

MONTANA PILOTS' ASSOCIATION



Heading Bug

March / April 2004

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NOTAMS:

MPA Retreat/Board Meeting—
April 24-25 in Helena

MPA Members— The Montana Pilots Association is offering current members the option of receiving the Heading Bug by email instead of regular mail. This offer is to save MPA dues so they can be used to preserve and protect Montana's aviation community. To sign-up, contact Geanette Cebulski, secretary/treasurer at:

mpasecretary@blackfoot.net

Please provide the following:

Full name

Mailing address

Email address

Sport Pilot rule withdrawn—

The FAA has temporarily withdrawn the proposed Sport Pilot rule from consideration by the federal Office of Management and Budget. Just before a 90-day review period expired, FAA Administrator Marion Blakey ordered the proposal withdrawn so that the agency could answer questions about its economic costs and benefits.

President's Message: Well, the Annual Montana Aviation Conference is over and it was without any doubt another huge success. The Great Falls Conference Committee did a fantastic job! A big thank you goes out to the Great Falls Hangar representatives who participated in countless meetings as co-hosts to this conference. This was the first conference the "Electric City" has held since the very first one back in 1984.

I was honored to stand in front of over 500 attendees at the conference to share with them the MPA awards. The MPA annually gives out many awards of recognition to well deserving members and scholarships to aspiring pilots to further their careers.

Our MPA Annual Meeting was held in conjunction with the conference. It was filled with committee and hangar reports, amending the constitution and by-laws and the election of a new slate of officers. Chuck Jarecki of Polson replaces Dennis Lenoir of Cut Bank as western director and Joe Roberts of Helena replaces Jay Billmayer of Kalispell as western vice-president. All other officers were re-elected for another term.

This spring and summer should prove to be a busy one for our organization. It starts out with a Strategy Planning Retreat and Board Meeting in Helena on April 24-25, hosted by the Vigilante Hangar, the MPA 2003 Hangar of the Year. The year starts winding down around the time of the Fall Fly-In. It sounds like a new hangar will be starting up to serve the Bozeman area, Roundup is looking to host a Safety Fly-In, Cut Bank is doing another Fun Weekend and Havre is hosting another Fly-In Breakfast & Toy Show to name a few. Please check the MPA Web site for the latest hangar activities and other aviation events.

I encourage you to join the MPA to support our efforts in preserving and protecting the aviation community we know in Montana. Through this newsletter and through our web site, we hope to keep you informed on aviation issues that may threaten our rights, as well as those that will enhance our freedom to fly the Big Sky.

Chuck Manning

MPA President

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Corrections: I must correct a couple of mistakes I made in the last edition of the Heading Bug. I stated a 2 percent fuel tax was lobbied for to establish an on-going funding source for loans and grants to assist Montana airports - that should have been a 2 cent fuel tax. I also inadvertently made inference that the EAA was not a part of AOM, it most definitely is.

2004 Calendar of Events

- May 15-16**—Alaska State Aviation Conference & Trade Show—FedEx Hangar, Anchorage, AK
- May 29-31**—Spotted Bear (8U4) Work Weekend—hosted by the USFS and Flathead Hangar
- May 29-31**—Benchmark (3U7) Work Weekend—hosted by the USFS and Glacier Hangar
- June 4-5**—Wings and Wheels, classic airplanes and cars—Bonners Ferry, ID
- June 12**—Havre Toy Show and Fly-In Breakfast—Havre, MT
- June 12-13**—Meadow Creek (10S1) Work Weekend—hosted by the USFS and Flathead Hangar
- June 20**—Fathers Day Fly-in & Pancake Breakfast—Ft. Peck airport (formally at the Bass' Beacon Star)
- June 21-25**—McCall Mountain/Canyon Flying Seminar—McCall, ID
- July 7-11**—NW EAA Arlington Fly-In—Arlington, WA
- July 17-18**—Schafer (8U2) Work Weekend—hosted by the USFS, Montana Aeronautics Division, MPA and Montana Flying Farmers
- July 24**—FAA and Montana Aeronautics Division Safety Meeting and ELT Seminar—Roundup, MT
- July 27-Aug. 2**—EAA Airventure (Oshkosh)
- Aug. 6-8**—Splash-In on Lower Stillwater Lake, Whitefish, MT
- Aug. 20-22**—Montana Fun Weekend Fly-In & Car Show—Cut Bank, MT
- Aug. 28**—Sixth Annual Polson Fly-In Pancake Breakfast & Pitchfork Fondue
- Sep. 11**—Sidney Airshow (Montana, not down under)
- Dec. 2**—Happy 65th Birthday to the Montana Pilots' Association

New MPA officers elected at the Aviation Conference

Part of the annual general membership meeting held in Great Falls on March 6 was the election of officers for 2004. Chuck Manning, Kalispell, was re-elected president, Geanette Cebulski, Seeley Lake, was re-elected secretary/treasurer and Charlie Inman, Havre, was re-elected eastern vice president. Newly elected were Chuck Jarecki, Polson, western director and Joe Roberts, Helena, western vice-president.

Chuck Jarecki is retired after 29 years in the cattle ranching business in the Polson area. Chuck earned his private license in 1960 and his commercial and instrument in 1961. His license is endorsed for single engine land and sea and gliders. He has flown over 4000 hours and many of those hours were logged in the C-180 he has owned for 27 years.

Besides serving on the MPA Recreational Airstrip Committee and helping found the Recreational Aviation Foundation he is on the board of directors of the Montana Weed Control Association and serves on the Society of Range Management Endowment Fund.

Joe Roberts, a Libby native now living in Helena, is currently the secretary/treasurer for the Vigilante Hangar and an appointed member on the State Tax Appeal Board. After years of motorcycle touring Joe obtained his private pilot license in 1996. He now flies a Husky and added his commercial and instrument licenses last year. His next goal is his CFI.

MPA 2003 Award winners

MPA president Chuck Manning presented the 2003 MPA awards during the Montana Aviation Conference on March 6 in Great Falls. The winners are:

- Pilot of the year**—Bill Sheets, Big Sandy
- President's Award**—Chuck Jarecki, Polson
- Junior Pilot Award**—Craig Goeden, Dillon
- Flight Training Award**—Eric Dewey, Billings
- Spark Plug Award**—Geanette Cebulski, Seeley Lake
- Hangar of the Year**—Vigilante, Helena
- Bent Prop Award**—Bob Alm, Kalispell
- Outstanding Service Award (website)**—Bailey Egan, Colstrip
- Outstanding Service Award (newsletter)**—Bob Lipscomb, Glasgow



Photo by Bailey Egan

MPA Spark Plug Award winner Geanette Cebulski, MPA secretary/treasurer and Chuck Manning, MPA President



Hangar Reports

Dillon Hangar—The March 30 meeting and pot luck dinner was held in Twin Bridges at the Ruby Valley Aviation hangar. George Warner and Rob McDowell reported on the Montana Aviation conference and Beau Bradley presented plans for a Fathers Day weekend Fly-In at Ruby Valley Aviation. Plans were discussed for expansion of the Dillon Hangar to include the surrounding area. The May meeting will be in Butte.

By Byron Bayers

Glacier (Cut Bank) Hangar—Held the monthly meeting/barbecue on March 15. Debbie Alke and Jeanne MacPherson described the January search for an airplane near Glasgow and offered ways to improve search methods. A lot of ideas were discussed and the hangar is planning a practice search to implement them. The next meeting/barbecue will be April 19 at the airport.

By Dave Ries

Great Falls Hangar—Helped sponsor the 2004 Montana Aviation Conference. Other than the wind, the conference was a huge success and many compliments have been received. I would like to thank all those associated with the conference for their hard work in making the conference a success.

The hangar sponsored an FAA Wings session entitled "Risk Management-Decision Making in the Cockpit". The presenter was Steve Jones, Helena FSDO. The Hangar will be sponsoring Wings sessions in May and July.

Marv Hessler has been attending SMGCS meetings being held by the Great Falls International Airport Authority. SMGCS is an acronym for Surface Movement and Guidance Control System. The committee consists of all users on the airport and the hangar was asked to participate. The SMGCS committee will help develop the surface movement procedures during low visibility conditions on the airport. The SMGCS plan is necessary for the Category III approach being added at the airport.

By Dan Prill

Headwaters (Bozeman) Hangar—There is an organizational meeting to form a new Bozeman area hangar April 23 at 7:00 P.M. The meeting will be held in Dennis Guentzel's hangar (#80) at Bozeman's Gallatin Field. Beer, wine, soft drinks and snacks will be provided. The meeting and MPA membership is open to everyone with an interest in aviation. All those who live in or are close to the Bozeman area welcome. You don't have to be a pilot to join.

By John McKenna

Miles City Hangar—The Hangar is very much alive. We had a slow year last year but will be going strong this year. A steak fry is planned for June 5 at Settle Aviation on the Sunday Creek Airpark just north of Miles City. The starting time will be posted on the MPA website bulletin board after the April 5 meeting. We will also have our annual Fly-In at Alvin Hirsch's ranch in October. We plan to get the "Rondi's" started again this year and any input on them would be of great help. We will be electing a president and vice president at the April meeting.

By Barbara Hirsch

Sanders County (Plains) Hangar—The March meeting was held at Benji's restaurant in Plains and conducted by Dan Lilja, secretary. Don Theeler reported on the improvements made to the Hot Springs airport. The runway has been extended 1,000 feet and is now 3,800 feet long. The entire length was resurfaced. Bicycles are now available for fly-in use and funds have been obtained for a courtesy car. Plans are to build a pilot's lounge with a garage for the courtesy car. Negotiations with the county for private hangar leases are in process. An October Fly-In is planned. Dan Lilja gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Noxon airport and the plans for a work party this spring or summer to clear the brush and restore it to a useable condition. Election of officers for 2004: Dan Lilja, president; Walt Pickering, treasurer/ vice president; and Steve Vondracek, secretary.

By Steve VonDracek

Vigilante (Helena) Hangar—The February meeting was held at Vetter Aviation at the Helena Regional Airport. Bill Gallea and Jeanne MacPherson presented a video journal of their trip to Kitty Hawk to participate in the Centennial of Flight Celebration on December 17, 2003. Bill put together a an entertaining video of the event, complete with musical accompaniment. The video showed the Kitty Hawk layout along with the stone markers indicating the landing spot of the first four flights of the Wright Brothers. The featured event of the Kitty Hawk Celebration was the re-enactment of the first flight—which didn't fly due to rain, lack of wind (they needed 10 knots) and mechanical problems. {*Ed note: what could better demonstrate the challenges the Wright Brothers faced that day a hundred years ago, and the riskiness of the whole enterprise?*} Bill also recorded the arrival of President Bush in Marine One who spoke on the aviation advances over the one hundred year history of flight. The following officers were elected for 2004: Gloria Hermanson, president; Bill Gallea, vice president; and Joe Roberts, secretary/treasurer.

By Joe Roberts

More on flying Montana's Missouri Breaks

By Chuck Jarecki

In a recent issue of the [Heading Bug](#) I gave a brief overview of flying into the Missouri Breaks country of North Central Montana. Now let's get into a few specifics.

First of all, the breaks lie under the Hays MOA. The floor of the MOA is 300 feet AGL. Flying beneath the floor of the MOA could compromise your safety and is inconsiderate of those on the ground. However, you can usually pick a time to fly into the area when the military is not using the airspace. The scheduled times for military operations are 0830 to 1030 and 1330 to 1530. These are the scheduled time blocks however the airspace may not be used the entire time. There are night operations one week each month, the hours being dependent on the times of darkness.

To obtain current information on whether the MOA is active contact Salt Lake Center on 133.4, they control the west half of the MOA where the break's airstrips are located. There is a remote radio repeater site at Roy, allowing contact with center before entering the MOA. While on the ground you can generally talk to center, if not, contact can be made soon after takeoff. The Montana Air National Guard must have an IFR clearance from Salt Lake Center to use the MOA, so this makes them the source of

real time information. Great Falls Flight Service can only provide the scheduled times of operation. Radar coverage is spotty below 6000 MSL, so don't count on flight following.

The F-16s fly as low as 500 feet AGL and the B-1s as low as 400 feet AGL. Plan your arrival and departure times for when the MOA is not active for a stress free and safe flight.

Let's discuss what the conditions should be to land at one of the airstrips in the breaks. All the airstrips have a dirt surface with a moderate cover of native grass. The soil is a dense clay known as gumbo. When wet, the ground is slippery and will ball up on your tires. You will, in all likelihood, not be able to taxi or take off if the ground is wet. If you have wheel pants, the mud will pack in so hard the wheels will not turn, and once it dries, will be like cement. If it has recently rained, do not land. If it looks like it is going to rain while on the ground and you cannot stay till it dries out again, take off and go somewhere else. During a heavy rain, much of the water runs off allowing the ground to dry quickly once the sun comes out. The posi-

tive side is when the ground is dry, it's as hard as pavement with no soft spots.

What is the best way to find out if the airstrips are dry before leaving home? There is a remote NOAA weather-reporting site in the Bull Whacker Coulee area. You can find current hourly information on wind, temperature and precipitation as well as the readings for the prior seven days. Go to www.wrh.noaa.gov/greatfalls, place the cursor NE of Fort Benton and click when the Blaine County flag appears. There is a listing of remote weather observation sites so read down and click on Little Bullwhacker Creek. Now you can determine if it has been raining in the area and how much has fallen each previous hour. How about a weather forecast while on the ground? All you need to do is get out your cell phone and call Great Falls Flight Service.



Cow Creek Airstrip Photo by Dan Lilja

Now that you are ready for a flight into one of the Missouri Breaks landing strips, let's discuss one of them, Cow Creek. This airstrip is located about 10 nautical miles up Cow Creek from its mouth on the Missouri River. As you fly northwest up the creek you will see the airstrip to your right, on edge of the bench. The coordinates are: N47° 56.85', W109° 00.54'. The runway is oriented east and west with a slight uphill to the west. The approaches are unobstructed. Cow Creek is approximately 2,500 feet

long and 40 feet wide. The surface is fairly smooth, suitable for a properly flown nose wheel aircraft. The east half of the runway has a pair of shallow vehicle ruts to the south of the centerline. Use the portion of the runway north of the ruts. There may be some surface roughness caused by cows walking across when the ground was soft. There is no windsock.

There is a suitable camping area at each end of the airstrip. The ground has a sod cover of grama grass, making a smooth spot for tents. The views from the west end of the strip look out over the Cow Creek drainage and toward the Bear Paw Mountains and are inspiring. It is a great location for watching the sunset and would be a good place to set up a camp for a couple of nights and fly to some of the other strips to hike and explore. There is no potable water available, and cattle may wander through the area. You may even see a couple of F-16s practicing overhead.

Practice no-trace camping and enjoy a special place in Montana.

“Hot Stove” Flying

by Husky Six Papa Fox (Joe Roberts)

It's that time of year. Flying is limited to paved runways, and many days are too cold, too snowy, or even too foggy to justify rolling the ship out of the hangar. So what to do?

Baseball fans have the “hot stove” league. What's that you say? To the true fan (remember that “fan” is a derivative of “fanatic”) it's the off-season and the only connection with their passion is to relive some of the best games from the previous season (and probably second-guess some of the same managerial decisions).

So I'd like to borrow the idea of the “hot stove” league from baseball and apply it to flying. I'll get out my logbook and relive some of my best flying adventures from the past year. Heck, maybe I'll even make a trip to the woodpile and fire up the hot stove!

A trip that immediately comes to mind is one Jerry Cain and I took in our Husky's to the Idaho backcountry. My logbook entry tells me the date is June 8. We are set for an early start on a clear, crisp morning with a forecast for good weather. It looks like CAVU all the way.

Jerry flies out of Lincoln and I fly out of Helena. We agree on a starting time and plan to hook up in the air on the pilot frequency of 122.75. As soon as I clear the Delta airspace of Helena and climb out west, over MacDonald Pass, I am on the radio and Jerry answers my call. By the time we get together we are south of Philipsburg and over the Sapphire Mountains. We have both set our GPS's for Hamilton and as we approach the Bitterroot Valley from the east, we can view the Bitterroot Mountains, still snow-capped and set against the greening valley below us.

Attention needs to be focused when landing at Hamilton (6S5). It's an uncontrolled airport with lots of traffic, including the turbine kind and even glider activity this time of year. . Eyes and ears are alert as we cross midfield and enter right traffic for runway 16. We're off the runway at the second exit and onto the ramp for a friendly greeting from Steve at North Star Aviation.

Jerry orders gas and we jump in the courtesy car for a quick trip to town for breakfast. Soon, we're waving “goodbye” to Steve as we taxi out for departure. Next stop is Moose Creek.

We need to crest a couple of those “purple mountain majesties,” so lifting off from Hamilton we maintain our heading and fly south, down the valley and over some of the scarred timberland from the terrible fire season of 2000. Before we get to the town of Darby we see Lake Como off our right wings. We turn to the west, fly over the lake and follow a rugged corridor towards the high stuff. Stunning country is sliding underneath our wings as we trim our elevators to gain more elevation. After reaching 9,000 MSL we crest the pass, which also serves as the state line, we're now over Idaho.

Before us is a long, winding, valley and we can see how

the snow and water work themselves off these high peaks. Below is a small rivulet, ahead of us it joins with others and becomes a stream, farther ahead and around the mountain, it becomes a river—the Selway. Yes, the fabled Selway, which will lead us to our destination, Moose Creek. These roaring waters at this time of year show plenty of white from the air, and seem barely contained in the canyons through which they run.

As we reach the Selway, I'm looking for an airstrip by the river known as Shearer (5US). Today we fly over it (I landed there last year), and it will orient us to Moose Creek, approximately 10 miles down river. Shearer is a small, rough Forest Service strip, used mostly for recreational access.

Soon we see Shearer below and we start dropping elevation as we approach Moose Creek (1U1). We continue to follow the Selway which is running to the northwest. Around the corner is the opening where the Moose Creek airstrip sits. After clearing all the high elevation just a few minutes ago, we're preparing to land in a spot that's just 2,400 feet MSL.

There are cross runways at Moose Creek. In the spring, or anytime it might be wet, the recommended runway is the shorter one. It lays to the northeast (04), and the recommended approach is to fly over the field at pattern altitude, then fly down the Selway River, make a 180-degree turn in a wide spot in the canyon and fly back up the river to the field maneuvering slightly to line up with the runway. The runway has an uphill grade (that's why it dries out quicker), and there is usually plenty of the 2,300-foot runway left when you and your airplane get stopped (hopefully simultaneously!).

Today Jerry has a different idea for landing. Just after we cross the field to head down-river, Jerry radios: “Let's turn and slip to the main runway.” I'm in no mood to argue and it sounds like fun. So we make a turn that puts us over the river and at the south end of the long runway (01/19). Right rudder, left stick, lift the nose to just the right spot to maintain a safe airspeed---let it sink and slip it in to Moose Creek. Whew, that is fun!

We drop into a tree-lined strip of green, and taxi to the west side of the main strip and select one of the camping sites nestled in the spruce and pine.

We're on the ground at Moose Creek. We'll set up camp, hike, and do some flying later in the day. But that's all in the next chapter.

*Moose
Creek
photo by
Jerry Cain*



HARD LANDINGS = ELT ACTIVATION

by Sevier Valley Civil Air Patrol Sq. Commander, Lee Holloman

What happens when an ELT is activated? Its picked up by the satellites or an airliner and flight service is notified. The Civil Air Patrol Center at Langley AFB is called and they issue a flight mission to a local area CAP Wing. The Wing in Utah then pages their 15 squadrons and the squadrons call wing mission center in SLC. Each squadron requires a crew of three consisting of a pilot, observer, and scanner. The wing decides how many crews and aircraft are needed and issues a mission and sortie number. In the last 18 months, there were five ELT alerts in our area and they all came in the middle of the night. How many would like to fly on a pitch black night, over mountains, in weather, looking for a downed airplane? This could be a real disaster.

Here at Sevier Valley CAP (Richfield, Utah) we flew four of these missions. Aircraft were located parked unattended at the following airports: Page, Ariz., twice within a month the same Cessna 150 at Mt. Pleasant and the last on March 13 at a small back country airport, near Fry Canyon called Lean-to-point. It was a Cessna 172 flown by a couple of campers from Calif. who made a hard landing activating the ELT. They were not aware the ELT was activated. Our squadron located the ELT at 2200 that night by electronic direction finder (DF). After daylight, the CAP directed a Utah Highway Patrol helicopter to the lat/long location. This whole exercise could have been prevented by the pilots tuning their radio to 121.5 prior to shut-down. It is also advisable to listen to 121.5 on cross country flights. It could be you on the ground looking for assistance or help. Please do not put other people at risk.

Bill Sheets, MPA 2003 Pilot of the Year

Bill soloed in 1950 while on active duty with the U.S. Navy flying with military flying clubs. The flying and ratings came during a 23-year Navy career primarily in submarines. Upon retirement from the Navy with an airplane single and multi engine land, instrument, CFI and CFII rating, a career in flying beckoned. During his first year of employment with an FBO, he added helicopter and seaplane ratings and later his A&P mechanics license. While working for the FBO, charter, instructing, ground school and sales demo's were all in a days work. Bill sold a Piper Aztec to a corporation who turned around and hired him to be their chief pilot. A few years later he went from being a corporate pilot to World Airways as a sales/demo pilot selling corporate prop jets. It was a good job but he had to be away from home too much so he quit and found his niche as an ag pilot.

Bill spent several years flying as an aerial applicator in Idaho, Oregon and Washington before purchasing Geyer Air Spray, which he renamed Big Sandy Flying Service. Bill was the founding president of Association of Montana Aerial Applicators (AMAA) and served on the Aviation Organizations of Montana (AOM) board for several years. At age the of 75 he is now restoring a 1953 C-180 and building an RV-4.

Kids will say the darndest things

By Bailey Egan

Kids in Miles City Montana know how to make you smile. The local MPA hangar was hard at work giving EAA Young Eagle rides to school children and were a little short of airplanes to fly all the kids waiting for their turn. Big Sky Airlines happened to have an airplane on the ground while all the commotion was going on and someone mentioned it sure would be nice to use the Metro Liner III to give a few rides. The Big Sky pilot jumped at the chance and after contacting the company for an O.K. they loaded it up and joined the fun. The best part of the story was when a small boy got off the Metro Liner and was asked how he liked the ride. He replied, "the ride was great but now I would like to get a ride in a real airplane!" Thank you Big Sky Airlines, you made everybody's day.



The MPA at work!

Feb. 23—Lewis & Clark Forest Travel Plan Resolution Group, Great Falls—attended by Dan Prill and John McKenna

Feb. 25—Central Montana BLM Resource Advisory Committee, Lewistown—attended by Chuck Jarecki and J.C. Kantorowicz

Feb. 26—Flathead Forest Planning Open House, Kalispell—attended by Jerry Cain, Ed Ethridge, Judy Harris, Chuck Jarecki, Art Lindstrom, Chuck Manning and Peter Muellner

March 1—Flathead Forest FOIA request meeting, Kalispell—attended by Chuck Jarecki

March 8—Lewis & Clark Forest Travel Plan Resolution Group, Great Falls—attended by Dan Prill

March 20—Strategy meeting for Flathead Forest Plan, Kalispell—attended by Perry Brown, Jerry Cain, Chuck & Judy Harris, Chuck Jarecki, Wes Lynch and Chuck Manning

March 22—Lewis & Clark Forest Travel Plan Resolution Group, Great Falls—attended by Dan Prill and John McKenna

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Challenge Aviation with Education

By Margie Prill

Did you know that sixteen teachers and approximately 50 of their students “snuck” into the Montana Aviation Conference in Great Falls last month? I’ll bet most of you didn’t even realize we were there.

Elementary and Secondary Educators are always on the look out for a good workshop. We need the workshops to renew our certificates every five years and to add to our knowledge base so we can bring a wealth of information to our students. So imagine my delight at finding a unique workshop that was related to my husband’s favorite interest *and* I was offered a \$100 scholarship to attend.

Jeanne MacPherson, Bureau Chief of Safety and Education with the Montana Aeronautics Division, has sponsored this workshop, in conjunction with the conference, every year for about five years to provide students and teachers with an opportunity to learn more about aviation and to take that information back to the classroom. She has set aside scholarships for teachers from her Aviation Education budget to promote Aviation Education in Montana. Due to her efforts, we were able to spend three days at the conference soaking up all kinds of flying facts.

Richard Klein, a former elementary education teacher from Chicago, who created an aviation curriculum for his school district, was this year’s facilitator. He shared a varied assortment of materials and information related to aviation. He then demonstrated classroom lessons in subject areas including math, science, social studies, art and language arts.

Using outdated airport directories, “freebies”, given away by most states after they are no longer current, he showed us how to use them to teach children how to locate information, an important life skill. Richard showed us how flight scenes in movies can be used to motivate students to learn to do math calculations. An example he used was calculating the amount of fuel the movie hero in The Bridges at Toko-Ri needed to reach his destination on a aircraft carrier in the middle of the ocean. Basic map reading skills were made easy with our own handmade compass rose and basic longitude and latitude explained starting with a simple game of tic-tac toe.

Richard was joined by Jeanne for an informative presentation on Mountain Flying and Search and Rescue, after which he introduced us to a number of math problems students could do involving Search and Rescue scenarios. He used triangulation, weather information, and time constraints to spark our interest in doing calculation to answer his hypothetical questions all set in Montana and

using a Montana Aeronautics Chart. This may seem elementary to most, but for non-pilot types these were all new concepts. His technique was highly motivational and we had great fun!

Some of the teachers in the workshop had their classes join us on Thursday morning for an Aviation Career Panel. It was made up of pilots, both military and commercial, along with pilot educators from several Montana locations. Student questions at the end of the presentation, indicating their high interest level, included everything from, “Can I fly in the Air Guard with exercise induced asthma?” to “What college major should I pursue if I wish to fly commercially after I get my degree?” These students were also invited to take tours of the Great Falls Air National Guard that afternoon.



I hope some of you caught the general session presentation by Mac Bledsoe. His son is quarterback Drew Bledsoe and he is president and founder of the Drew Bledsoe Foundation – Parenting With Dignity. We were able to attend

his opening remarks and were they ever powerful! Mac’s passionate call to positively affect the lives of the children in our sphere of influence by sharing our values with them really hit home with us.

Also part of our total immersion in all things aeronautic was a field trip to the Air National Guard where we were able to tour the Crash, Fire and Rescue area, the parachute practice, and see the survival gear and garb used by the F-16 pilots. Some of us even got to fly the F-16 simulator.

Our last exposure to aeronautics included a preflight at the airport with some of the small planes from the static display. We had hoped to go for an airplane ride, but the wind was so nasty it blew the glasses right off Jeanne’s nose outside Holman Aviation. She has, however, given rain checks for future rides when the wind dies down. We did “fly” on the ground with a flight simulator. This gave me a new appreciation for all the things you pilots have to do at once in order to get your plane in the air. My hat is off to all of you!

Jeanne assures me that another Aviation class for teachers will be offered at the next conference, this time in Butte. So do all your friends in education a favor and let them know about this wonderful opportunity to acquire knowledge they can use in a classroom while having fun and getting reimbursed. What a deal!

For more information, call Jeanne MacPherson, Montana Aeronautics Division, 1-406-444-2506, or email at jemacpherson@state.mt.us

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MONTANA PILOTS' ASSOCIATION



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We're on the Web at <http://montanapilots.org>