



**FEBRUARY 2009 AIRPORT NEWS**

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**ISSUE 2**



**WELCOME TO AMY CLEMENTS**

Amy Clements recently joined our airport administrative staff to temporarily fill the part-time office vacancy created by Darlene Mann's recent retirement.

Amy completed an airport management internship with us last fall while in her last semester earning a degree in Aviation Management from St. Louis University's Parks College. As a pilot, her operations experience will be a welcome addition to our staff and her responsibilities will go beyond office duties and managing our insurance verification program.

Amy is also our focal point for all activities related to the National Intercollegiate Flying Association's National SAFECON being held here in May.

Say "hello" to her next time you call our office. She will be answering most phone calls Tuesdays through Thursdays.

**NEW MUSEUM HOURS**

The Greater St. Louis Air & Space Museum recently adjusted their operating hours for the remainder of the winter. The new hours are Wednesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**Oliver's Breakfast 6:30 a.m. Weekdays!**

**Feb. 3: EAA Mtg**, Hangar 2 rear, 6pm food & 7pm meeting

**Feb. 5: Gateway Area Ultralight Assoc. meeting** in EAA room, Hangar 2 rear at 7:30 pm

**Feb. 14:** Don't forget your Valentine!

**Feb. 16: Presidents' Day**—Airport Admin Office Closed

**STATE OF THE AIRPORT—2009**

The New Year finds our airport in a healthy state of growth, but with many challenges and a few uncertainties ahead. The state of our nation's and the world's economy have had significant impacts on the aviation industry and airports are faced with new financial and security challenges almost every day.

We are fortunate to have strong aviation businesses based at our airport. Midcoast hired over 300 new workers in 2008 and will continue to need additional skilled workers in the foreseeable future.

Our many helicopters based here are kept busy with a variety of contracts; our transient aircraft traffic remains steady; and Parks College's new pilot production is up from last year. The airport continues to be a bright spot in the region's economy.

Although the cost of flying for sport and pleasure discourages many weekend pilots, our local EAA Chapter and Ultralight Association remain vibrant and are growing. Many members are actively building new planes or flying their aircraft frequently.

On a wider scale, general aviation as a whole continues to come under new attacks, but your conversations with your legislators have proven very effective in protecting the industry.

Last year you successfully stalled efforts to create aviation user fees. A user-fee proposal will probably be back again later this year so continue to be vigilant.

In December, the automakers' CEOs were chastised for flying private aircraft to seek bailout funds from Congress and the media jumped all over the story. Rep. Barney Frank then introduced a bill that would require any business receiving bailout or incentive funds to sell their private aircraft, a move that would devastate the entire general aviation industry.

Together, we mounted a successful campaign to educate Congress on general aviation's important role in business and economic development and the harmful language was stricken from the bill.

I'm hopeful that similar efforts will turn around the proposed large aircraft security program that will also harm our industry.

We are just beginning to fight another battle related to the use of economic stimulus funds.

In late December, every government entity prepared lists of road, school, public works, and other infrastructure projects that could be constructed to stimulate our economy and create jobs. Most of the projects will be entirely funded with federal stimulus funds with no local matching funds needed.

However, as it currently stands, all airport projects, and ONLY airport projects, will be required to have local matching funds contributed to the projects. Unlike all the other stimulus projects, airport construction funds will be funneled through the FAA's existing Airport Improvement Program (AIP) following routine AIP distribution rules and local match guidelines.

(Continue on reverse)

The requirement for a local match will make it impossible for many small and medium-sized airports to participate in stimulus projects. We are working with our Congressmen now, but it is a very steep uphill battle to get the rules changed in time to take advantage of the stimulus funds. Your help is needed on this issue now, especially in the House.

Never miss an opportunity to let Congress know how important general aviation is to you and to our country!

Speaking of construction, we will have a lot of it beginning very soon. The following projects are 95% funded through the Federal AIP:

Runway Lighting Controls: Our air traffic controllers operate our runway lighting through a makeshift system of three commercial telephone lines and 32 separate relays. The lighting control system that connects our new tower to our airfield lighting is a separate engineering project that is just now underway. You probably won't see anything happening as most of the work will be underground and inside buildings, but this \$268,000 project will greatly improve the reliability of our airfield lighting systems.

Interior Service Road: A road will be constructed around the north end of runway 5/23 to allow fuel trucks and other airport service vehicles to travel from one ramp to the other without crossing a runway or entering the movement area. This \$300,000 FAA-mandated project should be completed by mid-summer.

The criteria for economic stimulus projects require that a project be designed and ready to begin construction within 90 days. We submitted the following four projects for consideration: (1) an airport fire station to house the new truck that will arrive in September; (2) Precision Approach Path Indicators (PAPIs) for runways 5, 23, 12R, and 30L; (3) additional 10-ft. airport perimeter security fence; and (4) reconstruction of Vector Drive and portions of Curtiss Steinberg Drive. If they are funded, they will all be constructed during this summer.

Our final project for 2009 will begin in late May, immediately after the National Intercollegiate Flying Association's national flight competition being held here May 17-23. Runway 12L/30R will be extended an additional 1,500 feet to the east making it a 5,300 ft. long runway.

Combined, we hope to complete approximately \$7.8 million in airport construction this year.

As soon as the runway extension is completed, we hope to begin a two-phased reconstruction of the primary runway. The first phase will widen runway 12R/30L from 100 to 150 feet and replace the aging lighting system with a new high-intensity runway and approach light system. Phase Two will overlay the entire runway adding additional strength and new markings and should be completed in 2011.

There are many other construction and rehabilitation projects needed, but we are focusing on the critically-needed runway projects first.

We've made a lot of progress this past year. Almost all of the airport pavements have been repainted and we were one of the first general aviation airports in the nation to have the new enhanced taxiway centerlines and surface-painted holding position markings. These new-style markings greatly enhance

safety by increasing the visibility of all runway holding positions. You'll see more paint going down this spring as we expand those markings to meet the requirements of what seems to be ever-changing guidelines.

Our Airport Fire Department became operational in July and the FAA gave us a grant to purchase a new 3,000-gallon, triple-agent emergency response vehicle that will be delivered to us in September of this year. We now have professionally trained aircraft rescue firefighters and EMTs on duty from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. weekdays and hope to expand their hours of operation to include weekends sometime in the future.

If stimulus funds are not available to build an airport fire station, we will renovate the hangar currently occupied by A&S Helicopters and house the new truck in that hangar when it arrives.

We've accomplished all this without raising any of our airport rates or charges. However, our income and expense margin has become very thin due to rapidly escalating operating costs and the ever-increasing demand for capital improvement funds.

Each and every member of the airport staff deserves great credit for their dedication, service excellence, and their efforts to hold the line on airport expenses. It's their efforts that keep the airport operating safely. If you don't know everyone, they are:

Wendi Sellers – Assistant Director  
Gail Gartelos – Office Manager  
Amy Clements – Administrative/Ops Assistant  
Bobby Toenjes – Maintenance Director  
Val Juenger – Maintenance Supervisor  
Ken Buettner – Maintenance Technician  
Phil Landfried – Maintenance Technician  
Dan Trost – Maintenance Technician  
Chad Trost – Maintenance Technician  
Mike Mavrogeorge – ARFF\* Chief  
James Hinchey – ARFF Lieutenant  
Terry Bowman – ARFF Firefighter

Finally, and almost as a footnote, I'm frequently asked how Metro's financial shortfalls and service cuts may affect the airport. The airport is owned and operated by Metro as a separate and distinct operating entity within Metro's Business Enterprises Division. By law, the airport budget is isolated and funds are not intermixed with transit funds. Metro Transit's shortfalls, service cuts, and layoffs have little impact on the airport or its employees.

In summary, this is certainly not the "golden age of aviation" but the airport's current state and its future are stable and bright. It is weathering the current economic storm far better than most airports around the country.

Bob McDaniel  
Airport Director

\*Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting