



volume 18 | no. 3  
Summer 2010

## INSIDE THIS EDITION

- 2 | *AirTran Airways Expands Service*
- 2 | *Military Demo Teams Visit West Michigan*
- 3 | *Tips To Fly Through Your Next Trip*
- 3 | *Need A Place To Land Your Business?*
- 4 | *Airport Employee Information Corner*
- 4 | *Giving From The Heart*
- 4 | *Presenting*
- 4 | *News In Brief*

## Providing Thrust To The Next Generation

Originally announced in March 2010, West Michigan Aviation Academy (WMAA) will soon open its doors to the inaugural freshman class. This class was initially slated to accommodate a maximum 60 students but, due to high demand, enrollment was increased to 80 for the 2010-2011 school year.

The Academy, founded by Dick and Betsy DeVos, will be under the daily oversight of Patrick Cwayna, CEO, but Cwayna is quick to credit the Academy's Board Members for the vision and passion they bring to WMAA. The Academy brings together two of DeVos' passions: aviation and education. In addition to DeVos, the 7-member Board includes William Boer, president of Grey Dunes Associates, Dr. Tandy Champion, private practice physician, Rick Fiddler, director of aviation for Amway Corporation, Clifford Maine, attorney with Barnes and Thornburg, LLP, Kathleen Maine, general counsel for Michigan Medical Patient Care, and Bruce Matthews.

*Rendering courtesy of Integrated Architecture*

There are many layers of uniqueness to WMAA, the most obvious of which is undoubtedly its aviation focus. There are only 3 or 4 known aviation high schools in the nation, and WMAA is the only known charter school with an aviation focus. It will not offer extra-curricular activities or non-aviation electives such as art, music, etc. WMAA will operate an extended school day and school year model, with students attending 7 classes per day and between 188-200 days per year.



**WMAA Mission** - To provide a rigorous educational program, through an aviation focus, preparing students for unlimited opportunities, including college achievement, career success, and engaged citizenship.

WMAA is a high school and, as such, offers all the classes that any other state-approved high school requires, including English, sciences, math, civics, history, and more. The curriculum offers students three tracks to choose from: Aviation Flight, Aviation Business Administration, and Aviation Mechanics. While there is a strong aviation focus, the school offers a rigorous academic foundation to any student looking for a new, challenging way to learn.

In its first year, the Academy will employ 10-12 individuals in both full-time and part-time positions, but the economic impact began before the doors were even open. With 35-45 construction workers onsite each day, six days per week, construction activities at the WMAA facility will put nearly \$1 million into the local economy – with more to follow next year as Phase II of the building renovations begins.

The Academy has been authorized by Bay Mills Community College (BMCC), a tribal school based in Brimley in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. BMCC began with two schools in 2001 when legislative obstacles were removed to allow a federal tribally controlled community college to act as a charter school authorizing body. In 2010, BMCC will charter 44 schools educating more than 15,000 students across the State of Michigan.

So, how does Cwayna feel about a school at an airport? "It's like having the largest practical lab right in front of you. Plus, the Aeronautics Board and staff have been so welcoming and helpful that we already feel right at home."

For more information on the West Michigan Aviation Academy, you may visit their website at [www.westmichiganaviation.org](http://www.westmichiganaviation.org).

## Passenger activity continues to soar!

June 2010 passenger activity was up 28.5% over the previous year, setting two airport records; busiest month ever, and largest increase for any month (excluding the anomaly of 9/11). The total year-to-date activity for 2010 is 17.89% higher than 2009.



## AirTran Airways Expands Service

Just six weeks after arriving at Gerald R. Ford International Airport, AirTran Airways has launched service to two new destinations. On June 12, AirTran began weekend service to Fort Myers Southwest Florida International and Tampa International airports.

Some airport patrons may wonder, “Why more Florida destinations?” Interestingly enough, these new destinations, which bring the total nonstop destinations from GFIA to 24, bring our routes more into balance with our top passenger demand. A full 20% of passenger traffic is headed to Florida each year from GFIA. With five of the 24 nonstop destinations in Florida, that 20% is now mirrored in nonstop destinations. So, whether you are planning a trip to the theme parks of central Florida, the gulf coast, or perhaps the Atlantic Ocean, you can get there from here – with no stops along the way.

Additionally, of the top 25 destinations for all GFIA passengers, 19 of them are available nonstop via service offered by one or more of the eight airlines operating here.

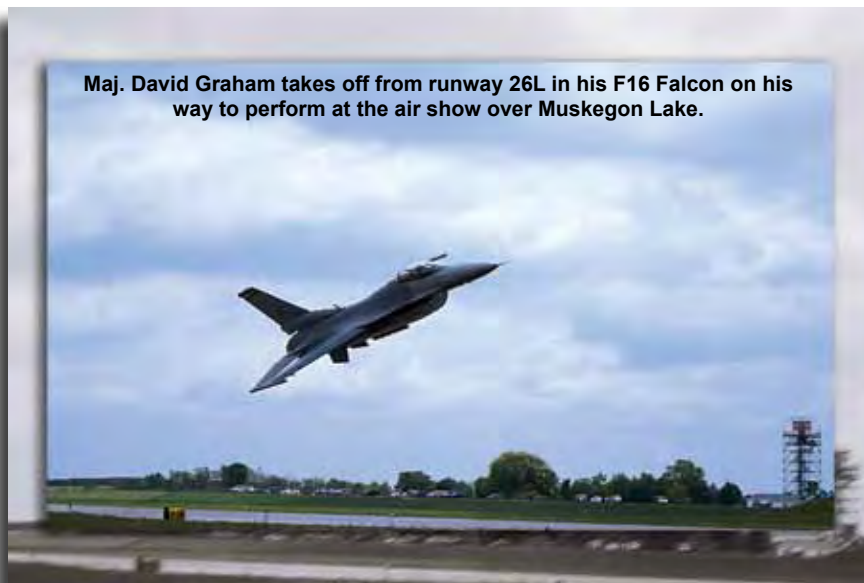


## Military Demo Teams Visit West Michigan

The 2010 Muskegon Summer Celebration event line-up included an air show for the opening weekend. Coordinating an air show involves many, many details. What’s an air show planner do? Well, if you are the “Air Boss” (aka Dennis Dunbar), you look at all of the resources that are available throughout the region. In doing so, Dunbar discovered Northern Air, Inc., a Fixed Base Operator at Gerald R. Ford International Airport, located just 30 miles away.

Referring to his first visit, Dunbar says, “What a great first impression! Northern Air has very impressive facilities and awesome customer service. They have pulled out all the stops to help us with our air show needs.” During the visit, Dunbar explained that there was an F16 Falcon and two A10 Thunderbolts that needed to be based at GFIA while performing at the air show over Muskegon Lake. While they bring in much of their own equipment, they would need ramp space, fuel and other ground support while they were here. For Northern Air, the request was not a problem. They bring plenty of experience to the table in handling unique events and aircraft.

So, on the last weekend in June, two A10s from Barksdale AFB, Louisiana, along with one F16 from Hill AFB, Utah, made the Northern Air ramp their temporary home. Airport visitors – as well as those in the viewing area – were treated to several rounds of practice maneuvers over and around the airport property. The A10s, with their 57’ 6” wing span and ability to fly at speeds up to 420 miles per hour in combat, flew in tandem from take-off to landing. The smaller F16, with a wing span of just 32’ 8” and ability to fly at speeds up to 1,500 miles/hour (but not in restricted air space), flew solo, showing impressive maneuverability.



**Maj. David Graham takes off from runway 26L in his F16 Falcon on his way to perform at the air show over Muskegon Lake.**

Flying the F16 was Major David Graham of the 388th Fighter Wing, while his lead crew chief, Staff Sergeant Tim Hiday, handled things on the ground. The A10s of the 47th Fighter Squadron, 917 Wing, were flown by Lieutenant Colonel Rod Glass and Lieutenant Colonel John Lipps, and were supported by crew chiefs Master Sergeant Curtis Miles and Master Sergeant Jon Butler (respectively). On the ground, providing 24/7 security for the aircraft, were members of the Michigan Volunteer Defense Force, 5th Battalion. Their watchful eyes allowed the flight and ground crews to rest and prepare for their flights.

As always, it was an honor for the airport and Northern Air to play a supporting role to our military.

## Tips To Fly Through Your Next Trip

Ever wonder what “secrets” are out there to make your next business or vacation travel experience a breeze? Well, the following tips are offered to help you fly through your next trip!

### **Before Leaving Home:**

If you can, pack everything you need for your trip in a single carry-on bag. Not only will you save on the checked bag fee, but you can avoid additional delays at the airport.

When packing, be sure to leave any prohibited items at home; and remember the TSA’s 3-1-1 Rule for all liquids and gels. You can always find the most up-to-date information on the TSA website at [www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov).

If you have no checked bags and are traveling within the U.S., you can also check in for your flight and print your boarding pass at home up to 24 hours before departure. By doing so, you can bypass the airline ticket counter altogether and head straight for your gate!

### **Arriving At The Airport:**

The airlines recommend that passengers arrive at the ticket counter at least 90 minutes before their scheduled departure time and be at the gate no less than 45 minutes before departure for domestic travel.

Remember to plan additional time to park and wayfind to the passenger terminal building. If you park in the economy lot, you should plan an additional 15-20 minutes to park and ride the shuttle to the terminal. From the parking garage, plan 5 minutes to walk across. Opt for Valet Parking and you can drop your car at the terminal curb!

While the average security-screening wait time at GFIA is 5-10 minutes, wait times do increase during peak travel windows. It’s always best to plan more time in your schedule and avoid the stress of potentially missing your flight. Keep your identification and boarding pass handy as you will need to show these items at the checkpoint.

### **Returning To The Airport:**

If you used Valet Parking, your vehicle will be waiting for you curbside – just stop at the counter to pay and you’re on your way. If you parked your own vehicle, you may use one of the “credit card only” lanes at the exit plaza and be on your way in just 30 seconds.

So, there you have it. Some tried and true travel tips. Give them a try, and – Happy Flying!



---

## Need A Place To Land Your Business?

Are you looking to relocate or expand your business? Are you looking for commercial real estate that can accommodate your business’s unique needs?

You may want to consider landing your business at Gerald R. Ford International Airport. We have a number of available properties for lease that can offer:

- A strategic, centralized location in the Midwest
- Foreign Trade Zone
- Excellent intermodal infrastructure – Air / Road / Rail
- Extensive passenger and air cargo route network

We have over 450 acres available for aviation-related development, with additional improved and unimproved properties for your consideration.

For more information about available properties, land use restrictions, or the airport’s minimum standards, contact:

Joel Burgess, Properties Administrator  
Kent County Department of Aeronautics  
5500 44th Street SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49512-4055  
phone: 616.233.6054  
email: [JBurgess@grr.org](mailto:JBurgess@grr.org)



## News In Brief

- » At its June 30 meeting, the Aeronautics Board accepted and filed the 2009 audited financial report. A copy of this report is available on the website at [www.flygrandrapids.org/Pubs.php](http://www.flygrandrapids.org/Pubs.php), or you can contact the Department at (616) 233-6000 to have a copy mailed to you.
- » GFIA will be partnering with Michigan Blood to host a community blood drive on Friday, September 24, in the International Room in the passenger terminal building. You may pre-register for a time on our website at [www.flygrandrapids.org/BloodDrive.php](http://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 August 25, September 29, and October 27, 2010 at 8:30 am. All meetings are held in the International Room in the passenger terminal building and are open to the public.

## Giving From The Heart

Twice each year, GFIA partners with Michigan Blood to host a blood drive at the airport. The most recent drive was held May 21. GFIA and Michigan Blood would like to thank all who participated in the blood drive.

Join us for our next blood drive, scheduled for Friday, September 24, 2010.

Previous Total	750 pints
Given 05/15/09	14 pints
Total donated at airport drives	764 pints

## 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 welcome the opportunity to come to your next meeting and provide an overview of the airport, 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](http://www.flygrandrapids.org).

**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](http://www.flygrandrapids.org)

**Kent County Aeronautics Board** | John Van Laar, chair; Ted Vonk, vice chair; Dean Agee; Joe Tomaselli; Dick Vander Molen; Floyd Wilson, Jr.

\* *County Commissioner*

**Executive Director** | James Koslosky, A.A.E.

**Editor** | Bruce Schedlbauer, APR, Marketing and Communications Manager

**Associate Editor** | Susan Sherman, Community Relations Coordinator, [ssherman@grr.org](mailto:ssherman@grr.org)

## Kent County Department of Aeronautics

Gerald R. Ford International Airport  
5500 44th Street SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49512-4055



## Airport Employee Information Corner

GFIA's stormwater, generated by rainfall and snow melt, is conveyed to local streams and rivers through the airport's storm water network. The airport and its tenants are required to manage petroleum products and other potential pollutants safely and to minimize their contact with stormwater runoff. Good housekeeping practices, including making sure the lids on dumpsters are closed when not in use, can help in minimizing or preventing stormwater contact with polluting materials.

GFIA has a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan that describes the management practices used at the airport to prevent or minimize pollutants in stormwater at the airport. The plan is available on our website at [www.flygrandrapids.org/Enviro.php](http://www.flygrandrapids.org/Enviro.php) or by contacting airport administration at (616) 233-6000.

The active participation of GFIA staff and tenants is a critical part of the stormwater management program. If you observe any practices or situations that appear to have the potential to negatively affect the quality of stormwater at the airport, please call Airport Communications at (616) 233-6055 and report your observation(s).

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

The World's Gateway to...