NORTH DAKOTA AVIATION ASSOCIATION

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QUARTERLY

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ATTENTION: THIS IS THE LAST FREE PRINT ISSUE FOR NON-MEMBERS



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FLY-ND Quarterly Editorial Committee
Nicolette Russell, Editor and Chairman (editor@fly-nd.com)
Leisha Lunnie, Mike McHugh, Maria Romanick

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Cover: Williston Basin Airshow, see more photos on page 13.

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From the Editor

For 78 years, readers in North Dakota have enjoyed aviation stories, history, and news through a printed publication, beginning with the Dakota Flyer in 1946. This publication has held many names and been led by a variety of passionate authors and editors. While our world has undergone drastic changes throughout the decades, aviation news in North Dakota has been a constant. However, the North Dakota Aviation Association (NDAA) and the Fly-ND Quarterly are currently undergoing many changes. *For the Quarterly, this Fall 2024 edition marks the final free print issue for NDAA non-members.* We are so grateful to our readers for their enthusiasm and support of our publication throughout the past 78 years, and we are proud to continue sharing current aviation content with you for many years to come. To ensure you continue receiving your print or digital copy of the Quarterly, visit www.fly-nd.com/membership. The digital Winter 2025 edition will be free for everyone and found at www.issuu.com/flyndquarterly.

Wishing you clear skies and unlimited visibility, Nicolette

Statements of fact and opinion are the responsibility of authors alone and do not imply an opinion on the part of officers and members of NDAA or Fly-ND Quarterly staff. If you've received more than one copy of this newsletter, please share it with a friend. Email admin@fly-nd.com to update your address.





Tanner Overland, Chairman
North Dakota Aviation Association
chairman@fly-nd.com

Reflecting on 2024 and Looking Ahead to 2025

As we close out another extraordinary year for the North Dakota Aviation Association (NDAA), I'd like to take a moment to celebrate our achievements and share exciting news about what's to come.

The highlight of 2024 was the return of the Fly-ND Conference to Grand Forks, ND, after a decade, and it exceeded all expectations. With over 300 attendees, 37 exhibitors, and nearly 40 first-time participants, the 2024 Fly-ND Conference was an event to remember. The summer brought us the Fly-ND Summerfest at Woodland Resort in Devils Lake, ND. This gathering was a great opportunity for aviation enthusiasts to network and connect, all while enjoying camaraderie with the Airports Association of North Dakota. Rounding out our 2024 calendar, the fifth annual Fly-ND Career Expo at the Fargo Air Museum inspired the next generation of aviation professionals with a day filled with learning, scholarships, and static aircraft displays.

Looking ahead to 2025, effective January 1, the print version of the Fly-ND Quarterly will transition to a "Member-Only Benefit."

Members of the NDAA will continue to receive the printed Fly-ND Quarterly, while non-members will receive digital versions via email.

It's important to clarify that currently receiving the printed Fly-ND Quarterly does not indicate current membership in the NDAA; it simply means you are currently one of the 5,000 aviation enthusiasts on our mailing list for this publication – and that you could potentially stop receiving this publication in 2025 unless you confirm your NDAA membership status.

Continued on page four



CHAIRMAN'S **COMMENTS** *Continued*

If you're uncertain about your NDAA membership status and want to ensure uninterrupted receipt of the printed Fly-ND Quarterly, please visit www.fly-nd.com/ to log in to your account or contact us at manager@fly-nd.com.

Be sure to save the date for the 2025 Fly-ND Conference, happening March 2-4 at the Delta Hotel by Marriott in Fargo, ND. This premier event will offer a range of educational sessions, networking opportunities, and industry insights you won't want to miss. Stay tuned to www.fly-nd.com for updates on early-bird registration, session details, and more.

As 2024 draws to a close, a sincere thank you to our nearly 400 NDAA members. Your unwavering support makes all of this possible: promoting aviation, funding scholarships, and strengthening our work to nurture North Dakota's vibrant aviation community. Your commitment fuels our shared success, elevates our mission, and helps us reach new heights. Together, we are building a stronger future for aviation in North Dakota. Thank you for being a part of our journey.

Here's to new horizons and reaching more milestones together in 2025! Tanner

Meet our NDAA Leadership



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Overland Aviation
NDAA Chairman



Devin Cole
Cole Aviation
NDAA Vice-Chairman



Renee Murrish
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NDAA Manager



Jake Werner
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NDAC Director
Non-Board Leadership



Mike McHugh
NDAC Education Coordinator
Non-Board Leadership



Kyle Wanner, Director
North Dakota Aeronautics Commission
701-328-9650 | kcwanner@nd.gov

North Dakota to Host 2026 NASAO Conference

I am excited to announce that the 2026 National Association of State Aviation Officials (NASAO) Conference will be held on September 12 -16 at the Alerus Convention Center in Grand Forks, ND. NASAO has been hosting a conference annually since 1931, making it a well-known national event that brings together state, federal, and industry aviation leaders from across the United States.

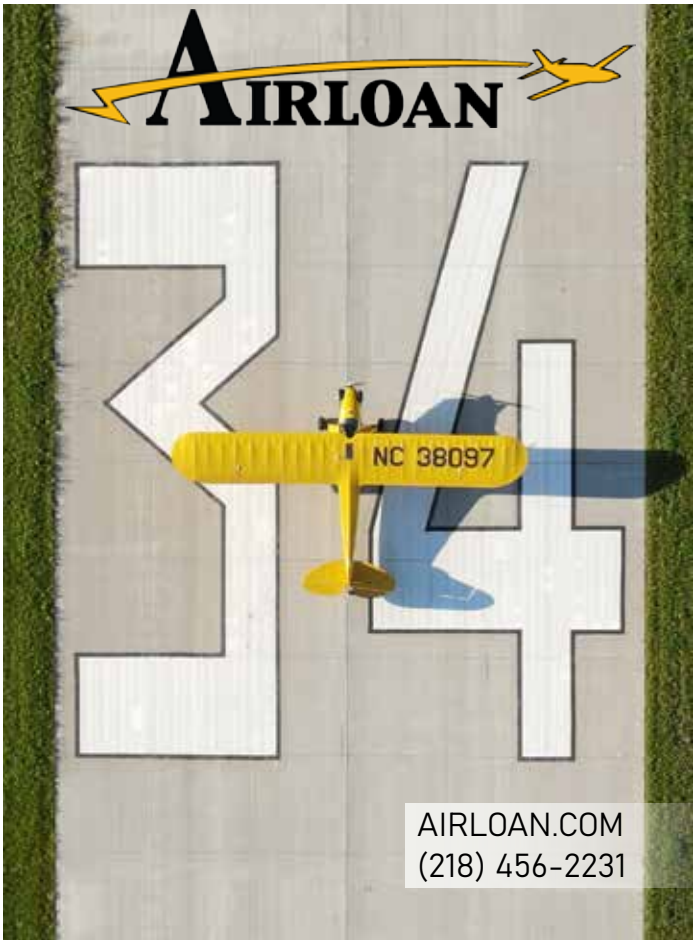
The selection of Grand Forks, ND, as the host site was officially announced during the recent 2024 NASAO Conference in Pittsburgh, PA. Our bid faced strong competition from other locations throughout the central part of United States, making this selection a significant achievement for our state. Notably, this marks the second time that North Dakota has had the honor of hosting the NASAO Conference—the first being in 1994, when the event was hosted in Bismarck under the leadership of former North Dakota Aeronautics Commission Director, Gary Ness.

North Dakota has a long history of innovation and leadership within the aviation industry which can be showcased at this event. The University of North Dakota's John D. Odegard School of Aerospace Sciences continues to set the standard for aviation education, while our groundbreaking work in uncrewed aerial systems (UAS) has solidified our position as a current leader in the field. Grand Forks is also home to the Northern Plains UAS Test Site and Grand Sky, the nation's first commercial UAS park.

Attendees will have an exciting opportunity to learn more about the aviation education and research initiatives at the University of North Dakota, as well as visit the VANTIS Mission and Network Operations Center (MNOC) at Grand Sky. This center is the operational hub for North Dakota's statewide UAS network, and VANTIS is the first system of its kind, designed to support real-time beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) operations. Its innovative approach holds the potential to revolutionize UAS integration not only in North Dakota but across the United States.

The 2026 NASAO Conference will serve as a significant platform for discussing the future of aviation, exchanging best practices, and exploring emerging technologies. It will also provide North Dakota with the opportunity to showcase our aviation success stories on a national stage while also reinforcing our state's role in assisting in the advancement of the aviation industry.

We are excited for this opportunity and look forward to welcoming aviation professionals from across the nation to experience North Dakota's renowned hospitality, innovative spirit, and deep passion for the field of aviation. Stay tuned for more updates as we prepare for this landmark event!





Renée Murrish, Manager
North Dakota Aviation Association
701-226-1640 / manager@fly-nd.com

A Season for Change

Greetings from Mandan, ND! I love living in North Dakota, as we have the opportunity to enjoy all of nature's seasons. The four seasons are a gentle reminder to us that nothing has to be permanent and change can be beautiful. My favorite season is fall, a time of reflection. Just like watching the leaves beautifully change their color and start falling to the ground, it is a visual reminder that letting go of things that block our full potential is truly beautiful, making space for something new that is more aligned with our goals. The North Dakota Aviation Association (NDAA) is in a season of change, and has been working hard reflecting and exploring potential changes, so we can reach our full potential for current and future members. It is such an exciting time within our association. I am so thankful for our Board of Directors and other committee members, who are committed to ensure the NDAA is the best it can be, now and in the future.

The NDAA had an exciting quarter. First up, we hosted our annual Fly-ND Summer Fest in Devils Lake, ND, enjoying many aviation sectors coming together to share their achievements, goals, experiences, and knowledge. We all enjoyed a couple days of camaraderie and sharing our passion for aviation. Following that event, we hosted the annual Fly-ND Career Expo in Fargo, ND. This event is the heart of our mission. We had over 250 students join us to learn about the different job opportunities in aviation within our government, corporate, and private sectors. It was just a joy for me to walk around and see the excitement on the students AND exhibitors faces, as the exhibitors proudly explained what they do for the community or state to make it a better place. This event truly captures our mission statement of promoting aviation by means of advocacy, education, and outreach. We were able to give out ten scholarships totaling $17,500! Again, I want to thank all the exhibitors for coming out, supporting this event, and sharing your experiences with these students. Looking forward, mark your calendars for our annual Fly-ND Conference, which will be held in Fargo, ND, from March 2-4, 2025. More details will be available soon on our website at www.fly-nd.com.

As you embark on this upcoming holiday season, remember to take time to recharge by doing the things you love, spend time with the ones you love, and remember why we are able to celebrate this holiday season.



Meaningful Memories: Cathy's First Flight

The Richardton Health Center took to the skies for their meaningful memories program, with the objective of doing something truly meaningful for each of their residents. Cathy had mentioned that she would like to fly in an airplane before her time on earth is over. Thanks to local aviators in the Richardton community, they were able to make her wish happen! Jody Hoff gave Cathy a ride in his private plane over the scenic badlands, the beautiful prairie land, and even crossed the Montana border - another item on Cathy's bucket list! To top off the day, Cathy also got to go for a ride on a trike through Richardton.











Mike McHugh, Aviation Education Coordinator
North Dakota Aeronautics Commission
701-328-9650 | mmchugh@nd.gov

Fifth Annual Fly-ND Career Day

The North Dakota Aviation Association (NDAA) hosted the Fifth Annual Fly-ND Career Expo on October 10, 2024, at the Fargo Air Museum. We had a great turnout of students, wonderful weather, and enthusiastic participation from industry partners. This year we had nearly 250 students register for the event, from all parts of the state. A highlight of the event was awarding $17,500 in scholarships to students, who are pursuing aviation education in a variety of fields.

This event could not be possible without participation from sponsors and exhibitors. A huge thank you to all who contributed time, aircraft, and financial resources to helping this event become a success.

If you would like to financially contribute to future Fly-ND Career Expos or would like information about providing a static display or an exhibit booth, please contact a board member or email manager@fly-nd.com. The Fly-ND Career Expo



has become an event that students and teachers look forward to each year, in order to help guide students into a career in aviation.

Stay safe and happy flying! Mike



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fargoairmuseum.org/memberships

Devils Lake Regional Airport Completes Major Terminal Expansion

By Adam Dillin, CM, Airport Planner, North Dakota Aeronautics Commission

On October 1, 2024, more than a hundred officials, dignitaries, and city residents gathered at the Devils Lake Regional Airport (DVL) for a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of the major expansion of the passenger terminal building. City Mayor Jim Moe and Airport Authority Chair Dennis Olson welcomed visitors and offered remarks on the challenges and successes of the project, before officially cutting the ribbon in front of the airline ticket counter. Attendees were then free to explore the new areas of the building and enjoy a complimentary lunch.

The current terminal structure was built in 2004, as part of a series of projects that had improved the layout and safety of the southern portions of the airfield. When it first opened, the building was a significant upgrade from the much older terminal it had replaced, but subsequent years of growing passenger counts and the ever-changing airline industry pushed the facility to its limits. The building struggled with inadequate space for bulky modern baggage and passenger screening equipment. Most notably, the industry-wide transition from small turboprop airliners to higher-capacity commuter jets often resulted in the passenger boarding lounge being crowded with double the number of passengers it was designed to hold.

The 2020 COVID pandemic hit every commercial airport hard with flight disruptions and a dramatic downturn in passenger enplanements. But for Devils Lake, it also created a remarkable once-in-a-generation opportunity. Congress passed the CARES Act which, among other measures, provided airports across the country with critical funding to help maintain their operations and advance infrastructure projects. This Act provided Devils Lake with $16.8 million and enabled the airport to not only weather the downturn but prepare for the inevitable rebound of passenger traffic, by pursuing the much-needed expansion of the terminal building.

After several years of design work and then a busy year of construction, the ambitious $13.5 million terminal project is now complete. The existing structure was remodeled and then doubled in size with a 6,000 square foot

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expansion. Airline, Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and airport staff now enjoy larger offices and more convenient workspaces. Security has been enhanced with roomy screening areas and an innovative automated exit lane system. The passenger boarding lounge can now comfortably seat 75 passengers, allowing DVL to easily accomodate the current CRJs, as well as bigger aircraft in the future. Additional amenities include larger modern restrooms, more vending options, a mother's room, an interactive North Dakota Aviation Hall of Fame kiosk, and a public lounge with fireplace. Finally, passengers flying through DVL during North Dakota's famously cold winters will most appreciate the new jet bridge, which will allow them to directly board their flights in air-conditioned comfort without having to trudge through the wind and snow.

Congratulations to the city of Devils Lake, the hardworking staff at DVL, and everyone who helped make this project a resounding success!









Congratulations to Kyle Wanner, the Director of the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission, as he completes his term on the Board of Directors for the National Association of State Aviation Officials (NASAO).



After five years, the extension and widening of the crosswinds runway at the Grand Forks International Airport (GFK) is complete. Congratulations to GFK on the opening of their runway!

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Fourth Annual Williston Basin Airshow

August 3, 2024 • Williston Basin International Airport (XWA)

The Williston Basin Airshow brought together aviation enthusiasts and the local community for an electrifying showcase of aerobatics. The fourth annual event featured world-class airshow performers, a classic car show, local food vendors, airplane rides, and activities for kids. In addition to the show's headliners, Bill Stein and Jim Peitz, there was also strong local support from North Dakota with the University of North Dakota showcasing their new Decathlon, Miss North Dakota singing the national anthem, and the popular P-47 and P-51 warbirds from Dakota Territory Air Museum in Minot. Spectators were immersed in the rich history of these warbirds and the return of the B-25 to Williston from the Commemorative Air Force in Minnesota. With inspiring narration throughout the event, the Williston Basin Airshow aims to ignite a passion for aviation in the next generation.





Above: Commemorative Air Force B-25 crew / Right: Kyle Fowler





Above: UND Decathlon / Below: airshow volunteers

Above: the crowd enjoying the airshow / Below: P-51





by Adam Kurtz
Reprinted with permission from UND Today

Successful drone test flights advance medical delivery

For rural areas and tribal communities, medical deliveries by drone may become regular occurrence, test flights suggest



Sen. John Hoeven, R-N.D., and UND President Andy Armacost stand at the center of members of UND's Vets2Wings program, at their celebratory lunch. Photo By Adam Kurtz/ UND Today.

Regular drone flights for medications are now a step closer to reality for the Mandan Hidatsa and Arikara Nation in North Dakota.

On Sept. 18, the MHA Drone Team successfully completed a pair of proof-of-concept flights across Lake Sakakawea between Elbowoods Memorial Health Center in New Town, N.D., and Twin Buttes, N.D. Normally, people living in New Town would have to make a nearly two-hour-drive to the health center to receive medications.

Despite some rough weather that Wednesday, the drone flights successfully demonstrated medications can be delivered in about 25 minutes.

"The success of the proof-of-concept flights was notable in underscoring the capacity to deliver lifesaving medications using uncrewed aircraft systems (UAS) in rural and Tribal communities," said Thomasine Heitkamp,research developer in the office of the UND vice president for Research and Economic Development.

She continued: "This effort required a strong team and good coordination from start to finish to support these beyond-visual-line-of-sight flights (BVLOS). We anticipate that the lessons learned from these flights will advance future use cases. I am grateful for the high level of community engagement and support from MHA Nation."

She also expressed gratitude to Catherine Self and Tyson Harmon from drone company Valkyrie, who served as the flight team for the project.

Mark Askelson, UND associate vice president of National Security and member of the MHA Drone Team, said the flights were conducted along a direct route between the Elbowoods Memorial Health Center and Twin Buttes. The success of the flights, with having to fly into the wind, shows that UAS technology has advanced to the point that medical deliveries are a viable option for people in rural communities.

"This demonstration showed that drones are able to perform, even in harsh conditions, functions needed by the MHA Nation," Askelson said. "We are moving closer to realizing the promise of drones for rural communities."

Askelson said involving supporting technologies such as Vantis,the state's network of towers aimed at enabling routine BVLOS operations, show that such flights are safe and economical.

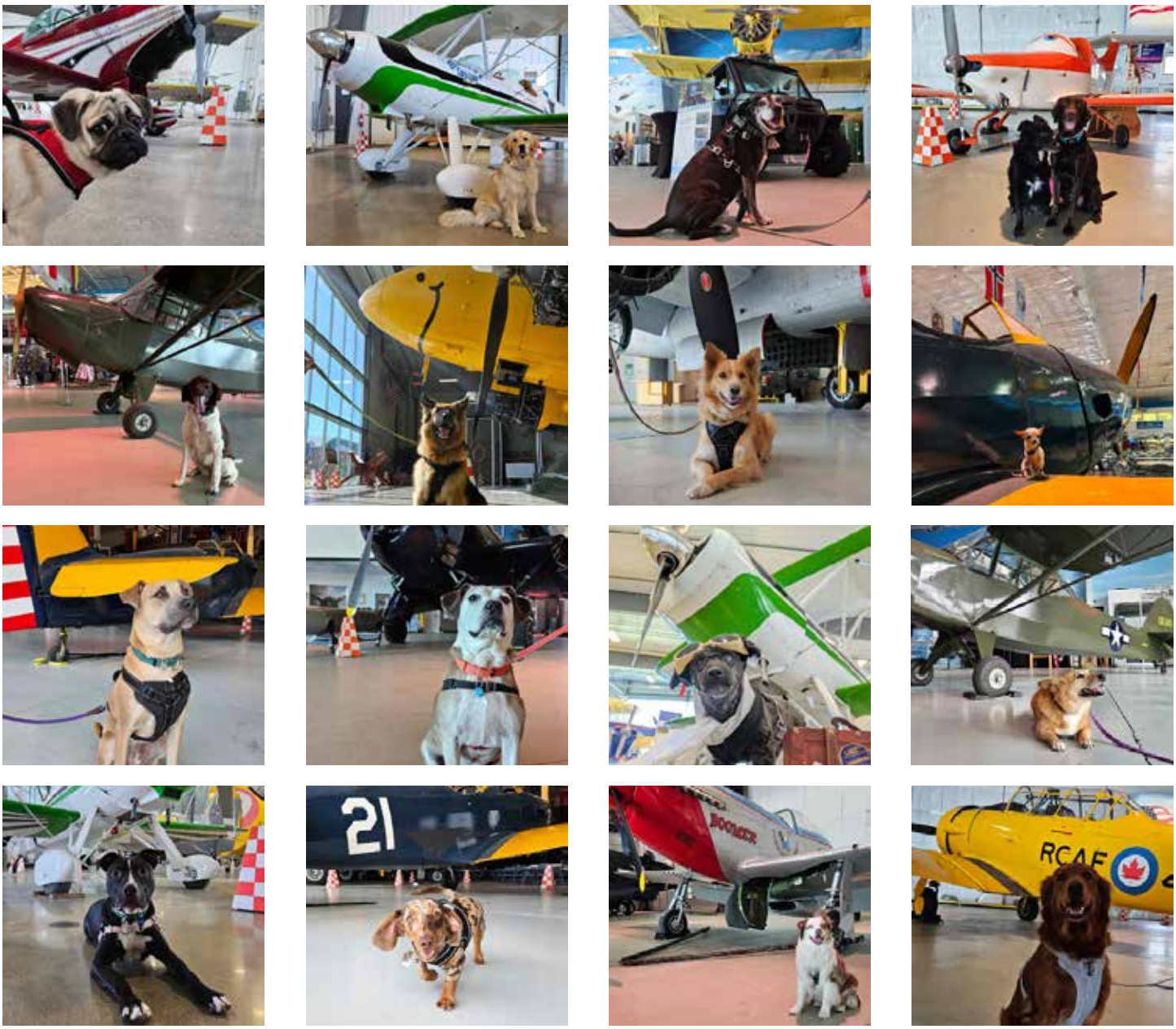
The MHA Drone Project is funded by a U.S. Department of Transportation grant through its Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Grants program.

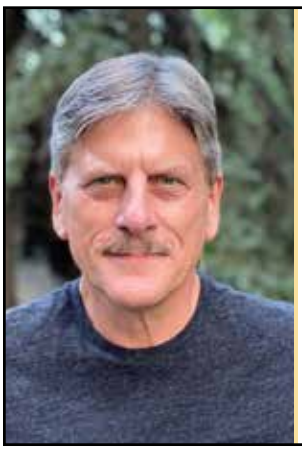
According to Askelson, the next steps in the project will be to document the demonstration effort and complete a final report for the first stage of the grant. After that, the team can begin to work on applying for the second stage of the SMART grant.

The MHA Drone Team includes the Mandan Hidatsa Arikara Nation; Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish Collegein New Town, N.D.; Elbowoods Memorial Health Center;the University of North Dakota;the Valkyrie uncrewed aerial system (UAS) team; DeTect, a Panama City, Fla.-based company that specializes in advanced radar and related remote-sensing technologies; the Northern Plains UAS Test Site; and Airspace Link, a Detroit-based company that develops software for drone flight planning and operations.

Fargo Air Museum: Recent Pets of the Week

Follow the Fargo Air Museum on Facebook to find more of their adorable four-legged visitors!





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Record-Breaking Annual Props & Hops Fundraiser

On October 3, 2024, the Mandan Aero Center hosted the eighth annual Props & Hops fundraiser for a record-breaking year. All proceeds from this year's event benefit local aviator, Mark Kiefel. About 18 months ago, Mark suffered a major stroke and will never fly again. It has and continues to be a long road to recovery for Mark, and the local community truly came together to show their support.

This year, Props & Hops drew over 300 members of the Bismarck-Mandan community to the airport on a Thursday evening, where attendees enjoyed an evening of local microbrews presented by Main Street Liquor and Coffee, a silent auction, live music from Shawn Oban, and smoked ribs from Robby, Shannon, and Debbie Boehm. Over $25,000 was raised and donated to Mark, to help with his health recovery. The event brings a tremendous amount of support and excitement from the community as several sponsors continue to support the event year after year. To date, Props and Hops has donated over $135,000 to distressed aviators, aviation education, and other aviation related causes.









Become an NDAA member today!

Sign up at www.fly-nd.com/Memberships

NDAA Membership Benefits

All Member Types of the organization will have the opportunity to participate in and benefit from the following items:

- *Fly-ND Quarterly* magazine subscription
- Network with other aviation enthusiasts and industry partners
- Help support the future of Aviation in ND
- Opportunity for committee involvement – Conference, Advocacy, Strategic Planning, etc.
- Advocacy and lobbying efforts which benefit the aviation industry
- "Regional Voice" through representation on other boards and other advocacy
- Collaborate with other member groups
- Help student members to fuel aviation for tomorrow
- Protect aviation in North Dakota
- Communicate concerns or issues to the board and organization
- Information focus on website, jobs, blogs, advertising, etc.
- Stay informed on aviation – related issues through regular communication
- Participate in NDAA events and functions



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Individual Member ($40) is for those with personal or employment interest in the aviation profession or industry and who support the purpose of NDAA.

- Member discounts from participating business partners
- Member discounts from participating North Dakota aviation museums
- IA renewals through ND PAMA at the Fly-ND Annual Conference
- Ability to vote at the NDAA annual meeting to elect officers, update bylaws, and vote on large issues and run for office and/or board position

Organizational Member ($250) is for agencies and non-profit groups whose mission serves the aviation professions, industries, and supports the purpose of NDAA.

- Special Priority at the Fly-ND Annual Conference (Including hosting training opportunities, discounted booths, meeting rooms, and award recognition)
- Representation and link on the NDAA Fly-ND website
- Assistance with distribution of your organization's information and dues processing
- Organization member websites and logos are advertised on NDAA website and at the Fly-ND Conference
- Ability to submit articles for the Fly-ND Quarterly regarding organizational updates

Allied Member ($250/500) is for firms, companies, and consultants who are actively engaged in providing products and/or services to aviation professions, and companies who support the purpose of NDAA. Allied members do not have voting rights.

- Listed in *Fly-ND Quarterly* and website as an Allied Member
- Certificate of Membership
- Opportunity for collaborative involvement in aerospace advocacy
- Network with the aviation community as well as participate in the Career Expo & other NDAA functions
- Advertise open job opportunities

Student Member (free) is for individuals enrolled in an institution of higher learning who have a keen interest in aviation and support the purpose of NDAA. Student Members are not entitled to vote or hold a board position.

- Explore all facets of aviation
- Eligible for scholarships
- Professional development credits
- Member discounts from participating North Dakota aviation museums
- Complimentary attendance at the annual conference
- Networking opportunities
- Mentorship & training
- Career advancement through job boards

FAA Selects NPUASTS for Radar Data Pathfinder Program

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announced a formal agreement with the state of North Dakota, through the Northern Plains UAS Test Site, a state agency, to use federal radar data to advance the integration of beyond visual line-of-sight (BVLOS) UAS operations into the National Airspace System (NAS).

FAA Deputy Administrator Katie Thomson made the announcement on stage at the UAS Summit & Expo in Grand Forks, North Dakota. The agreement marks a first-of-its-kind, government-to-government release of federal radar data. The data is integrated into Vantis, North Dakota's system for BVLOS UAS operations. The NPUASTS is the first participant in the program.

"This program will take us to the next level, ensuring even greater safety and efficiency as we integrate UAS into the National Airspace System," said Thomson.

"This would not be possible without a tremendous amount of work and collaboration between the State of North Dakota, FAA, and interagency partners, as well as the support of North Dakota's Office of the Governor and the North Dakota Legislative Assembly," said Erin Roesler, Deputy Executive Director, NPUASTS. "We're proud to be collaborating with FAA to address this and other UAS integration concepts."

"We really appreciate the work of Deputy Administrator Thomson and the FAA for their ongoing efforts to discovering the path towards receiving this data and ensuring safe integration into the NAS," said Executive Director Trevor Woods, NPUASTS. "We look forward to this continued collaboration and support from the inter-agency partners and the FAA."

What's the Radar Data Pilot Program?

Section 905 of the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 establishes a pilot program that allows qualified users to access airspace data feeds. The purpose of the Radar Data Pilot Program is twofold: (1) enable air traffic and UAS traffic management services; and (2) test technologies that may enhance or enable these services. The program focuses on defining security control requirements, validating the suitability of radar data, and demonstrating UAS flight operations.

The program also leverages the unique government-to-government relationship between NPUASTS and the FAA, with support from private sector system integration partner Thales. This collaboration has required the team to establish security requirements that are not only applicable to government entities but also adaptable for private entities. This approach ensures the design and implementation of robust security controls to protect sensitive flight data, while still allowing access to future qualified entities or users, including third-party service suppliers and potentially UAS operators.

What does this mean for UAS integration?

Vantis provides Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) operators with repeatable access to the NAS through safety-critical services and shared-use infrastructure. Through the Radar Data Pilot Program, we can assess how traditional aviation surveillance systems can help expand UAS access beyond specific geographic areas of the country.

This work is complex, with special attention paid to three critical challenges: security, capacity, and utility. For example, how do we use the data to promote integration while protecting the data and dissemination of it at the same time?



What's Next?

The FAA anticipates expanding the release of FAA surveillance data, which up to this point was only intended for North Dakota's Vantis, to more UAS third-party service suppliers by early next year, as required by the legislation.

Vantis is a case study for operator-friendly, BVLOS-enabling shared-use UAS infrastructure. We're seeking state and operator partners who are interested in sharing our progress and lessons learned by adapting the Vantis model and advancing true BVLOS in their communities.

To learn more, visit the Northern Plains UAS Test Site or Vantis websites: NPUASTS.com or VantisUAS.com

In historic first, 2 Honor Flights depart from Fargo airport on the same day

The flights, carrying around 100 veterans each, took off just one hour apart.

For the first time in the nearly 18-year history of Honor Flight in Fargo-Moorhead, veterans are seeing double.

On Sunday morning, the Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN sent two separate planes—nicknamed Alpha and Bravo—in a "Double Honor Flight" from Hector International Airport to the nation's capital.

Each plane carried between 100 and 110 veterans, for a total number of 215 making the trip.

Until now, every Honor Flight flying out of Fargo featured just one aircraft.



Jennifer Seesz of Alexandria, Minnesota, hugs her father, Louie, as he prepares to take off on the first-ever "Double Honor Flight" out of Fargo, North Dakota while volunteers welcome travelers to the airport in the early morning hours of Sunday, Sept. 22, 2024.

In September 2007, the WDAY WWII Honor Flight—the predecessor to the Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN—transported around 215 veterans on a single 747 and did it again in November 2007. However, this marks the first time in the local project's history that over 200 veterans have participated in two separate flights from the same city in a single day.

Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN President Jane Matejcek said the decision to double the number of travelers was practical and would benefit the veterans.

"Because of the weather in North Dakota and Washington, D.C. we're limited to a six to eight-week flying window each spring and fall, making it difficult to do more than two flights a year," she said. "Having nearly 900 on our waitlist meant some would wait four years for their trip, which we found unacceptable. The only way to remedy this was to take more than one flight at the same time."

So that's what they did.

But not before having to split their team of volunteers into two flights and recruit additional hands to help.

All hands were on deck today to welcome the travelers to Hector International, including police officers, sheriff's deputies, motorcycle club members, and bagpipers.

Jennifer Seesz of Alexandria gave her father Louie a big hug before he walked into the airport.

"This is a great experience for my dad!" she said.

"She signed me up for this two and a half years ago. It was a great surprise. A wonderful experience!" Louie added.

The 215 veterans on the two flights include male and female veterans, 193 Vietnam veterans, 22 Korean War veterans, and one WWII veteran. They are joined by volunteers, medical staff, and family members.

For the next two and a half days, they will visit the sites of Washington and be thanked and recognized for their service. The trip is free to the veterans because of community support and donations coordinated through the Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN.

Among the Vietnam veterans are three friends from Detroit Lakes: Dave Knopf, Dave Ohman, and Curt Erickson. After serving during the Vietnam era, they all spent the next 25 to 35 years together in the Minnesota National Guard.

Knopf, who spent more than two years on the waiting list, is grateful to be part of the historic "Double Honor Flight."

"That's pretty nice! The opportunity to go is what I like the most. I was hoping to take the flight either from Grand Forks or Fargo, and to be able to take it with my buddies is more fun!" he said.



Hector International Airport was busier than usual for an Honor Flight departure, as travelers on both the Alpha and Bravo planes wait for takeoff just one hour apart. Contributed/Luann Erickson McDonald/Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN

Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN President Jane Matejcek meets a group of Detroit Lakes veterans who all served in the Vietnam era and later for decades in the Minnesota National Guard, from left: Dave Ohman, Curt Erickson, Dave Knopf, Jane Matejcek.Tracy Briggs/The Forum

To accommodate the large group, the veterans will tour D.C. in eight color-coded buses instead of the usual four.

Continued on page 21

Thank You to the NDAA Allied Members

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Want to enjoy all the benefits of being a NDAA Allied Member too? Join today at www.fly-nd.com!



Honor Flight veteran Craig Tande, Aneta, N.D., right, and son Christopher walk past the Heather and Thistle Pipes and Drum Corps preparing to play music to welcome the travelers.

Matejeck said the only time both groups will be together is at their banquet Sunday evening.

Veteran Craig Tande of Aneta, North Dakota, will attend the banquet with his son Christopher, who is accompanying him on the trip.

He said he's thankful for the hard work of the many volunteers who made the trip possible.

"It's wonderful!" he said. "It's amazing when they can do something like this for the veterans. It's just terribly nice!

Story by Tracy Briggs. Reprinted with permission from The Forum.



Fargo Jet Center Unveils $25 Million Hangar and Office Complex at Fargo's Hector International Airport (KFAR)



Fargo Jet Center (FJC) is excited to announce the grand opening of its cutting-edge $25 million, 112,000-square-foot hangar and office complex at Fargo's Hector International Airport (KFAR). A ribbon-cutting ceremony, held on September 20, 2024, celebrated the completion of this major facility expansion, designed to enhance FJC's maintenance, avionics, and special mission modification services, while also providing much-needed aircraft storage space. The facility will also serve as the headquarters for sister company Weather Modification International (WMI), a global leader in atmospheric research and weather modification services.

"Our new hangar and office complex allows us to expand our services, increase efficiency, and take on more complex and specialized work," said Jim Sweeney, President of Fargo Jet Center. "The investment in state-of-the-art equipment and technology positions us to meet these demands while delivering a seamless, top-tier experience for our clients."

The complex includes a 27,000-square-foot maintenance hangar, a 23,000-square-foot hangar for special mission modifications, and dedicated spaces for composite fabrication, paint, sheet metal work, and avionics. With 30-foot-tall doors, the new hangars, among the largest in the upper Midwest, are designed to accommodate large corporate aircraft, including the Bombardier Global 8000. Additionally, the expansion repurposes 32,000 square feet of existing hangar space for increased aircraft storage, supporting both based and transient fleets. With U.S. Customs services located adjacent to FJC's passenger terminal, which will clear nearly 800 international flights in 2024, the new facility strengthens FJC's ability to support ultra-long-range corporate aircraft from around the globe.

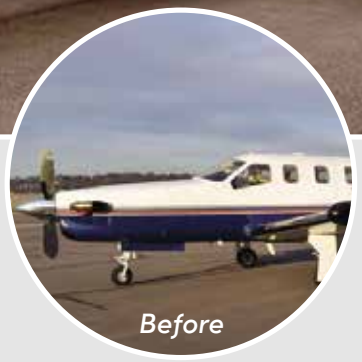
This expansion also delivers significant economic benefits to the region, creating new jobs in the aviation industry and bringing more specialized work to the Fargo area. Fargo Jet Center's footprint now spans 328,000 square feet across 11 acres at Fargo's Hector International Airport (KFAR), reinforcing its position as a key player in both the aviation industry and the local economy.

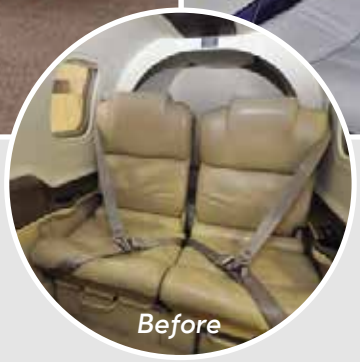


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The Winter 2025 digital issue will be free for everyone and will be found at www.issuu.com/flyndquarterly

CALENDAR of EVENTS

Check out the online calendar for details on these events: aero.nd.gov/events

February 2025

2025 Tri-State Aerial Applicators Convention

FEB 11-12 | Grand Forks, ND

The Tri-State Aerial Applicators Convention will be held at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks, ND, in 2025! The PAASS Program will be February 11th.

March 2025

2025 Fly-ND Conference

MAR 02-04 | Fargo, ND

The conference will feature sessions for pilots, mechanics, airport managers, and general aviation enthusiasts, focusing on various topics relevant to the industry. Mark your caelndar for March 2-4, 2025!