



Two, Four, Six, Eight – Who Do We Appreciate?



Airport patrons, that's who! And on March 29, 30, and 31, the Kent County Department of Aeronautics (KCDA) hosted its fifth annual Passenger Appreciation Days celebration to prove it.

At GFIA, the spring break travel period is the busiest time of the year. So, in order to say "thank you" to the most people at any one time, the first three days of this travel week are perfect timing. While it may have been cold and snowy outside, airport patrons were welcomed with tropical decorations and warm hospitality as they checked in and prepared for their flights.

The passenger terminal building's Grand Hall was temporarily transformed into an oasis of fun for passengers and greeters. Refreshments, games, drawings, and give-aways were the order of the day. The ever-popular paper airplane-flying contest saw the return of some previous competitors who came prepared with their own folding instructions in an attempt to create the most aerodynamic craft. KCDA

would like to thank airport tenants Aero Med, Enterprise Rent-a-Car, and FedEx for their generous donations of some of this year's give-away items, and food and beverage concessionaire HMSHost for its coordination of refreshments again this year.

Winners of the paper airplane-flying contest were Kimberly Calvert of Ada, Jacob Herremans of Rockford, and Les McElwee of Hudsonville. Each receives a \$100 gift certificate to Rivertown Crossings Mall in Grandville.

Winners of the daily drawings were Marcia Schrotenboer of Holland, Amy Burmeister of Sparta, and Rachel Dickerson of Grand Rapids. Each receives a \$150 travel voucher from Wagonlit Travel. Congratulations to all our winners, and our sincere thanks to everyone who includes GFIA in their travel plans throughout the year.



The paper airplane-flying contest is one of the most popular events, and creativity abounds as travelers fold their own flyers for that maiden voyage through the Grand Hall.

From The Ground Up

Throughout the next two-and-a-half years, you will see many changes at GFIA — most notably, the addition of a parking ramp and terminal area improvements. In an effort to keep you informed on the progress of this capital project — officially named the Terminal Area and Parking Improvement Program — and how it may impact your use of the airport facilities, we'll be running a series of articles titled *From The Ground Up*.



In each edition, look for the title and/or the vehicle photo above for the latest news and information regarding the progress of this exciting new airport project. Our first articles appear inside this current edition of *Airport Connections* (see pages 3 & 5). We hope you find these articles informative and helpful as you plan your future travels.

INSIDE THIS EDITION

- 2 | *Tenant Profile: HMSHost*
- 2 | *Random Act Of Kindness*
- 3 | *From The Ground Up: Airport Car Rental Operators Move Into Their New Facilities*
- 3 | *The FUNDamentals Of Airport Financing*
- 4 | *Adding It Up: The True Cost Of Your Next Trip*
- 5 | *From The Ground Up: Aeronautics Board Covers The Bases Of Covered Parking*
- 6 | *News In Brief*



Tenant Profile: HMSHost

HMSHost is probably a name you are not familiar with. You won't see it prominently displayed in the airport terminal, even though the company has three offices and 54 employees who work at GFIA. But without HMSHost, your airport experience wouldn't be the same. HMSHost is GFIA's concessionaire that provides food and beverages, retail shops, catering services, and vending services throughout the airport passenger terminal building.



HMSHost specializes in bringing brand-name dining and shopping experiences to travelers around the world. They have served in this capacity at GFIA since 1984. But, while HMSHost has been a steady presence, their offerings to airport patrons are ever-evolving – such as the May 2004 addition of Starbucks® and its full menu of beverages.



Soon, airport patrons will be able to choose from another new food service option. Quiznos® will be available in the food court as early as summer 2007, offering sub sandwiches, soups, salads, and breakfast items. The decision to add Quiznos to the list of food offerings comes in response to requests by customers and research conducted by HMSHost. "Our objective at HMSHost is to listen to our customers and provide the best possible facility and program to meet their needs and requests. Based on the research our company has completed, we feel Quiznos is a great option for GFIA," says HMSHost General Manager Brian Camp.

Next time you need to schedule a meeting at the airport, consider having HMSHost provide food for your attendees. From light snacks to full meals, from as few as two to as many as 50, HMSHost can serve up food to satisfy.

HMSHost's customer response-driven changes don't end there either. Shortly after the Transportation Security Administration implemented the restrictions on liquids and gels, HMSHost Store Manager Hayley Cornelisse was revising the layout of the gift shop and making room for new items that travelers would now need when they arrived in Grand Rapids. HMSHost customizes the inventory of each store to meet customer demand, and it strives to offer travelers a broad selection of regional souvenirs, gifts, apparel, and accessories. Newspapers and magazines include a selection of local, regional, and national titles.

The news and gifts shop isn't just about products, however. It also offers some unique services for airport patrons. For example, if you arrive at the airport and have forgotten to put your travel-sized liquids and gels in a quart-sized resealable bag (as required by TSA regulations), you can pick up a complimentary bag from the store. Have you ever arrived at the security checkpoint only to discover that you have a TSA-prohibited item in your belongings?

If it weighs one pound or less, you may take it to the gift shop, which has a mail-back program to help you send the item home instead of surrendering it. (Illegal items of any type do not qualify for the mail-back program.)

So, on your next visit to GFIA, remember to relax, enjoy a latte, and catch up on the latest news before your flight...thanks to HMSHost.



Random Act Of Kindness by Bruce Schedlbauer, Editor

Sunny skies and warm temperatures have returned to West Michigan, but area residents won't soon forget the winter storm that struck our region on February 3, 2007. For the Staples family of Portage, Michigan, February 3 will be doubly memorable. I was made aware of a "random act of kindness" the Staples were the recipients of that day, and I'm pleased to share this heartwarming story with you.

Kevin and Sonja Staples and their three young children were at Gerald R. Ford International on February 3 to drop off Sonja's brother, Woods, for a flight to Denver. Also at the airport that day were Larry and Henny Stauffer of Caledonia.

Henny was booked on a flight to Chicago. Kevin Staples shares what happened from there.

"After a nerve-racking two-and-a-half-hour drive from the Kalamazoo area through the storm, we arrived at the airport shortly after 3:15 p.m. We decided to wait to make sure Wood's flight left OK. After boarding, his airplane sat on the tarmac, and for the next three-and-a-half hours, we sat and waited for the weather to ease up and his flight to leave. There were many people waiting for the same plane and another United flight to either be cancelled or take off. One of those people, Larry

kindness

continued on page 4



From The Ground Up: Airport Car Rental Operators Move Into Their New Facilities

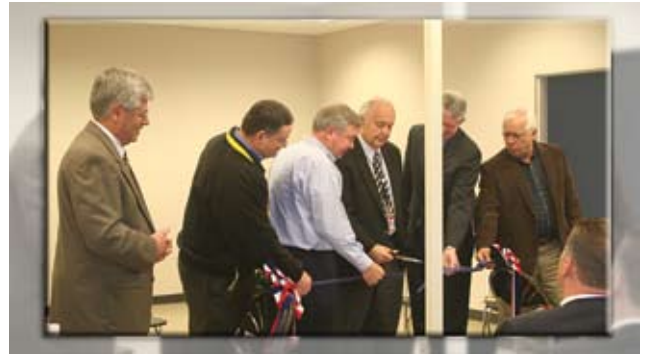
Many changes at the airport occur “out in the open,” where everyone passing through can see what is happening. But some changes occur behind the scenes...like the recent relocation of the car rental operators’ service centers. While this project will not directly impact customers (you still report to the same location to rent your vehicle), it allows the car rental operators to have larger, more modern service facilities in which to maintain their fleet of vehicles, and will allow them to pass along some efficiencies to their customers.

At their former location on the north side of Oostema Blvd., these service centers were landlocked. Expansion to meet customers’ needs was inhibited, and the airport was unable to accommodate additional on-airport rental car operators. In addition, the relocation of the service centers is a key component of the preparations for the construction of the parking ramp component of the Terminal Area and Parking Improvement Program.

On April 25, the Aeronautics Board held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to officially dedicate these new rental car facilities. In his remarks, Board Chair John Van Laar said, “This \$7.2 million investment in new rental car service facilities is but the latest element within a one-quarter billion dollar infrastructure investment program over the past 12 years – all with the goal in mind of better meeting the needs of a wide array of airport users, today and long into the future.”

In order to provide adequate levels of parking during the construction of the new parking ramp, the former service center sites will be razed and the Express Shuttle Parking lot will be expanded by approximately 1,000 spaces. These additional spaces will be used to offset the temporary losses in the short- and long-term lots during ramp construction.

Currently, airport patrons are served by Alamo/National, Avis, Enterprise, and Hertz, with reservation counters located in the east ticketing wing of the passenger terminal building; and by Budget via complimentary shuttle service to its reservation center.



Aeronautics Director Jim Koslosky looks on as Board Members Dean Agee, Ted Vonk, Chairman John Van Laar, Vice Chairman Tom O’Hare, and Dick Vander Molen cut the ribbon to officially open the new facilities.

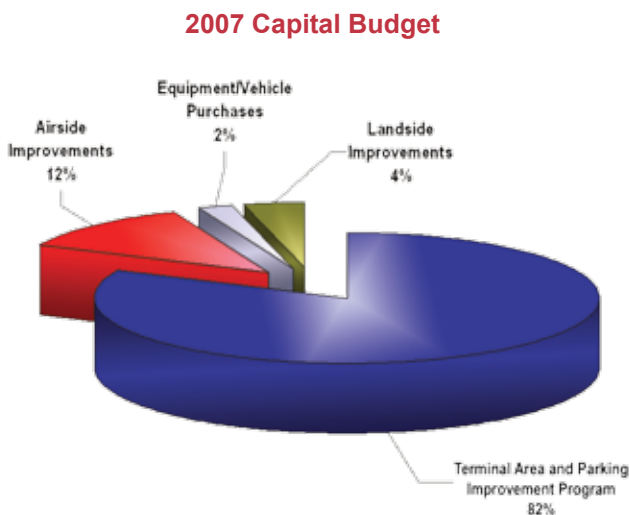
The FUNDamentals Of Airport Financing

The airport. An infrastructure of facilities and services that exists to accommodate the air-transportation needs of passengers and cargo across the country and around the world. Have you ever wondered what amount of your local taxes goes to pay for development, maintenance, and operation of the airport facility? You may be surprised at the answer.

Zero. That’s right; not one penny of your tax dollars goes to fund GFIA. The Kent County Department of Aeronautics (KCDA) is a self-sustaining enterprise fund that actually generates net revenue to pay for its operations and capital requirements, as opposed to being a tax burden on the local economy. In fact, it is the KCDA mission to “provide safe, efficient, environmentally sensitive, and *economically self-sustaining* air-transportation facilities responsive to regional needs.”

The Kent County Aeronautics Board, which is responsible for setting policy and providing general oversight of Gerald R. Ford International Airport, generates revenue for its operating budget through several sources including landing fees paid by the commercial airlines; terminal, building, and land rents paid by all airport tenants; fuel flowage fees paid by operators who provide fuel to aviation customers and corporations that base their aircraft here; and parking fees paid by airport users. The operating budget represents the level of funding required to operate the facilities. All revenue generated in excess of operating expenses is put into a reserve fund that is used for capital projects.

The capital budget, which is used to finance airport improvement and development projects, is funded through various sources: airport reserves, Passenger Facility Charges (PFC) and Airport Improvement Program (AIP) dollars that are collected from each ticket purchase, Customer Facility



Adding It Up: The True Cost Of Your Next Trip



Whether you do it yourself, use a travel agent, or work with an airline directly, a lot of research will go into the purchase of your next airline ticket. To varying degrees, most travelers are comparing fare prices, flight schedules, number of stops and/or plane changes, and possibly airline bonuses (e.g., free miles, seating upgrades, other perks offered by individual airlines). There is also the waiting game...the painstaking attempt to time your ticket purchase just right so that you get the lowest fare possible.

In West Michigan, flyers do have a choice of airports, airlines, and air service; and if you can't get what you want here, you can always drive to Detroit or Chicago, right? Well, before you hop in the car, ask yourself: Am I considering the full cost of my trip?

For 2007, the Internal Revenue Service has determined the mileage reimbursement rate to be \$0.485 per mile. This is calculated to be the total cost (not just the cost of fuel) to operate your vehicle for each mile. Parking fees also should be considered. When flying out of your local airport, you may have the convenience of having someone drop you off. Or, the parking fees may be less than at other airports.

LET'S DO THE MATH TOGETHER

You find tickets to your business destination for \$100 less by flying out of Detroit instead of Grand Rapids. Now, let's see what the true cost/savings equals. You save \$100 on your ticket. However, long-term parking at Detroit Metro for one week is \$70 vs. \$42 at GFIA, so you spend an additional \$28 to park your vehicle. You also have to drive to and from Detroit (300 miles round trip) at 48.5 cents per mile, costing you \$145 (300 x \$0.485). Now, you have spent \$173 to save \$100 on your airfare. Thus, you have actually experienced a net loss of \$73, and you had to spend an additional four-and-one-half hours in your car.

But surely, for a family of four, the situation would be different, right? Let's see.

You can save the same \$100 per ticket by flying out of Chicago O'Hare. Parking in the Economy Lot there will run you \$91 for the week – but if you fly out of Grand Rapids, parking will cost only \$42. You also have to drive to and from Chicago, costing you \$202 (415 miles round trip x \$0.485 per mile + \$10 for road tolls). Now, you have spent \$261 to save \$400 on your airfare, netting you a mere \$139 gain. And don't forget, you will spend seven hours in your car and will likely have to purchase a meal or two on the road. You may also incur a hotel stay if your flight leaves very early in the morning or arrives in the late evening.

So, is it a good idea to shop around for your airfare? Of course! But next time you plan your trip, before heading off to some distant airport, consider ALL the expenses, and make sure those savings really do add up in your favor.

ADDING IT UP:

BUSINESS TRAVELER	
\$100 savings for ticket	-\$100
\$70 parking (less \$42 at GFIA)	\$28
300 miles @48.5 cents/mile	\$145
COST / SAVINGS	\$73

FAMILY OF FOUR	
4 tickets @\$100 savings	-\$400
Parking	\$49
410 miles @48.5 cents/mile	\$202
Road tolls	\$10
COST / SAVINGS	-\$139
Meals	\$\$?
Hotel	\$\$?

Mileage amounts shown are from GFIA to Detroit Metro and Chicago O'Hare. Parking rates are quoted on airport websites.

kindness

continued from page 2

Stauffer, was waiting for his wife's flight to leave for Chicago. Seeing the weather wasn't going to clear up at all, my wife and I were contemplating trying to find a place for our family to stay for the night. During our time spent waiting, we had chatted with Larry, and he had asked us if we were going to drive back home that evening. We told him that because of the weather, we were thinking of trying to find a hotel. Sensing our need and growing unease with our situation, Larry generously opened his home to us and said we would be welcome to sleep at his house if we needed a place to stay. Surprised by such a kind offer from a stranger, I discussed our options with my wife. In the meantime, Larry's wife's flight finally left on its way to Chicago. By this time, I had discussed Larry's offer with my wife, and although Larry was a complete stranger I had met only a couple hours earlier, I felt comfortable accepting his offer to have my family stay the night at his house. So, we told Larry we would graciously accept his kind offer, and waited for confirmation of Woods' flight leaving, which ended up being cancelled about 20 minutes later. After Woods finally made it back off the plane, got his luggage, and made arrangements for a flight the next day, we followed Larry home. (He had waited approximately one-and-a-half hours extra for us after his wife's plane departed.)

We made it to the Stauffers' house (not too far from the airport), and Larry made sure we were comfortable (all six of us), pulled our van out of his drifted-over driveway in which it got stuck, and fed us dinner. He even had toys for the kids (thanks to him being a grandpa). The kids thought it was great...and Larry was so kind to them. He got up very early the next morning to help us get on our way. We dropped Woods off at the airport and started the long, cold drive back to the Kalamazoo area.

Larry's example of trust and compassion has truly inspired us. His

kindness
continued on page 6

From The Ground Up: Aeronautics Board Covers The Bases Of Covered Parking

“It’s about more than just parking spaces,” states Aeronautics Director Jim Koslosky. “This new structure, and its accompanying features, brings a whole new level of customer service to the airport patron.” That is why the Aeronautics Board and staff have painstakingly reviewed detailed design plans, financing options, and myriad other supporting documents before moving forward with the \$120 million Terminal Area and Parking Improvement Program, including a four-story parking ramp.

At a recent public workshop, Board members sat down with the design consultants from Gresham Smith and Partners (GS&P) and Carl Walker, Inc.; airport financial consultants Jacobs Consultancy; and the finance team comprising financial advisor Public Financial Management (PFM), bond counsel Dickinson Wright, and underwriter JP Morgan, to discuss in detail the construction project, phasing, costs, and impacts to the traveling public. This extensive, three-hour session was held to provide the Board with the information it would need to make a decision to move forward with the project.

As a result of its work session, on April 25, the Aeronautics Board authorized staff to work with GS&P to finalize the bid documents and open the bidding phase of the project. “This parking ramp component of the Terminal Area and Parking Improvement Program is the answer to our customers’ wishes for covered parking, provides us with the additional parking spaces we will need as the airport continues to grow, and will be a wonderful addition to the many parking options already offered at Gerald R. Ford International,” states Board Chair John Van Laar.

In addition to moving forward with the bidding phase of the construction project, the Board, in its April 25 vote, also authorized staff to proceed with issuing Airport Revenue Bonds to finance the project. The construction-bid specification documents are expected to be issued by 6/1/2007, with a bid closing date near 8/1/07. Bonds are expected to be issued around 9/26/07.



airport financing *continued from page 3*

Charges (CFC) that are collected from the cost of each car rental, and bond proceeds that come from the sale of airport revenue bonds. The AIP and PFC are federal programs, with the airlines collecting the fee and remitting to the federal government (AIP) or to the airport (PFC). The CFC is a local program with no federal approval needed. The rental car operators collect the fees and remit to the airport. Finally, the Kent County Board of County Commissioners authorizes the sale of airport revenue bonds, with all the proceeds coming to the airport. The Aeronautics Board has the ability to apply for grants of AIP funds to pay for certain types of capital improvement projects, and may request federal approval to receive PFCs for certain capital projects. For instance, the AIP and PFC monies cannot be used for the upcoming Terminal Area and Parking Improvement Program, because the use of the associated facilities will not be aeronautical in nature.

For 2007, the operating budget for KCDA is \$17.6 million. The capital improvement plan calls for \$69 million in infrastructure development, the majority of which is earmarked for the first phase of the parking and terminal area improvements. Additional capital improvement projects include airfield developments such as the reconstruction of Taxiway J, the completion of the perimeter road system, and pavement rehabilitation around the Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting station, as well as vehicle and maintenance equipment purchases.

So, what does all this mean? Simply put, it means the airport’s day-to-day operations and capital improvement projects are paid for only by those who use the airport. It also means, each time you use the services provided at the airport, you are investing in the aeronautical infrastructure that is Gerald R. Ford International Airport.

News In Brief

- » Aeronautics Director Jim Koslosky has been reappointed to the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce Regional Issues Council for 2007. Jim also has been reappointed to the Goals and Programs Committee at Airports Council International – North America (ACI-NA).
- » Aeronautics Director Jim Koslosky is the recipient of a 2006 Transportation Security Administration Partnership Award for his work on the Baggage Screening Investment Study Work Group. This award recognizes those industry and government members whose accomplishments and excellence in performance distinctly benefit the interests of the United States and the traveling public.
- » The Kent County Department of Aeronautics garnered a Gold Award in the 2007 Ad Club of West Michigan ADDY Awards for the airport's 2006 Annual Profile, titled *Flight Log*, which then went on to win another Gold Award in the district-level competition.
- » GFIA will be partnering with Michigan Community Blood Centers to host a community blood drive on Friday, May 18, 2007, in the International Room in the passenger terminal building. You may preregister for a time on the airport website at www.flygrandrapids.org/BloodDrive.php or by contacting Donna Thomas, office administrator, at (616) 233-6046. Walk-ins are also welcome.
- » The third annual Grand Rapids Wings of Mercy *CareAffaire* and pancake breakfast is scheduled to be held on Saturday, June 9, 2007, from 7:30 am – 11:30 am. This year's event will be held at Rapid Air. For more information, visit the Wings of Mercy website at www.wingsofmercy.org or call them at (888) 786-3729.
- » The GFIA Airfield Maintenance unit is hosting its fourth annual Airfield Maintenance Workshop and open house on Thursday, August 9, 2007. For more information or to register to attend, please contact Eric Vander Stel, airfield maintenance supervisor, at (616) 233-6080 or via email at EVanderstel@grr.org.
- » The next three meetings of the Aeronautics Board will be held June 27, July 25, and August 29, 2007. Meetings are held at 8:30 am in the International Room in the passenger terminal building and are open to the public.

kindness

continued from page 4

selfless act of service to help a family stuck away from home was deeply appreciated. From the conversation we had late that night at his house over dinner, it doesn't surprise me that he would not bat an eye at opening his home to a stranger who was in need of help. Larry is a living example of "The Good Samaritan." We wish this world was filled with more Larry Stauffer's - people who see a stranger in need and respond with unconditional love."

When I spoke with Larry on the phone regarding the kindness he showed the Staples family, it was quite evident he was not seeking any public recognition for what he had done. "I simply saw a young family in need and did what I could to help them. I hope someone would do the same if it were my children and grandchildren."

To Larry and the many other "Good Samaritans" in our community: A heartfelt "thank you" for your other-centered acts of compassion.

Thanks for reading.



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

Fax: 616.233.6025

Web: www.flygrandrapids.org

Kent County Aeronautics Board | John Van Laar, chair; Tom O'Hare, vice chair; Dean Agee*; Joe Jones; Dick Vander Molen*; Ted Vonk

* *County Commissioner*

Aeronautics Director | James Koslosky, A.A.E.

Editor | Bruce Schedlbauer, APR, Marketing and Communications Manager

Associate Editor | Susan Sherman, Community Relations Coordinator, ssherman@grr.org

Kent County Department of Aeronautics

Gerald R. Ford International Airport

5500 44th Street SE

Grand Rapids, MI 49512-4055



The World's Gateway to... **Michigan's West Coast**

HOLLAND • GRAND HAVEN • MUSKEGON • GRAND RAPIDS

PRSRST STD MAIL U. S. POSTAGE PAID GRAND RAPIDS, MI PERMIT NO. 1
--