



INCORPORATED

Heading Bug

January/February 2006

NOTAMS:

Mineta warns of user fees

On Tuesday, Jan. 24, Transportation Secretary Norm Mineta made use of his speech at the annual luncheon of Washington's Aero Club to talk about the future of the FAA and how it will be funded. First there was the encrypted user-fee warning: "I cannot give you the details yet, but I expect that we are going to see a cost-based plan that creates a more direct relationship between revenue collected and services provided," he said. That new plan is in the "final

Short Final

Overheard while flying near Frankfurt.

ATC: Lufthansa 456, descend and maintain 12-thousand.

Lufthansa 456: 12-thousand, Lufthansa 456.

ATC: Lufthansa 456, can you make it to 12 in one minute?

(short pause)

Lufthansa 456: Negative. The captain requests I inform you we're going as fast as this Fokker will go.

(silence)

ATC: ...Right. Lufthansa 456, turn right heading 330, please.



Photo by J.C. Kantorowicz

President's message:

My rule of thumb for winter maintenance on my airplane is to fly the bird at least once a month to get the oil moving in the upper parts of the engine, and then to fly it at least an hour at a time, so that the temperatures get high enough to precipitate out any condensation that may have occurred in the crankcase. Does this make sense? Like many of the "rules" we talk of in aviation, there's probably plenty of room for discussion and disputation.

I'll admit I'm not a mechanic but this regimen makes sense to me, and what I really like about it is that it provides a darn good excuse to go fly in the winter. These bleak days do not always afford the best flying conditions (I'm looking out at low clouds hanging in the Helena Valley right now), but then when you get one of those high pressure systems accompanied by "severe clear," you can all of a sudden get some of the best flying weather of the year. I love the dense air, and the "ground effect" on landing can feel like you're landing on a cushion---instead of smacking onto the turf like I might have done in August.

Another popular type of flying in the winter is so-called "hangar flying." If you are in Helena, you can usually head to Vetter's any morning about 10 o'clock and get some hot coffee and serious hangar flying. All landings are perfect, and airmanship is at the highest demonstrated level during this time period. Also, all technical problems are solved due to the application of superior intellect and mechanical prowess. I'm sure that most airports have a similar spot to do your hangar flying, and it's certainly useful to get us through these winter months.

Another great place to do some serious hangar flying is the state aviation conference. This year's event is being held in Helena and promises to be another great show. The headline speaker will be Erik Lindbergh, grandson of Charles, who will talk about the Lindbergh legacy. When Charles Lindbergh came to Helena in 1927 he had spent a few days with a group from Butte in the Seeley/Swan area, at a place then called Elbow Lake. (If you see it from the air, which I routinely do, you know why it was called Elbow Lake.) Shortly after the visit of the famous aviator, the lake was renamed in his honor, and is known today as Lindbergh Lake.

Pilots who heard him last year will be happy to hear that Montana native and back-country pilot extraordinaire' Mike Vivion, will be returning. Mike headed up to Alaska after getting his degree from the University of Montana in wildlife biology. Somewhere along the way, he also learned to fly an airplane. Since then he's had many adventures involving all kinds of wild animals including Super Cubs and Huskies. Mike's a very bright guy with lots of stories to tell, and most of us leave a presentation from Mike as a better pilot.

Elsewhere in this issue is information about the revised schedule for public meetings concerning the Missouri River Breaks airstrips. This is the number one issue for Montana pilots, and it is very important that pilots attend any meetings that are occurring in their area. It's been observed that a lot of things in life go to those who "just show up." This is certainly one of those occasions. You don't have to give a flowery, eloquent statement---something personal and heart-felt is far more effective. The decisions made on these airstrips will affect aviation in Montana for a long time to come, so please try to make your presence felt.

I look forward to seeing you at the conference and hope you are able to attend the annual general membership meeting which will be held on Saturday morning.

CAVU
Joe Roberts
406-442-8891

2006 calendar of events

March 2-4—Montana Aviation Conference—Helena (HLN)—Red Lion Colonial Inn—Saturday's banquet speaker: Erik Lindbergh, concurrent sessions, mechanic refresher seminar, aviation industry exhibits, aviation careers & activities for students, teacher workshop sessions, spouse and guest tour, registration fee waived for all student pilots—for further information call 406-444-2506 or for the registration form go to: www.mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/aviation/docs/aviation_conference.pdf

March 10-11—2006 Idaho Aviation Festival—Boise Centre on the Grove—for more information go to www.itd.idaho.gov/aero/AviationFestival or e-mail—inquire@meetingsystems.com or call 208•334•8775 or 208-288-0290

April 4-10—Sun 'n Fun EAA Fly-In—Lakeland, Florida

April 26—Closing date for comments to the BLM on the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument draft RMP

June 17-18—Twin Bridges Fly-In—for more information call Kendra Horn at 406•684•5335 or e-mail kendra@rubyvalleyaviation.com

July 24-30—EAA AirVenture 2006—Oshkosh, Wisconsin

Aug. 4-6—The Twelfth Splash-In—Fly-In at Stillwater Landing on Lower Stillwater Lake— Whitefish—for more information go to www.stillwaterlanding.com

Aug. 19—Eighth Annual Polson Fly-In and Swap Meet—Polson (8S1)—Pancake breakfast, lunch and Pitchfork Fondue (steak fry)—swap meet, airplane rides—Soroptimist's wine festival that evening— for more information e-mail Bill Olson at weo@commbank.net

a few cool Web sites

Another way to check TFRs

TFRs are a fact of life, but fortunately the flying fraternity is nothing if not innovative and TFR Check (www.tfrcheck.com), the latest tool to keep those Blackhawk helicopters off your wing, has been rolled out by Adventure Pilots, which is a nifty site with updates every five minutes from Jeppesen's database.

Tired of the stack of out-of-date sectionals cluttering the home office

There is a new Web site (<http://skyvector.com/>) with all the sectionals available online, but not to be used for flying. The beauty of the Web site is the viewer can zoom in on a geographic area or by placing their mouse over one of the colored spots, find the current weather for that airport. Clicking on the colored spot brings up a description of the airport complete with listing of the runways, their length and right or left traffic pattern.

Interested in airplane crashes

This site (<http://planecrashinfo.com/index.html>) is for the air disaster fanatics and lists the 100 top air disasters. A very user-friendly site with an easy to use index.

Wonder about where the military tests secret airplanes

Here's a link (www.area51zone.com/index.shtml) to Area 51 and Area 19.

Know a non-pilot who thinks a Cessna 152 is a "terrorist weapon"

Show this site (www.gaservingamerica.org) to those folks who think the C-152 is a "terrorist weapon." This AOPA site broadcasts all the great things about general aviation we pilots already know.

Young Eagles

The Young Eagles (www.young eagles.org) have been helping young people between the ages of 8 and 17 experience the sky for free. If you want to volunteer your time or a plane or both, you can check out their site

FAA's Aviation Safety site—

An FAA site (www.nasdac.faa.gov) for Aviation Safety. Reports galore, in the Safety Data Library. Need to know about bird strikes? It's in here.



hangar reports

Gallatin Valley Hangar--Dec. 4 was the one-year anniversary of the airplane accident that took the life of three of our good friends and fellow pilots and severely injured a fourth. A memorial



Amy and Don Olson

and potluck dinner was held in Jim Bastiani's old hangar to remember and celebrate the good times we had with our friends; Jim Bastiani, Brandon Speth and Cliff Lincoln. It was a happy-sad occasion, as we remembered all the good times we had with them and mourned their passing. Jim Bastiani's girlfriend, Dagmar, and Brandon Speth's girlfriend, Kelly, said a few words, then we observed a moment of silence. A special treat



was a visit by Don Olson, the lone survivor, and his wife Amy. Don is still recovering from his injuries but is getting on with life and it was good to see him at the airport again. We're hoping he comes out to the airport and visits more often. The memorial/potluck was organized by Ken Flikkema, who did an excellent job getting things together and making sure everything went smoothly. *by Walt Weaver*

Great Falls Hangar-- the December meeting was our annual Christmas party, held in conjunction with the EAA and catered by Air Host at the GTF terminal building, everyone agreed it was a fine event. Election of officers was held after dinner and the current slate was reelected. Ray Wallace asked to be excused from his duties as secretary/treasurer. The 2006 officers are J. C. Kantorowicz, president; Lou Ronnau, vice president; and Pam Whitney, secretary/treasurer. In January we resumed our regular agenda with discussions about continuing co-meetings with the EAA, membership, fly-in proposals for the coming year, the MPA Annual Poker Run, public service projects and money making ideas. It was decided that in the future the Great Falls Hangar will meet independently from the EAA chapter. Meetings will continue to be held at the GTF terminal building at 7p.m. but will be changed to the second Wednesday of each month. The next meeting will be Feb. 8. *by J.C. Kantorowicz*

Miles City Hangar-- well here we are in 2006 with our first meeting of the new year on Feb. 1. We are hoping to leave the officers as they were last year but will let you know. We did not do very much last year but hope to get things going again this year. We will be making plans for our annual steak fry at Settle Aviation which will be most likely the first Saturday in June, but will be sure to let you know far ahead of time. We will also have our Rondi in October at Alvin Hirsch's, which is always a big hit. *by Barb Hirsch*

Mission Valley Hangar-- held it's regular monthly meeting Jan. 9 at the Polson FBO and the attendance was robust. Sue Taylor, Polson Community Development Agency's new executive director, was introduced. Sue worked previously at the Richard Bong Aviation Museum in Superior, Wis. Following the success of our Christmas Party meeting, the membership agreed that the social aspect of our organization contributes to our vitality. It was agreed to have spouses at our monthly deliberations 3-4 times a year starting with our next meeting at Nine Pipes Lodge Feb. 6. A lengthy discussion ensued about the Polson 2006 Fly-In scheduled for Aug. 19 and a committee was formed to steer it. Leroy Hoversland, Chairman of the Lake County Airport Board, reported that Lake County will have a public hearing to adopt a county wide airport influence area regulation that is required by the 2005 Montana Legislature for all cities/counties with airports. *by Bill Olson*

Vigilante Hangar--held it's annual Christmas Party, Dec. 14, at Vetter's. Attendance was great, the food sumptuous and the evening was topped off by an exciting Christmas Gift Exchange - a "Yankee Swap." A short business meeting was held in which a nominating committee was formed. Mike Mulrone, Claudia Bunn and Bob Hamm were appointed to the nominating committee and will investigate if anyone is secretly hoping to wrest power and influence away from the 2005 officers. The hangar held it's regular monthly meeting, Jan. 11, at Vetter's. Thirty hearty folks came to watch the aviation film, *16 Right*, featuring the historic Van Nuys airport. The hangar provided delicious popcorn for all, and Joe Roberts provided the DVD. The nominating committee reported that no one in their right mind would want to be a leader of this unruly gang, so the 2005 slate of officers was re-elected by unanimous acclaim; Bill Gallea, president; Oliver Bucklin, vice-president; Jeanie Ferguson secretary/treasurer. *by Bill Gallea*

UMRBNM public meetings rescheduled

The BLM has rescheduled public meetings to answer questions and gather comments concerning the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS). The original meetings (scheduled for November and December '05) were postponed due to severe weather throughout central Montana.

The new meeting schedule:

Date	Community	Location
Tues. Feb. 21	Lewistown	Yogo Inn
Wed. Feb. 22	Winifred	Community Center
Thurs. Feb. 23	Fort Benton	Ag Museum
Mon. Feb. 27	Havre	Holiday Village Mall
Tues. Feb. 28	Chinook	Chinook Motor Inn
Wed. March 1	Big Sandy	Community Hall
Thurs. March 2	Hays	John Capture Center
Mon. March 6	Malta	1st State Bank
Tues. March 7	Billings	MSU Billings (Student Union Bldg.)
Wed. March 8	Great Falls	Townhouse Inn
Thurs. March 9	Kalispell	Outlaw Inn
Tues. March 14	Helena	Jorgenson's

Meetings start at 6 p.m. with introductions and a brief BLM presentation on the RMP/EIS. Each meeting provides an opportunity to talk individually with various resource specialists. Around 7:30 a more formal public comment period begins with a court reporter creating an accurate transcript of comments offered. Depending on how many people wish to offer comments, a time limit may be imposed for each speaker. Written comments will be accepted at these meetings. Meetings are scheduled to adjourn at 9 p.m.

If you cannot attend these meetings please send your written comments to: Monument RMP Team, BLM Lewistown Field Office, 920 NE Main St., P.O. Box 1160, Lewistown, MT 59457, or you may e-mail them to monumentrmp@blm.gov. All letters and e-mails should include the first and last name of the individual commenting and their complete mailing address.

Those individuals who want their name and address withheld from public release must state that preference at the beginning of their comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed. All comments from organizations and businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be available for public release in their entirety.

The public comment period was extended and runs through April 26.



Idaho senators lead fight to protect backcountry airstrips

Senators Michael Crapo and Larry Craig have not let up in efforts to protect backcountry airstrips. The two Idaho senators recently introduced the Backcountry Landing Strip Access Act to congress.

"Many federal land management agencies persist in trying to close or restrict access to backcountry airstrips," AOPA President Phil Boyer said in letters thanking Sen. Crapo and Sen. Craig for sponsoring the bill. "Without congressional intervention, the accessibility of these valuable assets will continue to be hampered."

"Backcountry landing strips allow people to enjoy forests and parks, support state economies through recreational activity, and play a vital role in access to research, management, aerial mapping and disaster relief," Senator Crapo recently said in a press release. "This bill will ensure our backcountry airstrips remain in operation, maintained and accessible."

AOPA has lobbied congress for years to protect airstrips in remote areas because they not only allow public access to public lands, they are also critical to managing and protecting these national treasures.

In 1998, for example, Boyer went before a House of Representatives committee to remind congress that it has always encouraged public access to wilderness areas, including access by aircraft. Since then there have been numerous attempts to write that access assurance into law, but except for some measures attached to funding legislation (which expires), no permanent solution has yet to clear both houses of congress.

Meanwhile, AOPA has wielded the power of its 407,000 members to push back administrative attempts to restrict or close backcountry airstrips. The association continues to work with pilot groups, state aeronautical agencies, and outdoor enthusiasts to obtain support for national legislation as well as working with members of the House of Representatives to introduce companion legislation.

Montana FBO insurance

There are rumors circulating about a disturbing situation looming in Montana that would drive FBO insurance rates up or make it difficult for some to buy coverage.

Two insurance agents were contacted to verify the rumors, and it appears we have problems here in "river city." They indicated two issues have come up in Montana, both of which will more than likely become case law, "the law as established in previous cases."

In one case a commercial and comprehensive general liability (CGL) insurance policy, which excludes losses as a result of motor vehicle operations, was used to pay the plaintiffs' awards when the truck policy limits were exhausted. This precedent is now being applied to a fatal loss accident involving a Cessna 206. The plaintiffs' attorneys feel the aircraft liability and hull loss limits are too low to adequately compensate their clients, and they are using case law to obtain the insured's FBO premises liability policy limits.

The other case is an existing case law that says an insurance company must continue to defend their insured even if the liability limits are exceeded. In most states, an insurance company's obligation ends when the company has exhausted the policy's liability limits.

At least two aviation insurance companies have reportedly said they will no longer write FBO's insurance in Montana, and most likely will not renew their existing insured FBOs. Both companies insure quite a few FBOs and if other insurance companies follow suit, FBOs in Montana may be hard-pressed to stay in business. Since 9/11 insurance rates for aircraft commercial operators and FBOs has increased as much as 300 percent.

According to the agents interviewed, this issue was brought to the attention of the Montana State Auditor's office which then queried one of the insurance companies. Their reply was, they are looking at increasing premiums for Montana businesses and not renewing some policies due to some aspects of the legal climate and a 185 percent loss-ratio in the state over the past three years. Loss-ratio is a number derived by dividing total premiums earned by losses paid and/or reserved. Which means at 185 percent this particular company paid \$1.85 in losses for every \$1 of premium collected. Generally, insurance companies need a 70 percent loss ratio (70¢ of losses paid for every \$1 of premium) to break even.

Why are some aviation insurance companies operating in the state losing so much money? They claim it is not because they have insured "bad" folks but rather the legal climate in Montana has made it a haven for plaintiff's lawsuits against FBOs involved in accidents. One agent's legal contact even went so far as to say the legal climate in Montana is worse than California!

Vic Wokal has gone West

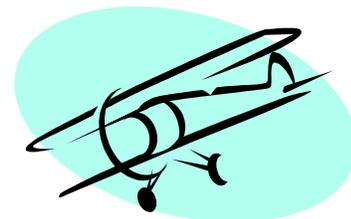
Victor (Vic) Wokal, 92, of Glasgow passed away Jan. 15 at Frances Mahon Deaconess Hospital of natural causes.

Vic was born on Oct. 3, 1913 on the family homestead 12 miles north of Dickinson, North Dakota. Vic began his flying career in 1941 and in 1944 he, along with his brother, Joe, established Wokal Flying Service. They became a Cessna Dealer in 1947. In 1962, Vic and his brother purchased a Fixed Base Operation (FBO) in Glasgow, Montana. Later, Vic became sole owner of the business. As an active member in the Glasgow community, he was on the board of directors for the Glasgow Area Chamber of Commerce, a finance committee member of St. Raphael's Catholic Church, the treasurer of Valley Hangar of the Montana Pilots' Association and after retirement, was appointed to the Valley County Airport Commission. In addition to owning the FBO, Vic served as Airport Manager, Frontier Airlines station manager and as a United States Customs Officer. Vic retired and sold his business in 1987.

Vic's love for flying led to a career including instructing hundreds of students, crop dusting, air ambulance service and assisting people in need during cold, hard winters by delivering mail, food and providing emergency transportation. One of his proudest accomplishments was the establishment of STAT Air Ambulance Service through a partnership with Kyle Hopstad and the Frances Mahon Deaconess Hospital. Glasgow is the smallest community in the United States with a twin engine, pressurized air ambulance service.

Vic was very honored by the many awards he received. The awards ranged from the Glasgow Area Chamber of Commerce's "Boss of the Year" to the Montana Pilots' Association Senior Pilot Award in 1990 and a Special Citation from the national Aircraft Owner's and Pilot's Association (AOPA). Two of the most significant honors during his life included naming of Glasgow airport "Wokal Field" and the designation of the "Wokal fix."

Vic was a man of spirit. It wasn't unusual to see him plowing snow or fueling an airplane in a suit and tie. One of his biggest thrills was on his 90th birthday, when Joe Etchart of Glasgow, flew him in an open cockpit airplane, and performed nine loops – one for every decade of his life. Vic is now an aviator in God's heavenly squadron.



EAA Young Eagles program strongly finishes 2005 by surpassing 1.2-million participant mark

EAA Aviation Center, Oshkosh, Wis. - (Jan. 11) - The EAA Young Eagles program, already the most successful youth aviation education program in history, strongly finished 2005, when the program passed the 1.2-million participant mark in November.

"In 2003, EAA reached its initial, impressive Young Eagles goal of one million young people flown and declared the program would continue to benefit young people in the future," said Steve Buss, executive director of the EAA Young Eagles program. "Our volunteer pilots and ground assistants have responded with enthusiasm and dedication. They understand how important it is to reach young people with the possibilities that exist through the world of flight. We are very proud of these volunteer efforts and how Young Eagles has become a significant part of the aviation community."

The EAA Young Eagles program has also meant more than flights and inspiration for young people. Young Eagles volunteer pilots bring activity and business to local airports, as an estimated 1.9 million gallons of aviation fuel have been donated to the program by Young Eagles pilots and participating airport businesses. In addition, thousands of families have come to their local airports, discovering the importance of airports and general aviation to their individual communities.

"EAA Young Eagles has become part of aviation's culture and an instantly recognizable program in the flying community," said Harrison Ford, actor, pilot and EAA member who has served as honorary chairman of the program since March 2004, and has flown more than 200 Young Eagles in his aircraft.

"I urge all pilots to participate in Young Eagles. Aviation is unique in that it is a wonderful balance of freedom and responsibility, a lesson that serves young people well, regardless of whether aviation becomes an interest they choose to pursue."

Youth who have participated in the Young Eagles program are now enrolled in every collegiate aviation program in the U.S. and in all of the nation's military service academies. In addition, selected schools throughout the country have adopted aviation and the Young Eagles program as an important science learning tool in their curricula.

EAA's Young Eagles program was founded in 1992 and has provided more than 1.2-million free demonstration flights to young people around the world through the efforts of 40,000 volunteer pilots and 50,000 ground volunteers. More information is available at www.youngeagles.org.



Mike Korn, Vigilante Hangar, claims this is a photo from his last BFR during the emergency procedures portion of the flight. Mike is looking for a CFI who is a little less hard nose for his next check.

FAA backs down on noise restrictions

The FAA has backed off on implementation of noise restrictions that could have prevented owners of thousands of older aircraft from getting any modifications, through Supplementary Type Certificates, to their planes that had anything to do with how much sound they might create.

After hearing from more than 30 groups and individuals, the agency decided that turning back the clock on already-certified designs would be both expensive and potentially unworkable, so the new noise standards will apply only to clean-sheet designs for which the certification is received after Feb. 3, 2006.

"Following consideration of all the comments, the FAA has determined that the impact of a new noise standard on already certificated aircraft could be significant," the final rule says. "We also realized that given the number of STCs, the impact is almost impossible to estimate for the fleet of single engine airplanes."

The noise restrictions are meant to bring U.S. rules in line with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) rules and if you have listened to some of the new European light sport aircraft populating that segment of the industry in the U.S., it is hard to argue with the direction this is headed.

But teaching old Cessnas, Beeches and Pipers, to name a few, new tricks was going to be a monumental undertaking and the issue was flagged by AOPA immediately.

"That could have prevented aircraft owners from making safety and utility improvements to their aircraft, and definitely hurt the small companies offering those improvements under the supplemental type certificate (STC) process," said Luis Gutierrez, AOPA's regulatory expert.

MONTANA PILOTS' ASSOCIATION - Membership Application Form

Name: _____ Spouse name: _____
 Mailing Address: _____
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 Work Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Please circle one of the local MPA Hangars (chapters) to join: ●Central (Lewistown) ●Colstrip ●Southwest (Dillon, Butte) ●Flathead (Kalispell) ●Gallatin Valley ●Glacier (Cutbank) ●Glendive ●Great Falls ●Miles City ●Mission Valley (Polson) ●Sanders (Plains) ●North Central (Havre) ●South Central (Billings) ●Valley (Glasgow) ●Vigilante (Helena) ●Member At Large (no hangar affiliation)

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Make check payable to: Montana Pilots' Association , Inc. **Total \$** _____

Mail to: Geanette Cebulski, Sec/Treas MPA, P. O. Box 1178, Seeley Lake, MT 59868-1178

Your membership is paid through this date: (See address label on front).

Osprey visits Bismarck, North Dakota

A very rare sighting, a Bell Helicopters developed Osprey landed at Executive Air, Bismarck, on Wed. afternoon, Jan 18. The crew of four were from North Carolina and looking for cold weather for aircraft testing. There are only 30 Osprey flying today. *Article and photos by Gary Ness*



Aviation history "preserved"

Military aviation history is not always just about planes and pilots. Sometimes its soaked into a patch of red paisley carpet or etched into a slab of wood. For pilots and crew who headed into harm's way in the Western Pacific, the watering hole known as The Cubi Bar at Cubi Point Naval Air Station in the Philippines was the closest thing to home. And now, anytime they are in the Pensacola area, they can visit their old haunt, check to see that their squadron plaque is still hanging and maybe play a game of shuffleboard.

After Subic Bay closed in the early 1990s, the National Museum of Naval Aviation had the bar dismantled and shipped to Pensacola where it was reassembled down to the last detail. "Every squadron that was in the western Pacific was here. There's a lot naval history in this room," said former patron and Apollo astronaut Gene Cernan, who recently had lunch there. The bar was among the first places squadron members would head after months of duty. These days, the atmosphere is a little more sedate. "It was a forward deployed base with aviators who had been at sea for months," said Cmdr. Jeremy Gillespie, a former P-3 pilot who patronized the bar in its original location. "There was a lot more drinking and smoking back then, a lot of steam being blown off."

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