



# AIRPORT BEACON

A publication of  Muskegon County Airport

## From the Airport Manager

Winter is finally coming to a close, and it certainly has been an odd one. If memory serves, last year we didn't see our first accumulating snow until after Christmas. This year, most of it arrived before Christmas, with nearly 50" falling before the first of the year. I know it is far too early to report final snow fall amounts, and with an annual average of over 100" per season, winter has likely not made its final visit. With that in mind, I want to thank the staff (both Maintenance and Attendants) for all their hard work this year keeping the Airport safe for the public. It is not easy to come in as early as 4 am or on a holiday, plowing runways for 12 straight hours, or watching the wind drift snow over a path you just shoveled minutes ago. I appreciate your devotion to keeping this place running smooth, not only in winter, but all year long.



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## Runway 14/32 Shift and Extension

The shift and extension of Runway 14/32 continues as scheduled. Final specifications are nearly complete and will be bid by the State on May 5. Some of the work to be done this calendar year include relocation of Grand Haven Road, relocation of various utilities, and site preparation for the runway and taxiway construction. Expect to see construction begin in June or July. The project budget for this year is \$4.3M. In 2007, the construction of the runways and taxiways will occur, as well as the building of the new ARFF (Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting) station. The project budget for 2007 is \$6.7M.

## USCG Hangar

The new USCG Hangar is nearly complete. The USCG is expected to move into their new facility on May 1, in time for the 2006 boating season. We look forward to having them back for their tenth year of SAR (Search and Rescue) operations, and sincerely thank them for all the lives saved while operating from the Muskegon County Airport.



## Business Profile

Submitted by Paula Gould, Brownstone

The Brownstone Restaurant was established at the Muskegon County Airport in the mid 80s by Frank and Gina Lister. In February 2006, Paula J. Gould, who worked for the Listers for 16 years, purchased the restaurant. Serving not only the Airport travelers, The Brownstone is not your typical airport restaurant. They offer a varied menu with top quality food made from scratch, from homemade soups, to sandwiches, salads and entrees. A full banquet facility is



available for parties up to 35, and a small conference room is available for business meetings.

A full catering menu is also available and local companies take advantage of delivered breakfasts, lunches, dinners, or a menu created to suit their needs.

As the new owner, Paula has brought back the locally famous "Lunch Buffet" available for only \$6.25.

In the coming months, The Brownstone hopes to change the menu somewhat by offering different entrees, salads, and sandwiches, but still keep the fine quality people have come to expect.

## Employee of the Month

January 2006

**Stephanie Wezeman, Mesaba**

February 2006

**Mike Kotecki, Airport**

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## *MKG History*

*Submitted by Ken Price, Executive Air Transport*

### *Who was Sinclair Drive named after?*

Sinclair Drive was named after a local aviation pioneer, Cecil "Sinnie" Sinclair.

*Taken from "The Early Birds Chirp, March 1996, Number 97."*

Sinnie Sinclair was born on April 8, 1888, in Chandleville, Illinois. A gifted pilot, he dedicated his career to the advancement of aviation, both as a pilot and businessman.

Sinnie began his aviation career in 1915, soloing the same year. Sinnie flew exhibition until he joined the U.S. Signal Corp. as a civilian flight instructor in 1916 teaching Army pilots. In 1925, he became Assistant Manager of Ford Airport in Dearborn, Michigan. In 1926 he flew airmail for Ford Company flying the "Stout all-metal airplanes." In 1928, he joined Universal Airlines flying throughout the Midwest. In 1935, Universal Airlines became American Airlines. In 1937 Sinnie formed Sinclair Flying School in Muskegon, Michigan. His stay in Muskegon lasted over fifty years.

Sinnie spent his years in Muskegon performing flight instruction, charter work, aerial photography, aerial ambulance trips and various other aviation projects. Sinnie taught thousands of students to fly, from WWI pilots to younger kids. He was a prolific instructor who never had a student who did not succeed. Many of his students became very prominent in aviation.

Sinnie's flight hours are not known, but it is believed they exceed 30,000 hours. He received literally hundreds of awards and citations. He was President of the OX5 Club of America. He organized and was a Colonel in the Muskegon Group of the Civil Air Patrol, 1956 Honorary life member of the AERO Club of Michigan, 1962 Honorary member of Michigan Flying Farmers, 1965 Magnificent Man Award by Twentieth Century Fox, to "Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines," 1968 Honored Guest with Walter Carr Sr., at the 50th Anniversary of the Air Mail Service. Sinnie was a member of all major aviation fraternal organizations.



1912 Sinnie is sitting in Charles Day's Tractor Bi-plane when it was in Chicago. This was his first experience with aircraft.



Circa 1916: "Sinnie" in front of his Jennie.



1940s "Sinnie" Sinclair with Phylis Cone and Emily Porter. They were students of Sinnie who joined WASPs during World War II, ferrying fighter aircraft across the country.



1946: Wearing his Civil Air Patrol uniform during the Muskegon County Airport Dawn Patrol on August 25, 1946. This photo was taken in his office on the North East side of the Airport.



1968: "Sinnie" Sinclair, an "Early Aviation Pioneer," holding his Presidential Citation from the OX5 Club of America.

At the age of 89, Sinnie Sinclair was listed in the Guinness Book of Records in 1977 as the oldest living pilot in the World.

Sinnie Sinclair died on April 5, 1986."

More information about Sinnie Sinclair can be found in the book *All God's Children Got Wings: A Story of Pioneer Birdman Cecil R. "Sinnie" Sinclair*, by Branyan, Vivian

If anyone has any photos to contribute to the history of Muskegon County Airport, send to [mkghistory@yahoo.com](mailto:mkghistory@yahoo.com).

## Employee Spotlight



**Tyree W. Mc Afee** is the Air Traffic Manager, Muskegon-Air Traffic Control Tower.

As the Manager of Muskegon Tower, he administers a staff of 25 employees with a budget and equipment valued at over ten million dollars annually.

His career with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) began as a high school intern and has spanned over two decades. He has worked for the Director of Air Traffic Services, Central Terminal Operations as a Resource Management Specialist-Air Traffic Controller, and has held various collateral assignments within the Air Traffic Organization.

Tyree has an extensive background in Equal Employment Opportunity Counseling, and mediation for FAA's Internal Alternative Dispute Resolution Program. He has facilitated numerous Cultural Diversity Workshops in various settings. Tyree was nominated for the FAA National Administrator's EEO Award 2002, and was a recipient of this Award in 2003. Currently, he holds the office of National President for one of the FAA's Employee Association Organizations. He has guest-lectured at Oklahoma City University, and is the owner of "TyMcA Consultants", a diversity educational and management-training firm.

Mr. Mc Afee has earned an Associate in Applied Science Aviation General (1983), Richard J. Daley College, Chicago, IL., a Board of Governors Bachelor of Arts (2000), Governor State University, University Park, IL., and he is currently a Master's candidate of Psychology at Governors State University.

Mr. Mc Afee is a world traveler, an active church member, and his interests include mentoring and community activism.

The FAA Digital Airport Surveillance Radar (DASR-11) was installed April 2004. The \$8 million project was fully funded by the FAA. Digital pictures on the radar screen are clearer, keeping planes from fading in and out when they encounter a weather system or get too far away. The new radar tower is taller and able to detect lower flying aircraft to the west. The radar system also provides detailed information about the severity of weather fronts.



### Airport Contact Info

#### **Airport Administration**

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#### **Airport Maintenance**

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#### **Air Travel Marketing Consultant**

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800-225-2525

#### **Midwest Airlines**

800-452-2022

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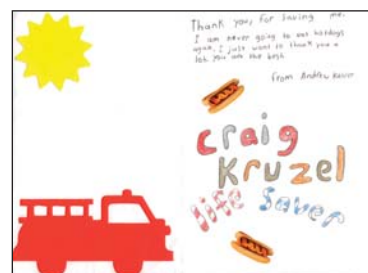
## 2006 Muskegon Air Fair



The Muskegon Air Fair will be back for its 23rd year on July 21-23. Considered one of the premier air shows in the Midwest, the 2006 Air Fair is sure to offer plenty of activities for the family. It is a little early to confirm the exact schedule of the air show, but expect to see U.S. Army Golden Knights Parachute Team, plenty of U.S. military jet fighter demonstrations, lots of static aircraft displays from supersonic military jets to vintage WWII, and the always popular Meijer Kids Hangar. More information regarding the show schedule will be provided in the next newsletter as more acts are confirmed. Several admission options and prices are available to meet every budget. Visit [muskegonairfair.com](http://muskegonairfair.com) for more pricing and show schedule information

## Thank You!

A big thank you to Craig Kruzel. In January, Craig and his family were at the Lakes Mall when Craig looked up and saw a boy who appeared to be choking on some food. Craig was able to perform the Heimlich maneuver on him and dislodged a piece of hot dog from the boy's throat. The boy and his mother were very grateful to Craig and sent a card to him in appreciation. Craig works in the Airport's Maintenance Department. Thank you, Craig!



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## Transportation Committee

Bill Gill, Chair  
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Louis A. McMurray  
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Roger C. Wade  
Nancy A. Waters  
Stephen R. Wisniewski

## Questions, Comments, Suggestions?

*Submit to:*

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homanpa@co.muskegon.mi.us

## *Interesting Facts*

Did you know that, for navigational purposes, runways are numbered based on their magnetic heading? Just add a '0' to the end of any runway number to find out which way it is pointing. For example, take *Runway 36*. Add a '0' and you get '360'. That means *Runway 36* is facing magnetic heading 360, or due north.

Did you know runway numbers change over time? Because the earth's magnetic field is always changing and shifts slightly each year, runway numbers also need to change to reflect the shifts.

Airport beacons started out as bonfires. In the infancy of aviation, bonfires were used along a route to guide pilots from point to point. Today, navigating by ground reference is almost obsolete, but airport beacons continue to rotate when it is dark or during IFR (Instrument Flight Rules) conditions.

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## First Quarter Passengers Carried

Midwest - 5,262

Northwest - 10,845



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