within inches of the pavement.

At all times, the goal is to maintain and/or restore the runways and taxiways to a safe operating condition. Certain snow events – rapidly falling, blowing or drifting snow – require multiple rounds of plowing before the runway is successfully cleared and reopened. Once the Operations staff inspects and tests the pavement and finds it safe, the runway is then immediately reopened for use.

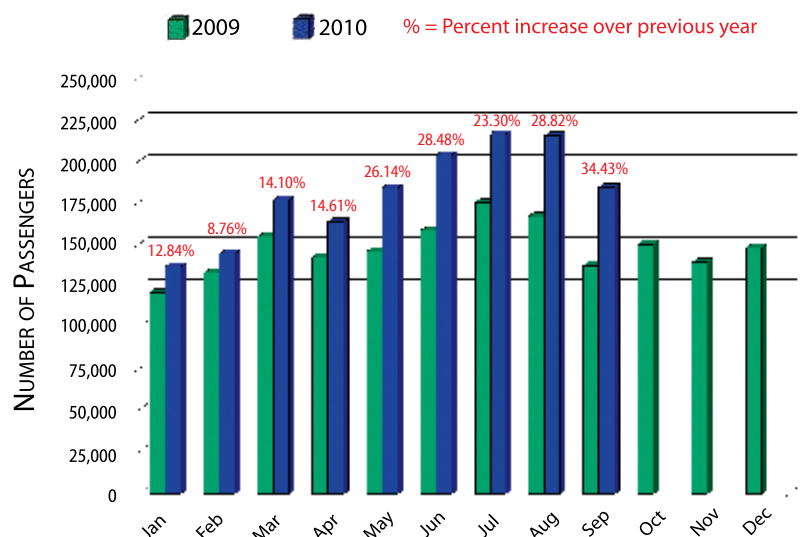
Now, remember that “average winter” mentioned earlier? Well, the 2008/2009 snow season dropped significantly more snow than average (105” total), which equates to 112.7 million cubic feet of snow removed! And it was all handled by an Operations staff of 6 and an Airfield Maintenance staff of 24, which explains why it takes such a well-coordinated effort.

## Passenger Traffic Continues To Take Off!

Up! Up! UP! Bucking the national trend, GFIA continues to see passenger traffic soar. For the fourteenth consecutive month, commercial passenger traffic has increased over the previous year. Through September, the total year-to-date activity for 2010 is 22% higher than 2009!

New airlines, larger airplanes, lower fares, and more non-stop destinations than ever before have played obvious roles. However, the key component is you, the travelers. Your loyalty to include GFIA in your travel plans is what shows the market strength that airline route planners need to see.

On behalf of all the businesses at GFIA, we thank you for your continued patronage!



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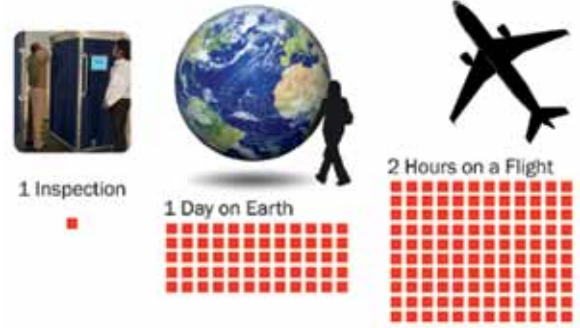
**Privacy Features**

TSA has implemented strict measures to protect passenger privacy, which is ensured through the anonymity of the image. The image cannot be stored, transmitted or printed, and is deleted immediately once viewed. Additionally, there is a privacy algorithm applied to the image which blurs the image enough to make facial features unrecognizable.

**Safety Features**

Backscatter technology screening is safe, and the technology meets national health and safety standards, including applicable American National Standards for radiation safety. This technology was evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) Center for Devices and Radiological Health (CDRH), the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), and the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory (APL), and results confirmed that radiation doses are well below those specified by the American National Standards Institute. The amount of radiation from a backscatter scan is equivalent to two minutes of flight on an airplane.

At GFIA, each passenger screening checkpoint has one lane which uses the AIT equipment and one lane for those passengers who opt for the alternative screening procedures. For a complete overview, including a video, you may go to the TSA’s website at [www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov) and enter “AIT” in the search box.



This X-ray exposure comparison shows that the amount of X-ray energy generated is very small. In one day on Earth, a person is exposed to 60 times more radiation than in one inspection. In fact, the exposure is equivalent to just two minutes of a typical commercial aviation flight.

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## Airline Information

Need to reach your airline? Here’s a quick reference list of contact information:

**Air Canada**

- » 888-247-2262
- » [www.aircanada.com](http://www.aircanada.com)

**AirTran Airways**

- » 800-247-8726
- » [www.airtran.com](http://www.airtran.com)

**Allegiant Air**

- » 702-505-8888
- » [www.allegiantair.com](http://www.allegiantair.com)

**American Airlines**

- » 800-433-7300
- » [www.aa.com](http://www.aa.com)

**Continental Airlines**

- » 800-523-3273
- » [www.continental.com](http://www.continental.com)

**Delta Air Lines**

- » 800-221-1212
- » [www.delta.com](http://www.delta.com)

**Frontier Airlines**

- » 800-432-1359
- » [www.frontierairlines.com](http://www.frontierairlines.com)

**United Airlines**

- » 800-864-8331
- » [www.united.com](http://www.united.com)

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## Local Airline Station Receives Two Awards

The Grand Rapids station for Allegiant Air was recently honored with two prestigious awards. First, Allegiant Air selected the Grand Rapids base to receive their Outstanding Base On Time Performance for 2009-2010. This certificate of performance was presented to LaTanja Leshoure, GRR manager of base operations, at the airline’s annual meeting in Las Vegas. Additionally, Quick Flight Services honored the Grand Rapids base with their 2009-2010 Station of the Year award. Quick Flight provides ground handling services on behalf of Allegiant Air in Grand Rapids. Larry Little, station manager for Quick Flight in Grand Rapids, was presented this award at Quick Flight’s annual meeting.

“It was truly an honor to be recognized with these awards,” said Little. “To know that the efforts of our staff are viewed positively throughout the company is remarkable.” Leshoure commented, “While Larry and I were honored to accept these awards, we did so on behalf of all the Allegiant Air and Quick Flight employees in Grand Rapids. These awards are a testament to the hard work they do each and every day.”

Congratulations to all the employees of Allegiant Air and Quick Flight Services in Grand Rapids for these distinguished honors!



## News In Brief

- » Jim Koslosky, GFIA executive director, has recently been reappointed as Senior Policy Advisor to both the American Association of Airport Executives and Airports Council International – North America.
- » At its meeting on September 15, the Michigan Aeronautics Commission (MAC) presented to Brian Picardat, GFIA director of finance and administration, the 2010 Award of Excellence. Each year the MAC recognizes a worthy individual for his or her positive contributions to aviation.
- » Robert Benstein, GFIA public safety & operations director, was elected second vice-chair of the Airports Council International – North America (ACI-NA) Public Safety & Security Committee.
- » 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 10. The Grand Rapids Santa Claus girls will once again be distributing the toys.
- » Mark your calendars! The annual Airport Holiday Music Festival is scheduled to take place December 6 – 10, 2010. Area middle and high school choral groups will perform in the Grand Hall of the passenger terminal building.
- » The next two meetings of the Kent County Aeronautics Board will take place November 24, in the International Room in the passenger terminal building, and December 15, at the West Michigan Aviation Academy facility. Meetings are held at 8:30 am and are open to the public.

## Giving From The Heart

Twice each year, GFIA partners with Michigan Blood to host a blood drive at the airport. The most recent drive was held September 24.

Previous Total	785 pints
Given 09/24/10	16 pints
Total donated at airport drives	801 pints

GFIA and Michigan Blood would like to thank all who participated in the blood drive. Special recognition goes out to Joel Burgess of the GFIA administration division who received his 1-gallon pin at this drive.

Join us for our next blood drive on Friday, May 20, 2011.

## 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.



**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](http://www.flygrandrapids.org)

**Kent County Aeronautics Board** | John Van Laar, chair; Ted Vonk\*, vice chair; Dean Agee\*; Joe Tomaselli; Dick Vander Molen\*; Floyd Wilson, Jr.

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