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Your Northern Migration Just Got Easier

On Monday, July 14, GFIA welcomed Air Canada back as a business partner as it began offering flights three times per day to Toronto via Beechcraft-1900 turboprop airplanes.

In addition to bringing the total nonstop destinations from Grand Rapids' Ford



International (GRR) to 16, the Toronto service will provide convenient connections at Toronto Pearson International Airport (YYZ) to Air Canada's extensive cross-Canada network as well as to major international gateways on five continents such as London, Frankfurt, Hong Kong, Beijing, Tokyo, Sydney, and others. Montreal-based Air Canada provides scheduled and charter air transportation for passengers and cargo to more than 170 destinations.

At GFIA, Air Canada is partnering with Continental Express for its ticket counter operations (located east of the baggage claim area) and flights will arrive and depart off Concourse A.



Concrete Goes Down; Steel Goes Up

In the past three months, some of the most noticeable changes have begun taking place since ground was broken for the Terminal Area and Parking Improvement Program (TAPIP) back in September 2007. Portions of the parking deck floors and ramps have been poured, the north retaining wall is taking shape, and work has begun on the gateway entrance plaza. But none of these changes draws your eye as quickly as the installation of the roadway canopy structure.



Beginning in mid-May, the wave-shaped girders began being lifted into place, secured to the vertical columns, and connected with the trusses in between. Each 38-ton girder arrives at the airport in several pieces. These pieces are welded together on site, where they rest on jigs until a 300-ton track crane gently lifts them into place. On a schedule of one every other weekend, the 13-girder skeleton should be completed by mid-September. Once in place, the steel will be painted and glass installation will begin. The canopy will provide protection from the elements over the Terminal Loop Road

The first six girders are up. The temporary terminal curb front can be seen in the foreground. (Photo taken from the fourth level of the parking deck.)

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Kent County Department of Aeronautics (KCDA) – A Snapshot From 10,000 feet

If you take a photograph out of an airplane window from 10,000 feet, what you see in your picture of the landscape below are the “big things”– even though hundreds, perhaps even thousands, of smaller things also exist at ground level. Here is our snapshot of the Department of Aeronautics.

KCDA is composed of four primary divisions: **Finance & Administration**, **Public Safety & Operations**, **Facilities**, and **Marketing & Communications**. Let’s take a look at the role each division plays at ground level.

The **Finance & Administration** division includes accounting and finance, information technology, properties, parking, and administrative support services. This division generates our annual operating and capital budgets; sets the rates and charges for the airport; coordinates concession, lease, and operating agreements with our business partners; and provides the information technology infrastructure and ground transportation parking services to our mutual patrons.

The **Public Safety & Operations** division includes aircraft rescue and fire fighting, police, and airport operations. This division provides the services that maintain a safe and secure airport for commercial passenger, cargo, corporate, and general aviation activities. It also coordinates closely with various other organizations (Federal Aviation Administration, Transportation Security Administration, and area mutual aid providers) for daily or emergency services.

The **Facilities** division includes building maintenance, airfield maintenance, and project design/engineering. This division is responsible for the development and maintenance of the airfield, fencing, passenger terminal, and other buildings on the airport campus. It is also responsible for snow removal, mowing, lighting repairs, and the structural integrity of all aircraft surfaces on the airfield.

The **Marketing & Communications** division includes air service marketing, community affairs, and news media relations. This division plans and coordinates special events, and produces the marketing and communications tools (e.g., website, newsletter, brochures) that are made available to the news media, airport patrons, and general public. It is also responsible for conducting public information campaigns and coordinating the airport’s air service development program.



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and ground walkways and will cover the pedestrian sky bridges.

On the north side of the temporary roadway, construction activity continues on the northerly two-thirds of the parking deck structure. As sections of each level of the deck are completed, the forms for the next level can be put in place in anticipation of the next level of concrete.

Just a bit east of the deck, work has begun for the new gateway entrance plaza. Roadway and utility work are underway and the retaining wall is being poured. Airport Executive Director Jim Koslosky says there are nearly 200 workers trying to get the work done as quickly as possible. “We look forward to completing this amazing project and making Ford International Airport a customer-friendly state-of-the-art facility for a West Michigan air service market,” said Koslosky.



For the latest updates on the parking situation 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.

Giving From The Heart

Twice each year, GFIA partners with Michigan Community Blood Centers (MCBC) to host a blood drive at the airport. The most recent drive was held Friday, May 16.

Previous Total	697 pints
Given 5/16/08	20 pints
Total donated at airport drives	717 pints

GFIA and MCBC would like to thank all who participated in the blood drive. Special recognition goes to two donors who reached personal milestones at this drive: Donna Thomas of the administration division and Susan Sherman of the marketing and communications division both received their one-gallon pins at this drive.

Join us for our next blood drive scheduled for Friday, September 26, 2008.

Emergency Response Exercise Aids Preparedness

It's the kind of news no airport wants to hear.

On approach to Gerald R. Ford International Airport, the crew of a Patriot Airlines regional jet determines that the aircraft's flaps are not functioning. At 10:20 am, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Air Traffic Control Tower notified the airport of the crippled aircraft and stated that it will arrive at GRR in 10 minutes. There were 50 people on board. The airport went into Alert 2 (emergency standby) mode. Calls went out to Cascade Township Fire, Kentwood City Fire, Kent County Sheriff's Department, and Life EMS to be on standby.

At 10:30 am, the pilot attempted a landing on 8L/26R (the north parallel runway). The aircraft landed very fast and halfway down the runway. It skidded off the west end of the runway, breaking into two pieces. The airport went into Alert 3 (crash) mode. Additional calls went out to the City of Grand Rapids Police and Fire, Caledonia Fire, American Medical Response, and Rockford Ambulance. A unified command post was established near the scene of the crash.

The good news is...this was only an exercise!

That's right. Thankfully, the details above were part of the fictitious scenario written to begin the airport's full-scale Emergency Response Exercise held on May 30. This FAA-mandated drill gives the airport and its mutual aid partners the opportunity to put their skills to the test as they follow the airport's emergency plan in



Grand Rapids firefighters carry a volunteer victim from the crash site to an awaiting ambulance located nearby for transport to an area hospital.

a realistic, yet controlled, atmosphere. You see, the airplane was really two school buses (one simulating each half of the broken plane) donated by Neal's Truck Parts of Grandville. The passengers and crew on board were really Caledonia High School students wearing moulage to create realistic injuries. But everything else was real.

The airport reviews its emergency plan annually, and every third year conducts a full-scale exercise. This exercise provides a unique opportunity to test the communication and interaction among the myriad public safety entities that would provide support in the event of an actual incident. It benefits every emergency agency involved, keeping them prepared and trained for any type of situation. "Possibly the most valuable part of the event is the debriefing session that takes place a few days after the drill," states Public Safety and Operations Director Rob Benstein. "We have an opportunity to review the implementation of the plan, to see how we can make it better, to see what additional resources we may need."

And for the record – air travel is still, by far, the safest mode of travel. GFIA has never experienced a major accident in its 45-year history.



Moulage makeup (as seen above on this volunteer victim's arm) adds to the realism of the drill.

Listen Carefully

GFIA is pleased to announce that hearing-impaired travelers won't need to worry about missing airport announcements anymore. That's because GFIA recently became the first airport in the U.S. to install a hearing loop system. This hearing loop system allows individuals with telecoil (T-Coil)-equipped hearing devices to have public address announcements transmitted directly to their hearing aids.

"The Aeronautics Board is delighted to offer this new service to our customers who use assistive hearing devices," said Aeronautics Board Chairman John Van Laar. "By the direct transmission of gate and flight announcements to T-coil-equipped hearing aids, this hearing loop system will significantly enhance the airport experience for people with hearing loss."

Passengers with T-coil-equipped hearing devices may turn on the feature on their hearing aids after passing through the passenger security screening area to hear all announcements made at the airline gates and hold-room areas throughout the concourses.



News In Brief

- » Gerald R. Ford International Airport received Honorable Mention for the prestigious Balchen/Post Award, given for excellence in the performance of airport snow and ice control, at the 42nd Annual International Aviation Snow Symposium on April 30. The Kent County Department of Aeronautics Operations and Field Maintenance sections are responsible for the safe removal of snow at GFIA.
- » Jim Koslosky, A.A.E., executive director for GFIA, has been appointed to the National Aviation Energy Task Force to work on the development of an industry position encouraging the development of a national energy policy.
- » Airport firefighter Pat DeJong is serving as the president of UAW Local 2600, parking operations agent Melody Allen is serving as the recording secretary for UAW Local 2600 and alternate steward for the airport, maintenance technician Mike Gatens is chief steward for the airport, and airport police clerk Kathy Krebill is a union steward for the airport. These appointments are for 2008–2010. Pat and Mike are also serving on the current bargaining committee.
- » GFIA will be partnering with Michigan Community Blood Centers to host a community blood drive on Friday, September 26, 2008, in the International Room in the passenger terminal building. You may preregister for a time on our website at www.flygrandrapids.org/BloodDrive.php or by contacting Donna Thomas, Office Administrator, at (616) 233-6046. Walk-ins are also welcome.
- » The next three meetings of the Kent County Aeronautics Board will take place September 24, October 29, and November 26, 2008, at 8:30 am. All meetings are held in the International Room in the passenger terminal building and are open to the public.

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KCDA achieves all this with a staff of approximately 120 individuals working together under the guidance of an executive staff. Policy and general oversight are the responsibility of the Kent County Aeronautics Board, a six-member body appointed by the Kent County Board of Commissioners.

As stated previously, hundreds, even thousands of smaller things occur at ground level, off the radar when looking at the big picture. But in this case, smaller doesn't imply less important, simply less visible.

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

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GFIA Employee Information Corner

GFIA's storm water, generated by rainfall and snow melt at the airport, is conveyed to local streams and rivers through the airport's storm sewer network. As a result, it is critical the airport and its tenants manage petroleum products and other materials safely and in a way that prevents them from coming into contact with the airport's storm water.

Polluted storm water can result in the decreased health of our surface water resources, and for that reason GFIA has developed and implemented a Storm Water Management Program (SWMP). The Plan describes management practices GFIA uses to prevent or minimize pollutants in its storm water.

The active participation of GFIA management, staff, and all airport tenants is an essential part of this program. If you observe any practices or situations that appear to have the potential to negatively affect the quality of storm water at the airport, please call Airport Communications at 233-6055 and report your observation(s).

The airport's Storm Water Management Program Plan (SWMPP) is available on the airport's website at www.flygrandrapids.org/Enviro.php. Hard copies of the SWMPP may be requested by contacting the Kent County Department of Aeronautics at 233-6000.

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