MONTANA PILOTS' ASSOCIATION



INCORPORATED

Heading Bug

January/February 2007

MEMBERSHIP SWEEPSTAKES

The Montana Pilots' Association Membership Sweepstakes drive to increase the association's membership terminates with the drawing, March 3, at the Montana Aviation Conference in Missoula.

Grand prize is a hand-held Garmin 96C GPS along with these other prizes:



- ♦ RS Beeper Box (Central Montana Hangar)—\$369 value—Beeper Box allows you to remotely control the power to your electric engine preheater from home, office or cell phone without the need for a phone line to your hangar
- ♦ Abe's Tie Downs / Conventional Deluxe 5-Kit—\$237 value—from Bill Ables, Abe's Aviation in Enterprise, Oregon
- ♦ Lindey's Steakhouse, Seeley Lake (Five Valleys Hangar)—\$25 Gift Certificate
- ◆ The Lodges on Seeley Lake/Lindey's Package (Five Valleys Hangar)—One night

lodging plus Gift Certificate for Lindey's Steakhouse

- Heritage Inn, Great Falls (Great Falls Hangar)—
 \$237 value—three nights lodging during the
 2008 Montana Aviation Conference
- Father's Day Fly-In/Ft. Peck Summer Theater Package (Valley Hangar)—two adult tickets for the fly-in breakfast June 17 and two adult tickets to The Sound of Music, June 16 or 17
- Mountain Flying Instruction (Vigilante Hangar)—two hours personalized instruction with Jeanne MacPherson
- Survival Vest (Vigilante Hangar)—\$150 value made by Bill Gallea and completely outfitted with quality gear for pilots to wear while flying
- Halon Fire Extinguisher (Gallatin Valley Hangar)

You do not need to be present to win the Garmin GPS but do need to be present for some of the other prizes.

president's message:

I recently visited with Montana's aviation guru, Phil Petrik, over the fuel fraud tax enacted by the 2005 Federal Highway Bill. Most pilots are not aware that since October 2005 the Federal Excise Tax collected on aviation jet fuel is deposited in the Highway Trust Fund instead of the Aviation Trust Fund?

Aviation fuel providers must go through a complicated registration process with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in order to request a refund of the 2.5 cents over-collected tax—jet fuel is taxed 21.9 cents per gallon (CPG) and highway diesel is taxed 24.4 CPG. Only after the refund request, is the money transferred to the Aviation Trust Fund. For more information, please go to the National Air Transportation Association Web site (www.nata.aero) and click on the Fuel Fraud Tax button on the right side of the page.

This diversion from the Aviation Trust Fund makes me ponder the pilot fueling his aircraft with car gas. What is he paying to the Aviation Trust Fund and to his local airport (flowage fee)? Something we need to think about.

Another thing annoying me is the Great Falls Airport Authority. I am very concerned when an airport authority refuses to seat a GA pilot using the rationale of conflict of interest. It appears to me, we the GA public, are being discriminated against. Using their rationale, it is my opinion that Great Falls Airport Authority members regularly flying from Great Falls on the airlines, but not using General Aviation would also be in conflict of interest. Would their reasoning prevent school boards from seating parents with school age children because that would be a conflict of interest?

The Recreational Airstrip Committee and the Recreational Aviation Foundation (RAF) are working on amending Montana's Recreational Use Statute to specifically include airstrips. Our bill to amend the statute was assigned the number SB 318. Idaho has amended their recreational statute and while this bill seems a no-brainer, it needs all the MPA members and Montana pilots to contact their legislators asking them to support this bill.

The MPA needs officers, board members and committee members, so If you would like to serve, please contact Lanny Hanson 406-526-3535 or myself. If you have an item you would like placed on the agenda for the MPA meeting at the conference, please contact me.

Russell Dahl President MPA 406-263-7821 ace1dahl@yahoo.com

calendar of events

2007

Feb. 16-17—Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic—Wingate Hotel, Helena—406-444-2506

March 1-3—Montana Aviation Conference—Missoula at the Hilton Garden Inn, 3720 N Reserve St, 406-532-5300 or hiltondirect.com

March 23—Deadline for March/April Heading Bug

Apr. 17-23—Sun 'n Fun—Lakeland, FL

May 28—Memorial Day

May 25—Deadline for May/June Heading Bug

June 17—Father's Day Pancake Fly-In Breakfast—Fort Peck Airport, Fort Peck—Lanny Hanson at 406-263-1154

June 23—High Country Warbirds—Valle, AZ

July 20—Deadline for July/August Heading Bug

July 28-29—Bozeman Air Show (BZN) featuring the Blue Angels along with MiG Fury Fighters, World Parabatic Swoop Team, Greg Poe, Kent Pietsch and Jim Pietz

Aug. 18—Ninth Annual Polson Fly-In—Polson (8S1)

Sept. 12-16—44th Annual Reno Air Races, Reno Nevada

Sept. 21—Deadline for Sept/Oct *Heading Bug*

Montana Aviation Conference lodging information

Rooms are blocked at the Hilton Garden Inn. Please call the hotel at 406-532-5300 to make reservations and reference the Montana Aviation Conference—\$75 + tax is the conference rate. Reserve your room today because the room blocks are only available until Jan. 28. Rooms have also been blocked at the following hotels within walking distance:

Comfort Inn—406-542-0888—\$69 + tax Courtyard by Marriott—406-549-5260—\$79 + tax Hampton Inn—406-549-1199—\$79 + tax Super 8—406-549-1199—\$58.59 + tax (up to two adults)

historical note

First U.S. Flight Instructor Refresher Course

In August, 1961, the Montana Aeronautics Commission sent their Safety and Education Officer, Dick Munroe, and the Federal Aviation Agency cooperated by sending their Safety Agent, Bill Cantwell, to Calgary, Alberta, Canada, to attend the 10th Civil Flight Instructors Course.

Montana's representatives returned home after ten days convinced that the Canadians had the answer to an upgrading program for flight instructors. The Montana Aviation Trades Association and the Montana Aeronautics Commission entered into an agreement to jointly sponsor a Flight Instructors Refresher Course in Montana. By the latter part of February, 20 students had been selected and the morning of March 5, 1962 found them hard at work at the first Montana Flight Instructors Refresher Course.





hangar reports

Five Valleys Hangar—held a Christmas Party Dec. 17 in conjunction with EAA Chapter 517 at the Inn on Broadway in Missoula. We had a real good turn out, the food was wonderful and the white elephant gift exchange was a lot of fun for everyone.

Jan. 8 2007 we held our meeting at the MSO airport conference room. Chuck Jarecki was our guest speaker concerning Legislative Issues and encouraged us all to stay in touch with our House and Senate Reps. It was a very informative meeting and our thanks to Chuck. We also had election of officers, Sherry Rossiter, secretary/treasurer; Jim Younkin, vice president; and Wade Cebulski, president were re-elected for another year. We also discussed ideas about selling hats for a little added income. We plan to invite Chris Jensen from the Missoula County Airport and other quests to come speak at our future meetings. Our next meeting will be at MSO airport conference room 7p.m. Monday, Feb. 5. Hope to see you there. by Wade Cebulski

Flathead Hangar—and EAA Chapter 102 joined together at the Vista Linda Restaurant in Somers on Dec. 21 to celebrate the Holiday Season and another year of aviation camaraderie. The evening started with an ice-breaker orchestrated by Jay and Vicki Billmayer. Each person was given a part of a specific model airplane or glider. The objective was to find others at the party who had the parts of your airplane and assemble it for flight. A fly-off (try to fly your airplane through a hula-hoop) was held later in the evening after a delicious dinner buffet of prime rib and salmon. Fly-off and door prizes consisted of many bottles of wine and spirits, books, gift cards to area stores, a sweatshirt and hats.

January's meeting was at the Vista Linda on Jan. 25. The evening program was Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) by Justin Sands. Justin worked eight years for Boeing in Seattle after receiving a degree in Industrial Design. While at Boeing, he was part of a team who both designed and built UAVs. Justin and his wife Tracy own Red Eagle Aviation at Kalispell City Airport (S27).

February's program will be "Breezy Bob" Alm. "Breezy Bob" has made numerous flights to bring attention to cancer, including a lower 48 States Tour. "Everyone has been touched by cancer...be it through loved ones or ourselves... and it is important to continue this awareness effort." <u>Montana and the Sky, Vol. 54 - No.11</u> by Chuck Manning

Miles City Hangar—Greetings from Miles City. As of this date we have not had our first meeting of the new year, but will be doing that on the first Monday in Feb. It has been a very quiet year for our hangar. Hopefully 2007 will be more productive and we will have the cooperation of the weather. As soon as we have all our plans in place for the new year we will send it out. by Barb Hirsh

Mission Valley Hangar— and EAA Chapter 1122 met Jan. 23 at the Polson FBO. The main discussion items were the new condominiums being built off the approach end of runway 18 and the proposed addition of a boat launch facility at the seaplane base. The program was provided by Ron Normandeau and his map review along with information on the errors involved with the different types of projection when maps are drawn. The next meeting will be Feb. 27, 7 p.m. at the Polson FBO and the program will be Mitch Steinberg, Rocky Mountain Aircraft in Kalispell, explaining GPS and the new ELT requirements. *by Connie Plaissay*

South Central Hangar— Hi from Mexico, I have been here since October, but the hangar continued to have our BBQ in Billings with the EAA Chapter on the first Friday of each month. I was home the month of December for the Holidays. There was a dinner on Friday, Dec. 1, at the hanger to celebrate the holidays. In January we skipped having anything because of many get togethers in the month of December. We will continue to join the EAA the first Friday of each month at the EAA hanger in Billings for a BBQ. We are encouraging new members and old members to get their dues in.

Our scheduled events for 2007 for now are: June 17, Father's Day pancake breakfast at the Powers, 7 a.m. to whenever. Call Bobbi or Daye at 406-628-4267 for more information

Sunday Sept. 2, Fly-In BBQ at the Powers starting at 1 p.m. with games and fun. BBQ Buffalo Burgers at 4 P.M. and lots of special goodies—Fly in, Drive in/Fly out, Drive out OR bring your camping equipment and spend the night. Call Bobbi or Dave at 406-628-4267 for more information. *by Bobbi Powers*

Valley Hangar—met on Jan. 4 and turned the meeting into a night cross country training flight. Four airplanes with eight members flew to Culbertson for a night refresher, and then had some hangar talk over a meal at the truck stop. This is a good way to keep pilots current for night flying and flight rules. We plan to do this again and anyone interested in joining us, please let us know. Keep your wings level and your nose high. *By Ken James*

Vigilante Hangar—had a great Christmas Party at Vetter's on Dec. 13. We invited the local EAA Chapter, and many of their members joined us for a pot-luck dinner and a fun white elephant gift exchange. The Jan. 10 meeting featured a program by Steve Jones from the Helena FSDO with the FAA "Safer Skies" DVD on "Weather." by Bill Gallea

"War is very personal"

retired 4-star general recalls Korean War in new book

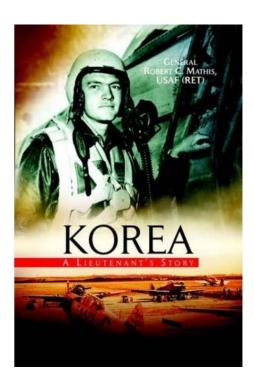
Korea, a Lieutenant's Story, is an autobiography, a personal account of war, a lieutenant's story of Korea in 1950-1951. The author is Robert C. Mathis of Bozeman, who founded Eagle Mount, which through programs in five Montana cities provides therapeutic recreational activities for children and adults with special needs.

Mathis served 34 years in the Air Force. He flew over 300 combat missions in Korea and Vietnam. After earning a doctorate in engineering, Mathis became program director for the F-111 fighter plane and later for the F-15. He also served as vice chief of staff of the Air Force. During his career he won the Purple Heart, Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross with oak leaf cluster, Air Medal with eleven oak loaf clusters, the Air Force and the Defense Distinguished Service medals, and many other awards. He retired as a four-star general.

Obviously, Mathis has many stories to tell. He appropriately starts at the beginning of his career by writing of Korea.

With his personal perspective, conversational tone, and consistent style, Mathis quickly establishes himself as a skilled storyteller and provides the background for his Korean war story.

From the small town of Eagle Pass in southern Texas, young Mathis went to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He graduated 115 out of 301 students in the Class of 1948, not outstanding he admits, but "a genuine accomplishment" for him. He then trained as an Air Force pilot and became a fighter pilot flying the relatively new jet aircraft.



World War II and the post-war settlements left Korea, like Vietnam and Germany, divided. On June 25, 1950, North Korean forces invaded southern Republic of Korea, and by October, Mathis was flying combat missions in Korea. He flew F-80 jet fighters, bombing and strafing. Mathis twice served as a forward air controller on the ground with South Korean forces at the front, directing fighters and bombers to targets. Also, he flew as a Mosquito pilot, flying T-6s on airborne forward air control missions. He even did a stint as an aide to a general.

Lousy weather, poor runways, flying accidents, maintenance problems and low fuel were some of the dangers Mathis and his fellow pilots experienced, in addition to the gunfire and missiles aimed at them during combat.

One night while Mathis was working as a forward air controller at the front, and in fact in front of the infantry, the Chinese launched an attack and overran his position. One assistant was killed, another wounded, and a third went missing in action and became a prisoner in the North. In a postscript to Mathis's book, John R. "Buddy" Gaston briefly tells his own story of going to Korea, joining Mathis at the forward position, and surviving three years as a prisoner of war.

Meanwhile, back at the front, Mathis was trapped behind enemy lines. Determined to escape, he played dead while Chinese soldiers walked by him. While trying to cross the battle line back to friendly territory, Mathis was hit by enemy fire. The bullet ricocheted off a rib covering his heart, and Mathis hopped on a Patton tank retreating southward. But he soon returned to action.

"This just happens to be my story," Mathis says.

Mathis tells his war story with modesty, humor, and grace. He takes the reader back to Korea as he experienced it, because, as he says, "war is very personal." It was so personal that friends got injured, friends got captured and friends got killed. Mathis got lucky—his guardian angels stayed with him, but he had kept them busy!

2007 Awards Committee needs nominations!

It's that time of the year to start thinking about the upcoming Montana Aviation Conference, March 1-3 and the MPA needs nominees for the following awards:

Pilot of the Year Award
Junior Pilot Award
Montana Pilots' Association Flight Training Award
Bill Matthews Award
Bent Prop Award
President's Award

Please use your next hanger meeting to select candidates and send the nominations to Russ Dahl at ace1dahl@yahoo.com or call 406-263-7821. For the Junior Pilot Award, and MPA Flight Training Award, send the nominations to Jeanne MacPherson, Montana Aeronautics Division at jemacpherson@state.mt.us. The nominations need to be in by Feb. 16. These awards will not be given if a suitable candidate is not nominated.

PILOT OF THE YEAR AWARD: This award honors a pilot, who through many years of dedication, has made significant contributions to aviation in Montana, and perhaps in other areas. This award epitomizes our thoughts for someone who shares their intelligence and energies in community and/or education projects.

JUNIOR PILOT AWARD: The recipient is chosen for his/her outstanding interest in aviation, citizenship within their community and demonstrated academic achievement. New pilots are frequently chosen for this award. This person is more likely pursuing a professional aviation career. This award may, as an option, include a check of up to \$500, which is raised by our members, MPA funds are NOT used for the monetary portion of this award.

MONTANA PILOTS' ASSOCIATION FLIGHT TRAINING AWARD: This \$500 scholarship is open to a person who has considerable interest in aviation and is to be used for flight training.

BILL MATTHEWS AWARD: May only be presented to a pilot who has overcome a physical handicap to either start flying, or continue flying after having been stopped because of a handicap. Mr. Matthews, a paraplegic, learned to fly years ago in Great Falls and the award was established in his memory. In the past, this award has been given to a deaf mute, a person who had a limb or limbs missing or a person who has overcome paralysis and modified an airplane so they could fly. This award is intended to celebrate the courage and sprit of those who have overcome a physical challenge that might have blocked an individual with less character and determination

BENT PROP AWARD: The MPA has given this traveling award many times in past years. Like the other awards, it will not be given each year if a suitable candidate can not be found. It is always given in the true spirit of good humor. We learn from our mistakes and the award is made with discretion for a non-serious, non-injury accident for which a humorous presentation can be made. There is no intent to humiliate, harm or harass anyone. We would all prefer to have him or her laugh along with us over a foolish error. (Nominee has to agree to accept this award before it can be presented)

PRESIDENT'S AWARD: The president will accept suggestions; however, this award is left to his/her sole discretion. The recipient, a pilot or non-pilot, is chosen to recognize their outstanding support or achievement in aviation. It recognizes the contributions made in many areas, such as education, public relations, leadership or the active participation in the state and federal activities of our association. It is not a good conduct award, but rather a recognition of the person who has gone the extra mile to support the goals of aviation and the MPA.



only 95 five years after the fact

Costco opened a new retail store near the Helena Regional Airport in November and their shoppers arrive by a new road, Cromwell Dixon Way. Most drivers are not aware of the historical significance that name has in Montana's aviation history. There are only a couple other reminders of the aviation history established 95 years earlier. In the new terminal there is a mural painted by Helena artist Bob Morgan depicting Dixon's flight, a granite monument in front of the old Helena airport terminal, a historical marker on MacDonald Pass near U.S. Highway 12 noting where the flyer crossed the mountains nearby and a USFS campground named in his honor 15 miles west of Helena on Highway 12.



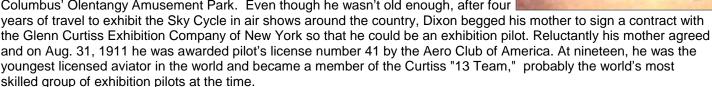
Cromwell Dixon was born in San Francisco, California, June 8, 1892, but his father died when he was only two years old. His mother took the boy to Columbus, Ohio where she had family and it was there that Dixon grew up a natural inventor who by age ten had built a small sailboat, a camera and a backyard rollercoaster.

In the summer of 1905, Cromwell was one of the thousands who went to the Ohio State Fairgrounds to witness Toledo balloonist Roy Knabenshue exhibit his propeller equipped airship. Knabenshue's aircraft, powered by a motorcycle engine was far more controllable than previous free flight balloons that were at the mercy of the winds. He moved his body along the frame suspended below his airship to control the accent and decent and at one state fair exhibition in 1907, Knabenshue flew from the fairgrounds to the Ohio Capitol building, visited with the Governor and then returned to the fairgrounds.

With his imagination aflame, young Cromwell went to the fair daily to watch the flying exhibition, admire the airship and pick Knabenshue's brain. By the spring of 1907, the youth had created his own "sky cycle," following Knabenshue's advice and using bicycle pedals to drive the propeller, as opposed to engine power, which increased the risk of a hydrogen gas fire.

The Dixon Sky Cycle was thirty-two feet long, fifteen feet in diameter and the fourteen year old pilot's first public exhibit with the Sky Cycle was June 9, 1907 at South Columbus' Driving Park Race Track. The young aviator flew several times the first summer, including one flight of five miles rising to an altitude claimed to be one mile. He was honored with a medal which proclaimed him the first and youngest airship inventor in Columbus.

Cromwell Dixon exhibited his Sky Cycle in Ohio cities and regularly flew at North Columbus' Olentangy Amusement Park. Even though he wasn't old enough, after four



The Wright Brothers' flight in 1903 was the dawn of aviation, and soon adventurers across the country were pursuing this exciting new venture. In Helena, the State Fair Board along with Lewis Pedwell, Montana land dealer and president of the Montana State Fair; John Ringling, the circus king; and Louis Hill, president of Great Northern Railway, offered \$10,000 (about \$450,000 in current dollars) to the first person to fly over the Continental Divide. J.C. Bud Mars made the first attempt on Sept. 30, 1910, and crashed in the Scratchgravel Hills northwest of Helena. He survived, and is credited with starting the St. Charles Aero Club in 1911.

In 1911 Cromwell Dixon took up the challenge with his Curtiss biplane he named, the Hummingbird. It was Sept.. 30, 1911, when the cool autumn winds swept Cromwell Dixon to the top of the Continental Divide. Located at 4,000 feet above sea level, the fairgrounds served as Dixon's ramp into history with hundreds of people watching including Montana's Governor Edwin L. Norris. Governor Norris was so confident Dixon would make it over the Continental Divide he provided a letter for Dixon to deliver to the people of Blossberg (a Northern Pacific Railway station no longer on Montana maps).

It took Dixon 15 minutes to reach 7,000 feet, which was only 800 feet higher than the mountains he was to cross. Guided by a column of smoke from a fire set by the people of Blossberg, Dixon cleared the crest of the Continental Divide near Mullen Pass. Dixon landed on a sloping hillside about a mile from the railroad station and 17 miles from Helena. The entire flight took 34 minutes and secured Dixon's place in history. Dixon asked the assembled group to send a telegram to Helena by saying, "Boys, I knew I could do it. Tell the folks in Helena I am here safely and will be back in a few minutes and will see them before 4 o'clock."

Continued next page

After delivering the Governor's letter, sending the telegram to Helena and another to Jerome Fanculli, general manager of the Curtiss Exhibition Company, Dixon refueled his airplane, adjusted the carburetor and had the airplane turned to face the valley. With a strong west wind, Dixon took off and flew for 20 minutes, fighting the strong winds to gain enough altitude to again cross the Continental Divide.

After landing back at the fair grounds in Helena, Dixon was met by the crowd where Governor Norris proclaimed Dixon "The World's Greatest Aviator" and Louis Hill presented him with a \$10,000 check. Dixon did not make any speeches but was quoted in *The Helena Independent* newspaper the next day as saying: "I was confident that I would make it, as sure as it was possible for anyone attempting such a stupendous feat can be. The credit lies as much with the machine



and motor as with myself, for it is impossible for a machine to be in more perfect condition.

"The air currents were the only serious thing with which I had to contend. At times I would strike a descending current and fall for 35 or 50 feet, and then the machine would get through with a puff and begin to rise immediately. One puff in particular, was the worst I have ever encountered, it almost turned the machine over. The only way I got through was to turn my plane almost straight down and by falling for nearly a hundred feet gain velocity to carry me out of the danger zone.

"The wind was a great help on the outbound trip, but on the return was a handicap which was difficult to overcome. At the summit, the velocity of the wind was in the neighborhood of 30 miles an hour, and the cross currents and eddies which came over the crest were the most puzzling and dangerous of my whole trip. One who has never been up in the machine has no idea of the strain under which the aviator labors while battling with a gale in which the currents are absolutely unknown."

Unfortunately, many barnstormers, being young, inexperienced pioneers in a new era, lost their lives while performing risky maneuvers to entertain audiences. Dixon died just two days later at the fair in Spokane, Wash., while attempting to fly out of a difficult and dangerous field. He had to make a steep climbing turn over some railroad track embankments when an unexpected gust of wind struck his machine, upsetting him. He was too close to the ground to recover and was so seriously injured in the crash, he died two hours later. He was returned to Columbus, Ohio and laid to rest in Greenlawn Cemetery. His headstone reads: "Cromwell Dixon, Young Aviator, Loved By All." Cromwell Dixon had a flying career that lasted just a little over four years and his 1911 feat is overlooked by most of the aviation references, but Montana has not forgotten the "boy aviator" and the record he set on that fine September day.

Name:	Mailing Address:	
City/State/Zip:	Home Phone:	
Work Phone:	E-Mail:	
□Flathead (Kalispell) □Gallatin Valley □ □Mission Valley (Polson, Ronan & St. Igna	r): □Central (Lewistown) □Colstrip □Five Valleys (Misson Glacier (Cutbank) □Glendive □Great Falls □Miles City (Since County (Plains) □North Central (Havre)	
□South Central (Billings) □Southwest (Billings) □Southwest (Billings)	on, Butte & Twin Bridges) □Valley (Glasgow) □Vigilante (l	Helena)
□Member At Large		Helena)
□Member At Large AN Regular Member (pilot) □\$25	INUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES (JAN – DEC) Household Membership (2 Regular Members) Family Membership (1 Regular and 1 Associate)	Helena) □\$45 □\$35

Montana Pilots' Association, Inc. P.O. Box 1178 Seeley Lake, MT 59868-1178

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