

“Professional Aerial Applicators Providing Crop Protection Products  
and Services to Production Agriculture Across Montana”

[www.montanaaerialapplicators.org](http://www.montanaaerialapplicators.org)

[www.facebook.com/Montanaaerialapplicators](https://www.facebook.com/Montanaaerialapplicators)

## **P r e s i d e n t ' s M e s s a g e**

### **THUNDERBOLT and LIGHTFOOT**

By the time you are reading this, the polls will be closed and hopefully the country will know who the next president will be. Our two candidates remind me of Thunderbolt and Lightfoot. For those that don't know, or can't remember, they are from an old movie. Thunderbolt is a bank robber pretending to be a preacher because he is getting chased down by his own gang. Lightfoot is a want-to-be thief trying to break into the big leagues. Thunderbolt can't find the stolen money and Lightfoot does not see that as a problem: he suggests a plan to just rob the same bank as last time. I don't want to spoil any more of the movie, you will have to watch and see how it ends.

It took a few years, but we finally had a successful spray check. Clear weather, calm winds, a great testing crew, and I didn't crash! The only thing I could ask for is to have more planes show up. We only had six this year, which is not enough to pay our expenses. This leaves us taking the money out of the Association's reserves. The spray check is such a great way to make sure your plane is set up right or try some new configurations. You also get Dept. of Ag credits and some insurance companies even offer a discount if you perform the check.

In other news, the board made the decision to have a virtual winter convention this year. It was a tough and disappointing decision, but here are the issues that we were confronted with: first, although we had many people begging us to host the convention at their hotel, they each had a long list of demands for the Association, but with very little help from them to help us comply with the requirements. Second, we had no idea what the turnout would be, as we do not know how comfortable everyone is with going to a convention this year. Lastly, many of our vendors are not allowed to attend conventions.

So, what we have done is condense it all into a one-day virtual convention. This includes the pass program and a 15 minute talk from each of our vendors. I will miss socializing with everyone in person, but it is my hope that everyone will continue to support the association. We are doing our best to provide value in these uncertain times..

May your passes always be long and obstacle free,                      Greg

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- ### 2020 AMAA MEMBERSHIP
- Operator Members—23
  - Pilot Members—8
  - Retired Members—5
  - Allied Members—10
  - Associate Members—8
  - Life Time Member—1

- ### UPCOMING EVENTS
- ⇒ NAAA Ag Aviation Expo  
December 7-10, 2021  
Savannah, GA
  - ⇒ AMAA Convention  
January 25, 2021—Virtual
  - ⇒ Montana Aeronautics Conference—Cancelled for 2021



Thank you, **Darrin Pluhar**, for serving as the 2020 NAAA President. Countless hours were devoted to the job with an enormous amount of time spent on the road and in the air, away from home and your own business needs. Thank you, Darrin, for being an advocate for the aerial application industry and helping to make sure that agricultural aviation remained an essential business during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020.

**JET A USA offers a One Cent Rebate Program** to 13 state aerial applicator associations. Montana is considering joining the program. According to Les Horrell “when a member in good standing of your state association purchases Jet A fuel from JET A USA, we will contribute one cent per gallon to the association. This program has the potential to contribute thousands of dollars annually to your association.” During the fall board meeting, AMAA board members discussed participation but would like feedback from those who regularly purchase and use Jet A in their aircraft. The program was developed to allow JET A USA to determine an equitable contribution to a state’s agricultural aviation association. Further, Les wrote that “we firmly believe we should put back into and financially support the association via a contribution commensurate with our fuel sales in that state. As a family owned small business specializing in fuel sales to agricultural aviation, we recognize as do you, the important of a viable agricultural aviation industry.” Approximately \$75,000 was contributed to state associations in 2019. If you’d like more information about this program, contact Les Horrell at 602-828-6458 and give feedback to an AMAA board member so we know whether to proceed with adopting this program in Montana.

#### 2021 PAASS Program

The PAASS program will be offered on Monday, January 25th (please see additional registration information on pages 6 and 7). You will need to first register for the AMAA conference. I will then submit your information to the Director of Education and Safety, Dr. Scott Bretthauer, so that an invitation to the PAASS zoom presentation can be sent to you. This must be done 7 days in advance so it’s imperative that you register with the AMAA as soon as possible.



On a gorgeous October day, several AMAA members flew into Lewistown, MT and participated in the Operation S.A.F.E. clinic, under the direction of Tim Shamblin of Burley, ID and his son, Buster. Time and again, aircraft flew over the string, producing a spray pattern that was then professionally analyzed. A precise picture of the plane’s swath analysis was quickly available with helpful direction and instruction on how to improve performance. One member told me it was the best clinic ever held. Everyone who stuck around was invited to a delicious steak dinner at Greg Smith’s immaculate hangar that night.

Thank you to everyone who participated!

## Fall 2020 NAAA Update

### Pat Stromberg

I hope that this fall has found everybody all tucked in and safe from the season and that members are finding new and inventive ways of relaxing. For many of us around the state, fall seems a lot more like winter with significant snow and lows well below that zero mark. I know I had spraying left to do yet and it pretty much got to the point where mother nature said, not so much. Anyway, early in October, the NAAA had their fall board meetings and although I wasn't able to attend, I was able to sit in on my committee and general meetings via online video calls and conference calls.

During this past year, as we all know, there has been a pandemic as they call it, and it has interfered with a whole bunch of stuff. While all this has been going on, NAAA has been working diligently to make sure that Aerial Application was deemed an essential business. They were also working to help get medical certificate expiration dates extended, as well as CDL and applicator license dates extended. This actually came into play for me because I tried everything to get a medical, and ended up getting it on the last week of my normal expiration month, but I felt a whole bunch better knowing that I had another month to get it if I needed. The NAAA continues to work with various agencies to ensure that aerial application operations aren't interrupted and that we can continue to provide the crop protection products that keep the food and fiber supply abundant. One way they do that is to make comments to the EPA on the FIFRA required re-registration process for various active ingredients, not only to help keep those products available as tools for us, but also to help make sure those products retain their aerial application label. So far this year, NAAA has commented on 52 product re-registrations. Along with those products, NAAA is also actively working with the EPA on efficacy and drift modeling for UAS (Unmanned Aerial Systems). There currently is not any approved method of testing for those application devices, and as such there is much debate about whether it is legal to use them and comply with chemical labels. Also, there are not currently any UAS systems that meet the airworthiness requirements of the FAA, so is it legal for them to dispense economic poisons at all? NAAA is working with the FAA, EPA and UAS industry representatives to ensure UAS systems are properly integrated into the aerial application business.

Recently the NAAA members voted on some bylaw changes, and they were approved by a 92% majority of members. Some of those include: Broader membership disciplinary criteria to include a code of conduct, broader membership criteria in operator and pilot categories, and removal of the requirement of state association membership.

On the government relations side of things, NAAA has had a lot to deal with this past year. The activists haven't stopped their efforts just because of COVID 19, and there have been several bills in different states that would severely limit or eliminate aerial application. In Colorado, there is a bill that would ban all neonics, OP's and do away with pesticide registration districts opening the door for individual districts to ban pesticides or aerial application. The waters of the US that was effectively set back to pre-Obama

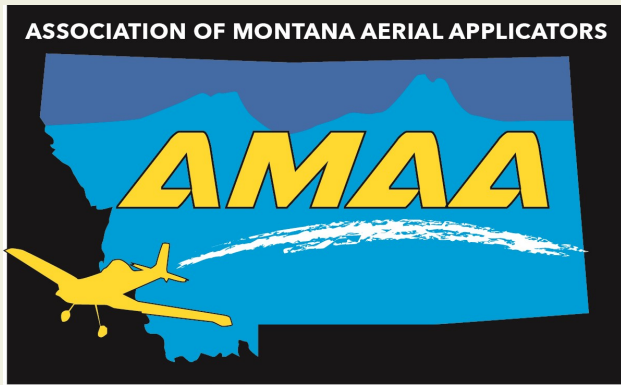
(continued on page 6)

days will likely be hashed out in the supreme court, however if Biden becomes president, it will almost certainly go back to the way the Obama administration had intended it, which we all know is a problem for us. The EPA has a proposed rule on the agenda that would limit emissions of aircraft. As of right now, that rule would affect aircraft by weight, and an 802 is a couple thousand pounds under the cap for the rule. However, the NAAA is watching it carefully and will push for carbon credits if it affects us because we take care of the crops that ultimately reduce emissions. They would use yield data to show the result of not using aircraft and how much more land and inputs would be required to grow the same crops and to show the positive environmental impact of ag aircraft.

In safety and federal regulations, there were 44 accidents as of 10/02/20 with 9 of those being fatal. The accident rate is down, however the fatality rate is average. NAAA continues to work with the FAA on their interpretation of CAM 8. Many of the aircraft in operation today were certified under CAM 8 and there has been some confusion with the FAA on certain aspects of it. Air Tractors certified in 1987 or later were certified under part 23, and CAM 8 in years prior. One thing of note on CAM 8 certified aircraft, is that there was not a requirement for a logbook entry on hopper capacity and max load. But with the lack of a placard or logbook entry, you must be aware that at max load, and 1.8g load factor, you may exceed the limitations of that airframe. There will be a section on the NAAA website available to members only that will outline and deal with CAM 8 issues. NAAA has also started a line of communication with wind energy companies to address markings and other safety issues. There was an accident this year where an ag aircraft buzzed a wind generator tower and ended up injuring one of the workers on the tower, so the wind energy companies will push for more regulation or buffer zones if there are any more accidents of a similar nature.

In closing, just a few remarks on the benefits of NAAA membership. NAAA spends about 2.4 million dollars annually on expenses, only about 31% is covered by membership dues. So they spend about \$1150/member. That makes the membership fee pretty cheap. One benefit that is available to members is an hour of free legal consultation, which there have been several cases just this year where members have had to use that. The NAAA sent a letter to all the state Ag Departments outlining the PAASS program and it's benefits as it pertains to applicator recertification. It is the single best safety and educational tool available to aerial applicators and should be recognized for recertification. On that note though, there is talk of raising the PAASS program fee for non-members, which would make your NAAA membership even more cost effective. As I've said before and will continue to advocate, NAAA membership is the cheapest insurance you can have in this industry. Nobody else is out there fighting on your behalf, and with today's political and social environment, it's nice to have somebody in your corner.

Everybody have a great fall and winter, and hopefully we'll see you all on the interweb in January for the first and hopefully only online convention of the A M A A.



## Montana Ag Pilots and Operators

AMAA is going virtual! Because of the many and varied unknowns facing us during the wide-spread pandemic (can we meet mask-free, safely travel, and will the rules change between now and the end of January?) the board of directors made the very difficult decision to move from an on-site in-person format in January to a one-day virtual conference to help you meet your Continuing Education needs for Montana Department of Agriculture licensing and renewals.

The virtual meetings will take place on Zoom. To participate, all attendees must register with a separate email address and view the webinars using your unique log in information. After I receive your registration fees (due by January 8, 2021, late registrations cannot be accepted due to imposed time constraints that surround a virtual meeting) you will receive an email to complete your registration for the webinars. With this registration, I will be able to track and confirm attendance to earn CEUs. Hours will be credited to those that attend entire sessions. Once your Zoom registration is confirmed you will receive Zoom meeting ID codes and passwords. Please note that conference registration fees have been reduced this year since we will not have to pay for rooms, meals, and other related costs. There will be expenses incurred due to hosting the PAASS program and using Zoom, in addition to standard annual operating costs of doing business.

You can join these meetings on a computer or mobile device. You will not need a Zoom account to participate but you will need to open Zoom on your computer or use the mobile app. While attending the Zoom session, please be in a stationary location to maintain your Zoom log in for the course. Additionally, it is recommended that you are at a quiet location with minimal distractions to maximize your educational experience.

NAAREF's PAASS program (see additional information on PAASS on page 4) will be offered as well as informational videos from your favorite vendors and sponsors. Additional information will be provided as it becomes available. Please feel free to contact Colleen Campbell if you have suggestions, questions or concerns.

Membership and Convention Registration  
**ASSOCIATION OF MONTANA AERIAL APPLICATORS**  
 Annual Convention and Trade Show  
**“VIRTUAL”**  
 Monday, January 25, 2021

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Company \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ YES, I would like a 2021 AMAA Operator Membership @ \$200.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ YES, I would like a 2021 AMAA Pilot Membership @ \$ 95.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ YES, I would like a 2021 AMAA Associate Membership @ \$ 75.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ YES, I would like a 2021 AMAA Retired Membership @ \$ 25.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ YES, I will be attending the Virtual Conference @ \$200.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ YES, I would like a Non-Member Convention Registration  
@ \$400.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to **AMAA**.

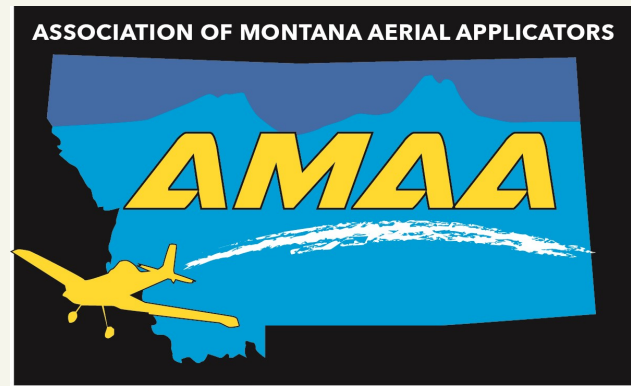
Due to time restraints and the necessity to email invitations to the “virtual” conference registration forms **MUST** be received by:  
**January 8, 2021**

Mail checks to:  
**AMAA**  
1891 23<sup>rd</sup> Lane NE  
Dutton, MT 59433

If you prefer, you can call me with your credit card information (a small surcharge will apply)  
or I can provide you with instructions for an electronic transfer of funds.



Montana  
Sponsors  
And  
Exhibitors



Sponsors, Exhibitors, and Friends! I can never express just how much your support of our association has meant in past years. Because of the vast unknowns due to the wide-spread pandemic, the AMAA board of directors made the very tough decision to go virtual this year, rather than hosting an on-site in-person conference. We are offering “virtual sponsorships” and hope that you’ll choose to continue your support of the Association of Montana Aerial Applicators.

During our “virtual” conference on Monday, January 25th I will display logos and give shout-outs to our wonderful sponsors. The cost for this advertising is just \$100. The second option, at just \$250, is that you can provide a short 10-15 minute video to be aired that day, along with your logo. It is preferable that all information be geared directly to aerial application and the use of your product or service. I think the YouTube platform is best to use for this but I’m open to other programs. Logos and videos must be received by December 31, 2020 so that I can incorporate them into the program.

Further, the team at Chem-Man have built a website (<https://www.agaviationconnect.com/>) to serve as a central hub 24/7 to connect ag aviation businesses and customers. Here is a link to a short video with a quick tour and explanation of the website:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fgVMN3kpr1PUOYduD9qVQuQskoi0\\_Ov4/view?ts=5f6ce775](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fgVMN3kpr1PUOYduD9qVQuQskoi0_Ov4/view?ts=5f6ce775)

Each vendor will have their own page with contact information and optional information (pictures, website, logos, etc.). Videos are optional but would be a great way to showcase your products. In order to be featured on this website, I do request that you continue to sponsor our convention as you would during a normal season. I invite you to check out the website and submit information about your business in order to be included on the website. It may become a vital part of our industry and a place that customers can go to shop if they aren’t able to make it to a convention. For questions about the site, please email Ashleigh at [support@agaviationconnect.com](mailto:support@agaviationconnect.com) or visit the website at [www.agaviationconnect.com](http://www.agaviationconnect.com) to submit your business to the directory. *Thank you, Colleen*

SPONSOR REGISTRATION FORM  
**ASSOCIATION OF MONTANA AERIAL APPLICATORS**  
Virtual Conference  
Monday, January 25, 2021

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **YES**, I would like my company's logo displayed during the virtual conference and in future AMAA publications @ \$100 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **YES**, I would like my company's logo displayed and I will also provide a pre-recorded 15-minute video presentation to be shown during the conference @ \$250 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **YES**, I agree that 2020 has been a difficult year and I would like to further support the AMAA with a generous donation in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **YES**, I would like an allied membership @ \$160.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to **AMAA**.

Sponsor applications, payments, logos and videos must be received by:  
**December 31, 2020**

Mail checks to:

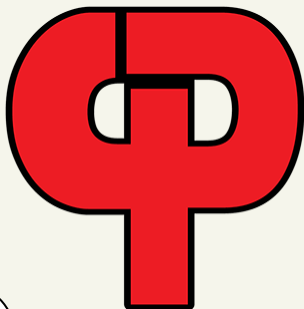
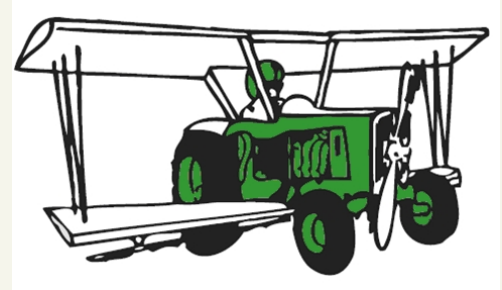
**AMAA**

1891 23<sup>rd</sup> Lane NE

Dutton, MT 59433

If you prefer, you can call me with your credit card information (a small surcharge will apply) or I can provide you with instructions for an electronic transfer of funds.

**Email logos and videos to: [eccampbell@yahoo.com](mailto:eccampbell@yahoo.com)**



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