Volume 10, Issue 1 March 2016

### AMAA NEWSLETTER

"Professional Aerial Applicators Providing Crop Protection Products and Services to Production Agriculture Across Montana" www.montanaaerialapplicators.org

ASSOCIATION OF MONTANA AERIAL APPLICATORS

#### U P C O M I N G E V E N T S

- 2016 Operation
  SAFE Dates—April 1-3 in Lewistown
- Spring Board Meeting—During the Operation SAFE Fly-In
- Fall Board Meeting— TBD
- 2017 Convention—
  January 22-24

"Upon the performance of each rests the fate of all."

#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE: President's Message 1 **Board of Directors** 2 Informational Items 3 NAAA Treasurer 4 NAAA Spring Board 5 Meeting Operation SAFE 8 LTP Report 9 2016 Exhibitors 10 AMAA Membership 11 AMAA Billboard 12

### 2016 AMAA President, Bruce Downs

Thank you to everyone for coming to the AMAA Convention! Also, special thanks goes to the vendors for supporting AMAA. Thanks to all who spoke about their products. It was really great for Brenda Watts to take time out of her busy schedule to come to Montana and speak to us. I wish her the best as NAAA's president.

My first year as president has been very rewarding and even a little challenging at times. I want to thank the Board for supporting me and a special thanks is extended to Colleen; she does a lot of work to keep the AMAA running smoothly. Thank her when you can!

As you know, the spray check will be in Lewistown on April 1-3. If anyone who hasn't committed yet would like to come and get your plane checked, just call one of us. You are more than welcome to participate. We just need numbers to plan ahead so contact us as soon as possible. We also will be holding our spring Board meeting during this time in Lewistown so if you have questions or any comments, please call or e-mail myself or any of the other Board members.

We are sorry about not having breakfast available during this year's convention. Last year, we paid for breakfast and the Heritage also provided a complimentary breakfast with the rooms. Because of that, we decided to try and save money and not provide breakfast in the morning. We didn't know until it was too late that the Heritage no longer provided free breakfast with its rooms. We apologize for this and will make adjustments for next year's convention.

Please remember to support our sponsors whenever possible. They are listed in this newsletter. Again, thank you everyone for attending and remember if you are not a member, please consider joining the NAAA. They work hard to lobby for us and keep us in business.

Thanks, Bruce Downs

#### 2016 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## Darrin Pluhar NAAA Treasurer

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# Colleen Campbell Executive Secretary

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#### Tidbits of Information

Thank you to **Wilbur-Ellis**Company for the 2015 InPlace funds in the amount of \$786.50, presented to us during the AMAA convention in January. These funds are used to offset the costs associated with the Operation S.A.F.E. Fly-In. This program is discontinued for 2016.



The NAAA is looking for photos that depict the history of aerial application from state associations to use as the organization celebrates its 50th anniversary. Please forward photos to Colleen as soon as possible.

Dues for 2016 Membership with the AMAA may still be paid. Dues are as follows:

Operator \$190

Pilot \$95

Retired \$ 25

Allied \$160

Please mail dues to Colleen Campbell.

Paul Newby reports that **MATE** was a success once again this year. Mate was held February 18-20 in Billings. Paul and his wife, Pat, manned the booth all 3 days and were joined by Matt Lutz on Friday and Bruce and Joanne Downs on Saturday. Spinning propellers and candy were distributed at the booth along with informative brochures regarding aerial application, the AMAA and the NAAA. Big Sky Growers of Manhattan donated 50# of potatoes which Paul gave away along with AMAA bags. Paul reports that several folks were interested in getting into the industry. Thanks to everyone who had a hand in promoting the aerial application industry at MATE.

I apologize for not having breakfast available during the convention in January. The Heritage Inn catering department failed to inform me that the hotel no longer served a complimentary breakfast to hotel guests. In 2015, we tried something new and Dupont sponsored a buffet-style breakfast one morning. However, be-

cause of the available complimentary breakfast, much of the buffet was wasted (and I hate to waste food!). I will try to arrange breakfast within the scheduled time frame

of our meetings for the 2017 convention.

The Association of Montana Aerial Applicators encourages membership with the National Agricultural Aviation Association. The NAAA works diligently to represent and promote its 1900 members located in 46 states.

Volume 10, Issue 1 Page 4

#### From an NAAA email:

#### **Darrin Pluhar Elected 2016 NAAA Treasurer**

ALEXANDRIA, VA - FEBRUARY 2, 2016 - The National Agricultural Aviation Association (NAAA) is pleased to announce that Darrin Pluhar has been elected as its new treasurer for 2016.

Pluhar owns Plu's Flying Service Inc., an aerial application business located in Ekalaka, Mont., that operates three aircraft. Since establishing the business in 1996, he has been servicing producers across southeastern Montana for more than 20 years. Pluhar hires pilots as needed but does most of the spraying himself. He primarily applies herbicides to winter wheat and spring wheat, but he also treats a great deal of pasture and alfalfa, with some safflower, sunflowers and corn. His season starts in April and ends in November. Because July and August can sometimes be slow months for aerial application in southeast Montana, Pluhar uses that time to help other aerial application operators across the Midwest when they get busy. "I know what it's like to be behind and need help ASAP, so I tend to return the favor and help other operators out whenever I can."

Pluhar has been an active member of the Association of Montana Aerial Applicators and NAAA for years. In 2008-2009, he went through the NAAA/Syngenta Leadership Training Program, which develops new leaders and advocates for the agricultural aviation industry. He joined NAAA's board of directors as Montana's state representative in 2013 and has served on several key committees, including NAAA's government relations, bylaws and safety/federal aviation regulations committees.

Pluhar is joined on the 2016 NAAA officer team by President Brenda Watts of K & P Flying Service, Watson, Ark.; Vice President Dominique Youakim of Aerinova Aerial LLC, Mattoon, III.; and Secretary Graham Lavender of AgAir Update, Perry, Ga.

Pluhar is honored to serve alongside his fellow officers. "When asked to serve I felt like it was my duty and look forward to it," he said.



#### Chemical update provided by Tater Erickson, Dupont, AMAA Board Member:

Change is the name of the game in the chemical industry right now. We are seeing many mergers and acquisitions. Dow and DuPont have announced a plan to merger as equals later in 2016. This will be spun off into 3 separate companies in the years to come: Agriculture, Industrial Chemicals and Performance Materials. Syngenta has entered into a buyout agreement with ChemChina; this will be one of the largest chemical companies in the world. The world is full of rumors as world trade continues to be unsettled. So keep your ears to the ground; change is in the air. More importantly, we have a crop year fast approaching and it is going to be a busy year coming. Please consider coming to this year's fly in in Lewistown; it truly is some of the best management practices to know your pattern. Hopefully we will see you there so we can catch up.

Promote aerial application at the national level!

### 2016 NAAA Spring Board Meeting Report

The NAAA recently held their Spring Board Meeting in Alexandria, VA on February 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup>. It was a busy three days for state representatives from all across the US discussing and dealing with the issues affecting the aerial application industry. Following is a brief summary:

On Thursday morning, Dana Ness and I traveled up to Capitol Hill for some appointments with Joseph Schmoll of Sen. Daines office and Henry Ring of Sen. Tester's office. In those meetings, we relayed to both staffers some of the NAAA's viewpoints and concerns with many of the issues facing our industry and the political implications involved. The main topics we covered were WOTUS and NPDES, Tower markings, UAV issues as well as user fees, fuel excise tax exemption, bonus depreciation and Aerial Application Research Technology funding.

Friday morning, NAAA held the PAC fund raising breakfast where Rep. Sam Graves (R-MO) was the guest speaker where he updated us on some of the issues currently being addressed by Congress, one being the privatization of Air Traffic Control. The new FAA Reauthorization Act of 2016 establishes a not-for-profit ATC Corporation run by an 11 member board. The makeup of the board was dominated by airline influenced position basically giving them control over it. Rep. Graves stated that the GA Caucus was instrumental in adding two more seats to that board to better represent general aviation and diminish the airline dominance. Privatizing ATC means that user fees would have to be implemented to fund the system. Fortunately, piston and turbine aircraft involved with Ag aviation have been exempted. There is still an overall concern with the privatizing of ATC on many issues (GA airspace usage, safety and modernization) and has a long way to go to become law. Rep. Graves serves as Co-Chairman of the General Aviation Caucus and is a very important advocate for our industry.

In the General Session, Jack Housenger, EPA's Director for the Office of Pesticides Program briefed us on what they are currently dealing with which include product re-registration, proposed changes to the private and commercial applicator certification requirements and WPS requirements where, interestingly enough, for the first time they are considering the NAAA's recommendations to take into account wind speed and direction when determining applicator exclusion zones near workers and sensitive areas.

Andrew Moore, NAAA's Executive Director, opened his "state of our industry" remarks by recognizing the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the NAAA this year, along with how the new, quarterly digital magazine will be celebrating the occasion through articles focusing on all the people and events that shaped the industry over the last 50 years. All this will lead up to the big finale to take place at the NAAA Convention to be held in Long Beach, CA this December.

Concerning the future outlook of the aerial application industry, some of the challenges we face include the US Dollar being at a 13 year high which will affect US exports, plus high commodity production in 2015 created surpluses that will lead to declining prices.

The good news for agriculture food production:

- \* The global economic growth is forecast to average 3.5% annually over the next ten years.
- \* Population growth will increase from 7.2 billion today to 8.1 billion by 2025 (9 billion by 2050).
- \* Significant growth in the world's middle class means greater food demands and US Ag exports long term.
- \* Enhanced US Ag trade through the Trans-Pacific Partnership deal between the US and 11 Asian-Pacific countries that reduces/eliminates many barriers for our goods and services.
- \* Crop protection products market will continue to grow to meet the global food demand.

I serve on many different committees and will briefly summarize the main points of interest as follows:

Government Relations covered a lot of topics of interest including The FAA Reauthorization Act of 2016. In addition to the privatization of ATC, there is also a provision to require the marking (paint, balls and sleeves) of ALL towers 50 – 200 feet in height and to develop a database that shows all such towers. Included in the language is an exemption for any such towers within the footprint of a farmyard, business or other such facility.

Concerning UAV's, their registration took effect in December and as of the first part of February, there were more UAV's registered (340K) than there are total civilian aircraft (325K) in the US. NAAA continues to push for requirements that would help to increase the visibility and ensure the safest environment possible when operating UAV's in the realm of airspace used by Ag aircraft. Examples would be to require paint, strobes, pilot certificated operators, NOTAM operations and ADSB-Out tracking. Some of the negatives to come out of the Reauthorization Act was an amendment that would exempt UAV's less than 4.4 lbs. from registration and another exemption for UAV's operating less than 400 feet as long as they don't interfere with manned aircraft and is being used for research and development. Currently, all UAV operations are limited to within line of sight, but they are already pushing for non-line of sight as well as night operations.

The proposed changes to Waters of the US (WOTUS) is still under review following a stay of the law by the US Court of Appeals after being challenged by 18 states last Fall. In January, the White House administration vetoed a resolution to prevent the law from taking effect, to the surprise of no one.

Meanwhile, there is still a push to get the NPDES permitting requirement rescinded. Currently, there is wording (S. 1500) to do just that attached to the Sportsmen Act Bill, which is working its way through the Senate. In January, it passed out of the Environmental and Public Works Committee and is now headed towards the floor for a vote. There is optimism that the NPDES wording will remain in the full bill once it comes up for a full vote by the Senate but, as history has shown us, the wording can be striped at a moment's notice so we can't take anything for granted. Having 54 R votes, only 6 D's are needed and according to people close to the politics, there appears to be enough support for passage, should the vote happen. Keep your fingers crossed!

Another topic of interest that was brought up in Safety & Regs, and received much discussion, was the issue of pilot fatigue, specifically sleep deprivation. Steve Bruneau with Pulsar Informatics, gave a presentation on how his company has worked with the trucking industry doing fatigue studies on drivers and how their performance is affected and the ramifications on safety. Some pilots commented that they have been involved with or known someone who has participated in some type of sleep study. Many determined their quality of sleep was very poor and simple remedies can be taken to ensure quality sleep leading to better alertness throughout the day which greatly increases flight safety. It was agreed that NAAA should work with Pulsar to develop a fatigue study of Ag pilots. This will likely be included in a future PAASS program.

That is a pretty condensed version of the committees I was a part of. There are well over 20 committees that meet during the board meetings, so I would encourage everyone to visit the NAAA website for a more detailed look at what was covered and to keep up on the current events happening within the our industry.

As you just read, NAAA is working hard for the aerial application industry and the vital role it plays in meeting the demand for food, fuel, fiber and forestry across the United States and around the World. Recently, you should have received a reminder to renew your NAAA membership. If you have never been a member of the NAAA, I'd like you to consider all that they do to support your livelihood. Here are some things to consider that various membership categories have to offer:

Operator: Bonus Depreciation

Fuel Tax Savings; Avgas: \$.19/gal x 30 GPH x 250 Hrs. = \$1425/Season (\$6/HR)

Jet A: \$.23/gal x 55 GPH x 250 Hrs. = \$3162/Season (\$13/HR)

Average cost of membership: 1 cent per acre!

Page 8

Affiliated Operator: Includes Partners, Branch Managers, etc.

Insight to issues affecting our industry.

Tools to run a safer, more efficient business.

(Digital magazine, website, e newsletter, media relations kit, bill stuffers)

Pilots: Better informed with industry insight through digital magazine and website.

Safety awareness through weekly Fly Safe Campaign notices.

Adds credibility and shows professionalism to current and future operators.

Support: Includes spouses and significant others.

Helps them to understand the aerial application environment and your place in it.

Gets them involved in the promotion of our industry thru education, tradeshows, etc.

Teddy Roosevelt once said:

"Every man owes a part of his time and money to the business or industry in which he is engaged. No man has a moral right to withhold his support from an organization that is striving to improve conditions within his sphere."

Those are wise and true words from one of our greatest A	merican Presidents.
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Fly Safe!			
Darrin			

#### **OPERATION SAFE**

Operation Safe will be held April 1-3 in Lewistown, MT. Scott Bretthauer will be on site to run the diagnostic equipment and Paul Newby will be the photographer. We have 10 aircraft scheduled to fly across the line. If you wish to participate and haven't already signed up, please contact Colleen. As of this writing, we have 2 lunches and 1 dinner being provided. If you know the days you'll be attending, please try to email this to Colleen so we can plan for the meals. The cost is \$200 per aircraft. BASF scholarships are available—please see the NAAA website for more information. There is a block of rooms reserved at Super 8 (406-538-2581). They are being held until March 25 so please reserve your room soon. Other local motels include: Yogo Inn (406-535-8721), The Calvert Hotel (406-535-5411, 877-371-5411), B & B Motel (406-535-5496, 877-538-3563) and Trail's End Motel (406-535-5468). For additional information or to register, please call or email Colleen (406-781-6461, eccampbell@yahoo.com).

The <u>NAAA/Syngenta Leadership Training Program's</u> goal is to develop strong, knowledgeable leadership in the agricultural aviation industry. The year-long program includes training that enables its participants to clearly communicate the important roles aerial application plays in the production of our country's agricultural products to the public, media and government. The program has been offered by NAAA and Syngenta Crop Protection Inc. (formerly Zeneca Agricultural Products) since 1995. **Paul Newby** was chosen to represent Montana during the 2015-16 program year. Paul was in Alexandra, VA last month for the second session. This is his report:

Our second and final session of Leadership Training was in Alexandria, VA at the Hilton Hotel in Old Town Alexandria. It started at 7 AM on the 12th of February at the AgAv PAC breakfast with Congressman Sam Graves (R-MO), co-chairman of the General Aviation Caucus and member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Congressman Graves enlightened us about the ongoing effort in Congress to "privatize Air Traffic Control", an effort that is now stretching beyond 10 years. Most of us have likely heard that it is an effort to privatize, however, Congressman Graves indicated that is untrue, congress is creating another Government Corporation with a self-governing board with some powers of taxation (user fees). It is far from complete and currently appears that Ag Aviation will be exempt from user fees and remain on fuel tax footing and likely so will the rest of GA. If there is interest in the subject I'll be happy to expound further in Lewistown at our fly-in.

Following breakfast we attended the Board General Session and then started the training session at 10:00 AM with Bob Schramm covering the NAAA and the D.C. Landscape, in short, money is the "mother's milk" of politics! Following this Andrew Moore gave an overview of NAAA followed by lunch. Following lunch we spent the afternoon on Social Media, how it works and how to make good use of it, followed by a fabulous dinner at 6:30 that evening.

Saturday started with continental breakfast at 7:30 followed by a continuation of media training followed by splitting us into two groups for simulated media interviews, one before lunch and one after. Following a break we gathered for evaluation and discussion with both groups present. We adjourned at 4:45 PM and at 6:00 PM attended the Presidents Reception and Class Recognition (graduation), all followed by a wonderful group dinner and conclusion. It was a great experience and I think each of us developed some great relationships with fellow applicators which will be of great value in the future.

Thanks to all of you for giving me the opportunity to attend.

Paul Newby

#### 2016 EXHIBITORS AND SPONSORS

AEROTRONICS—Steve Vold, 406-259-5006

**AG-WEST**—Casey Lilly, 406-453-0010

ARYSTA LIFESCIENCE—Craig Codr and Rick Liesener, 406-780-0265

**BASF**—Chris Berg, 406-210-4460

BAYER CROP SCIENCE—Justin Nielson, 605-222-2476

CITY SERVICE VALCON—Ed Croymans and Breezy Burlison, 406-250-9225

CROSS PETROLEUM SERVICE—Greg Cross, Larry Taylor, Craig Stebbins, 406-377-8325

**DOW AGROSCIENCES**—Lee Ohlinger 406-866-3200, Seth Keas 785-737-6234,

Alison Anderson 662-416-8280 and Bryan Randall

**DUPONT CROP PROTECTION**—Tater Erickson, 406-366-1287

DYNANAV SYSTEMS, INC—Reg Moen, 604-313-0745

HELENA CHEMICAL COMPANY—Brooks Hammel 406-628-8768, Paul Olson 406-262-3737,

Willie Krueger 406-855-4910

MONSANTO—Kerry Yates, 406-788-4215

MOUNTAIN AIR INSURANCE—Ken Brion/AJ Schutzman, 406-363-1411

NORTHWEST PROPELLER—Dick and Martha Jacob, 253-770-7400

OMAHA AIRPLANE SUPPLY—Rich Broberg, 800-228-9400

PICKETT EQUIPMENT COMPANY—Bailey Everett,901-494-1937

PRATT & WHITNEY—Eric Gates, 715-271-4862

QUEEN BEE AIR SPECIALTIES—Chip Kemper, 208-745-7654

REGAL AVIATION INSURANCE—Rusty Wissmiller, Jason Wissmiller, 800-275-7345

SKY TRACTOR SUPPLY—Peg Klemetson, 701-436-5880

SYNGENTA—Johnnie Scott, 406-453-5004

TRACMAP—Mark Hornback, 888-656-6135

TULSA AIRCRAFT ENGINES—Rex Vaughan, 918-838-8532

WILBUR-ELLIS COMPANY—Burl Brawley 406-727-4500, Craig Cheetham 406-248-1176

### **THANK YOU!**

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Page 12 AMAA NEWSLETTER



There is a continued interest to display the billboard this summer. Boyd Morgan has arranged for it to be hung near Kalispell for the months of June and July. Boyd has also made a generous donation to this account. If you would like to help meet the financial demand to display the AMAA billboard, please make your donations payable to AMAA and mail to Colleen. Thank you!

