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The LWS Airport Report

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A Blue Light Special

After the bad news last month that it was delaying the reconstruction of Runway 12-30, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) last week gave Airport Authority officials some good news. Rather than lose the discretionary grant monies, the FAA will authorize funding of a taxiway lighting system.

Taxiway lights are used to outline the edges of taxiways during periods of darkness or restricted visibility. The associated fixtures are elevated and emit a soft, blue light.

Almost as high a priority as the runway project, the new lights will replace the nearly obsolete reflectors that have been the mainstay of ground visual guidance for decades. With initial estimates of around $2 million, the state-of-the-art system will likely use LED-based technology.

“Both airline and general aviation users have been pushing taxiway lights as a safety enhancement for years,” Stephanie Morgan, Airport Manager told the Authority Board.

Of course the good news doesn’t come without a challenge. The schedule is tight, with installation planned for late summer or early fall.

But wait! That’s not all...

Tuskegee Aircraft

On display in the airline terminal building during Black History Month, is Victor Klingler’s impressive collection of model aircraft flown by the Tuskegee Airmen of World War Two fame. The models are identical to the actual aircraft flown by the real heroes. Check it out. Thank you, Victor!
Say Again, Sam?

“Say again?”

It’s a phase you’re bound to hear if you listen to pilots and air traffic controllers.

When one or the other isn’t sure they heard something correctly, they say, “Say again?”

Ok...now that you’ve had your first How-to-Speak-Aviation lesson, feel free to join in the chorus.

LWS just needs a longer runway.
All together now: “Say again?”

LWS needs a longer runway.
“Say again?”

That was my reaction, too, when I heard the rumor. I studied the airport’s master plan. The consultant studied the region’s demand, needs, and looked inside their crystal ball, and couldn’t find a good reason to lengthen the runway.

So I got out my English-to-Aviation Translation Dictionary and asked, “Why do we need a longer runway?”

Well...Pullman’s getting a longer runway.
Truth is, Pullman needs a longer runway because of their altitude. Higher altitudes require longer runways. That’s why Denver’s are longer than the Interstate Highway. But other than keeping up with the Jones’s why do we need a longer runway?

So bigger jets can land.

“How big?” I asked.

Oh—there was a pause for some head scratching—737s would be nice. How about an occasional 757? Or an Airbus? I like Airbuses!

At that point, I pulled up some pictures of 737s, 757s, and—yes—Airbuses in Lewiston from our Facebook page. “Like these?” I asked.

Yes!

I pointed to the pretty blue Sun Country 737 that stops by Lewiston a little more than monthly. “This one went from Lewiston to Atlanta last month, fully loaded, non-stop.”

Finally, there came a question!

Do...ahm...we really need a longer runway?

“Look...nobody loves long runways more than airport managers and pilots. But right now, our airport can handle anything the market can throw at us.”

You mean...building a longer runway won’t help us improve airline service?

Market demand drives airline service.

And we’re working on that. But there’s not a single airline telling us, “Build it and we will come.”

So relax. Let’s not chase multimillion dollar runway extensions to impress the neighbors. If we do, we’ll buy noise complaints. In the meantime, fasten your seatbelts, put your tray tables in their upright and locked position.

Happy Landings...

-SAM

Looking for a Few Good Friends

If there’s one thing everyone in the region agrees on, it’s the need for good airline service.

But exactly what does that mean? For some, it means new destinations. For others, it means adding flights to existing destinations.

It’s what we call “Air Service Development,” and as Kermit the Frog said, “It ain’t easy.”

Improvements to airline service—whether it’s with existing airlines or the possibility of new ones... it doesn’t just happen. It means putting on your best face. It means being the kind of community that the airline wants to be a part of. It takes teamwork, nurturing, research, marketing, good public relations, networking, and financial assistance.

We’ve got an air service development consultant we’re working with. And they’re good. But we need some friends.

Are you interested in joining the campaign? Becoming a sponsor? Do you know someone who can help? Give us a call at (208) 746-4471.
Blue Light Special (Continued from Page 1)

In approving the project, the Authority Board also approved the use of grant money to replace the wind sock apparatus, its segmented circle and traffic pattern indicators.

“The spinoff benefit is that it saves the tetrahedron,” said Bill McCann, Jr., Authority Board Chairman.

The “tetrahedron,” is another wind indicator, considered a “historical icon” by some. Installed shortly after World War II, the FAA has hinted it’s time to move it or get rid of it because it blocks the aerial view of windsock’s associated segmented circle.

“But the general aviation community uses it all,” argued Morgan to the FAA.

The windsock apparatus, too, was installed in the 1940s, and it became apparent that relocation was the right way to approach the replacement. Once an optimum place is found, a new segmented circle and traffic pattern indicators will be installed where they don’t interfere with the tetrahedron.

“It’s a grab bag project, said the airport manager, “solving a few smaller problems while making huge safety enhancements.”

Interesting, how something state-of-the art might just save a landmark piece of airport history.

Drones...Not Just for the Battlefield Anymore

And then there are model airplanes.

Safety concerns led the FAA to create a new set of regulations, and models and drones may require registration. The Federal Aviation Administration requires you to notify the Lewiston Airport and Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) before flying drones within 5 miles of the airport.

For additional information, visit our website at golws.com. You might also find the information you’re looking for at one of the following websites:

http://knowbeforeyoufly.org
http://www.faa.gov/uas

The one on the left is a drone and the one on the right a bird, right? Actually, both may be both. Huh?
Hertz: A Reason for Repeats

Rhonda Schaefer, Hertz Car Rental Manager laughs aloud when asked how long she’s worked at the airport. “Almost thirty-five years.” Then she laughs again. “My first customers are either retiring...or dead!”

Rhonda first airport job was 1984, waiting tables at the airport restaurant. John Uhlman, Hertz manager at the time thought she had the people skills to be a manager. “So he hired me, then quit!” Rhonda laughed again.

Three and a half decades later, Rhonda is having fun, with no idea of quitting. “I love the airport, I love the customers, and I love the company. What else could you want?”

She got a little quiet, though, when asked about the worst experience. “September 11th,” she answered without hesitation. “It was awful. People on the pay phones crying, trying to get home. The airlines were shutdown,” she said with a thoughtful shrug. “There was nothing they could do. We booked 25 one-way cars to the east coast. Our company was giving special rates until we ran out of cars. We got more from Spokane and rented them at discounts until we had nothing left. I felt so bad for those people,” she said, quietly.

“They’re not all bad memories,” Kim Whitlock, veteran of 26 years with the company, reminded Rhonda. “We’ve had some fun with the things people leave in cars.”

Rhonda started laughing again, recounting the time someone left a soup container in a car. “I brought it into the office and nearly freaked out. There was a snake inside. And it got loose!”

Rhonda and Kim were laughing hysterically, recounting the reptile that disappeared in the terminal building. “Later we saw it slithering away across the parking lot,” she said.

When the laughter stopped, Rhonda and Kim came back to the same bottom line. “Repeat customers see us and ask, Are you still here?”

There’s a reason there are repeat customers. There’s a reason some have been coming back for 35 years. Next time you need a car, check with Rhonda or Kim and you’ll find out why.

What, When, and Why?

We’re guessing this was a DC-4. The red and white antenna pole in picture’s far right appears to be the LWS radio range in the late 40s or early 50s.

Judging by the size of the crowds, this big aircraft must have been quite the sight in its day.

Does anyone know the occasion?

If so, find us on Facebook (golws1) and fill us in!
The Lewiston-Nez Perce County Regional Airport Authority

406 Burrell Avenue
Suite 301
Lewiston, ID 83501

Phone: (208) 746-4471
Fax: (208) 798-0591

“Like us” on Facebook at Go LWS

Welcome to LWS

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 we provide.

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Meetings

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