



No Holding Pattern For Construction Activities

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Summer has given way to fall, and we take note of the changes in the landscape around us. At GFIA, those changes include much progress being made on the Terminal Area and Parking Improvement Program (TAPIP) project. Work continues on the roadways and entrance plaza as asphalt, pavers, and curb and gutter are put down and more steel goes up.



On September 20, the final girder and supporting trusses were installed for the roadway canopy. Welders continued working on the canopy for a short time as they completed a bit of finishing work. Close on their heels were the painters, who had to brush paint the entire skeleton in preparation for the next phases of the project.

These days, you can see not only much of the progress that has been made on the TAPIP project, you can see through some of it too! August 13 brought the beginning of a new phase of the project when Naturalite of Terrell, TX, set the first pane of glass on the roadway canopy. At the time this newsletter went to press, approximately 55 percent of the canopy glass had been installed.

Hand in hand with the canopy glass system is the installation of bird netting, a major component in the overall design of the canopy structure intended to significantly reduce the availability of nesting

areas for birds. The primary purpose of this netting is to maintain safety on the airfield for the traveling public, as large flocks of birds increase the possibility of a bird strike by an aircraft. A secondary purpose is to reduce the amount of bird waste on property located beneath the canopy structure.



Also underneath the canopy are the two pedestrian sky bridges and accompanying elevator/escalator cores. Glass installation has begun on the first of the two passenger sky bridges and on the front of both elevator/escalator cores. The eastern-most sky bridge steel skeleton is being erected. The western-

most sky bridge has been enclosed and interior work has begun.

At street level, concrete has been poured for curb and gutter and crosswalks in preparation for the asphalt roadway to be laid. Additionally, concrete and steel framework are being installed for the commercial lane public transportation shelters and streetscaping.

Meanwhile, work on the northerly two-thirds of the parking deck continues, with additional sections of concrete being poured, staircases being installed, and new levels of the entry helix being built. Exterior work on the parking lot exit plaza has been completed, and the contractors are now finishing the inside of the expanded facility. Work on the new credit card-only exit lane has also been completed and is now open for use.

On many days, it is not unusual to find 250 men and women working on the various components of this extensive project. These workers represent such trades as excavators, iron workers, welders, heavy equipment operators, truck drivers, electricians, carpenters, painters, general laborers, and many more.

For the latest updates on the parking status at GFIA, you may visit our website at www.flygrandrapids.org/RampUp.php. You may also sign up to receive e-lets in your inbox.

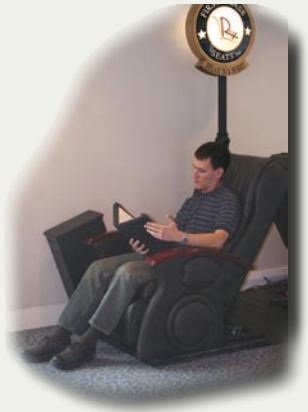
Throughout the project, we thank you for your patience and your patronage of Gerald R. Ford International Airport.



Relax, Recharge, And More

We all understand the concept of doing more in less time. Some refer to it as “multitasking,” while others just call it “busyness.” Whatever name you put on it, we all do it; as a result, we may get stressed, forget important things, or just plain ignore those so-called luxuries we just don’t have time for. Well, Gerald R. Ford International has several new customer amenities available that might be just what you need.

Looking to relax before or after your flight? Or, perhaps you like to arrive early when picking up a coworker or loved one from the airport. Now you can enjoy the relaxing benefits provided by a deluxe Shiatsu massage recliner while you wait. These commercial-grade chairs give a deep-muscle workout with strong pressure up and down the back, using massage actions that are best described as kneading, rolling, and tapping. At a cost of \$1 per three-minute massage, it could be just the ticket you need. Massage chairs are available on each concourse and in the Grand Hall.



And, while you relax and unwind, why not charge up that cell phone, PDA, or iPod for the next leg of your journey? With cell phones being the most popular way to stay connected while traveling, the need for a convenient way to recharge batteries away from home is on the rise. Plus, as additional features are added to cell phones, PDAs, and MP3 players, the need to recharge more often becomes greater, which is why GFIA now offers Charge Carte™ Rapid Chargers. The Charge Carte is a self-serve, rapid-charging kiosk that offers a charging station for twelve electronic devices—complete with charging cords for today’s most popular cell phones, PDAs, and the iPod®. The rapid-charge technology utilized by the Charge Carte will safely charge a cell phone up to twice as fast as a standard wall charger. At a cost of only \$3 for 30 minutes, it just might be the best investment of your trip. Charge Cartes are available on each concourse and in the Grand Hall.

Also new at GFIA is redbox. Redbox provides a fully automated DVD rental system featuring new release rentals for \$1 per night (plus tax), with new releases added each Tuesday. For added convenience, you may reserve your DVD online at www.redbox.com and then just stop by the kiosk to pick it up. And, DVDs may be returned to any redbox kiosk, anywhere across the United States. You may also find a redbox kiosk at select Meijer and Wal-Mart stores, or at your area McDonald’s restaurant. The redbox kiosk at GFIA is located near the exit from Concourse B.



Presenting...

Is your group looking for a speaker for an upcoming meeting? Would your organization like to learn more about the airport?

The GFIA Marketing and Communications division would be glad to come to your next meeting and provide an overview of the airport, as well as updates on ongoing airport development projects and the state of the aviation industry. Presentations can be timed to fit nicely into a breakfast or lunchtime meeting.

For more information, or to request a speaker for your next meeting, please call the Marketing and Communications division at (616) 233-6053, or visit the website at www.flygrandrapids.org for more information located under *About Us, Newsroom*.



Open House For Charity Scheduled

Saturday, December 6, the GFIA Firefighters will be holding an open house to benefit Toys for Tots. This great family-friendly event will include tours of the fire station, fire truck demonstrations (weather permitting), refreshments, and other activities. The open house will run from 1:00 to 4:00 pm.

The airport firefighters will be collecting donated toys, puzzles, dolls, and games from November 3 through December 12 for the Toys for Tots campaign. Can’t make it to the open house? No problem! You may drop off your donation at the fire station any day.

The fire station is located just beyond the passenger terminal building.

For more information about the Toys for Tots program, or to see if your family qualifies, call the Holiday Hotline at (616) 459-2625.



Open house visitors can be among the first to check out the BRAND NEW Oshkosh Striker 1500 fire truck!



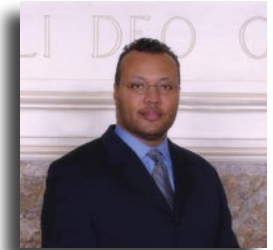
Aeronautics Board News

Departing...

July 30 marked the end of membership on the Kent County Aeronautics Board for citizen member Joe Jones. Mr. Jones joined the Board in September 2002, filling a midterm vacancy. He was reappointed to the Aeronautics Board in 2004 and 2007.

Mr. Jones came to the Board one year after 9/11, and on the heels of the arrival of the Transportation Security Administration and its new security screening equipment. During his tenure, the Express Shuttle lot was built—and expanded twice, the general aviation ramps were reconstructed, WiFi service was added, the Cell Phone lot was constructed, gate B6 was completed, and the Terminal Area and Parking Improvement Program went from the drawing board to realization—and progress on that project continues today.

At the meeting on July 30, Board Chairman John Van Laar said, “It has been a pleasure working with Joe over these past six years. His insight and experience have been great assets to the Aeronautics Board and have contributed to the success of the operation and development of Gerald R. Ford International Airport. With regret we accept his resignation, and wish him success in his new venture.”



Arriving...

On October 29, the Kent County Aeronautics Board welcomed Joseph Tomaselli, president of Amway Hotel Corporation, as the newest citizen member of the Board. Mr. Tomaselli will fulfill the remainder of the term recently vacated by Joe Jones, and brings his extensive experience and knowledge of the hotel, convention, and travel industries to the table.

Mr. Tomaselli is certainly no stranger to community volunteerism. Currently, he serves as a Board member with the Grand Rapids/Kent County Convention & Visitor’s Bureau, the Grand Rapids Downtown Development



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Expanding Horizons

To some, a 30-minute ride in a small, single- or twin-engine piston aircraft may not be worth the drive to the airport. For others, it may be a nice way to pass the time on a weekend afternoon. But for the special needs children and young adults who participate in the annual Fly Day event sponsored by Dreams and Wings, it is an experience they will likely never forget. For them, it is an event that may open doors and connects them to a world they may otherwise never have known exists.

The excitement and energy of these individuals is electrifying. Yet, regardless of their level of anticipation, they wait patiently for their turn. Each returning group is asked what their flight was like and they happily describe the experience to all who will listen...and the energy grows exponentially.

As they approach the airplane, each group is given a brief ground school about the airplane. They hear about fueling, propellers, engines, and general safety guidelines. As they taxi out to the runway, they don a headset so they can listen in on the communications with the control tower. Then, that moment they have been waiting for arrives as they accelerate down the runway and the airplane lifts off the ground. For Constance McKinney, this was her first-ever ride in an airplane. When asked what she thought of the experience, her face beams as she replies, “It was really fun. Mack (her cousin) held my hand and helped me be brave the whole time.”

In all, the September 6 Fly Day event provided airplane rides to 36 children and



Constance McKinney (seated) brought her mom, Shirley, and her cousin Mack Smith with her for her first airplane ride. Their pilot was Sue Siporin (back row center).

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Airport Police Chief Retires



November 1 ushered in a new era for GFIA as Police Chief Dave Stricklen retired after 29 years of service to the airport community, 22 of those as Chief.

During his tenure, Chief Stricklen has assisted in VIP operations for six United States Presidents and myriad other heads of state—including the final homecoming of the airport’s namesake, President Gerald R. Ford. He has seen his staff grow from 11 officers in 1979 (who also performed operations and fire fighting duties) to the current force of 20 dedicated law enforcement officers. He has seen the airport grow from fewer than one million, to more than two million, passengers per year.

Chief Stricklen also witnessed, first-hand, the dramatic changes in airport security measures following the tragic

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News In Brief

- » Phil Johnson, A.A.E., deputy executive director for GFIA, has been elected president of the Great Lakes Chapter - American Association of Airport Executives. The Great Lakes Chapter includes more than 400 airport administrators and representatives of service and professional firms serving airports from twelve Midwestern states and the Canadian provinces of Manitoba and Ontario.
- » Brian Picardat, A.A.E., finance director for GFIA, has been elected first vice president of the Michigan Association of Airport Executives. MAAE is a professional organization whose primary goal is to assist airport executives in fulfilling their responsibilities to the airports and communities they serve. Membership includes executives from large, medium, and small airports throughout Michigan.
- » The Kent County Department of Aeronautics received an Award of Excellence from the American Association of Airport Executives for its extensive level of participation in the Association's professional training program for 2007. Since 2000, KCDA has participated in the AAAE's Airport News & Training Network—an Internet-based training system that provides relevant training to staff at their desktops. One significant advantage of this program is the ability of staff to receive current airport-specific training without the time and expense of travel to distant locations.
- » The next two meetings of the Kent County Aeronautics Board will be held on November 26 and December 17, 2008, at 8:30 a.m. All meetings take place in the International Room in the passenger terminal building and are open to the public.
- » The thirteenth annual Airport Holiday Music Festival will be held December 8 to 12. At various times throughout the day, area middle and high school choral groups will be performing in the Grand Hall. Stop by and enjoy a bit of holiday spirit.

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young adults and one or two family or friends of their choosing. Partnering with Dreams and Wings for the 2008 event were Northern Air, Inc., Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital, and eight pilots who donated their time, aircraft, fuel, and other related expenses. Dreams and Wings is a nonprofit organization that provides physically, mentally, or emotionally challenged and seriously ill children and young adults the opportunity to fly in small airplanes. Dreams and Wings is fully supported by private and corporate donations. To learn more, you may visit their website at www.dreamsandwings.us.

Airport Connections is the quarterly newsletter of the Gerald R. Ford International Airport. We encourage our readers to contact us with comments, suggestions, and submissions. If you wish to be added to the mailing list for *Airport Connections*, please contact the Kent County Department of Aeronautics:

Phone: 616.233.6000

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Web: www.flygrandrapids.org

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Authority, and the Grand Rapids-Kent County Convention Arena Authority. He also serves as vice chairman for the Grand Rapids Downtown Alliance.

Mr. Tomaselli's current term will end December 2009, at which time he will be eligible for reappointment by the Kent County Board of Commissioners.

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events of 9/11/2001. The creation and implementation of the Transportation Security Administration irrevocably altered the landscape of airport security. Through it all, Chief Stricklen adjusted the course of his division, always looking to keep the focus on customer service.

In a reflective moment, Chief Stricklen relates, "The airport has been my home for almost 30 years. I feel as much a part of the airport as the support beams that hold up the building."

"We thank Chief Stricklen for his service to the airport community over the past nearly 30 years," states executive director Jim Koslosky. "His dedication and leadership have been critical in maintaining balance between airport security and customer service. We wish him well as he makes his final departure from the airport."

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