



AirportConnections

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Can You Surf At The Airport?

You can now! That's right: Gerald R. Ford International's passenger terminal building has gone wireless! In a move designed to bring added convenience, efficiency, and productivity to the users of GFIA, the Kent County Aeronautics Board has introduced **FREE** WiFi service throughout the terminal building. This new service is powered by ICOA Airport Networks of Rhode Island.

The new neutral-host, high-speed broadband wireless Internet network will offer passengers secure, convenient wireless Internet access from anywhere in the terminal. This public service does not require users to install or use proprietary software.

Passengers with WiFi-enabled laptops, PDAs, or cell phones may now connect to the Internet to check their email, access their corporate servers, download documents and surf the web, with unlimited access anywhere from the curb front to the airplane. →



GFIA's Award-Winning Tenants

Midwest Airlines Named Top Domestic Airline

The 2005 Zagat Survey of U.S. Airlines ranks Midwest Airlines #1 Overall. Midwest also garnered the top spot in the categories of "comfort" and "food" and a second place finish in "service." The fourth criterion surveyed is "website."



The airline survey, based on voting by 5,277 people who report taking an average of approximately 15 domestic flights per year, reflects the experiences of passengers aboard a total of 80,000 flights within the U.S. each year – or about 220 flights per day.

"Even in difficult economic times, our employees understand the value of each interaction with our customers, and do everything they can to deliver on our promise of 'The best care in the air,'" states Timothy Hoeksema, Chairman and CEO of Midwest Airlines.

Midwest Airlines has served GFIA since 1988. Currently, Midwest Connect offers seven daily non-stop flights to Milwaukee. →



Starbucks® Wins The Golden Cup

"Go for the gold!" is probably not the battle cry you would expect to hear at Starbucks – unless, maybe, you are in Turin, Italy. But this cheer means much the same thing to the employees of the Starbucks at GFIA, and now they have achieved their goal.

The Starbucks Gold Cup Award recognizes excellence in both customer service and efficient store operations. The GFIA Starbucks team is the first in their growth-size category to win this award. This performance incentive program requires a store to average 95% or above in its review scores for the quarter.



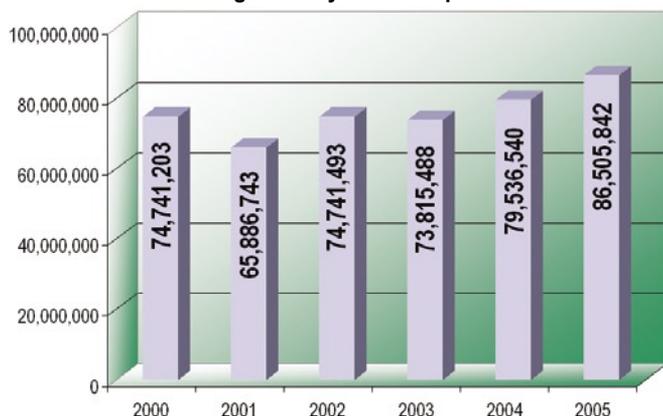
Starbucks has been in operation at GFIA since 2004 and is managed by the airport's food and beverage concessionaire HMSHost. →

2005 Aviation Activity In Review

2005 will be long-remembered as the year the airline industry was plagued by high fuel prices, volatile contract negotiations, and several airline bankruptcy filings. Through it all, GFIA's commercial passenger activity continued at near record pace, with the airport serving a total of 2,090,505 travelers (vs. 2,150,125 in 2004).

On the other side of the airfield, cargo volumes set a new record with 86,505,842 pounds carried in 2005! This 8.75% increase over 2004 means an average of 237,002 pounds of cargo were handled each day. →

Total cargo activity shown in pounds.



Don't Forget!

If you would like to receive your copy of *Airport Connections* electronically, you may sign up by going to www.flygrandrapids.org.

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GFIA Tenant Profile: FAA Air Traffic Control Tower

As you drive toward the airport, one of the first things you see is the Federal Aviation Administration Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT). No wonder, given that it rises nearly 150 feet above the ground, sprouts more than a dozen antennas, and is topped with windows giving its occupants a 360° view of the airport and surrounding 20+ mile area.

Have you ever wondered what goes on in the ATCT? An intricate web of communication involving pilots and air traffic controllers takes place to ensure the safety of the airspace for which the controllers are responsible. At GFIA, the ATCT is responsible for all aircraft flying at or below 10,000 feet above sea level within a 35 mile radius of the airport. The Grand Rapids control tower is responsible for all aircraft that fly in this airspace, even if they are not departing from or landing at Gerald R. Ford International.

Technology is a vital component of the Air Traffic Control system. Examples include radar that shows the location of each aircraft, instruments that calculate wind speed and shear by tracking the movement of dust particles in the air, computer systems that pass along an aircraft's flight plan from one control tower to the next throughout the course of the flight, and the Automated Terminal Information Service (ATIS) that provides continuous broadcast of recorded information including cloud height, visibility, obstructions to visibility, temperature, dew point, wind direction and velocity, altimeter setting, runway in use, and other pertinent remarks.

While technology is important, it plays only a supporting role to that of the Air Traffic Controller. These men and women, many of whom are pilots, have trained extensively throughout their careers and are certified on each position within the Tower. While they rely on technology to complete their jobs in an efficient, safe manner, their expertise is unmatched by any computer or machine.

In Grand Rapids, the 28-person federal ATCT team (including 22 controllers) handles approximately 350 take-offs and landings each day, vectoring each through a carefully choreographed aeronautical ballet with the goal of "ne'er the planes shall meet." →



A view of the inside of the Air Traffic Control Tower cab at GFIA.

Inextinguishable Passion GFIA Hires New ARFF Chief

He always wanted to be a firefighter. Call it his passion – his fire. In 1974, fresh out of high school, he was hired by the Ionia Fire Department. In 1979, he became one of the first state certified firefighters at Gerald R. Ford International Airport. Now, he has been promoted to Fire Chief.

In a career that spans 31 years – 26 of which have been at the airport – Bryan Kimble has almost done it all. He was a State of Michigan level II certified firefighter, an American Association of Airport Executives senior-level certified firefighter, a National Fire Protection Association certified fire inspector, a State of Michigan licensed fire inspector, a State of Michigan licensed Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), and had been serving as a shift Captain since 1990. But Kimble's passion for firefighting was still not extinguished, so he decided to undertake one more challenge...and on December 12, 2005, he began the next phase of his career as Chief of the Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting (ARFF) division at Gerald R. Ford International Airport.



Why did Kimble pursue a career as an airport firefighter? "I originally applied because I had a family to support and I needed full-time employment with benefits. I've stayed because this is by far the best job I've ever had," states

"It is a real win for the Department and the airport to appoint a new Chief of ARFF with the training, skills and experience that Mr. Kimble brings to this important leadership position. It is even better that we were able to promote from within through an open, competitive recruitment effort."

**- Jim Koslosky
Aeronautics Director**

Kimble. "The Department of Aeronautics is incredibly safety-conscious and makes sure we have everything we need to do our jobs well."

The GFIA Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting division comprises three shifts of four firefighters and one captain, each working 24-hour rotations. So, what is Kimble's first task as Chief? "I have to replace myself," replied Kimble, referring to the now-vacant Captain's position. →

2006 Parking Rates

Effective January 1, 2006, parking rates at Gerald R. Ford International are as follows:

Short-term Parking:

\$2.00 first hour
\$24.00 daily maximum

Long-term Parking:

\$1.00 per hour
\$8.00 daily maximum
\$48.00 weekly maximum

Express Shuttle Parking:

\$1.00 per hour
\$7.00 daily maximum
\$42.00 weekly maximum

Valet Parking:

\$15.00 per day
\$10.00 for five hours or less

ARFF Collects More Toys

2005 was the second year the GFIA Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighters collected donations for Toys for Tots. Along with the usual stuffed animals, dolls, puzzles and board games, one generous donor dropped off two brand-new bicycles!

The Grand Rapids Santa Claus Girls coordinate the distribution of toys to needy families throughout Kent County. Thanks to all donors for your generosity.

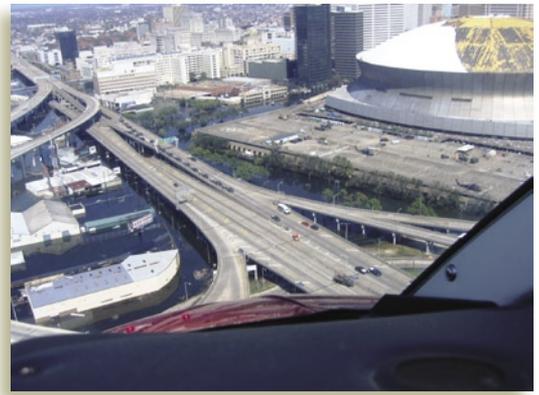
For more information about the Toys for Tots program, call the Holiday Hotline at (616) 459-2625. →



Hurricane Relief Efforts Assisted By GFIA Tenants' Generosity

We've all heard the stories of how hurricanes Katrina and Rita savaged the southern coastal states. We've seen the pictures of the mass destruction. Many West Michigan residents have donated time, money, and other resources to aid the victims of these deadly storms. Several airport tenants also have contributed to these efforts.

When International Aid, a Spring Lake-based nonprofit, global relief, development and training agency, stepped up to help in the disaster relief efforts, they discovered they were not standing alone. Alticor provided the use of their fleet of corporate aircraft to transport relief workers and supplies to the south. Dick DeVos, former president of Alticor, loaned his personal helicopter, which logged more than 50 flight hours, allowing relief coordinators to view all areas in need of help and delivering medical supplies to the New Orleans Superdome.



Approaching the New Orleans Superdome in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.



John Workman (right), President of Eagle Alloy Leather and Roger Spoelman, President of Mercy Hospital in Muskegon and International Aid Board member unload medical supplies at the Superdome.

Alticor Director of Aviation Rick Fiddler said, "Our staff took such pride in being able to help the relief efforts in this manner. I had pilots volunteering for every flight we took and they were genuinely disappointed when our help was no longer needed." Northern Jet Management provided significantly discounted flights of several of their corporate aircraft. Aero Med provided helicopter maintenance supplies and medications. Wings of Mercy has, to date, provided more than a half dozen medical relief flights.

International Aid has been able to donate more than \$40 million in relief aid to the hurricane-damaged areas. They were also able to go into Hancock County, among the hardest hit areas, and assist in the organization and disbursement of food and other aid supplies that were delivered to their warehouse. "In no way could this have happened, on this scale, without the generous donations of our airport community," said Dean Agee, Vice President of Advancement/Communications for International Aid, and Kent County Aeronautics Board member.

For more information on International Aid, visit their website at www.internationalaid.org. ➔



Who's Who In Airport Security?

Anyone who has been to the airport in recent years has undoubtedly noticed the plethora of uniformed employees. Have you ever wondered what their respective responsibilities are? Well, in the next few paragraphs, we will try to "demystify" airport security and law enforcement at GFIA.

If you're flying out, the first uniformed staff you are likely to see is the curb front security officers. D & R Security, Inc., a locally owned and operated security firm, provides this service under contract to the Kent County Department of Aeronautics (KCDA). In addition to monitoring vehicle traffic around the terminal, D & R staff monitor vehicle access points to the air carrier ramps. The services provided by D & R Security are in support of federally-mandated security measures in place at GFIA.

Also providing security services at the airport is the staff of the federal Transportation Security Administration (TSA). All passenger and baggage screening is conducted by these federal employees. Additionally, TSA is the regulatory agency that ensures airport and airline compliance

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General Aviation Growing Strong

On November 30, the Kent County Department of Aeronautics (KCDA) and Northern Air, along with more than 60 attendees, celebrated the opening of Northern Air's new aircraft maintenance hangar and KCDA's newly reconstructed general aviation ramps with a joint ribbon cutting ceremony.

The new heated jet hangar, constructed by Northern Jet Management, will house up to nine corporate jets, and can accommodate state-of-the-art "high tail" jets which serve several regional corporations. The newly reconstructed aircraft ramps allow the airport to better serve the larger and heavier business aircraft, accommodating aircraft up to 175,000 lbs. This improvement more than doubles the weight capacity of older asphalt ramps.

U. S. Representative Vern Ehlers addressed the audience, congratulating the GFIA community on the completion of these two expansion projects, saying, "I am very pleased to see the continued growth in business aviation, as evidenced by the opening of this wonderful new facility. As a member of the Aviation Subcommittee of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I spend much of my time advocating for general and business aviation, so I am happy to see this expansion of Northern Jet at my home airport, Gerald R. Ford International Airport."



U. S. Representative Vern Ehlers.



Kent County Aeronautics Board vice chair Tom O'Hare (left) and Northern Air president Chuck Cox.

Speaking on behalf of the Kent County Aeronautics Board, vice chairman Tom O'Hare said, "The Kent County Aeronautics Board and Northern Air have been long-standing partners in serving the needs of the corporate, business, and private aviation community here in West Michigan. This partnership has contributed to what is today a significant and growing segment of the overall aviation mix that makes up Gerald R. Ford International Airport." ➔



- » The next three meetings of the Kent County Aeronautics Board will take place February 22, March 29, and April 26, at 8:30 am. All meetings are held in the International Room in the passenger terminal building and are open to the public.
- » For the fourth year in a row, GFIA Airfield Maintenance staff placed first in the annual Snow Plow Rodeo sponsored by the City of Wyoming and the American Public Works Association. This year's winners were Airport Maintenance Supervisor Eric Vander Stel and Airport Maintenance Equipment Operator Rich Feigel.
- » Joel Burgess has joined the Kent County Department of Aeronautics as Properties Administrator. Joel comes to the Department from Comair/Delta Connection, where he served as the airline's Grand Rapids station manager.
- » James Koslosky, A.A.E., Aeronautics Director, has been appointed to serve on two national steering groups. One of these steering groups is guiding the development of federal policy positions supporting reauthorization of airport development funding for our nation's airports. The second steering group is supporting the Transportation Security Administration's effort to develop a program and funding mechanism to move baggage screening from airport terminal lobbies to back-room, in-line solutions.
- » Bruce Schedlbauer, APR, Marketing and Communications Manager for the Department of Aeronautics, is serving as 2006 Chairman of the Marketing and Communications Steering Group of Airports Council International – North America. Additionally, Bruce has been elected to the Board of Directors of the West Michigan Tourist Association.
- » On January 3, 2006, Ann Broker, Port Director with the U. S. Customs and Border Protection Department, retired after 35 years of service.

Celebrate The Season

The sound of aircraft engines had some competition the week of December 5-9 in the form of holiday music. Eighteen local school groups signed up to perform throughout the week, putting travelers, visitors, and employees in the holiday spirit. As a result of bad weather, three of the scheduled groups were unable to perform, but we thank them for planning to be with us and we hope they can return again next year!

This year's performing ensembles came from: *Burton Elementary School, Byron Center High School, Caledonia High School, Caledonia Middle School, Creston High School, Cutlerville Christian Middle School, East Grand Rapids High School, East Kentwood High School, Grand Rapids Christian High School, Moline Christian School, North Point Christian School, Ottawa Hills High School, South Christian High School, and Wyoming Park High School.* →

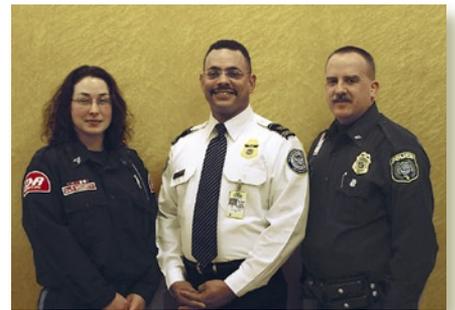


East Grand Rapids High School Madrigals perform traditional Christmas music for travelers.

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with federal transportation security regulations.

The third group of uniformed staff you will see is the Airport Police. These KCDA-employed personnel are fully-sworn law enforcement officers who are armed and have the power to arrest and enforce the laws governing the airport, Kent County, and the State of Michigan. Their primary roles are to provide law enforcement support to the TSA baggage and passenger screening checkpoints, and ensure the security of the airfield in support of KCDA's airport security program as mandated by the TSA. In addition, Airport Police provide law enforcement support to all of the airport community.



From left, Sgt. Terrie Karr, D & R Security; Kent R. Jones, Supervisory Transportation Security Officer; and Jeffrey Smeenge, GFIA Law Enforcement Officer.

While each has its unique role to play, these organizations – comprising nearly 250 employees – work together to ensure the security of the GFIA traveling public in a layered, collaborative effort. →

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 call the Kent County Department of Aeronautics at 616.233.6000. For additional information, be sure to visit us on the web at www.flygrandrapids.org.

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

phone 616.233.6000
fax 616.233.6025

web www.flygrandrapids.org

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