



MSO GA NEWS

Fall 2025



What are these EAA guys watching?
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Montana Civil Air Patrol holds clinic for flying in the mountains.
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MSO pilot Jim Crossley flew the U-2 Dragon Lady.
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Rain or shine, AirVenture 2025 at Oshkosh delivered.
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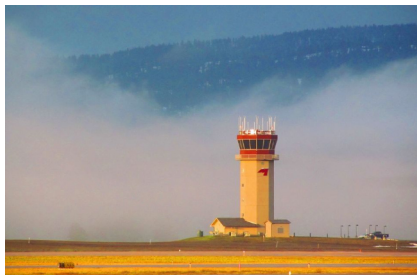
New biz on the block.
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MSO has a new flight club.
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GA development planned for MSO.
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One of MSO's best-liked air traffic controllers moves on.
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Extra baggage?
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Massive runway rehabilitation project completed
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Museum of Mountain Flying acquires movie star.
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Neptune upgrades machine shop.
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Flying Montana, the best, worst, and "watch out!!"
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← A Northern Shoveler duck suffers untimely end.
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MSO terminal expansion, runway rehabilitation, and other airport news

Tim Damrow, MSO Deputy Director, and MSO GA News

Terminal updates

With another record-breaking summer season in the books, we are entering the home stretch on our multi-year terminal expansion project. Since the project started with design in 2017, the following years saw a multitude of changes at MSO to accommodate our growth and position us for expansion in the future.



The shiny new baggage claim dazzles the eye and pleases passengers.

gates in our “B Concourse.”

The B Concourse also features two new concessions: the MSO Taphouse and MSO Marketplace. These new stores feature expansive views, food and, of course, several beverage options to help satisfy your thirst. During the opening festivities we also unveiled “Air 2 D2,” an autonomous food service robot that will deliver food directly



This exhibit reminds travelers how special Western Montana is.

early December.

Runway rehabilitation

As if continuing terminal construction wasn’t enough, this summer also saw the successful completion of a massive runway rehabilitation project. This project represents a once-in-20-year investment in the airport’s primary runway, with construction teams completing full pavement replacement, electrical upgrades, and safety enhancements.

The 127-hour closure of the runway, which ran from 8am on September 2 through 3pm on September 7, 2025, allowed

crews to work around the clock to complete critical runway improvements designed to ensure the highest standards of safety and resiliency.

“This was a major undertaking that required precision planning and execution, and we are incredibly grateful for the community’s patience and support during the closure,” said Brian Ellestad, Airport Director, Missoula Montana Airport. “With this critical rehabilitation complete, MSO is positioned to continue to safely and reliably serve the growing air service needs of our region.”

While the paving of Runway 12-30 is complete, crews will continue with electrical work through the fall and with runway grooving now complete, a final paint application is scheduled for spring 2026.

The runway rehabilitation project included significant infrastructure updates, with impressive construction milestones achieved.

Fun facts about the project:

- 45,000 tons of asphalt planned to be paved
- 80,000 feet of new electrical conductors
- 330 airfield lights upgraded to LED
- 300+ personnel on-site daily
- 35 airfield signs upgraded to LED

The runway closure was carefully scheduled over a year in advance and executed with a condensed timeline to minimize impacts on travelers. During the closure the airport took advantage of the pause in flight operations to complete multiple projects simultaneously. From deep cleaning restroom facilities, bag system maintenance, roadway painting to an upgraded TSA queuing system and emergency response training.

“It was all hands-on deck this week at the airport, and we are extremely grateful of our dedicated staff who came together to complete several initiatives,” said Tim Damrow, Deputy Director, Missoula Montana Airport.

Safety updates

As part of the airport’s ongoing commitment to safety, the Missoula Airport launched a Safety Management System (SMS) earlier this summer. SMS provides an online portal

MSO (Cont. from page2)

for users to submit safety concerns to the airport which are then reviewed by a safety team for follow up investigation and action. Our GA community is often the “eyes and ears” of the airport and encourage users to report any unsafe conditions using the links provided!

Air service

With cold weather and the holiday season quickly approaching, what better time to start thinking about summer vacations! Next year is shaping up to be another record year for air service for MSO with American Airlines launching year-round service to Chicago (ORD) beginning December 18. If you are planning to travel next year, now is the time to book to take advantage of early bird savings and get the best deal on your next trip!

...and more reported by MSO GA News

Morrison-Maierle Engineers will design complete rehabilitation of Taxiway-A. The taxiway has been impacted by more and heavier aircraft. Rehabilitation will include paving and electrical system upgrade. Engineers will also

design and plan for the conversion of the decommissioned Rwy 8/26 into Taxiway H. It will require new layout of the edge lighting system and pavement markings and a full overhaul of the system (conductors, LED lights, signs, and regulators). It will also require modifications to lighting control systems in the air traffic control tower. The pavement will require crack seal and seal coat, last done in 2018. TW-H reconstruction will likely take place spring/summer 2026. TW-A rehabilitation will take place later.

...and more, BBQ fun!

The Missoula Montana Airport generously sponsors a “GA BBQ” every fall. This year’s was held September 14. Our Missoula EAA Chapter contributed the place, its hangar in the East LZs, and Jeff Hollenback generously contributed his neighboring hangar space for roomier dining. BBQ chefs were Airport Director Brian Ellestad and Deputy Director Tim Damrow. Everyone agreed that this year’s burgers were the best ever! Airport Public Safety brought over a fire truck that was a fun attraction for the kids.



Airport Master Plan

MSO GA News

The Airport Master Plan (AMP) for the Missoula Montana Airport has been in process since November 2022. Its purpose is to develop a 20-year plan for facilities and operations at MSO. The process has been led by Morrison-Maierle Engineers with extensive experience in airport design and planning, Scott Bell and Shaun Shea. Over these past months and years, there have been numerous meetings attended by airport staff and stakeholders. Public meetings have given Missoula residents a chance to provide input.

What's the status of the AMP today? It's still under review by the FAA. The final, approved document will include an "Airport Layout Plan" detailing where future developments will occur. Among these is the potential location for future general aviation hangar development. The plan shows this location as the area that was the approach end of the now-decommissioned Runway 26. Now would be a good time for pilots interested in building hangars to organize and begin forming a concept about the type of hangars that could be built in the future.

Before hangar development can take place, the former Runway 8/26 will be reconstructed as "Taxiway H." Design for the reconstruction will be complicated and is expected to begin this month (November 2025). It's hoped that infrastructure needs will be addressed – water, sewer, gas, fiber, etc. in preparation for future GA development.

The airport's consulting engineer, Shaun Shea, has this to say about the reconstruction of Runway 8/26 as Taxiway H: The taxiway will hopefully "...come under construction in late spring, early summer of '26. This includes a complete



The former Runway 8/26 will be reconstructed as Taxiway H. The green bars are the proposed non-movement borderline, the red bar is the proposed hold short line. "GA" is the proposed future location of GA hangars (from a graphic provided by Morrison-Maierle).

overhaul of the electrical system (new conductors, lights, signs, etc). Going from RW to TW will require a new layout of all the lights, so we can only use a small portion of the existing light

layout. This also requires some upgrades in the airfield electrical vault, and changes to the airfield lighting controls system (ALCS) in the ATCT. The pavement needs all the RW paint markings removed (which is a delicate process due to the age of the asphalt). We will complete crack sealant, surface sealant, and remark to TW standards. There are also a few other items that need to be brought up to FAA standards. Lastly, we need to develop a pretty intensive construction phasing plan so that we can maintain access to the full airfield and not choke off ramps/taxilanes/hangars during construction. Needless to say, what seems like a fairly straight forward project is actually quite complex."

Missoulians and GA pilots have seen tremendous, progressive change at MSO, all done with excellent results. We can expect the same kind of progress to open up more opportunities for GA, but we'll just have to be a little patient!

A small, handwritten signature in blue ink, likely belonging to Shaun Shea, the consulting engineer mentioned in the text.

Farewell to a familiar face at MSO: reflections on a decade of service

Christel Palmer, former ATC Manager at MSO

On August 15, just one day before my 45th birthday, I made the bittersweet decision to step down as ATM at Missoula International Airport (MSO). For the past ten years, I've had the privilege of working among an incredible team and a vibrant community of aviators. From small planes to commercial jets, and from paragliders to skydivers, every day at MSO brought its own set of challenges and rewards. Our collaborative efforts—including a major 20-year planning project with airport management, users, and Spokane

Approach & Salt Lake Center—are memories I'll always cherish. It's been an honor to serve my home state and help shape the future of our local airspace.

After a period as a contract worker, I applied to return to the FAA, seeking the security of government retirement, improved pay, and benefits. My original plan was to remain at MSO until our daughter graduated high school in June 2026. However, after an accident at DCA and expedited hiring led by Sean Duffy, my timeline moved up to September 2025. Our

From Dan's Desk – extra baggage

Dan Neuman, MSO Business Development Manager

Did you ever wonder where the term “extra baggage” came from? I’m the kind of guy that could travel with a backpack and a cell phone, my wife though is a different story, she likes to have “options” while traveling. We recently checked in for a trip to the beach. (When I think beach trip, my packing list consists of; shorts, a t-shirt, and flip flops.) As we set our respective baggage on the airport scales, however, hers tipped the scales well past the limits. Of course, me being the curious soul that I am, I decided to google the term “extra baggage.” This is what I found.

The term "extra baggage" originated from the literal

meaning of luggage that is heavier or larger than the allowed limit for transport, for which an extra fee is paid. Over time, "extra baggage" came to be used widely to describe any psychological burdens from one's past that complicate their present-day relationships and emotional state.

Wow, well that definition rapidly descended into a labyrinth of relationship peril. So, in an uncharacteristic display of good sense, I opted not to share this explanation with my wife. Instead, I pulled out my credit card and gladly paid the “extra baggage” fees.

Move (Cont. from page 4)



Christel with her husband, Roland, and daughter, Qiana. Photo by Christel

daughter’s drive to finish high school early—taking extra summer classes to graduate a semester ahead—made the decision easier. While my husband and daughter will stay in Missoula until her official graduation in January 2026, we’re looking forward to frequent trips back and forth until we’re reunited in Phoenix, AZ. Missing out on a child’s senior year isn’t easy, but knowing she’s been accepted to ASU and considering a major in Aeronautical Management Technology (UAS) brings comfort that I’ll be present for her next big steps.

Returning to the FAA allowed me to select a level 10

A note from Matt Bendza, MSO’s “new” Air Traffic Manager

I grew up in south Florida, then spent 6 years in the army as an air traffic controller with 3 deployments totaling 3 ½ years in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. I moved to Alaska after the army in 2008 where I was a controller for 9 years and the manager for 7 years.

I was hired at MSO in 2023 and worked as a controller prior to Christel’s leaving and was selected as the new Air Traffic Manager based on my previous management experience and current tower rating at MSO.

facility, and as a family, we chose Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport (PHX). The move has been an adjustment—trading Montana’s snowy months for Arizona’s summer heat, where folks spend most of the year indoors. Training at PHX started with self-study, followed by immersive classroom and simulation sessions tailored for Sky Harbor operations. After just one week in the tower, I’m already experiencing the differences: a digital ATIS system, a dedicated weather observer, and streamlined clearance processes. Ground control is a symphony of coordination, with two separate positions directing aircraft on the north and south sides. Though I miss the dynamic pattern management at MSO, I’m embracing the regimented structure at PHX and looking forward to new adventures in the Valley of the Sun. Thank you, Missoula, for the memories—I’ll carry them with me as I embark on this new chapter.

I hold a private pilot license with float and instrument ratings, and a little over 1000 hours of which most is tailwheel in either a Taylorcraft, PA18, or my current Piper PA-12. I have two sons, 4 and 10, that are enthralled with aviation and flying - can’t get them out enough!

As we get a couple more people certified and I get my feet under me a little better, it is my intent to stop in from time to time and visit with airport users and hold a couple of pilot meetings to discuss operations, concerns that pilots have, as well as best practices from the tower perspective. I will be scheduling my annual Runway Safety Action Team Meeting around the end of March.

MSO has a new flight club

MSO GA News

The newly formed Lake Missoula Flight Club gives Missoula area pilots a new flying opportunity. The club's mission is to provide pilots in Western Montana a safe and affordable way to appreciate aviation with quality aircraft and in a welcoming environment. Club headquarters are shared with Blackfoot Aviation in the former location of Joe Featherly's Ace Aviation, East LZ Hangar #3. The club is registered in the State of Montana as a 501(c)7 non-profit social club. The five founding members include James Wasem, who serves as president, and includes Joe Featherly.

The club currently flies a 1964 Cessna 150D. Members are charged an hourly rate based on tach time. The club expects to "soon" add a STOL-equipped high performance aircraft, a

1959 Cessna 182B Skylane.

Member applications are accepted via the online form at the website <https://www.missoulaflightclub.com/> Members pay a



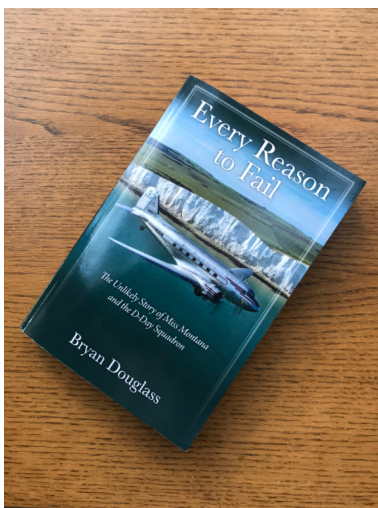
The club's Cessna 150D, "Dimples."

one-time \$500 initiation fee and a monthly member fee of \$100. Each paying member receives \$100 in credits for the month to incentivize regular flying. The flight club is a great way for pilots to enjoy recreational flying, build time, and stay current.



Airport weather and conditions by phone and radio

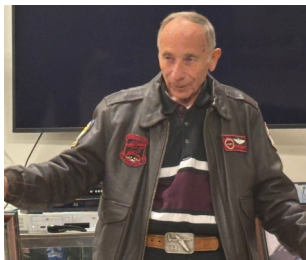
- ATIS by phone 406-549-2989, when you're away from a radio during hours of tower operation
- ASOS (Automated Surface Observing System). 406-728-3743. MSO weather 24/7.
- After the tower closes, ASOS weather is available by radio at 126.65.
- Talk to a real person. 406-329-4840. The staff at our local National Weather Service office is always glad to visit with pilots about weather and can often clarify uncertainties in a forecast.



Bryan Douglass' book about the epic adventure of Miss Montana to Normandy is absolutely a "must read" for aviators, especially those of us sharing a base with the historic DC-3. Bryan's story creates in the reader a deep appreciation for a number of things: The success of a near-impossible effort to make the aircraft flyable in less than a year's time and starting with zero resources; the rarely seen volunteer energy that showed up again and again to do the work; the rich relationships among the Miss Montana crew that flourished because of their sharing of an epic adventure; the physical and performance challenges involved in participating with many DC-3s never before together as a group and called upon to skillfully execute a "one-shot-only" D-Day Seventy Fifth Anniversary performance. The historical accounts included in the book, Mann Gulch, WWII, the Berlin Airlift, give added value. Every Reason to Fail can be purchased on Amazon. Bryan will sell an autographed copy for \$20. Contact him at bryan@everyreasonstofail.com

Flying the U-2

Gary Matson; photos courtesy of Jim Crossley



U-2 pilot Jim Crossley shares flying stories at a MSO chapter meeting.

Missoula pilots enjoy gathering to share stories of adventures and misadventures flying their airplanes, called “hangar flying.” Only one among us, U-2 pilot Jim Crossley can tell about what it’s like to fly at 70,000 feet. Jim shared his U-2 stories at a recent EAA Chapter meeting. He was born in Moscow, Idaho, while his Dad was studying veterinary science at Washington State University. After his graduation, the family moved to Missoula in the early 1950s and grew to include 3 boys. The Crossley Veterinary Hospital was staffed by all the family members and served Missoula for 38 years.

Jim graduated from Sentinel High School and attended the University of Montana for a year, participating in Air Force ROTC. He opted for military service, volunteered for the U.S. Army when he was 19 years old and served as a combat



A U-2S. The first model, the U-2A, began flying in 1955, newer models have succeeded the older ones. Jim flew the U-2R, produced in 1967. Its capabilities were much greater than earlier models. The S model was produced in 1985. Only a few U-2s are built during the infrequent production runs. Twelve U-2Rs were built. The external pods house electronic equipment. Fuel is carried in the wings.

intelligence analyst. After his tour in the Army, Jim came back to UM. There, the Air Force ROTC program was ending, but he was able to take a “pilot slot” and transfer to the University of California. From there, he enrolled in the pilot program at the University of Texas and was one of three selected from a field of ten for pilot training. His training included flying the twin engine trainers T-37 and T-38. His long-term goal was to fly for the airlines so he opted for flight training in the C-141 Starlifter, working out

of Norton Air Force Base in San Bernadino.

Jim’s early flights in the C-141 included trips to Osan Air Base in South Korea. During one trip, he was staying with the airplane preparing for the next flight leg while the rest of the crew went into town. He was suddenly struck by the sight of a big, black, strange-looking airplane taxiing towards his plane nose to nose. He recognized it as U-2. This was in the late

1970s and Jim told himself that there was “no way they’re still flying those things.” Seeing that airplane after so many years piqued his curiosity and reawakened his interest in space flight, or something close to it.



The café for the “Blackcat” U-2 squadron at Osan Air Base, Korea. Jim was based at Beale Air Force Base but from time to time would spend a couple of months flying U-2s out of Osan.

helped him through the process of managing the paperwork to apply for training in the U-2.

Meanwhile, he returned to piloting the C-141 out of McChord Air Base. One day, he received a message inviting him to come down to Beale Air Force Base, the home of a U-2 squadron, for an interview. He spent two weeks there while the U-2 pilots, Wing Commander and Squadron Commander spent as much time as they could getting to know him on a personal level. A U-2 squadron is a special, close-knit fraternity dependent upon each other for support and performance. The squadron wanted to make sure Jim was a conscientious hard-worker and would have what it takes to join them as an equal contributor.

Jim’s introduction to the squadron included a visit to its “Heritage Room.” On display was documentation of all the squadron’s battle actions and portraits of all the pilots who flew them. The documentation began with 1955, when the airplane was first flown. The Heritage Room has a bar serving beer and peanuts in the shell. Pilot patrons ate the peanuts and tossed the shells on the floor. New pilots were tested by being given the job to clean up the shells in the bar: “Are you good enough to join us and prove your interest by cleaning up the

Meanwhile, Jim sought to have some choice in his Air Force future. His wife was Japanese, so he pursued opportunities for being based in Japan. After patiently considering options, he was assigned to a T-39 Sabreliner flight inspection aircraft. His job was to test the performance of navigation aids like VOR and ILS and confirm their accuracy. Among the airbases he visited was the South Korean base Osan, where a U-2 squadron was based. He became friends with squadron pilots and visited whenever he could, thinking to himself, “Boy, I’d really like to do that!” The squadron’s operations officer

shells on our bar floor?”

Among the trials Jim experienced was being put into the pressure suit worn by U-2 pilots. This was kind of a test... some can't tolerate being bound inside a suit with visibility only through the attached helmet and face shield. Some get claustrophobic. New pilots are also tested in a high-altitude chamber and taken to simulated altitudes up to 80,000 feet. Does the pilot tolerate this while remaining calm and alert?

Jim's visit with the squadron also included flight training. The trainee is given a booklet with frequencies and other information to memorize. There's not time or place to look things up during flight operations. Normally, there are three actual training flights in a U-2 to "see if you can handle it." The U-2 trainer is modified to include two cockpits. The instructor pilot in the front and the trainee behind.

The training flights were done in the pattern, doing touch and goes. In the first flight, the instructor pilot took off and climbed almost vertically up to 3000 feet. He lined up for the landing, which must be done with the help of a backup pilot in a chase car. As the airplane passes over the approach end of the runway, the chase car accelerates quickly enough to closely follow the landing U-2 followed and report to the pilot how far the landing gear is above the runway. The airplane lands in a stall. If touchdown is too soon and too fast, or if the stall happens too high, the airplane will be damaged. During the landing of Jim's first flight it at first seemed easy – he thought "just like a Cessna 172." Then, all of a sudden things



My "graduation photo" upon finishing training. My training class had two other pilots and we went through all of our training as an element.

got crazy slamming the yoke left, right, up, down to keep the wings level and airspeed correct. Jim thought, "Holy moley, what's going on here!?"

Jim's second "check ride" took place a little later. He handled the airplane well enough that his instructor said "OK, you're done, you're hired." Next, Jim was sent to Travis Air Force Base for a tough, "astronaut physical" which he passed with flying colors.

Jim returned to McChord and the C-141 but soon had a set of orders for a new assignment as a U-2 pilot at Beale. He spent a few more days there making preparations and visiting with the guys.

Navigation System was used in the airplane. This system continuously monitors the aircraft's motion to calculate position by dead reckoning. Pilots also had to be able to read charts, and to know how to look through the camera viewfinder and pick the photo target. It was important to include distinctive features near the target to help clarify its location. Jim's flying included flying the border between South Korea and North Korea.



Kelly Johnson, designer of the U-2, with this U-2C, about 1958.

To say that the U-2 is an incredible airplane is a profound understatement. No aircraft designer anywhere in the world has come up with anything close. The U-2 was designed at Lockheed's "Skunk Works" by Clarence "Kelly" Johnson

who also designed the P-38 Lightning and P-80 Shooting Star. It is a very lightweight aircraft, with wings essentially like those of a glider. It climbs very fast, reaching 70,000 ft in about 10 minutes. The U-2R that Jim flew could stay aloft for 9-11 hours without refueling. The U-2S It can stay aloft for 14 hours. Fuel burn is extremely efficient at 70,000 feet because of the low concentration of oxygen in the air. The fuel mixture is very lean to enable the most efficient mixture at 15 parts oxygen to 1 part fuel.

At an altitude of 70,000 feet the air is so thin that the indicated airspeed is about 70 knots while the true airspeed is around 400 kts. The aircraft is difficult to fly, demanding extra effort from the pilot trying to fly and capture photos at the same time. There is a "coffin corner" for airspeed – too fast and the wings vibrate and may be damaged; too slow and the airplane stalls, plunging uncontrollably downward. Because of the challenging flight characteristics, the aircraft is flown on autopilot when at highest altitudes. Descent begins with lowering the landing gear and deploying the speed brakes. Descent from 70,000 feet takes about 45 minutes.

There have been designs aimed at replacing the U-2, including the unmanned RQ-180. Jim thinks that the judgement capabilities of a human pilot cannot be replaced in a UAV. The U-2 will likely last longer than the current proposed retirement date of 2026.

Jim was in the U-2 program for two years. When his Air Force career ended, he flew for the Flying Tigers Airline and

Flying Montana – The best, worst, and “watch out!”

MSO GA News

The best

The 41st Annual Montana Aviation Conference will be held February 26-28 at the Billings Hotel and Convention in Billings. The conference is widely recognized as one of the best in the nation. If you can attend, you’ll learn and enjoy!

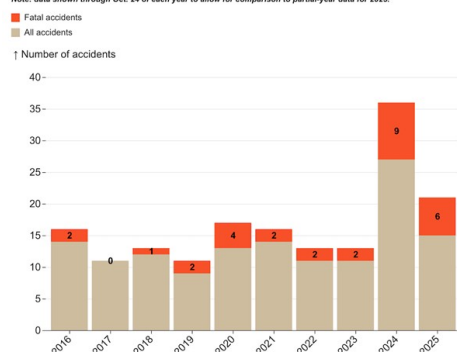
[Click here to register for the conference.](#)

The worst

Writing in the Montana Free Press, October 24, 2025, Jacob Wellness reports that the Montana small aircraft crash rate is among the highest in the nation. According to the National Transportation Safety Board, we rank third behind Alaska and Wyoming. If there’s any good news, it’s that the number small aircraft accidents this year so far is actually down compared to the same period last year.

Montana general aviation accidents, 2016-2025

Note: data shown through Oct. 24 of each year to allow for comparison to partial-year data for 2025.



Data: NTSB
Graphic: Jacob Oness/MTFP

Flying in Montana does potentially expose pilots to greater risk than flying other places. High density altitudes on hot days, “mountain wave” on windy days, enroute changes in weather, and high terrain with blind canyons are among the flight conditions for which experienced Montana pilots are well aware. Among recent small aircraft crashes in Montana, only one involved an experienced Montana pilot. Having good judgement about where to fly and when is what keeps Montana pilots safe.

Watch out!

A new Restricted Area near Townsend, Montana, has been approved.

Limestone Hills Restricted Airspace Update

Restricted area R-4601 in the vicinity of Townsend, Montana was approved. The new restricted area will provide the Montana Army National Guard and the 40th Helicopter Squadron with the ability to conduct live-fire aerial gunnery training in the Limestone Hills Training Area. R-4601 extends from the surface to 9,000 feet and is located approximately four miles west of the Townsend Airport and extends approximately eight miles to the southwest.

It will be activated by a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) to inform nonparticipants when the restricted area is active. When this airspace is not needed by the using agency for its designated purpose, the airspace will be returned to the controlling agency for access by other users. The controlling agency for this restricted area is the Salt Lake Center.

The use of R-4601 is restricted to 140 days of the year and the maximum estimated usage is up to 50 events that may occur during the day or night. During each usage, R-4601 would typically be used for a 2 to 3-hour block for a maximum total of 150 hours per year.

Thanks to MSO pilot Pete Graf for forwarding the info!

U-2 (Cont. From page 8)



Jim has a “kids program,” building a ZENITH 701 aircraft in his hangar in Friday Harbor, WA. “We have 4 or 5 elementary school students and 4 high schoolers. The airplane is about 90% complete and we hope to get it flying in the spring.”

for FedEx. He continued service as a member of the Air Force Reserve, collaborating with the Air Force Academy, he enjoyed participating in career days set up by area universities, helping young people understand what it took to be accepted into the Academy. Jim Crossley, thank you for your outstanding service and for sharing your personal story as well as that of the incredible U-2!

Actor Gary Sinise was Lieutenant Dan Taylor in the film Forrest Gump. He took a flight in a U-2, documenting all the preparations as well as the flight in this [YouTube video: High Flight | U2 Spy Plane Dragon Lady | Cockpit View At 70,000 Feet | With Gary Sinise](#)

MSO EAA Chapter 517 news

MSO GA News



Missoula paraglider pilot David Bixby demonstrates the controlling of the aircraft.

Our MSO EAA Chapter continues to be a dynamic presence in the Missoula Airport community. Monthly meetings feature very interesting speakers. Among these are the Missoula paraglider pilots David Bixby and Joshua Phillips.

Paragliders are a lightweight,

fabric-winged aircraft that can be flown by anyone up to the challenge – no license required, although training by experienced pilots is extensive. Paragliders can be flown to altitudes of up to 15,000 feet and over great distances, Missoula to Helena for example. Missoula's Mount Sentinel is a perfect launching point, and flight routes include Blue Mountain and south through the Bitterroot. Missoula paraglider pilots are

required to notify MSO Air Traffic Control before and after each flight; they fly with radios. MSO's powered aircraft pilots, watch for paragliders, especially southbound. To find out more about Missoula paragliding: Home - Glide Missoula



U-2 pilot Jim Crossley with Kellen Lovrien (on Jim's right) and Tyler Stenerson (on Jim's left). Kellen is the son of Chapter President Ed Lovrien and rumored to fly his C-182 as well as his Dad. Tyler is the Chapter's most recent Ray Scholarship winner and recently received his Private Pilot certificate.

Another unique and fascinating EAA meeting program featured U-2 pilot Jim Crossley's stories of his flying days. There have been very few U-2 pilots and very few U-2's produced since the first days they flew in 1955. Jim lives in Missoula and stays active with his aviation interests (see accompanying article, page 6).

The Chapter celebrated the success of its "Build and Fly Program." A radio-controlled model aircraft, an

electric-powered Kadet LT-40, was built in the Chapter hangar by youngsters with guidance from Chapter members. Thanks to Chapter President, Ed Lovrien, an RC airfield was constructed southwest of the airport. Here's what Ed had to say about the airfield: "I took my tractor up and prepared the spot for the runway, and we had a bunch of the build and fly kids and teachers, as well as a bunch of club members come up and start laying the mat. It was a tough job, but we had a goal." One of



Ed Lovrien does some of the early work on the Big Sky Thunderbirds, Dave Lewis Memorial Field.



The builders of the RC model Kadet L-40 celebrate its inaugural flight on July 26, 2025.

the hardest workers was safety officer Dave Lewis. He overcame obvious physical limitations and wouldn't rest. Dave died the day after he had worked so hard on the airfield. In his honor, it was named Big Sky Thunderbirds, Dave Lewis Memorial Field. It is a great place to fly model RC aircraft and we are looking for interested members to join and come fly with us. We would like to lengthen the runway 100 feet more. You can contact Ed Lovrien at 406-544-2008 if you are interested.



Cal discovered the partially completed kit plane in California and brought it to Missoula.

The Chapter is starting a youth airplane build program. Chapter member Cal Geyman is supervising the building of a Vans aircraft model RV-9 in the Chapter hangar. He found the partially built kit listed for sale on Vans Airforce website. It had sat in the original builder's garage in Santa

Maria CA for 15 years. He traveled 1,200 miles, loaded the kit in his vehicle, and brought it to Missoula. Cal is an experienced builder, now flying his recently completed Van's RV-9. He and others will assist students being recruited from Missoula's three high schools. The project is a daunting undertaking, costing about \$100,000, and expected to take three years. It will start in January, continuing the fabrication of wings and fuel tanks that has begun. Building sessions will be on Saturday and Sunday afternoons, at the chapter's hangar at the Missoula airport.

Any local student is invited to come check it out! Participation is free, and is a unique experience that can lead to many types of careers in aviation. Please email Cal Geyman at cgeyman@gmail.com if you have a young person that

My Oshkosh adventure - 2025

Story and photos by David Herzberg

It all started last winter when I mentioned to my family that I would like to take my grandson to Oshkosh this summer for his high school graduation. He was about 20 hours or so into his private pilot license training. As time progressed, he applied to two different airlines for their pilot training academies. He graduated from high school on May 25 of this year and was accepted and started school at the Alaska Ascend Academy June 16th! So much for that plan!

In multiple conversations with my grandson's dad, my son-in-law kept saying that he would like to go. So with a lot of thought and great advice from the local EAA chapter members, the decision was made to go.

After several weeks of planning around family obligations, we started our adventure. The plan was to leave early, camping along the way. As with any journey, the trip to and from is part of the adventure.

We stopped at a few key places we wanted to go. Being an Air Force Veteran, I wanted to visit Minot Air Force Base and Grand Forks Air Force Base. I had watched many videos of the Duluth, Minnesota Harbor so it was on my bucket list. We got to see a large iron ore cargo ship "American Identity" leave the harbor under the iconic lift bridge in Duluth. A couple other side trips took us to see Paul Bunyon and Babe the Blue Ox in Bemidji and the headwaters of the Mississippi river at Lake Itasca, Minnesota.

The official starting day of Oshkosh was Monday, July 27. We arrived on the afternoon of the preceding Thursday, the 24th. There was still lots of space left to camp at Camp Scholler and after 3 inches of rain the day before, we found a mostly dry spot to camp.

We spent quite a bit of time those first couple of days just sitting near the taxi way and watching hundreds of arriving aircraft. We watched the ADSB website on our phones to see

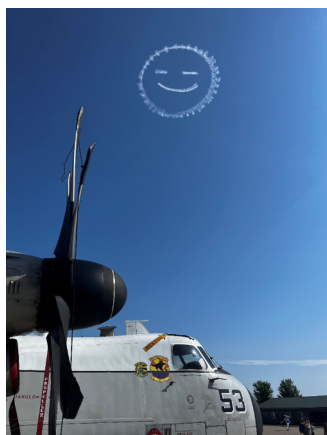
the craziness of the arrivals. I was also listening to the control tower on my phone. A couple of aircraft highlights landing to me were the U2, C-17, KC-135 and several other large commercial aircraft. There were also low passes by a B-1 and several F-35's.

The official commercial area of the Oshkosh show was closed until Monday but you could walk around all the aircraft that had previously arrived. There were not a lot of people out in the evenings, and it was most enjoyable to take your time and walk through and get a close-up of so many different types of aircraft. I think my favorite group to look at were the warbirds.

Speaking of warbirds, there were warbird formations flying almost every afternoon. The warbird formations were absolutely spectacular. The flying ability of those pilots with so many airplanes and so much precision is just incredible. It is a site and sound that I will never forget.

Our time was limited so we only attended the first day of the official show. It was exciting to see the static displays of what I call "big iron" and get to talk to some of the crew members. We spent some time in the commercial exhibits including Boeing, Garmin, multiple GA aircraft manufacturers and vendors of all types of aircraft equipment. Had I been a home builder, I would've spent a lot of time in the home build forums to see all of the craft that goes into building an experimental aircraft.

For me, the sight and sounds of the arriving aircraft were the highlight of the whole trip. The tremendous amount of detail that has to go into organizing that event is amazing. I call it a "well-oiled machine." The volunteer ground crew people were awesome, the transportation was great and the ticketing and camping went very well. Hats off to the EAA for making it such a great experience.

(Left) A sky-written smiley added some fun to the many other spectacular aerial events. (Center) A C-17 fly-by was an attention getter. (Right) The U-2 drew crowds of admirers.



Update from the Museum of Mountain Flying

Bryan Douglass; photos courtesy of Bryan

2025 has been another eventful year at the Museum of Mountain Flying. We continued to fly Miss Montana to various events and we acquired another historic Montana airplane.

Compared to previous years, Miss Montana was not as busy, but we still made some memorable flights. Of note was the



Bryan escorts former smokejumper and D-Day veteran George Cross in the Museum's historic DC-3 Miss Montana.

85th national smoke jumper reunion, which was held in Missoula. We made 19 short flights that weekend, carrying well over 100 former smoke jumpers on a scenic flight over



Bryan and former Smokejumper pilot Dick Hulla in the cockpit of Miss Montana.

the Nine Mile Ranger station (where many of them had trained and jumped) and the Missoula valley. One notable guest was George Cross, 101-years young and a former smokejumper and D-Day veteran. While many of the more senior smoke jumpers required assistance to board the plane, George was as spry as his pilots despite being nearly twice our age. It was an honor to have him on board. We also got a chance to get Dick Hulla, former smokejumper and smokejumper pilot, into the left seat for part of a flight. It meant a lot to him to be in the pilot seat again.

The most significant event for 2025 was the acquisition of the Douglas A-26 Invader that was used in the film *Always*. The A-26 Invader was a World War 2 era light bomber that went on to see service in Korea and Vietnam. There are very few A-26s flying today. Coincidentally, we learned about the *Always* A-26 in 2019 when we met Bob Steenbock, the designated pilot examiner who gave our pilots their type-rating check rides in the DC-3 in preparation for the trip to Europe. Bob mentioned that he owned the plane but declined our generous offer for him to donate it to the museum.

Fast forward to 2024 when he put the airplane up for sale and, through some very fortuitous circumstances, we were able to purchase it in short order. The fortuitous circumstances were mainly that a former smoke jumper and museum supporter provided most of the funds to purchase the plane. It sat in a

hangar in Brownsville, Texas, and took much longer to get airworthy than we originally expected. However, in September 2025 Bob, Eric Komberec, and Randy Schoenemann finally flew her back to Missoula. She is comfortably ensconced in the museum awaiting more work to get ready for the 2026 flying season. When he delivered it to the museum, Bob shared that he really wanted us to own her because he didn't think any other owner would do as much to preserve her.

If you don't remember, or weren't around, in 1989, the movie *Always* was an early Spielberg film centered on aerial firefighting. It was a love story starring Richard Dreyfuss, John Goodman, and Holly Hunter and well worth watching even if you don't love old airplanes. It also starred legendary Audrey Hepburn in her last film appearance. Most of it was filmed in and around Libby, Montana. The log "control tower" that was constructed for the film at the Libby airport still stands.

There were two A-26s in the film, one of which - N4818E - was owned by Lynch Aviation in Billings. N4818E is the plane we acquired. Denny Lynch used the plane as an aerial tanker to fight fires for many years and flew the plane during the flying scenes in the film. It still wears the "Fire Eater" nose art that it sported in the film. A friend who knew Denny and was familiar with the plane said the only time Denny ever made money with it was when it was in the film. If you watch the film, you will notice many scenes where the plane is idling while the action happens. Reportedly, Denny told Spielberg that idling those old engines for long periods of time wasn't good for them. Spielberg's response? "So how much is an engine?"

The A-26 *Always* plane is another historic airplane with strong ties to Montana and fits perfectly with the mission of the Museum of Mountain Flying. It is very different from our C-47/DC-3, with nearly twice the horsepower, but nowhere near the passenger capacity. In fact, it's a bit of a squeeze to get two pilots and a rider in the jump seat to fit. It cruises nearly twice as fast as the DC-3, so it will be a challenge to get the two to fly in formation around Missoula – and the state. But we plan to make it happen. She needs a good bit of mechanical work, which we hope to complete this winter. If all goes well, you should see both amazing planes flying over Missoula next year – hopefully together! When you hear radial engines roaring next year, look UP!



Birds and MSO

MSO GA News

Missoula has been home to rich and diverse wildlife populations for millennia. We love the watching and the hunting, but not the conflicts that go with our developments. We enjoy watching a hawk gracefully circling on a thermal or a flight of ducks headed somewhere so purposefully. Unfortunately, when these sights are at an airport there are potential conflicts.

Bird strikes by aircraft are a common, everyday event at busy airports, but have been less frequent at MSO than most. However, the occurrence of three bird strikes on one day, September 5, 2025, was highly unusual and triggered a meeting of the airport's Wildlife Hazard Management Plan Working Group. Airport Federal Compliance Manager Jesse Johnson facilitated the meeting, attended by others including ATC and general aviation. Why so many bird strikes all on the same day? Anything different that could cause this extraordinary occurrence? Two of the birds were ducks and Jesse hadn't known of any duck strikes during his tenure at MSO. Is there anything that can be done to mitigate the apparent increase in the risk of bird strikes?

One bird strike on September 5 was by a Horizon Embraer departing on Runway 30. A Green-winged Teal duck was taken in by one of the jet's two engines. The aircraft continued its flight and landed safely in Seattle. A second Embraer departing on Runway 30 hit a Northern Shoveler duck. A third strike on the same day involved a smaller bird and was off-airport.

The group discussed changes on or near the airport that may have contributed to the unusual number of bird strikes. There has been development east of the airport that may have compromised habitat, causing the birds to be on the move. A second likelihood was the seeding of grass on the ground adjacent to Runway 30, after its reconditioning had been completed. The grass seed is a likely bird attractant that will diminish in time as the seed takes root. A third likelihood is the

new presence of a corn maze just a short distance southwest of the departure end of Runway 30. The maze was created for the first time this year as a source of entertainment for the community with a focus on a "Missoula Fall Fest" at the site. Corn is a well-known attractant to ducks, especially during cold wet weather. Corn is an important source of nutrition for the birds.

The FAA requires that a complete wildlife assessment be completed every 10 years, unless there is ongoing development around the airport property. Missoula's last plan was done in 2010, so it is past due. It's an elaborate, one-year project requiring study by a qualified biologist to identify species present, wildlife attractants, and possible mitigating measures. The airport has put off this process, waiting to see the extent of encroachment to the airport by new city growth that could potentially change wildlife movements.

Ongoing mitigating measures are taken by public safety officers using their vehicles and their horns to chase off lingering birds. Lethal elimination is permitted for some species but is used only as a last resort. Meanwhile, MSO pilots, watch for ducks so you don't have a quack up!



A recreational corn maze is new this year, located not too far from the departure end of Runway 30.

EAA (Cont. from page 10)

wants to check it out. Our chapter website has a full description & photos of the project (<https://chapters.eaa.org/ea517/youth-build-projects>).

The Chapter meets the third Monday evening of each month, beginning with pizza at 6:30. Meetings always feature an interesting speaker or program. During the months of

November through March, coffee and donuts are served on the first Saturday of each month, 9-11AM. Join in for some fellowship and hangar flying. During the second hour Ralph Johns will lead a "VMC Club" discussion. EAA National sponsors the informal club and provides a problematic flying scenario for discussion. All members and non-members are welcome to these meetings.

Montana Civil Air Patrol Mountain Flying Clinic, August 23 and 24, 2025

Adam Davis

One of the great privileges and challenges for pilots in Montana and other states is that we have access to airstrips located in mountainous terrain. Each airport has its own set of characteristics that make flying to or from them unique. This might be because of several different factors or a combination of multiple factors. It may be in close proximity to terrain like Rock Creek (RC0) or Benchmark (3U7), it might have a sloped runway such as Boulder (3U9) that can catch pilots off guard, or that it is shorter than expected like Drummond (M26).

This year, one of our goals in the Montana Civil Air Patrol was to hold a Mountain Flying Clinic for its pilots and to practice flying in the mountains. So, on the weekend of August 22 - 24, we had four airplanes and nine pilots gather at the SkyService FBO in Helena for some training.

The plan was pretty straightforward. This being the first "mountain" flights for most of the MT CAP pilots to airports with other than hard-surface and wide-open runways, the selected airports were relatively easy to fly to but still challenging. There were two routes that would be flown for the weekend. For the East Route, aircraft would depart from Helena (KHLN) and fly to Benchmark (3U7), then Canyon Ferry (8U9), then to Boulder (3U9), before returning to Helena (KHLN). The West Route would depart Helena (KHLN), fly to Lincoln (S69), then on to Seeley Lake (23S) and Rock Creek (RC0), before returning to Helena (KHLN).

The airplanes we were flying included two Cessna 182s

equipped with G1000 avionics, one Cessna 182 with steam gauge avionics, and one Cessna 206 with G1000 avionics from the Montana Civil Air Patrol Wing. The Cessna 182s were all normally aspirated engines, while the 206 was turbocharged.

The weather forecast for the weekend promised a great time. Each day would have cool mornings and light afternoon winds. However, there was a slight challenge. At the time of our flights, there were two forest fires burning near Lincoln (S69), and had TFRs around them. Consequently, the West Route aircraft had to navigate between the fires after departing from Helena (KHLN) and flew in considerably reduced visibility due to smoke.

One flight would take place on Saturday morning, with the aircrews switching planes and routes after lunch and flying again in the afternoon. On Sunday, we only planned to fly once more in the morning. The noticeable changes from the morning flights to the afternoon flights were that the winds aloft had increased, and the higher temperatures in the afternoon decreased the performance of our airplanes. Both factors are crucial aspects of flying in the mountains, and we wanted our pilot to experience exactly those conditions that weekend.

Each flight we planned went well, and everyone stayed safe. After the flying was concluded on Saturday, many of us went out for dinner in Helena. A few of the pilots were active military for many years, and many stories and jokes were told.



CAP aircraft ready to go on the ramp at the Helena airport's SkyService. Adam Davis photo.



The Drummond airport is inconspicuous. AirNav says "RWY rough due to bunch grass and rodent holes. Extremely soft when wet."

Aviation weather cameras at Montana airports

<https://weathercams.faa.gov/map/>

Live views of weather at many Montana airports, including Glacier Park, Ferndale, Superior, Seeley Lake, Lincoln, Helena, Deer Lodge, Butte, Missoula, Hamilton, and others.

New biz on the block

Kendon Campbell

While temps might be cooling down, activity at East LZ Hangar 3 is heating up! We are excited to announce the opening of Blackfoot Aviation, an independent repair shop operating under Part 91 geared for Missoula GA owners and operators. After months of planning, recent ground lease approval from the airport board of directors, and strong support from existing members, we have finally reached (Vr). The mission is simple: “fix airplanes, build community.”

For many private pilots who own and operate their planes, the tale is all too familiar: Annual inspection time is only a few months away and the big shops are full or not looking to take on more. You call around, use some connections, and maybe even manage to get worked in, only to be left in the dark until it is time to review airworthiness and recommended items. Not their fault; the part 145 FAA designated repair facilities are primarily designed for commercial operations, with more regulation, paperwork, insurance requirements and overhead costs (that have nowhere to go but trickle down to the bill). So, like me, you find yourself flying your plane to a smaller airport that is just more geared for general aviation – like Ronan or Stevensville. Quality shops, but not the “quality time” my wife had in mind shuttling me from and to the airports an hour from our home.

About 6 months ago I came out to my T Hangar to find a flat tire on my 1959 Cessna 182. The plans I had to take my office manager and her husband for a scenic flight around Flathead and the Swan Range that morning were just as deflated. I scratched my head and started calling around. To my relief Joe Featherly, owner of Ace Aviation, was willing and ready to

help. After the repair we got to talking, about business, about flying (he also owns a '59 182b), and about the forecast for both our lives in this upcoming season. Over the summer, one thing led to another, we believe God opened the right doors, and as a result Blackfoot Aviation was formed. In essence, Blackfoot Aviation purchased Ace Aviation and the hangar it conducted business in (#3 East LZ Complex).

Joe and I both share a vision, one we have found to be alive in many others as well, for the general aviation culture at Missoula. We seek to see community built around a common passion. We want more small planes, not less. More events, more safety meetings, and more flight clubs. We strive to see the next generation of pilots and enthusiasts have access to the world of aviation, regardless of financial barriers. Of course, one way we can do this is to offer a place of repair, conversations, and timely accessibility. Joe Featherly will stay on as designated IA to sign off on repairs. We also recently have made a big hire: Jake Culver, A&P, who has been mentored for the last 5 years under Mark Roth of Bitterroot Aviation. I will bring my experience of running automotive dealerships and service stations to the business side of things. Hopefully with a little luck and a lot of internal combustion this shop will continue to generate lift.

Whether you have an upcoming annual, have a funny noise on your bird, or simply a funny story, we invite you to swing by and see what we have going on behind the bifold doors. Blackfoot Aviation is open for business, and we look forward to shaking your hand.

Good flying & go Griz!



(L to R) Kendon Campbell, Jake Culver, and Joe Featherly.

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Neptune Aviation expands capabilities with major machine shop upgrade

Kevin Condit, Neptune Aviation

As Neptune Aviation prepares to transition its aerial firefighting fleet from the BAe-146 to the advanced Airbus A319, the company has upgraded its machine shop with the addition of a Hermle C 400 Gen 2, a state-of-the-art, 5-axis CNC machining center known for its exceptional precision, versatility, and efficiency in producing complex aerospace components.

This upgrade represents a significant investment, and it strengthens Neptune's ability to produce complex, mission-critical components in-house. With the Hermle C 400 now operational, the company can manufacture many of the parts needed for routine maintenance and repair, reducing reliance on external vendors and accelerating both development and turnaround times. These enhanced capabilities will help Neptune extend the service life of its BAe-146 fleet—where replacement parts are increasingly scarce—and ensure greater self-sufficiency in maintaining its next-generation A319 aircraft.

"All the parts needed for the A319 are highly customized and specific to Neptune, since we are the only airtanker company utilizing the A319 for aerial firefighting operations. Being able to build these parts in-house means we avoid the delays and costs of outsourcing the project to a third-party machine shop, helping us to complete maintenance much more quickly," said Pierre Blouin Support Shop Manager.

The benefits extend beyond maintaining its own fleet, according to Clifford Lynn, Neptune's Director of Maintenance.

"This is a major leap forward for our organization. Until now, our machine shop's main focus has been on supporting internal needs. With this investment, we're expanding our capabilities to reduce reliance on outside suppliers and to open the door to future revenue opportunities. The Hermle C 400 gives us the advanced functionality to produce highly complex, precision parts for our own aircraft, and customers across the broader aviation industry and beyond," says Lynn.

Neptune's advanced capabilities enable it to serve clients requiring anything from a single custom part to small batch runs. What sets Neptune apart is their extensive quality assurance expertise as a certified repair station, allowing them to provide all the necessary documentation aerospace customers require. This ensures that every part, whether made one-off, or in large batches, meets strict aerospace standards

and is fully supported with paperwork that repair stations and manufacturers rely on, making Neptune a trusted partner for precision parts production.

The company plans to develop parts for three tiers of external customers. The most immediate will be for repair stations serving the aviation industry, which they are already serving. Next, Neptune will pursue opportunities in the aerospace industry, including organizations such as NASA and private companies. Longer term, the company aims to enter the contract manufacturing space, producing high-volume parts for a broader industrial customer base.

"This investment in the Hermle C 400 is just the beginning. We plan to continue upgrading our equipment and growing the machine shop," says said Seth Cohen, Neptune Aviation Machine Shop Lead. "We're also actively hiring skilled machinists to help us take full advantage of what this platform can do. As I like to say, 'you can't bring in a great race car driver if all you've got are jalopies.' With this machine, we're building a shop that's ready to compete at the highest level."

With the Hermle C 400 now operational, Neptune Aviation is positioning itself not only as a leader in aerial firefighting but as a trusted, precision manufacturing resource for the broader aviation and aerospace community. The company welcomes inquiries from repair stations, manufacturers, and organizations seeking a partner for custom or small-batch precision parts.

To learn more or discuss machining projects, contact Neptune Aviation and its FBO Northstar Jet at info@northstarmso.com.



The Hermle machining center will enable Neptune to produce mission-critical aircraft components in-house.

JS

MSO GA News thanks Kendon Campbell, Blackfoot Aviation; Kevin Condit, Neptune Marketing Manager; Jim Crossley, U-2 pilot; Tim Damrow, Missoula Montana Airport Deputy Director; Adam Davis, MSO CAP Squadron; Bryan Douglass, Museum of Mountain Flying; Cal Geyman, EAA Secretary; Dave Herzberg; Jesse Johnson, MSO Federal Compliance Manager; Ed Lovrien, EAA President; Dan Neuman, MSO Business Development Manager; Christel Palmer, former MSO ATC Manager; Matt Bendza, MSO ATC Manager; Shaun Shea, Morrison-Maierle Engineers; James Wasem, Lake Missoula Flight Club for their contributions to this "newsletter" (news magazine!).

If you have something interesting to write about, we'd like to put it in the newsletter and share it with the Missoula aviation community! Long (about 500 words), short, funny, serious, whatever. The News is published intermittently. Interested in contributing? Contact the editor (see below).

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MISSOULA AVIATION WEB SITES

Aerotronics: <http://www.aerotronics.com/>

Blackfoot Aviation: <https://www.blackfootaviation.net>

Flying drones safely: <http://knowbeforeyoufly.org/>

Heli-1: <https://heli-1.com/>

Homestead Helicopters: <http://www.homesteadhelicopters.com/>

Lake Missoula Flight Club: <https://www.missoulafightclub.com/>

Minuteman Aviation: <https://www.minutemanaviation.net/>

Missoula Montana Airport: <http://www.flymissoula.com>

Nat'l Museum of Forest Service History: <http://www.forestservicemuseum.org/>

Neptune Aviation: <http://www.neptuneaviation.com>

Northstar Jet: <https://neptuneaviation.com/fixed-based-operations/>

Aviation license plates



MPA plate

EAA plate



Montanans are greatly blessed to have two special license plates that boost general aviation. Request one of them for each of your vehicles next time your renewal comes up. The Montana Pilot Association plate raises funds to establish an effective "endowment" which will fund at least two flight training or mechanic scholarships of \$4000 every year. Former MPA President Mike Vivion notes just how important scholarships are given the increasing need for pilots and aviation mechanics. Mike says "we have a LOT of very generous folks in Montana. This is just a very painless way for someone to make a difference, without even having to think about it, year after year."

Missoula's EAA Chapter 517 also has a specialty plate. Funds provide aviation scholarships and pay the expenses needed to keep the Chapter's hangar viable as a place to promote general aviation. The Chapter sponsors Young Eagles events at its monthly breakfast. Young people interested in aviation can go for a ride with one of the Chapter's pilots and also can sharpen their piloting skills in the hangar's flight simulator.

