



## Passenger Appreciation Days Readies Spring Break Travelers For Fun & Sun

At GFIA, the busiest travel holiday is Spring Break. That's why, each year, the Kent County Department of Aeronautics (KCDA) sets aside three days of this season to say thank you to our airport patrons. This year's Passenger Appreciation Days celebration was held March 31, April 1 & 2.

Decked out with tropical decorations and some great beach tunes, the hospitality station in the Grand Hall was the place to be! Refreshments, drawings, games, and give-aways galore awaited our travelers as they prepared for their flights. This year's oasis of fun once again featured the perennial favorite paper airplane flying contest for budding pilots of all ages as they created their own craft and then sent it on a maiden voyage down our indoor "runway," all the while hoping to be entered into the drawing for a mall gift certificate.

KCDA would like to thank airport tenants AirTran Airways, Allegiant Air, Delta Air Lines, United Airlines, the HMS Host News & Gift Shop, L-3 Communications, Metro Cab, Northern Air, Grand Rapids Air Center and Universal Forest Products for their generous donations of give-away items. The Amway Grand Plaza Hotel donated the overnight stay. We also want to offer a huge thank you to food and beverage concessionaire HMS Host for their coordination of refreshments.

Congratulations to this year's prize winners:

### **Mall Gift Certificates (\$100 each)**

- Kaitlin Susan of Grand Rapids
- Rachael Parsons of Comstock Park
- Michael Hill of Grandville

### **Travel Vouchers (\$150 each)**

- Lisa Mulder of Spring Lake
- Chad Lloyd of Holland
- David Crawford of Grand Rapids

### **Mystery Prizes**

- Julie Beaton of Muskegon won an overnight stay at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel
- Shari Crawford of Kalamazoo won a pair of Allegiant Air tickets
- Mabelle Cox of Buena Park, CA, won a backpack and a set of electronics accessories

Aeronautics Executive Director Jim Koslosky states, "We know that travelers have choices when it comes to the airport they use. This is our way of saying 'Thank you' for choosing GFIA."



## Airport Connections Electronic Edition

Airport Connections - the very publication you are reading - is available in electronic edition. Each quarterly publication is posted online at [www.flygrandrapids.org/Pubs.php](http://www.flygrandrapids.org/Pubs.php) and is available via our e-distribution database!



To receive Airport Connections in your inbox each quarter, simply send an email to [gfiainfo@grr.org](mailto:gfiainfo@grr.org) with the word "Subscribe" in the subject line. It's that easy! After that, on our about the 1st of February, May, August, and November each year you will receive an email from us with Airport Connections as a .pdf attachment. You may manage your subscription at any time by sending an email to the address above with the word "Unsubscribe" in the subject line to be removed from the mailing list.

Concerned about sharing your email address? No worries! KCDA does not share or sell any of our mailing lists with other entities.

# Is Your Business Taking Off? It Could Be!

The Gerald R. Ford International Airport is located on approximately 3,200 acres of land, with more than 450 acres available for aviation-related development. The excellent intermodal infrastructure (air, road, and rail), extensive passenger and air cargo route network, on-site U.S. Customs and Border Protection office, and Foreign Trade Zone designation, combined with our strategic, centralized location in the Midwest, make landing your business here a sound business decision.

## What is a Foreign Trade Zone?

Foreign Trade Zones (FTZs) are treated, for the purpose of tariff laws and Customs entry procedures, as being outside the Customs territory of the United States. Under FTZ procedures, foreign and domestic merchandise may be admitted into zones for operations such as storage, exhibition, assembly, manufacture and processing, without being subject to formal Customs entry procedures, the payment of Customs duties, or the payment of federal excise taxes. When merchandise is removed from a foreign trade zone, Customs duties are eliminated if the goods are then exported from the United States. If the merchandise is formally entered into U.S. commerce, Customs duties and excise taxes are due at the time of transfer from the foreign trade zone. For merchandise that is manufactured in a FTZ with permission of the Foreign Trade Zones Board, the importer may elect to pay Customs duty at the rate of either the finished product or its foreign components, whichever is lower. In this manner, use of a foreign trade zone can result in the reduction of Customs duty owed by companies that manufacture products in a FTZ.

At GFIA, there are a number of developed sites available, with additional improved and unimproved properties for your consideration. For more information about available properties, land use restrictions, or the airport's Minimum Standards for aviation-related development, contact:

Joel Burgess, Properties Administrator  
Kent County Department of Aeronautics  
5500 44th Street SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49512-4055  
Phone: 616-233-6054  
Email: JBurgess@grr.org



## 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.

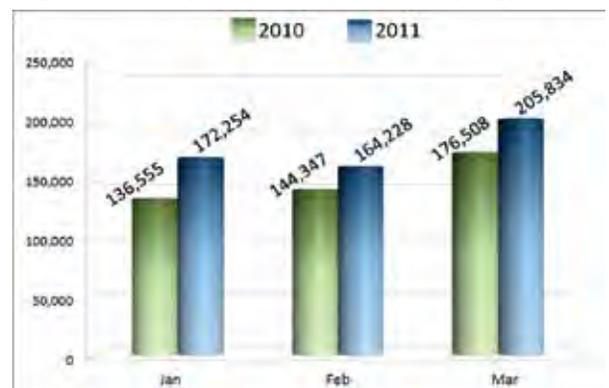
## Passenger Numbers Continue To Climb

Total commercial passenger traffic for first quarter 2011 continues to climb as GFIA serves 18.6% more travelers than first quarter 2010. Despite tough economic times, West Michigan travelers continued to make aviation travel plans, as evidenced by the fact that more than a half-million have already flown via GFIA. Additionally, March 2011 breaks the previous high for March set back in 2005 when 199,987 passengers traveled via GFIA in 2011.

As we approach the one-year anniversary of the arrival of low-fare carriers AirTran Airways and Frontier Airlines, we anticipate that year-over-year passenger gains will level off to more moderate growth.

“The bottom line is, West Michigan travelers gave GFIA overwhelming support in 2010, and that support continues today,” said Aeronautics Executive Director Jim Koslosky. “In order to maintain and increase capacity, airlines need to see that there is demand in the market.”

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## New Fire Chief Joins The Ranks

As of April 18, the Gerald R. Ford International Airport (GFIA) Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting (ARFF) section came under the leadership of a new Chief. Todd Szakacs, formerly the Fire Marshall with the City of Holland Fire Department, brings 18 years of firefighting experience to the position. Additionally, he holds an A.S. degree in Fire Science from Kalamazoo Valley Community College, and is certified as an EMT, Firefighter I and II, Fire Inspector and Fire Officer. Prior to his work with the City of Holland, Szakacs was a Fire Lieutenant with Pfizer, Inc. for seven years, and Fire Captain with both the Allegan Township Fire Department and the South Kalamazoo County Fire Authority (five and ten years, respectively).

In addition to managing and directing the operations of the ARFF section at GFIA, the Fire Chief is also responsible for ensuring that all firefighting operations comply with Federal Aviation Regulations and that fire staff are properly trained in aircraft rescue firefighting procedures and protocols. The Fire Chief is responsible for the Airport Emergency Plan and serves as the incident commander in the event of an emergency at the airport. The Fire Chief must also develop and administer the annual operating budget for the ARFF section.

For Chief Szakacs, he will get a “crash course” in the airport’s emergency response procedures as the airport holds its triennial full-scale emergency exercise in May. The drill, mandated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), gives the airport and its mutual aid partners the opportunity to put their skills to the test as they follow the airport’s emergency plan in a realistic, yet controlled, environment. The written plan is reviewed annually, but every third year the airport conducts the full-scale exercise.

Welcome aboard, Chief Szakacs!



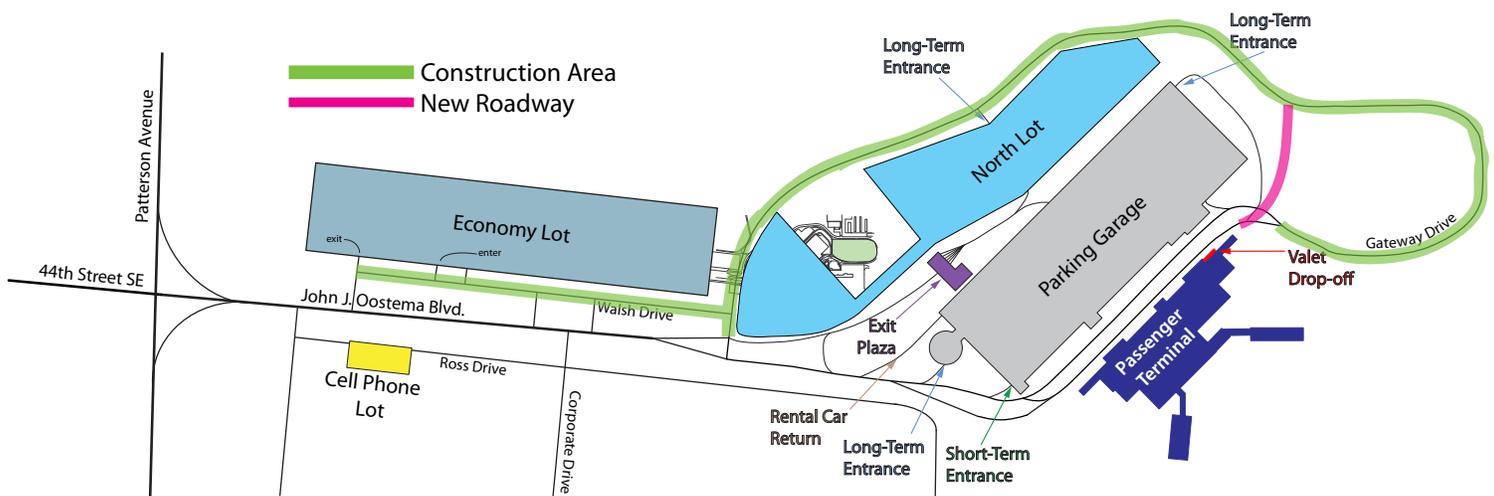
## Roadway Improvements Set To Begin

The snow has melted, the ground has thawed, and throughout Michigan the road construction crews are preparing for another season of roadway improvements. At GFIA, there are 6 miles of public roadways that must be maintained. This summer (June through August), Walsh Drive and a significant portion of Gateway Drive will be reconstructed, with a new portion of roadway added on the east side of the parking garage. This new roadway will shorten the distance vehicles will travel when departing the passenger terminal facility.



During construction, the economy lot will remain open and accessible. Gateway Drive will be ONE-WAY traffic heading east beyond the passenger terminal curb front. Airport patrons who would like to park in the North Lot will be directed to proceed beyond the passenger terminal facility and follow Gateway Drive around to the entrance on the north side of the lot. ALL TRAFFIC headed to the businesses located along Gateway Drive will be directed to proceed past the passenger terminal facility - using the commercial lane - to the east and around to the business locations. The project is expected to be completed before Labor Day.

At the conclusion of the construction project, a new roadway will be opened to direct all vehicle traffic beyond the passenger terminal facility on a shorter route. As the project progresses, tune your car radio to 1610 AM for informational updates as you approach the airport.



## News In Brief

- » The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recognized the Department of Aeronautics for its annual financial report by awarding it a 17th consecutive Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. This award is presented to those government agencies whose financial reporting meets the high standards established by the GFOA.
- » Executive Director Jim Koslosky, A.A.E., has been reappointed as senior policy advisor with the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE) for a one-year term beginning May 2011.
- » Deputy Executive Director Phil Johnson, A.A.E., has been elected to the AAAE Board of Directors for a 2-year term. He has also been appointed Chair of AAAE's Airline Economics and Air Service Committee.
- » GFIA will be partnering with MI Blood to host a community blood drive on Friday, May 20, in the International Room in the passenger terminal building. You may pre-register for a time on our website at [www.flygrandrapids.org/BloodDrive.php](http://www.flygrandrapids.org/BloodDrive.php) or by contacting Donna Thomas, office administrator, at (616) 233-6046. Walk-ins are also welcome.
- » The next meeting of the Stakeholders Advisory Committee for storm water/deicing long-term management plan development is scheduled for Tuesday, May 3, 2011 at 10:00 am in the International Room in the passenger terminal building.
- » The next three meetings of the Kent County Aeronautics Board will take place May 25, June 29, and July 27, at 8:30 am. All meetings are held in the International Room in the passenger terminal building and are open to the public.

## Hot Off The Press: Airport Profile 2011

The 2011 airport *Profile* is now available. 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 "ascent," chronicles the ways in which the airport's continued rise supports the upward trajectory of the West Michigan region.

The airport *Profile* is available on the website at [www.flygrandrapids.org](http://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.



### Did You Know?

Aviation first came to Kent County 100 years ago when a skeptical crowd watched a Wright biplane take off from the West Michigan State Fairground in Comstock Park on September 10, 1911.

These beginnings laid an aviation foundation that currently contributes over \$500 million annually in economic activity in the West Michigan region and connects more than two million passengers a year to destinations worldwide.

*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)

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\* 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](mailto:ssherman@grr.org)

### Kent County Department of Aeronautics

Gerald R. Ford International Airport

5500 44th Street SE

Grand Rapids, MI 49512-4055



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