

**“PROFESSIONAL AERIAL APPLICATORS PROVIDING CROP PROTECTION PRODUCTS AND  
SERVICES TO PRODUCTION AGRICULTURE ACROSS MONTANA”  
WWW.MONTANAERIALAPPLICATORS.ORG  
WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/MONTANAERIALAPPLICATORS  
OCTOBER 2024  
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**Professional Aerial Applicators**

**AMAA 2024 MEMBERSHIP**

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*Please Fly Safe*

**AMAA**

**Page 2**

### **NAAA Update**

**Mike Campbell**

NAAA fall board meetings were held October 10-13 in Chattanooga, TN. It was a productive three days in a setting just blocks away from the Tennessee River. I serve on 5 committees. I will briefly highlight activities that NAAA staff and your state representatives are currently working on. The membership committee will eliminate production of the paper directory in 2026. These are produced every spring and are outdated as soon as they are printed as members tend to renew at different times of the year. This could be updated and kept current if digitally produced and would save thousands of dollars each year. At the request of NAAA members, finding solutions for

health and life insurance is an issue NAAA has been working on for several years. The insurance committee has announced that these policies are now available for members. This has been quite an undertaking and is definitely a perk you'll want to explore. The Safety & FAR Committee wants to obtain real numbers for accidents involving UAS. The UAAS committee is new to NAAA; it will help broaden the message of airspace safety and application efficacy. One key item the group will focus on is right-of-way issues involving UAS and fixed wing and rotor aircraft. The AMAA may want to consider, as other states are doing, inviting UAS operators to Operation SAFE clinics and offering memberships to the state association.

A couple items of note:

- Darrin Pluhar is a new board member of NAAREF. Congratulations, Darrin!
- Toby McPherson, a North Dakota operator and with the help of NAAA, will donate his Ag Cat Serial #1 to the Smithsonian Museum.

Ag accidents were routinely in the 100's per year in the 1990's but, because of NAAA's award-winning PAASS program, there have been only 52 (13 fatal) in 2024. This number is still way too high! The 2024-25 PAASS message is geared towards aviation safety (CFIT) and environmental professionalism. The staff continues to make great headway with the EPA; since 2017, NAAA has commented on over 280 pesticide reviews. There are continued gains in the area of tower markings. The FAA approved radio frequency 122.925 for communication between ag aircraft. The Farm Bill expired 9/30/24; NAAA has priorities in place for the new bill and will comment soon. Don't expect a new bill to be in place until 2025. Press releases and Ag on the Mall are still a big hit with consumers and the ag community alike. The 2024 Ag Aviation Expo will be held in Dallas/Fort Worth November 16-20, 2024. Having an earlier convention is something members have wanted, and by the record number of pre-registrations members are looking forward to the show in the Lone Star state. can attest to its benefits.

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**Professional Aerial Applicators**  
**AMAA**

**Page 5**

**Professional Aerial Applicators**  
**AMAA**  
*Continued*

the Wires Course will be offered free (the course usually costs \$150) on Saturday the 16 th thanks to the Tylor Johnson Legacy Foundation in North Dakota. This Foundation is “Dedicated to Safer Skies and Honoring Tylor’s Memory.” Tylor was killed in a 2023 ag plane accident and his family honors his memory by funding this informative and timely course. A few AMAA members attended the past two years and can attest to its benefits.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your NAAA representative.

## **SUPPORT COMMITTEE UPDATE**

**Colleen Campbell**

This year I serve on three Support committees that include Convention, ATHENA, and Scholarship, which I chair. The Convention committee is tasked with providing a fun activity during the Ag Expo each year; this year it is in Dallas/Fort Worth November 16-20. On Monday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, the ladies (adult only) outing is a short bus ride from the Omni Hotel to Billy Bob's for a southern barbecue buffet followed by an hour-long line dancing class. The class size is limited to 100 ladies so sign up soon (via the convention registration form) if you plan to attend. The 2024-25 ATHENA program is entitled "What is Your Game Plan?" and will be offered on Wednesday morning,

November 20<sup>th</sup> from 9:45-11:45. Pre-Game planning is necessary before a busy spray season; this period focuses on what to do ahead of time (purchasing supplies, completing forms, etc.) as well as communication tactics between your pilots, ground crew and family members. The second part of the presentation focuses on Game Time. There will be 8 scenarios offered and discussion will be encouraged on how to handle situations that may arise during your work season. This will be followed by the Post Season wrap-up, with takeaway tips to help guarantee a smooth and successful spray season. Guys and gals alike find the ATHENA program valuable, and many states offer this to everyone during their annual conventions. Finally, the Scholarship committee reviewed 5 applications that we received from students answering the question "What are the biggest obstacles to the ag aviation industry in your area? Discuss how they could be overcome." We have \$3,000 to disperse and this year we chose to give the top three applicants each \$1,000 because of the creativity, knowledge, and love of agriculture revealed in their essays. It was really fun to read how the students express their knowledge and desire to be a part of our great industry. We haven't quite finalized the topic for the 2025 essay but watch for the announcement next spring on the NAAA website and in this newsletter.

J

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**  
**WACEY CATHEY**

*Fall 2024, as I write this we are just 12 days from Election Day. Each election year there is some form of anticipation on the results. This particular election seems to be much more important than any of my life but maybe it's because I'm at an age where I'm starting to pay more attention.*

*The 2024 season seems to have been average at best for operators across the state. Though I have not talked to many at this point, hopefully everyone's season was safe and productive enough to keep the lights on, and fuel in the bulk tank for next year.*

*The grasshopper cycle appears to have slowed down across the state. Now we will have to get things ready for what Mother Nature will give us for work next spring. I'm still anxiously awaiting a fungus run of some sort. I think there will be many changes ahead of us in the next 8-10 years. The continued pressure from the general public with the use of chemical crop protection products, Drone technology, FAA, and Inflation to name a few. We had a rough year in the industry with many accidents, too many fatalities, and a surprising number of mid air incidents, that I'm sure the FAA will have something to say about.*

*I Look forward to visiting with everyone about these topics in January at the annual meeting and convention. We are currently working hard to get new vendors along with old, to attend our trade show this year with new products and ideas.*

*Too Blue Sky's Ahead!*

*AMAA President,*

*Wacey Cathey*

**The main work of the Legislature, this session, will be:**

1. **Property tax revisions, which AMAA should watch closely**
2. **An Ag exemption to certain acreages, part #1, above**
3. **Clean-up bills from Dept of Ag.**
4. **Lots of water bill drafts**
4. **A local district judge, cleared the way for all paperwork for a bill, as it is being drafted, to remain 'private', until the bill receives a number. So, very hard for anyone, to check on the wording of a bill (its intent), as the bill is being written. Sounds like the Montana Supreme Court will be weighing in on the District judges' summer 2024 decision.**
5. **After the November election, more will be known about new bill drafts, some of which, could affect AMAA members. The new members of the Legislature will have 'given away' their intentions, via individual bill drafts.**
6. **All the "usual" bills, of which, some could affect AMAA members. Such as Appropriations bills, nutrient standards, work comp changes, etc.**

**AMAA Gun Raffle tickets available from any board members if you are interested in purchasing or selling tickets . Only 150 tickets will be sold**

Page 8

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**From the September 5th NAAA Newsletter**

**FAA Safety Team Hosting Another Part 137 Drone Pilot Webinar, September 10th Professional Aerial Application Organizations;**



NAAA Speaking on Aviation Safety and Environmental Professionalism Programs . On the evening of September 10, 2024, at 7PM CST, the FAA Safety Team (FAASTeam) will present a third drone safety webinar for uncrewed aerial application systems' (UAAS) pilots titled 'Ag Drone Podcast – UAS Part 137 Professional Organizations'. NAAA CEO Andrew Moore will be speaking as part of the webinar on the importance of belonging and participating in professional industry associations to ensure aviation safety and environmental professionalism. Also speaking will be Joel Jones, founder and owner of American Drone, a Wisconsin-based LLC; and Nicholas Matlock, aviation safety inspector with FAA, AFS-752 (Emerging Technologies Division). To register for the webinar here contact Troy Siekas at (612) 253-4513 [troy.siekas@faa.gov](mailto:troy.siekas@faa.gov).

**One hundred years ago, on Aug. 3, 1921, an aerial crop dusting experiment spawned the birth of the agricultural aviation industry. Scroll down to watch (and share) the video the industry's legacy after a century of agricultural aviation.**

Membership and Convention Registration  
ASSOCIATION OF MONTANA AERIAL APPLICATORS  
Annual Convention and Trade Show  
Heritage Inn – Great Falls, Montana  
Sunday, January 19– Tuesday, January 21, 2025

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

–

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

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

Spouse Name, if attending (Please Print Names)

\_\_\_\_\_ YES, I would like a 2023 AMAA Operator Membership @ \$250.00

\_\_\_\_\_ YES, I would like a 2023 AMAA Pilot Membership @ \$100.00

\_\_\_\_\_ YES, I would like a 2023 AMAA Associate Membership @ \$100.00

\_\_\_\_\_ YES, I would like a 2023 AMAA Retired Membership @ \$50.00

\_\_\_\_\_ YES, I will be attending the convention. Registration fee @ \$325.00

\_\_\_\_\_ YES, I would like a Non-Member Convention Registration @ \$500.00

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to AMAA  
112 Maryha Rd Reserve MT 59258

**Convention Registrations must be received by January 8,**

**2023**

Mail checks to:

AMAA

112 Marhya RD

Reserve, MT 59258

**Upcoming Events**

**2024 Ag Aviation Expo Dallas/Fort Worth November  
16-20, 2024.**

**2025 AMAA Convention January 19-21**

**2025 Spring Board Meeting April**

**Exhibition Space Request**

**Form**

**ASSOCIATION OF MONTANA AERIAL**

**APPLICATORS**

**Annual Convention and Trade**

**Show**

**Heritage Inn – Great Falls,**

**Montana**

**Sunday, January 19 – Tuesday, January 21,**

**2025**

**Company** \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

**Company Representatives Attending (Registration includes two.)**

**(Please Print Names. For each additional rep, over two, please add \$20 per lunch and \$45 per banquet ticket.)**

\_\_\_ **YES, We would like an Allied membership @ 500.00**

\_\_\_ **YES, we will have more than two representatives. Additional meals:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ **YES, please reserve a 15-minute presentation slot for our company**

\_\_\_ **YES, our company would also like to be a convention sponsor in the**  
**amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_.**

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

**Please make checks payable to AMAA**

**Mail checks to:**

**112 Marhya RD Reserve, MT 59258**

**Exhibitor applications and payment must be received by December 31, 2025**

**Door Prizes are also gladly accepted!**