

# MONTANA PILOTS' ASSOCIATION



## Heading Bug

September/October 2006

### MPA Membership Sweepstakes

The MPA started a Membership Sweepstakes drive that will run Oct. 1 to March 1 to increase the association's membership. The sweepstakes drawing will be held at the Montana Aviation Conference, March 3, in Missoula. Grand prize is a hand-held GPS along with numerous other prizes.

Each renewing member, each new member and each current member who sponsors a new member will have their name submitted for the drawing. To earn that extra chance in the sweepstakes drawing make sure and include your name as the sponsoring member on the new members application. The more new members sponsored the more chances to win.

To obtain a new membership application contact a hangar officer, clip/print the application from this issue of the *Heading Bug* or print out a copy from the Membership Application link on the MPA Web site [www.montanapilots.org](http://www.montanapilots.org)

MPA Hangars are being asked to help the membership drive by coming up with additional prizes to be given away.

### short final

Another day at customs...

I was returning to the US with my niece. The week before, a friend had flown the plane into a local grass strip and there was still mud and residue on the fuselage. As customs agents inspected the plane, one officer asked about the dirt and commented, "I gotta say, that's the first time I've seen grass on the *outside* of the airplane." Naturally dense (and focused on the inspection) I puzzled as my niece, who is in her early twenties, began to choke down laughter.

...She had to explain it to me as we taxied away.

### president's message:

Greetings fellow Montana aviators,

If the MPA has your e-mail address, we have sent an Action Alert, requesting you send your comments on the travel plan for the Jefferson Division of the Lewis and Clark National Forest. Please take the time to review the travel plan and make comments. If you did not receive it, the Action Alert is also presented later in this issue of the *Heading Bug* and on the MPA Web site.

I would encourage all members to provide us with an e-mail address. This allows us to quickly inform you of time sensitive Montana aviation issues.

As we enter the final quarter of the year, the Montana Pilots' Association has started a membership drive called the Membership Sweepstakes. Tim Robertson and Geanette Cebulski developed the recruitment plan, with prizes to be awarded in March at the Montana Aviation Conference in MSO. Hopefully, the local hangars will have additional prizes for membership in their hangars.

It is also time to find members interested in serving the MPA as officers, board members and on the committees. If you or someone you know is interested, please e-mail me [ace1dahl@yahoo.com](mailto:ace1dahl@yahoo.com).

Last week I was able to fly a half dozen IFR approaches in the rain, a very enjoyable treat after the hot, dry summer.

Fly safe.

Please e-mail your thoughts or suggestions for the Montana Pilots' Association to me at [ace1dahl@yahoo.com](mailto:ace1dahl@yahoo.com)

Russell Dahl  
President MPA



Jason Dahl ready to go  
Photo by Ryan Dahl

# calendar of events

## 2006

**Oct. 7**—Hirsch Ranch Fly-In—30 miles northwest of Miles City—starting in the morning with a lunch at noon—406-354-6009 or 406-853-9955 for more information

**Oct. 7**—Plains Airport Dedication (S34)—new runway 13-31 and new name, Penn Stohr Field—Plains-Paradise Chamber of Commerce serving breakfast 8 to 11 a.m. and lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.—airport dedication at 1 p.m. with flag ceremony by Plains VFW Post 3596 and Plains High School Band—smokejumper and air tanker demos and airplanes on static display—all pilots flying in will receive a free meal and souvenir

**Oct. 20**—Comment period for the Lewis and Clark Forest is extended to Oct. 20—**see photo below and article on page 4!**

**Dec. 2**—MPA Board of Directors meeting—Lewistown

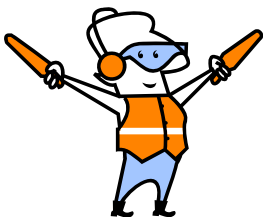
## 2007

**March 1-4**—Montana Aviation Conference—Missoula

**Aug. 18**—9th Annual Polson Fly-In—Polson (8S1)



This photo shows Cleveland Creek at the Middle Fork of the Judith River in the Little Belt Mountains. This is one of five sites found suitable for backcountry airstrips and is included in the draft travel management plan for the Jefferson Division of the Lewis and Clark National Forest. Dan Prill and John McKenna, Recreational Airstrip Committee members, have put a lot of work into getting the USFS to include new backcountry airstrips in their travel plan. Now the Recreational Airstrip Committee needs your help. Please read the article on page 4 for more information and to find out what you can do.



The *Heading Bug* is available on the MPA Web site [www.montanapilots.org](http://www.montanapilots.org) along with several years of back copies. If there is a favorite article you want to read again it is now available online by going to the Web site and clicking on Newsletter.



## hangar reports

**Great Falls Hangar**— held our regular meeting on May 10. I gave a report of the quarterly meeting in Billings and planning was done for the summer activities. June was to be our poker run in conjunction with the Lewistown Fly-In. All day we had rain and poor weather not permitting anyone to fly the poker stops. In the evening we did have our barbecue in Tom Wrobel's hangar. July's meeting to discuss the problems at the GTF Airport Authority was poorly attended. An editorial piece was written, co-signed by many members of the hangar and presented to the *Great Falls Tribune* for publication. The article detailed the problems surrounding the attempted appointment of a pilot to the board and demanded action from our elected officials as well as the Airport Authority. In July a judge in Dillon ruled that a pilot should be seated on the board. The Airport Authority board refused and decided to take this fight to the Supreme Court. The August meeting was suspended due to many other activities being attended by the membership. Our regular meeting schedule will start again in September. *quarterly report by J.C. Kantorowicz*

**Mission Valley Hangar**— had a very busy summer flying close to 100 Young Eagles and putting on the best Polson Fly-In to date in August. Over 350 people came for breakfast and an equal number for lunch, there were 108 airplanes that flew in for the festivities including seven airplanes from Cameron Park, Calif. The Fly-In drew quite a variety of airplanes; everything from an L-29 jet to antiques, bi-planes, helicopters, experimental, classics, seaplanes and current production airplanes. Hank Galpin came down from Kalispell with both his Travelair 6000 and his Bucker Jungmann bi-plane. He spent most of the day giving rides in the Travelair. *by Mauri Morin*



North flight line at Polson Fly-In  
Photo by Robert "Hawkeye" Hughes

**Sanders County Hangar**— Plains Airport (S34) is holding a dedication ceremony on Saturday, Oct 7 to usher in their new runway 13-31 and a new name, Penn Stohr Field. The Plains-Paradise Chamber of Commerce is serving breakfast from 8 to 11 a.m. and lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The airport dedication is at 1 p.m. with a flag ceremony by the Plains VFW Post 3596 and the Plains High School Band. Weather permitting there will be smokejumper and air tanker demos and airplanes on static display. All pilots flying in will receive a free meal and souvenir. *by Dan Lilja*

**Vigilante Hangar**—Since our last quarterly report, the Vigilante Hangar has continued to be very active. We hold meetings monthly on the second Wednesday of the month. June 14—We were invited by Neil and Karen Salmi to fly-in to Townsend (8U8) for a dinner and movies. We watched a film on flying the Red Rock Canyon country in Utah, and an AOPA video on airport security provided by Mike Ferguson. July 12—We planned our most ambitious project ever! In an effort to promote safety and improve our flying skills we organized another fly-in to Townsend to practice maximum performance take-offs under high density altitude conditions. We were set up with a theodolite and runway markers to measure actual distance to climb over a 50 foot obstacle. We were also set up with aircraft scales provided by the Helena College of Technology A & P Program to measure actual aircraft weight. Door prizes rewarded those who were closest to their estimates. The Hangar purchased the fixings to support a delicious barbecue and pilots were invited to bring their own 'protein,' which would be prepared by volunteers. Unfortunately Mother Nature worked against us, and those intrepid few who flew-in got to witness one of the most dramatic thunderstorms of the summer season roll over the Elkhorns and across Canyon Ferry Reservoir. Oh, well. August 9—Our monthly meeting coincided with the scheduled grand opening celebration at the Lincoln airport. So we encouraged all our members to be at Lincoln to honor their wonderful new facility. Many Vigilante Hangar members did come and enjoyed great food, great company and refreshingly brief speeches. Sept. 13—We met again at Vetter's for popcorn and movies, this time a video of "Bush Pilots of Alaska," loaned to us by Red Drennon. *quarterly report by Bill Gallea*

# ACTION ALERT

## to all pilots interested in enhancing aviation opportunities

### Background

For the past couple years, the Lewis and Clark National Forest has been in the process of developing a new travel management plan for the Jefferson Division of the Lewis and Clark Forest which includes the Little Belt Mountains.

The Forest Service told the MPA that if it wants to influence the outcome of any National Forest management plan, then the MPA needs to be involved in the planning process from the beginning. During the initial planning process for the Jefferson Division travel plan the Forest Service conducted bi-weekly meetings for six months with all interested stakeholders. Representing the Montana Pilots' Association were Recreational Airstrip Committee members John McKenna and Dan Prill. The purpose of participating was to gain public airstrips in this region of Montana where none presently exist.

The Forest Service asked the MPA to determine suitable sites for airstrips. With the permission of the Forest Service, MPA member Bill Gault of White Sulphur Springs generously donated his helicopter to fly John and Dan into several potential airstrip locations in the Little Belt Mountains. Four sites were determined suitable and the Forest Service added a fifth. They are Russian Flats, Deep Creek Parks, Holiday Camp, the Middle Fork of the Judith River and the Lost Fork of the Judith River. The last two had airstrips in the past, and all have various recreation attributes.

### Where we are today and what you need to do

The Forest Service has developed five management alternatives, two of which contain airstrips. For the complete draft go to: [www.fs.fed.us/r1/lewisclark](http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/lewisclark), click on the [web page link](#) and then click on [Opportunities for Airfields](#).

The Recreational Airstrip Committee is asking you to get involved and write comments to the Forest Service supporting airstrips in the Little Belt Mountains. There are no public airstrips on Montana's National Forest lands east of the Rocky Mountain Front and this effort would broaden the network of airstrips in Montana providing internal trailheads for recreation and additional public safety.

Be sure to read the USFS aviation analysis in the draft plan which contains many factual errors which should be commented on in your letter. If you do not have time to read the draft here are several points you can make:

- There is no evidence presented in the draft plan that the establishment of an airstrip leads to an increase in game law violations. This is merely a supposition, not based on data. It appears that the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department was not consulted, even though they are the game law enforcement agency.
- Aircraft access to our National Forests is a legitimate means of transportation, while at the same time causing the least disturbance to the landscape.
- The Wilderness Study Area (WSA) in the Lost Fork area does not meet criteria for Wilderness designation based on Forest Service studies done in 1982. Therefore, the nearby WSA should not be a reason to deny the establishment of an airstrip in the Lost Fork drainage.
- The Forest Service would not incur dollar costs to establish any of the airstrips, contrary to what is said in the draft plan.
- Commercial activity is already regulated by the Forest Service and should not be included in the draft plan.
- There should be no mention of the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument airstrips in this draft plan. Parallels do not exist between the two planning processes as the managing agencies are different, mandates are not the same and the ecosystems, social and environmental landscapes are dissimilar.
- No other user group requires the degree of training that pilots have, and no other user group is subjected to the regulatory oversight that pilots operate under.
- If you have a personal experience, like having to use a backcountry airstrip for emergency purposes, be sure to include that.
- If you are not from Montana, mention why you want to fly here and recreate in the backcountry.

This is the first time that the MPA has ever been included to this degree in a Forest Service planning process and the flying public should not miss the opportunity to comment on this draft travel plan which includes the option for five new airstrips.

For more detailed information or answers to your questions, contact: John McKenna—[jt185@montanadsl.net](mailto:jt185@montanadsl.net) phone 406-587-4746 or Dan Prill—[dprill@gpdinc.com](mailto:dprill@gpdinc.com) phone 406-736-5184

Please do not put this off, write your comments now! The deadline for comments is Oct. 20, 2006. You can mail written comments to: Forest Supervisor, P.O. Box 869, Great Falls, MT 59403-0869. Or you can submit electronic comments by putting Little Belt - Castle - Crazy Mtns Travel Plan in the subject line of your e-mail. Send e-mail comments to: [comments-northern-lewisclark@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-northern-lewisclark@fs.fed.us)

Be sure to preface your comments with the statement that this letter pertains to the Jefferson Division draft travel management plan. Include your complete name and address in your correspondence.

## Life is fate, time and circumstance - Dr. Forrest Bird

*Ever flown over Lake Pend Oreille in northern Idaho and spotted the lake house with all the seaplanes and the private airstrip and wonder who they belong to? They belong to Dr. Forrest Bird and here is a little more information on this next door pilot.*

Looking around a group of hangars in northern Idaho containing 18 helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft, it's evident that Dr. Forrest M. Bird's life mimics his name.

Bird traces his love for aviation back to his childhood. His father was sent to France with the American Expeditionary Forces as a pilot during WWI, and was one of the first American pilots in the Army Air Corps to fly early bombers over German soil.

In 1928, Captain Bird purchased a GXE Waco 10. The biplane featured two side-by-side seats in the front cockpit, while the pilot flew from a back seat. It was in this airplane that 14-year-old Forrest Bird soloed, in 1935.

Bird, who had always possessed a mechanical aptitude, later helped his father and grandfather restore the aircraft. It was a great learning experience for young Bird, leading to a mechanics airplane and powerplant license. He was also soon on his way to a commercial pilots license and an instructor rating. In the years leading up to WWII, he became a very experienced pilot for his age. An academic background in aeronautics, along with an ROTC reserve commission, prepared him for entry into the Army Air Corps as a technical air training officer in the Air Transport Command.

Bird was called to active duty just after receiving his airline transport rating. The class 5P pilot was qualified in all military aircraft, including trainers, fighters, observation, bombers and transports.

Ferrying a captured high-altitude version of a German Junkers Ju-88 from the British RAF back to the states gave Bird the opportunity to study its advanced demand oxygen breathing system and come up with an advanced pressure breathing system. That led to a recommendation that he enter biomedicine. The "flyboy" wasn't interested, thinking he would stay in the military or return to an offered position with Eastern Airlines.

But circumstances ("I saw my life go up in smoke") and fate would intervene, leading him to introduce the world's first reliable, low-cost, mass-produced respirator to the world in 1958, as well as other Bird respirators, such as the Babybird, which drastically reduced the death rate in low birth weight babies with respiratory problems. Other inventions followed, eventually leading to Bird's induction into the National Inventors Hall of Fame.

To find out what drastic circumstances changed Dr. Bird's destiny, read, "[Life is Fate, Time and Circumstance](#)" - By Di Freeze. (If that link does not work go to: <http://www.airportjournals.com/Display.cfm?varID=0301003>)

*This article by Budd Davisson in Air Progress magazine in May, 1973 gives additional insight into Dr. Bird.*

### Four-engine Catalina cum Innovator

Completely renovating, modifying and generally spiffing up a PBY Catalina isn't a project your average backyard home-builder is likely to tackle. But Dr. Forrest Bird, an ex-ferry command pilot and aero-engineer turned heart-lung specialist, happens to be one of those scientific renaissance men we hear so much about but never meet.



With four fans instead of the usual two, the Innovator gets lots of second looks.



When he's not at his Palm Springs teaching/manufacturing facility, he's either zipping around the country at the controls of his Lear 25 or thinking up some new medical concept at Bird Lodge, his Howard-Hughes-like retreat that cantilevers out over a lake at Sand Point, Idaho. It's about ten miles from the Sand Point airport to Bird Lodge, but his Cessna 185 on amphibious floats makes short work of that trip. (The Cessna has its very own knotty-pine-paneled waterside hangar in the back of the lodge.)

A J-3 on floats is for guests to play with. A thundering old (but very elegant) Howard 500 completes the stable. Which brings us back to Bird's re-building project, intercontinental transportation machine, medical laboratory, and classroom—the Bird Innovator PBY.

The most obvious and controversial modification is the pair of GSO-480 Lycomings outboard of the R-1830-94 P&Ws. The obvious question is, how can an extra 760 horses help an airplane that already has 2,700? Doc Bird has the answer to that. According to him, the outboard section of the Catalina wing never did do the job, especially at slow speeds. It's so big and rough that the airflow tends to break up prematurely. The contribution of the Lycomings is not to add horsepower, but to act as exotic flow straighteners and aerodynamic boosters for those huge outer wing panels. The slipstream from the Lycomings makes that portion of the wing much more effective and dramatically drops the V<sub>mc</sub> with one of the main engines out. They increase cruise speed 20 mph, to a not-too-impressive 150 mph, and drop stall speed at least 5 mph.

Of course, Bird didn't stop with the engines. PBYS have never been known for their Pitts-like controls, so he added Fletners (flush-mounted rollers at the hinges to retard flow separation) to the ailerons to lighten things up. He also enlarged the vertical tail surfaces, which did wonders for the single-engine control. All of the flight engineer's controls have been moved into the main cockpit so that one pilot can handle all the flying.

Since Bird likes to go to South America and Europe and doesn't like airliners, he's enlarged the Cat's fuel capacity to a staggering 2,500 gallons, good for about 20 hours and 3,000 miles at 130 gph. It has a stainless-steel galley and shower complex and if the passengers should get tired after a day aloft, the Innovator sleeps four.

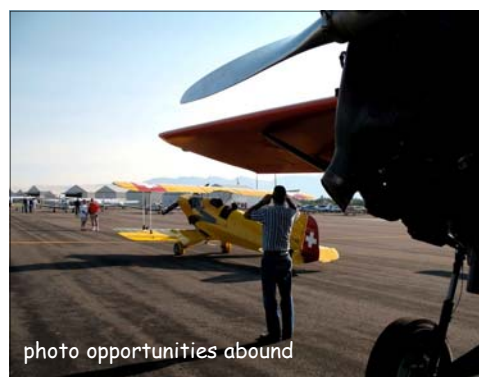
In many ways, Doctor Bird looks at the Innovator as an aerial classroom, as well as a research platform. The aft galley and observation bay are completely equipped for almost any type of surgery. Cathode-tube-monitors, pressure gauges and stainless-steel hospital hardware abound. It's perhaps the best-equipped and most mobile emergency/rescue craft anywhere—it even carries its own rowboats under the wings. The entire interior of the airplane is lined with stainless steel and it has its own onboard steam generating unit which is used to sterilize the entire inside of the airplane. When the open-heart surgery is being done in the blisters, observers can stand on rails on either side of the fuselage to watch the proceedings. Pretty wild, huh?

You can buy engineering drawings and STC rights from Dr. Bird, if you're so inclined. Where else can you get a transcontinental operating room that sleeps four and scares the hell out of lineboys?

*Many western Montana pilots have joined fly-ins to visit Dr. Bird and see his collection of aircraft. The most recent fly-in was sponsored by EAA 102/Kalispell on Sept. 30 with the pilots flying into the private airstrip Bird Nr 2 (ID19) where they met with Dr. Bird. You can find more information on ID19 at <http://www.airnav.com/airport/ID19>, but do not go flying into the airstrip without prior permission from Dr. Bird. Dr. Bird is opening an aviation museum in Sand Point and is looking for aviation memorabilia for the museum.*

## 2006 Polson Fly-In photos

*all photos by Robert "Hawkeye" Hughes*



## Summary of Sept. 9 MPA Board Meeting

## FAA revises AD mailing policy

The MPA Board of Directors met Saturday, Sept. 9, in Great Falls at Holman Aviation. Fourteen officers and members were present. Lunch was served by J.C. and Charlotte Kantorowicz.

Fred Lark, Lark Unlimited, gave his first \$50 to the Recreational Airstrip Fund for Chuck Jarecki's purchase of a satellite phone.

The membership committee presented a plan for a membership drive this fall. We had talked about a plan to increase our membership for months and have finally settled on a plan that we feel is affordable and has room for growth. The plan would be similar to that implemented by AOPA as an incentive for membership renewals, referrals and new members. Each renewing member, each new member and each current member who sponsors a new member will have their name submitted for a drawing. The grand prize will be a hand-held GPS, which will be awarded at the 2007 Montana Aviation Conference along with various other prizes. Each MPA hangar is asked to help by acquiring an additional prize to be given away. Some prizes may be awarded on a "must be present" to win basis to further encourage conference attendance. Information will be mailed out with renewals in October or November and also mailed to all Montana registered pilots (approximately 2200).

The Board approved a request for financial assistance for a pilot shelter at the Townsend airport. Neal Salmi, Townsend airport manager submitted a letter requesting funds of \$940 to complete their pilot shelter along with a detailed drawing of the project. Bill Gallea, president of the Vigilante Hangar endorses the project. The grant will be disbursed from the Recreational Airstrip Fund.

The FAA clarified a new policy to mail paper Airworthiness Directives (ADs) applicable to engines only to owners and operators who have "registered" their engine. Confusion arose because engines aren't registered separately from aircraft, although a block on the FAA registration form allows buyers to list engine type. The FAA planned to stop mailing printed engine ADs to aircraft owners who had not filled in the engine block on the registration form. In a clarification, the FAA acknowledged the confusion and said it will continue mailing engine ADs to registered aircraft owners based on the type of engine typically installed on the aircraft and not only on information in the engine block of the registration form. "With further investigation," an FAA spokesman explained, "we have reverted to our previous method of distributing engine ADs to both registered aircraft owners (who may have the engine installed) and owners of aircraft that have identified in the database that they do have the engine installed." *AiNAlerts 10/2*



### MONTANA PILOTS' ASSOCIATION - Membership Application Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please select a local Hangar (chapter):**  Central (Lewistown)  Colstrip  Five Valleys (Missoula)  
 Flathead (Kalispell)  Gallatin Valley  Glacier (Cutbank)  Glendive  Great Falls  Miles City  
 Mission Valley (Polson, Ronan & St. Ignatius)  Sanders County (Plains)  North Central (Havre)  
 South Central (Billings)  Southwest (Dillon, Butte & Twin Bridges)  Valley (Glasgow)  Vigilante (Helena)  
 Member At Large

#### ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES (JAN – DEC)

Regular Member (pilot)  \$25 Household Membership ( 2 Regular Members)  \$45  
 Associate Member (not soloed)  \$15 Family Membership (1 Regular and 1 Associate)  \$35  
 Montana 1st Solo Student Pilot  1<sup>st</sup> year free

**Make check payable to: Montana Pilots' Association , Inc.**

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

**Total \$** \_\_\_\_\_

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Seeley Lake, MT 59868-1178

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# Heading Bug

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**MONTANA PILOTS' ASSOCIATION**



**INCORPORATED**

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