



volume 18 | no. 2
Spring 2010

INSIDE THIS EDITION

- 3 | *Spring Break Travel Season Heats Up During Passenger Appreciation Days*
- 3 | *Airport Traffic Continues To Rise*
- 4 | *News In Brief*
- 4 | *Airport Profile 2010 Now Available*
- 4 | *Presenting...*

AirTran Launches Service On Two Routes

Clear skies greeted passengers headed to Orlando International Airport on May 4 as AirTran Airways launched service to the first two of their nonstop destinations. Nonstop service to Baltimore/Washington International (BWI) is now available twice daily, departing Grand Rapids at 6:25 am and 5:50 pm. Nonstop service to Orlando International (MCO) is available once daily at 12:55 pm. Coming June 12, AirTran will offer nonstop service to Tampa International and Southwest Florida International in Fort Myers every Saturday and Sunday.

“When you look at the regional leadership present here today, you really get a sense of how this market is different.”

**— Kevin Healy, Senior VP
AirTran Airways**

A celebration event was held which welcomed the first inbound flight from BWI,

airtran airways
continued on page 2

One Mile High...Endless Possibilities

On May 14, Gerald R. Ford International welcomed its newest carrier into the fold when Frontier Airlines landed its inaugural flight from Denver International. The addition of Frontier brings the number of airlines serving GFIA to nine, three of those being low-fare carriers. This daily nonstop service will depart at 10:00 am, with return flights arriving at 11:25 pm. A 99-seat Embraer 190 aircraft will fly this route.

In addition to bringing nonstop service to West Michigan travelers who are Colorado-bound, this new service on Frontier also brings one-stop connections to nearly 70 destinations across the United States plus five of the most popular leisure destinations along the coastlines of Mexico!

On Saturday, May 15, a celebration event was held to commemorate the inaugural departure to Denver. Representatives from Frontier and airport officials were on hand to greet airport patrons and welcome passengers as they prepared to board the aircraft. Cliff Van Leuven, Frontier’s vice president of customer service, said, “Grand Rapids is a city that we think fits well with our route structure. It allows the West Michigan community to connect all over the west on the Frontier system.”

frontier airlines
continued on page 2

Airport Roadway Receives Improvements

From April 26 to June 30, the Kent County Road Commission is resurfacing John J. Oostema Boulevard/44th Street from the airport entrance to the new gateway, as well as the intersection of Patterson Avenue and 44th Street.

During construction, one side of the boulevard will remain open and accommodate two-way traffic while the other side is resurfaced. Current phasing indicates that the north side (westbound lanes) will be resurfaced first, followed by the south side (eastbound lanes), with portions of the intersection being resurfaced during these two, and two subsequent, phases.

Due to construction activity, drivers on southbound Patterson Avenue will not be able to make a left turn into the airport. Watch for detour signs, which will direct you to go west on 40th Street to Brockton Ave., and then south on Brockton Ave. to 44th Street. You will turn left (east) on 44th Street to access the airport entrance. You can view updated information and get a printable map with driving directions from the airport website at www.flygrandrapids.org/DrivingMaps.php.

We thank you for your patience during this construction activity.



airtran airways

continued from page 1

carrying Kevin Healy, senior vice president of marketing and planning for AirTran Airways, and Dick DeVos, president of The Windquest Group and chairman of the Regional Air Alliance of West Michigan (RAAWM). They joined regional business leaders, elected officials, and staff from AirTran Airways and Gerald R. Ford International Airport for a reception and celebration welcoming the networked low-fare carrier to West Michigan.

When speaking about the Regional Air Alliance and its role in attracting AirTran to GFIA, DeVos stated, “This truly represents a regional effort. This is not about Grand Rapids, this is about all of West Michigan, as indicated by the business leaders here today from Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, Lansing, and Traverse City. Over 100 communities across America have either lost or reduced their air service. Grand Rapids – West Michigan – is expanding our air service; once again bucking the national trend.”

“When you look at the regional leadership present here today, you really get a sense of how this market is different,” stated Healy. “The number of businesses represented is like a Who’s Who in American Businesses right here in Michigan.” During his comments, Healy also had an opportunity to acknowledge AirTran’s ongoing relationship with the Make A Wish Foundation by presenting an honorary boarding pass, which represented free airline tickets, to local Foundation representatives.

In his remarks, airport executive director Jim Koslosky stated, “AirTran’s entry into our market brings us back into air service balance with a full range of low-fare and mainline travel options. At GFIA we are close, convenient, and connected, with low fares.”

The AirTran ticket counter is located in the east ticketing wing, and flights will operate from Concourse B. Hours of operation for the AirTran ticket counter are 4:00 am to 10:00 pm daily. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.airtran.com or call (800) 247-8726.



Dick DeVos, chairman of the Regional Air Alliance of West Michigan and Kevin Healy, senior vice president of marketing and planning for AirTran Airways, arrived at GFIA on the inaugural flight from BWI.

frontier airlines

continued from page 1

Frontier Airlines is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Republic Airways Holdings, Inc. with hubs at Denver International Airport, Milwaukee’s General Mitchell International Airport and Kansas City International Airport. In April, Republic Airways announced that its two branded carriers, Frontier and Midwest, would combine under the Frontier Airlines name. (Midwest Airlines has served GFIA since 1988 with nonstop service to Milwaukee.)

The Frontier ticket counter is located in the west ticketing wing, and flights will operate from Concourse A. Hours of operation for the Frontier ticket counter are 4:00 am to 12:00 midnight daily. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.frontierairlines.com or call (800) 432-1359.



Spring Break Travel Season Heats Up During Passenger Appreciation Days

With the Grand Hall temporarily transformed into an oasis of fun – think tropical decorations and cool beach tunes – airport patrons were treated to the seventh annual Passenger Appreciation Days celebration on April 1, 2, & 3. Refreshments, games, drawings, and give-aways were the order of the day as Kent County Department of Aeronautics (KCDA) staff welcomed flyers and meeters/greeters alike.

Of course, this event wouldn't be complete without the ubiquitous paper airplane flying contest for "pilots" of all ages. This year's winners – Emma Despres of Grand Rapids, Aram Howard of Caledonia, and Sam Williams of Grand Rapids – each received a \$100 gift card to Rivertown Crossings Mall. Winners of the daily prize drawing – a \$150 travel voucher – are John Burch of Belmont, James Phillips of Dorr, and Amy Simon of West Olive. Additional "Mystery Prizes," donated by the Amway Grand Hotel and HMS Host Gift Shop, were won by Norita Sue Siler of Alto, Sharon VerHage of North Muskegon, and Marilou Boncher of Caledonia. Congratulations to all our winners!

KCDA would also like to thank airport tenants U.S. Customs & Border Protection, Delta Air Lines, L-3 Communications, Metro Cab, and HMS Host for their generous donations to this year's event.



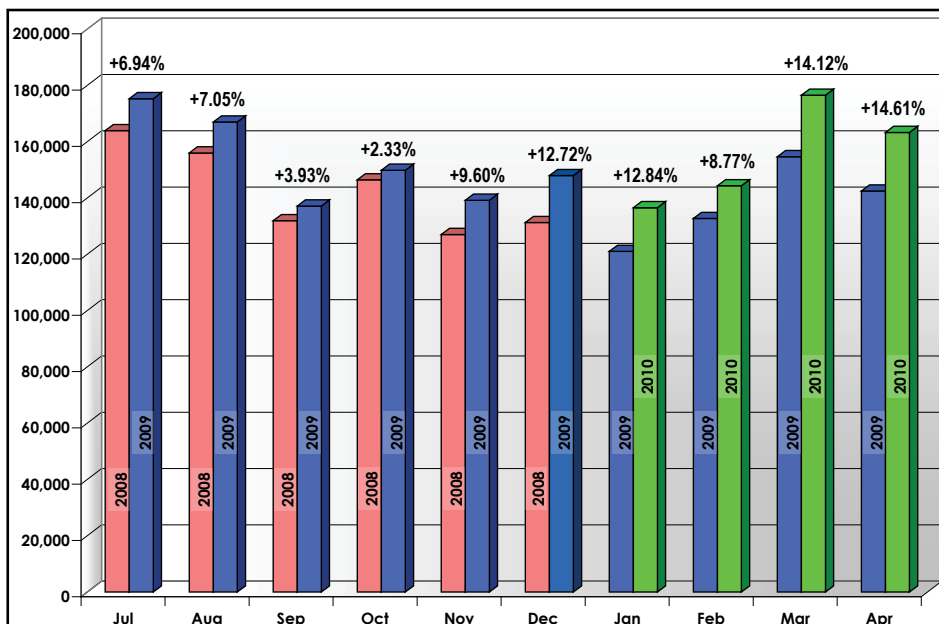
Dory, a Northpark Montessori student, puts up a jump shot to earn a second chance at the paper airplane flying contest before heading south for her family's spring break vacation.

Airport Traffic Continues To Rise

Commercial passenger airline traffic ebbs and flows throughout the year following some fairly predictable patterns. For example, March, July and August tend to be the busiest months of the year at GFIA, which is expected when viewed alongside a school-year calendar. Those months coincide with spring break and full months of summer vacation for most families, thus allowing the greatest freedom to travel without pulling the kids out of school.

In light of these fluctuations, airports use year-to-year monthly comparisons to determine if traffic volume is up or down (e.g. March 2010 vs. March 2009). Of course, even this method is subject to effects that cannot be controlled such as weather or a later school break period. (For instance, in 2008, traffic volume was higher in April than in March, due in part to the spring break season beginning well into the first week of April.)

So, how is GFIA traffic trending these days? With the most recent data available through April 2010, passenger traffic has been up every month for the past nine months! The smallest monthly year-to-year increase was in October 2009, when traffic was up 2.33%. The largest increase was April 2010, when traffic volume increased by 14.61%.



every month for the past nine months! The smallest monthly year-to-year increase was in October 2009, when traffic was up 2.33%. The largest increase was April 2010, when traffic volume increased by 14.61%.

For the calendar year 2009, GFIA was down just 2.1% from the previous year, while the national aviation statistics show that U.S. domestic travel was down 5.2% for the year. This is great news for West Michigan travelers, and it is likely to keep improving in response to the new flights, destinations and airlines that have arrived in 2010.

The key to continued success is you, the traveler. One hundred twenty five flights per day at GFIA, to and from 23 major market destinations on nine airlines, but without passengers it's all for naught. Thank you for your continued patronage of Gerald R. Ford International. We look forward to your next trip!

News In Brief

- » The next three meetings of the Kent County Aeronautics Board will take place May 26, June 30, and July 28, 2010, at 8:30 am. All meetings are held in the International Room in the passenger terminal building and are open to the public.
- » Northern Jet Management recently appointed Mark Serbenski as vice president of sales. Serbenski has been with Northern Air since 2001 and previously was the director of maintenance. He is a graduate of Western Michigan University with a Bachelor's degree in Science and Aircraft Maintenance Management.

Airport Profile 2010 Now Available

The 2010 Airport Profile is hot off the press. The Profile is an annual publication of the Kent County Department of Aeronautics that recaps last year's activities and shares information about the coming year's projects and goals.

This year's Profile, titled "Beyond The Horizon," 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 our service to West Michigan. Read about the completion of the Terminal Area and Parking Improvement Program project as well as exciting new air service developments at Gerald R. Ford International Airport.

The Airport Profile is available on the website at www.flygrandrapids.org. If you would like to receive a printed copy of the Profile, please contact the Department of Aeronautics offices at (616) 233-6000.



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 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

Kent County Aeronautics Board | John Van Laar, chair; Ted Vonk, vice chair; Dean Agee; Joe Tomaselli; Dick Vander Molen; 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



Michigan's West Coast
HOLLAND • GRAND HAVEN • HUSKESON • GRAND RAPIDS

The World's Gateway to...

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