

The Airport Report

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Return of the Forest Service

INSIDE THIS ISSUE!!!!

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A year ago this summer, twenty-five small fires around the Clearwater River morphed into a monster, threatening lives and property around what became known as the Clearwater Complex. The Forest Service went on the offense, opening a temporary tanker base at the Lewiston-Nez Perce County Regional Airport.

Although it wasn't intended to be, Forest Service and Airport officials agree—it was good practice. Because they're back!

Grangeville Airport is on track to close and rebuild its 5,100-foot runway this summer, and until it's reopened, the Forest Service will call LWS, "Home."

"The lessons we learned last year accommodating the Forest Service on short-notice helped us prepare



Single Engine Air Tanker (SEAT) dropping retardant

for their return this year," said Chris Hayes, Lewiston Airport Manager.

Before the end of June, Hayes expects to see mobile tanks in place along with pilot, crew, and support operations trailers.

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On Your Calendar...

- Business after hours at the Airport! June 16th, 5:00 to 7:00 pm, Airport Terminal Building, Second Floor Reception Area
- Experimental Aircraft Association (Chapter 328) Pancake Breakfast every 1st and 3rd Saturday
- A full-scale emergency exercise will be conducted June 10th,

What Wait Times?

News of TSA security wait times at large airports exceeding three hours has customers from throughout the region calling Airport Administration.

"The concern in their voice is almost palpable," said Airport Manager Chris Hayes, "and it brings out questions folks have wanted to ask ever since they spent the night in some major hub concourse. The conversation usually goes something like this:

So what are the wait times now at the Lewiston Airport?

"How were they last time?"

"Well the wait times now are same as they were a year ago."

Oh! Well...how 'bout weather?

"Blue skies and good visibility."

How 'bout next week? Is weather going to delay my flight next week?

"Well, we do get fog or snow once in a while. But over all, our operational rate is better than any airport in the Pacific Northwest."

I suppose your parking rates are pretty high, huh?

"Actually, parking is free for our customers."

Hmmm...want to avoid long wait lines, bad weather, parking fees and the long ride home? Book your next flight from LWS."

Old Gun Club Building Goes Up in Smoke

Except for the faint, orange glow inside the old gun club building, the facility didn't look much different May 11, 2016 than it had for years. Vacant after Federal Aviation Administration officials declared it an incompatible land use, it fell into disrepair. Weeds eventually crept up to its foundation, and vandals broke the windows and scavenged anything of significance.

"The building became an attractive nuisance," said Bill McCann, Jr., Chairman of the Airport Authority, "and there was nothing left to salvage."

So early morning, May 11th, the building's interior was filled with kindling wood and set afire. Airport and fire department officials stood by and waited, and for the longest time the building was a petulant child, stubbornly refusing to be moved.

Then, suddenly, with an audible gasp, the fire took a deep breath and blew a large, dark plume of smoke into

the clear, windless blue sky over the airport. Seconds later, angry orange flames engulfed the structure and with hours, the clubhouse was gone.

"It was an excellent training opportunity," said Lewiston Fire Chief Travis Myklebust. "Firefighters rarely a chance to study fire—up close and personal.

For the airport, it was a chance to close an old chapter and open a new.

"Land is one of the airport's only resources," said Board Treasurer Pat Nuxoll. "The costs of tearing the building down were high. So the airport saved money and firefighters got a chance to train and the community got rid of an eyesore."



Gun Club Clubhouse Engulfed in Flame

Once the rubble is hauled off and the site cleaned up, officials will begin marketing the site as part of the Airport's South Side Business Park.

Hillcrest and the Air Posse: Teamwork to Make the Dream Work

It's the nightmare scenario. Someone you know or—worse yet—someone you love is lost somewhere in the millions of acres of wilderness surrounding the highways that Idahoans take for granted. May 15th, 2016 the scenario almost ruined someone's dream.

Three people, a young man and two young women were in a backwoods vehicle accident. Their SUV was stuck, they were lost, and then cell service gave out.

Ground search teams were dispatched with little luck. So the following morning, the Nez Perce County Sheriff's Air Posse was called.

"Frank Maresca and Jim Finley had the Posse's search and rescue aircraft airborne within 30 minutes," said Jim Finley, Posse Commander.

Frank and Jim began searching Deer Creek, Hoover Point and the surrounding ridges. After several passes, Jim noticed a Hillcrest helicopter below.

He grabbed the radio microphone and asked for help.

Hillcrest immediately terminated their mission and joined the search, staying low while the Posse kept surveillance from above. It wasn't long before the Hillcrest pilot radioed back.

He'd spotted footprints. Following them, he not only found the missing man, he was able to land and pick him up—he'd been walking since early morning, leaving the two girls in the stuck SUV.

With a little more coordination, Hillcrest and the Air Posse found the

vehicle and Hillcrest picked up its occupants and transported them to the Kruze Meadows command center.

For the folks who were lost and their families, it wasn't the nightmare scenario after all. With the Air Posse and the help of the Hillcrest Aircraft Company, the nightmare became the dream come true...return of lost loved ones.



A Fresh Look at Airport Operations

News reports about the airport fire station got you confused? Not surprising. There's a lot of agencies and issues involved, and not all of them are compatible. Maybe this article will help.

Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) is very a specialized field of fire fighting, and with the possible exception of fire, they have very little in common. BUT...Federal Airport Regulations will not allow an airport to receive airline service without ARFF. If you want your airport to have airline service, you must have equipment (a truck or trucks), and you must have a place to put it (a station). Both truck and station must meet strict regulations. Whose?

Enter: the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Airport Inspection Division. *They're here to help.* And their message? LWS needs to replace its truck.

Problem is, the newest generation

Fire Station, a joint Airport/City of Lewiston facility.

How about remodeling or expanding that facility?

Enter once again, the FAA Airport Inspection Division (*yes, they're still here to help*). The current LWS fire station location doesn't meet current standards either.

So the equipment's the easy part?

"We'll go out for competitive bids," said Airport Manager Chris Hayes, "and order the truck next year."

The only location on the north side of the airport that meets the needs of the City of Lewiston, the Airport, and the FAA is the southwest corner of Airport Park.

"The geography and geology there present some development challenges," said Bill McCann, Jr., Airport Authority Board Chairman, "and they're driving the costs out of sight."

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"...geography and geology ...[are] driving the costs out of sight."

-Bill McCann, Jr. Chairman
Lewiston-Nez Perce County
Regional Airport Authority

Whitman Elementary Students Learn Airport Operations

Students at Whitman Elementary School couldn't go to the airport for a field trip, so thanks to Airport Administration, the Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) folks, and Alaska Airlines, the airport came to them!

Marci Purcell's second grade class finished reading the book *Up and Away: Taking a Flight* by Meredith Davis, then



A second grader models the latest in Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting apparel

asked some questions she couldn't answer.

Fortunately, there was a former airport employee working down the hall in the School's Intervention Room.

"Mr. Turner—or 'Mr. T' as he's known around here—borrowed some equipment from the Airport, and before I knew it, my students were modeling firefighting gear and demonstrating how to marshal an aircraft to parking."

"Mr. T" [Robin Turner] retired from the Lewiston-Nez Perce County Regional Airport three years ago.

"When Mrs. Purcell asked, I was only too glad to help," he said. So were Airport Manager Chris Hayes, Connie Waldher, team leader at Alaska Airlines, and Dave Stradley at the Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting Station.

With their help, Turner reported in to Mrs. Purcell's class with enough equipment to start their own airport.

Then came the questions: *Mr. T...
...what makes an airplane fly?
...why are there clouds?
...do taxiways take you to the shopping concourse?*



2nd Grade student demonstrating "Top Gun" aircraft marshaling techniques.

And best of all...

...when you go to the bathroom on an airplane, where does the smelly stuff go?

"For the most part, my job was easy," Mr. Turner said with clear tone of relief in his voice. "The kids read the book and already knew about taxiways and runways. What more could you ask for?"

A New Light at Night



Customers who come and go during the hours of darkness aren't coming and going in quite as much darkness as before.

Why?

Because new modern, energy efficient LED lights have replaced the old HID fixtures in the main parking lot. Customer feed back? *They like it!*

Most of the lot's dark corners are gone because the LED setup puts out more light. The fixtures last longer and consume somewhere between 50 and 80% less electricity.

Not bad, huh?



Airport Operations...A Fresh Look

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The FAA will cover the costs of over 90% of the airport's part of the project, but not the City of Lewiston's, "...and the Airport's needs can be met by building a stand-alone station elsewhere on the airport," said one FAA official.

"Realistically, the north side of the airport is nearly 'built-out,'" said Verl Long, Airport Authority Board Commissioner.

No wonder, then, with all the competing criteria and regulatory requirements, the Authority chose to take a step back and ask, *what is in the*

interests of the airport?

Would that mean the possible placement of an ARFF station on the airport's south side? Could an ARFF station on the south side be combined with a replacement snow removal equipment building, thereby opening up the existing locations on the north side for other development?



New Generation Aircraft Rescue & Fire Fighting Vehicle

Forest Service Returns

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"Generators, pumps, and pallets of equipment will be showing up any day,"

At least two single-engine air tankers will be pre-positioned here, along with a Twin Commander command and control aircraft.

"We understand it's a somewhat standard 'package' for immediate response," said Bill McCann, Jr., Chairman of the Regional Airport Authority. "But they [Forest Service

if things get out of hand, they can bring in the larger aircraft like they did last year, and we can accommodate their needs."

The year 2015 saw the introduction of two Canadian CL415s into the region. Hundreds of fire fighters arrived by Sierra Pacific Airlines Boeing 737s.



Canadian CL415 Fire Fighting Aircraft

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LEWISTON-NEZ PERCE COUNTY REGIONAL AIRPORT



Feedback.....

It isn't something we put up with. The Authority Board and Staff appreciate input and suggestions—not just about this newsletter, but about ways we can improve our airport and the services provided

**LEWISTON-NEZ PERCE COUNTY REGIONAL AIRPORT
AUTHORITY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

William V. McCann, Jr., Chairman

Jim Finley, Vice Chairman

Pat Nuxoll, Treasurer

Verl Long, Secretary

Emmett McCormick, Commissioner

Meetings

For up-to-date information on schedules, check the Public Meeting section of the Lewiston Morning Tribune.

