



# Gerald R. Ford International Airport

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 30, 2014

## AIRPORT BOARD

ROGER MORGAN, Chairman  
RICHARD A. VANDER MOLEN,  
*Vice Chairman*  
STEVEN R. HEACOCK  
BIRGIT KLOHS  
DAVID A. SLIKKERS  
THEODORE J. VONK  
FLOYD WILSON, JR.

## KENT COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF AERONAUTICS

BRIAN D. RYKS, A.A.E.  
*Executive Director*  
PHILLIP E. JOHNSON, A.A.E.  
*Deputy Executive Director*  
ROBERT W. BENSTEIN, A.A.E.  
*Public Safety & Ops. Director*  
BRIAN PICARDAT, A.A.E.  
*Finance & Admin. Director*  
THOMAS R. ECKLUND, P.E.  
*Facilities Director*  
TARA M. HERNANDEZ  
*Mktg. & Comm. Manager*

Contact: Tara Hernandez, Marketing & Communications Manager  
[thernandez@grr.org](mailto:thernandez@grr.org) or 616-233-6053



## GFIA Awarded for Outstanding Achievement in Snow & Ice Control

**Grand Rapids, MI** – It is no secret that the 2013-14 winter season was unusually brutal, and the Gerald R. Ford International Airport is being recognized for outstanding service for battling the ice and snow.

GFIA was awarded the Balchen/Post Award for “Outstanding Achievement in Airport Snow & Ice Control.” The award was presented by The International Aviation Snow Symposium and is given to three categories of commercial airports: Large, Medium and Small. The Gerald R. Ford International Airport was awarded in the “Small” category which is classified by less than 100,000 scheduled operations (take-offs and landings) annually.

GFIA saw 116.0” of snow this season, dating from July 1, 2013 to the present. In an average winter, GFIA removes 83,700,000 cubic feet of snow from the airfield. That’s enough to fill 20,000 Olympic-sized swimming pools!





# Gerald R. Ford International Airport

1963 YEARS 2013  
GERALD R. FORD  
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

## AIRPORT BOARD

ROGER MORGAN, *Chairman*  
RICHARD A. VANDER MOLEN,  
*Vice Chairman*  
STEVEN R. HEACOCK  
BIRGIT KLOHS  
DAVID A. SLIKKERS  
THEODORE J. VONK  
FLOYD WILSON, JR.

## KENT COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF AERONAUTICS

BRIAN D. RYKS, A.A.E.  
*Executive Director*  
PHILLIP E. JOHNSON, A.A.E.  
*Deputy Executive Director*  
ROBERT W. BENSTEIN, A.A.E.  
*Public Safety & Ops. Director*  
BRIAN PICARDAT, A.A.E.  
*Finance & Admin. Director*  
THOMAS R. ECKLUND, P.E.  
*Facilities Director*  
TARA M. HERNANDEZ  
*Mktg. & Comm. Manager*

"We all know how challenging this past winter was for our staff and that meant additional work and long hours making sure our airfield and operations were safe and secure," said GFIA Executive Director Brian Ryks.

"This is a tremendous achievement for our staff, and I cannot say enough about the hard working airport operations and field maintenance crews who are the recipients of this award. We are very proud to be recognized as the best among our peers."

Throughout the winter season, airport operations staff is responsible for monitoring and reporting airfield conditions as well as coordinating snow and ice control activities with airfield maintenance, air traffic control, and aeronautical users of the airport. Airport field maintenance staff is responsible for physically clearing snow and ice from the airport's 1.5 million square yards of pavement – that's enough to build a two-lane road to the Mackinac Bridge!

For more information or interviews, please contact Tara Hernandez.

###

