

*Advancing Aviation – Advancing New York!*

# Air Currents

NEW YORK AVIATION MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION • VOL. 8 NO. 2 • S U M M E R 2006



## *Annual Conference to Land in Buffalo!*

### **2006 NYAMA Fall Conference and Exhibit Show**

**September 13-15, 2006**

**The Adam's Mark Hotel in Buffalo, NY**

#### **Conference Highlights**

NYAMA's 2006 conference and exhibit show will offer an exciting format that enables attendees to build relationships, discuss strategic issues, and identify enhanced business opportunities. The conference sessions are designed for small general aviation and large commercial service airports, FBOs, business partners, and others with interest in the aviation industry.

The conference program provides many opportunities for registered attendees to mingle with colleagues, speakers, exhibitors and sponsors in a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere.

- **Wednesday Evening Welcome Reception and Exhibit Show Opening**

Exhibitors will have their displays set-up, and our networking opportunities will give you a chance to learn more about industry trends.

- **Thursday Evening Exhibitor Reception**

Join us for some Wine, Cheese and Chocolate, Thursday evening from 5:30-7:00pm!

#### **Exhibit Show**

Discover the latest products and services in the aviation industry at the 2006 Exhibit Show. The Exhibit Hall is the place to explore a showcase of leading technology vendors and interact in hands-on demonstrations with some of the hottest technological innovations.

#### **Sponsorship Opportunities**

Sponsorship of conference events and programs enables business partner members to increase exposure, build relationships, and enhance your organization's image.

#### **More Information**

For more information, please contact NYAMA at (518) 432-9973 or email [info@nyama.com](mailto:info@nyama.com).

## *Program Overview*

### **WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13**

#### **Buffalo Niagara International Airport Technical Tour**

#### **Welcome Reception and Exhibit Show**

**Opening:** Welcome to Buffalo! Join your colleagues for a reception and exhibit show grand opening in the conference hotel, sponsored by the conference exhibitors.

### **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14**

#### **Opening Session and NYS DOT Update**

**FAA Update:** Manny Weiss, Eastern Regional Administrator, FAA; William J. Flanagan, Manager, FAA Airports Division, Eastern Region

#### **Luncheon with Keynote Speaker**

Join Greg Principato, President of ACI-NA, as he discusses recent events and key issues facing the aviation industry.

#### **Concurrent Sessions**

##### **General Aviation/FBO Roundtable**

This interactive panel discussion will examine critical issues facing the FBO industry and airports. Topics will include insurance, taxes, and landing fees.

*Moderator: William McShane, Long Island Jet Center*

##### **Air Service Development**

Today, airports of all sizes recognize the need to proactively communicate with airlines in their efforts to attract new flights and sustain existing service.

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**Rich Halik**  
President

# Word on the Wing

*From the  
President*

## *Dear Friend of Aviation:*

It's been a busy summer! We've had an ambitious legislative session in Albany and continue to advocate with regard to several key legislative priorities.

Our primary focus this year has been passage of legislation to exempt the purchase of GA aircraft from sales tax. Once again, we saw some encouraging signs of movement on the bill, but it fell short of passage as session wrapped up. The Association also helped identify potential funding for the AIR 99 program through the unused state match of the AIP program. Accessing those unused funds and reallocating them for use by airports has proved challenging, but we've made progress and are hopeful these things will develop further in the coming year.

We also have continued to share with lawmakers the need to find a more reliable and regular State funding source to meet airport capital development needs. While we appreciate tremendously the money included in the 2005 Bond Act for aviation concerns, that is only a temporary solution to a long-standing need. Speaking of the Bond Act—NYAMA has voiced concern over the significant delays in announcing grant awardees for Bond Act projects. It seems those wheels are turning, and we hope to hear a list of projects funded under the first two years of the program very soon. See the Legislative Update article in this edition of the newsletter for a review of all the issues currently being monitored by NYAMA.

In anticipation of a new administration this fall, NYAMA has been developing white papers and supporting materials to educate the new leadership regarding aviation issues and concerns throughout the State.

The Association is preparing for our annual conference to be held in Buffalo at the Adam's Mark Hotel, September 13-15. The program will address topics such as air service development, marketing and community outreach, legislation and lobbying, customer service, the FBO/airport partnership, and more.

This year's annual meeting will take place on Friday during the conference, at which time the election of officers and board members will take place. I encourage the full participation of both members and non-members in the annual meeting. It's a wonderful opportunity to learn about the Association's recent accomplishments, future goals, and to get involved. The conference also offers an interactive trade show (Wednesday, September 13 – Friday, September 15) and a Snow Removal Peer Review Training Workshop on Friday, September 15. Registration materials have been mailed and are available online at [www.nyama.com](http://www.nyama.com).

Thank you for your continued support of the Association and industry. As always, don't hesitate to contact Association Headquarters with any questions or to express your interest in getting involved.

Please have a healthy and safe summer. I look forward to seeing you all at the fall conference in Buffalo!

Sincerely,

Rich Halik  
NYAMA President

## Get Involved!

The Board of Directors would like to extend an invitation to all NYAMA members to attend a future board meeting. Please contact NYAMA Headquarters at (518) 432-9973 or [info@nyama.com](mailto:info@nyama.com) to see how you can get involved in leadership in the only organization in New York State dedicated solely to the needs of the aviation industry. Please also let us know if you are interested in serving on the Board of Directors.

### Upcoming Board Meetings:

- September 13, 8-10am (Buffalo)
- November 29, 10:30am-3:00pm (SWF)

## *Do we have your email?*

NYAMA is increasingly using email to disseminate timely information to its members. If you haven't been receiving periodic emails from NYAMA Headquarters, it may be because:

- We don't have your email
- The email we have on record is incorrect
- You have not "white-listed" the [info@nyama.com](mailto:info@nyama.com) email, so it is being filtered out of your inbox.

Please check your email settings and contact us if you have not been receiving emails to ensure you receive timely, valuable updates from your Association.

### Conference Program, continued from page 1

This session focuses on understanding the relationship between airports, airlines and passenger growth. Find out how to benchmark your existing services and processes and review the skills necessary to prepare and present convincing new service proposals.

*Ken Currie, Innova Aviation*

#### Concurrent Sessions

##### Marketing and Community Outreach

Airports throughout the State of New York have been struggling with their community outreach and PR programs. This session will explore various strategies for dealing with the media from experienced industry and public relations professionals. Session attendees are encouraged to come prepared to discuss PR challenges they have faced and identify what worked and what didn't.

*Gary Lewi, Rubenstein Associates, Inc*

##### Legislation and Lobbying Overview

Join representatives from NYAMA, NBAA and AOPA as they discuss the importance of educating lawmakers regarding aviation issues, and discuss the basic do's and don'ts.

*Dean Saucier, Northeast Regional Representative, NBAA  
Bruce Geiger, NYAMA Legislative Representative, Bruce Geiger & Associates*

#### Customer Service: Dealing with Airlines, Passenger Service, Tenants

Consistent, quality service can only come from a culture where excellence thrives. Join leading airport professionals for an informal panel discussion on how to deliver the best customer service to individuals and businesses that come in contact with your airport. Panelists will share successful strategies and lead a discussion where conference participants can share their questions and solutions.

*Bob Hobbie, ServiceElements International, Inc.  
Bill Vanecek, Director of Aviation, Buffalo Niagara International Airport*

*Al Graser, General Manager, John F. Kennedy International Airport*

### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

#### NYAMA Annual Meeting

NYAMA members and non-members alike are encouraged to attend and participate in the Association's Annual Meeting. Learn about the organization's accomplishments over the past year and objectives for the coming year.

#### Peer Review Training Workshop: Snow Removal Services (with lunch)

Weather in the northeast creates tremendous challenges for airports of all sizes. Join peers in discussing the latest technology and solutions for dealing with snow removal at airports. ■

## Thank You Sponsors!

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Buffalo Niagara Int'l Airport, NFTA

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### Sponsor Today!

Become a 2006 NYAMA Sponsor and show your support for NYAMA and New York State aviation. Contact NYAMA ([info@nyama.com](mailto:info@nyama.com)) for more information, or download a sponsorship flyer online at [www.nyama.com](http://www.nyama.com).

## Eclipse 500 Achieves FAA Type Certification

**Eclipse Aviation realizes ground-breaking achievement as revolutionary — Becomes the world's first FAA-certified VLJ**

General aviation marked a major milestone recently as Eclipse Aviation, manufacturer of the revolutionary Eclipse 500 very light jet (VLJ), received provisional type certification from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The company expects to receive the full type certification for the Eclipse 500 by August 30th that will allow day/night, Visual Flight Rules (VFR)/Instrument Flight Rules (IFR), single-pilot and Reduced Vertical Separation Minimums (RVSM) operations throughout the complete operating envelope, and enable the company to start delivering Eclipse 500s to customers.

"We have looked forward to this monumental accomplishment since Eclipse was founded nearly eight years ago," said Vern Raburn, president and CEO of Eclipse Aviation. "I am incredibly grateful for the tireless efforts of the combined Eclipse-FAA team that guided us to this critical moment in our company's history. As we celebrate today, we also know that certification is not our destination; the most important measure of our success will be our ability to continue to deliver unprecedented performance, reliability, technology, training and service innovations to our customers for years to come."

FAA certification was officially granted to the Eclipse 500 on July 27, and the provisional type certificate was presented to Vern Raburn, president and CEO of Eclipse Aviation, by FAA Administrator Marion Blakey in a special ceremony at EAA's 2006 AirVenture in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

*Continued on page 4*

*Eclipse, Continued from page 3*

### **Eclipse 500 Redefines Private Jet Value Proposition**

The Eclipse 500 is the least expensive twin-turboprop business jet in the world, delivering acquisition and operating costs that are dramatically lower than those of current entry-level jets. The Eclipse 500 gives customers technologies and capabilities traditionally only found in jets costing millions more. Further lowering customer cost of ownership, the Eclipse 500 is designed for high hour/cycle operations, providing airline-like reliability and dispatch availability.

The Eclipse 500 is powered by two Pratt & Whitney Canada PW610F engines that are flat rated at 900 pounds of thrust and feature a dual-channel Full Authority Digital Electronic Control (FADEC). Designed with an approximately 50 percent reduction in parts count, the PW610F incorporates the latest technologies while offering optimum value to the operators.

Using a test fleet of five FAA conforming aircraft, the Eclipse 500 was certified in more than 1,800 flights and 2,700 flight hours. To meet the FAA's stringent performance and safety requirements, Eclipse's comprehensive flight test program assessed the Eclipse 500's performance across thousands of test points that examined aircraft handling, flight characteristics, avionics and electronics performance, environmental/noise impact, systems reliability and aircraft safety.

Tooled and designed for high-volume, low-cost production, Eclipse plans to deliver more than 50 Eclipse 500s through the end of 2006.

Visit Eclipse online at:  
<http://www.eclipseaviation.com>.

*Andrew H. Broom, Eclipse Aviation,  
Reprinted with permission. ■*

## **\$247,000 Grant for Stewart Airport**



US Senators Charles E. Schumer and Hillary Rodham Clinton announced that the US Department of Transportation has awarded \$247,000 in Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) funds to the Stewart International Airport. The money will be used to acquire snow removal equipment.

"This is great news for the Hudson Valley," said Schumer. "The Stewart International Airport welcomes travelers to New York each year, and these improvements are important for local businesses and strengthening the local economy. I will continue to fight for federal funds to help the airport remain a thriving center of activity and a hub for economic growth in the region."

"Stewart Airport has announced a number of very positive developments in recent months and this is yet another boost for them. If we are to maximize Stewart's capacity as a regional airport we must make sure that flights can land and take off at any time. This funding will help ensure that passengers can get in and out, no matter what the conditions or the weather," Senator Clinton said.

This grant will provide federal funding to acquire a snow removal vehicle at Stewart International Airport. This equipment is necessary to maintain safety at the airport during adverse weather. This will allow the airport to remain open and reduce delays during these periods.

*The Sentinel, August 1, 2006, Reprinted with permission.*

## **Black Hawk Military Helicopters to Be Made in Big Flats**

Sikorsky Aircraft and Chemung County announced a partnership that will result in a new 97,000 square foot Military Derivatives Completion Center (MDCC) being developed by Sikorsky. The company will locate in a building constructed and owned by the Chemung County Industrial Development Agency, on property leased from Chemung County at the Elmira Corning Regional Airport.

The Sikorsky HAWK WORKS @ Schweizer Aircraft, as the facility is to be named, will be used to complete BLACK HAWK military helicopter derivatives. The facility will also have capacity to work on other special mission aircraft currently produced at Schweizer, and positions Schweizer to acquire additional military work in the future. The facility can be expanded to 150,000 square feet if business conditions warrant. Sikorsky currently employs 475 people in Chemung County in its existing 150,000 square foot facility at the Elmira Corning Regional Airport. The company is committed to create a minimum of 100 additional jobs at the new facility which will be located at the west end of the airport. Construction will begin this summer; the facility is scheduled to open in spring 2007.

Under the partnership agreement, the Chemung County IDA will invest \$13 million to construct the new facility and provide equipment. The County will then lease the facility and equipment to Schweizer Aircraft Corporation for a period of 15 years. The company will have multiple options to extend the lease. Financing for the project includes a capital grant from the Empire State Development Corporation, and additional grant funds secured by Senator George Winner and Assemblyman Thomas O'Mara, along with incentives available through the Elmira Empire Zone.

Chemung County Executive Thomas Santulli, and Southern Tier Economic Growth president George Miner, who serves as staff to the Chemung County IDA, negotiated the project with Schweizer Aircraft Corporation/Sikorsky.

Santulli noted, "This is a very exciting project for Chemung County and New York State. Schweizer Aircraft Corporation has been in Chemung County for a very long time and is a leader in innovation in the aviation industry. Schweizer has been providing parts for Sikorsky Black Hawk helicopters for years. To be now making them here will only increase their reputation as a leader in military aircraft manufacturing. I am happy that the hard work of the Chemung County IDA, STEG and our state

*Continued on page 5*

# Legislative Update

From Bruce Geiger, NYAMA's Legislative Representative

## Sales and Use Tax Exemption for the Purchase of GA Aircraft (S.3655A/A.6819A)

On June 13, 2006, NYAMA representatives Rich Halik, Bill McShane, Brian Shaughnessy and Bruce Geiger met with Assembly Ways & Means Committee Deputy Director of Fiscal Studies Scott Palladino in an attempt to garner eleventh-hour support for Assembly passage of NYAMA legislation to exempt from sales tax the purchase of GA aircraft. This was just one day after the Senate passed the bill, sponsored by Senator William Larkin. For the two weeks after this meeting, working closely with our Assembly sponsor Robin Schimminger, we continued to work with the Assembly membership to solicit support.

NYAMA argued against the notion which seemed to permeate the mindset of the Assembly leadership that exempting sales tax on the sale of GA aircraft was a "giveaway to the rich." NYAMA held that the current sales tax structure puts New York airports at a competitive disadvantage relative to neighboring states, resulting in the direct loss of NY based corporate aircraft and the accompanying jobs and related businesses.

During the last days of the legislative session, local newspapers carried stories about the aviation sales tax issue, lending support to NYAMA's position. NYAMA representatives were at the Capitol till late in the evening attempting to get the legislation on the Assembly Ways & Means agenda so that it could be acted on by the Committee. Despite this effort and the tireless advocacy by Assemblyman Schimminger, the bill was not advanced further and the regular session of the Legislature ended on Friday, June 23.

## AIP Funding/AIR 99

Efforts to capture unused funds in the AIP program for transfer to the AIR 99 program fell victim to the acrimonious budget process. Little in the way of three-way negotiations took place this year and the Legislature essentially passed a two-house budget with no significant input from the Governor. Consequently, the Governor vetoed nearly \$3 billion in Legislative spending, with the Legislature overriding most of the vetoes. There is no real expectation that such budget issues as AIP funding will be subject to negotiation this year.

## Background Checks for Flight Instruction (S.4493/A.2122)

This bill, which would subject any persons seeking flight instruction in a New York State flight school to background checks before they are allowed to receive such instruction, passed both houses of the Legislature and was sent to the Governor for his consideration on August 4. Because of strong opposition from the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), and the bill's expected negative financial impact on airports that host flight school operations, NYAMA has also expressed opposition. On July 20, representatives from AOPA, NYAMA and flight schools met with the Governor's counsel, Gerald Connolly, to voice our concerns with this bill. While NYAMA is a strong supporter of efforts to combat terrorism, the bill may interfere with what the FAA and TSA are already doing in this area. In fact, it seems clear that the federal government has reserved the authority to regulate civilian flight schools and that such authority preempts the state's ability to require background screening of prospective pilots. NYAMA offered to work with the Governor to address the intent of the legislature in a way that will not unnecessarily burden flight schools and the airports at which they operate.

## Reduces the Tax on Aviation Fuel Businesses (S5755B)

This bill passed the Senate the past two years but was not acted on by the Assembly. Prior to SFY 2004-05 the Petroleum Business Tax (PBT) was imposed on kero-jet fuel and aviation gasoline used by airplanes in which both the points of departure and arrival of any flight or any leg of the flight were within the state. The SFY 2004-05 enacted budget contained provisions that imposed PBT on only kero-jet fuel and aviation gasoline consumed during takeoffs from points within the state regardless of the destination. This bill would eliminate the PBT on all kero-jet fuel and aviation gasoline.

*Black Hawk, Continued from pg 4*  
and local government officials helped to bring this project and these excellent manufacturing jobs to Chemung County."

Miner added, "We have been eyeing the west end of the airport for a project like this for the past few years. The infrastructure that the Chemung County IDA and the State of New York have invested in the Airport Corporate Park and Interchange 50 of Interstate 86 was key to making this project happen. We planned and invested in the location but never knew what would land there. The Sikorsky HAWK WORKS facility was a perfect fit".

"New manufacturing jobs in upstate New York have long been a fading memory, so the arrival of these new Schweizer Aircraft jobs will be exciting and energizing for Chemung County and the Southern Tier. I'm grateful for the opportunity to help make this investment in our long-term economic foundation," said New York State Senator George H. Winner, Jr. (R-C, Elmira). "This expansion of Schweizer Aircraft maintains our region as a leader in the aviation manufacturing industry, and that bodes well for the future of many area workers and their families."

Assemblyman O'Mara said, "This is a very exciting project which will have a tremendous positive impact on local job creation. I am very pleased to see the Sikorsky Hawk Works @ Schweizer Aircraft commitment to expand in the Southern Tier of New York. Their expansion is a great shot in the arm for the local economy and a testament to the quality work force we have here. It's a win for our entire community."

Schweizer Aircraft Corporation, based in Big Flats, New York, was incorporated in 1939 and is a manufacturer of light helicopters, unmanned air vehicles, and fixed wing aircraft.

By K. Miner, ChemungCounty.com,  
Reprinted with permission. ■

Continued on page 6

## Avgas and Kero-jet Fuel Sales Tax Changes

On May 21, 2006, Chapter 35 of the Laws of 2006 was signed into law which, among other provisions, changed the New York State percentage rate of sales and compensating use tax on motor fuels and diesel motor fuel to a cents-per-gallon method. At the time, NYAMA was informed by staff of the fiscal committees in both houses of the legislature that the retail sale of avgas and kero-jet fuel was unaffected by the new law.

However, the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance, in a question and answer sheet (TSB-M-06(7.1)S) prepared in response to the new law, which went into effect June 1, 2006 specifically interpreted the legislation as changing the sales tax treatment of the retail sale of kero-jet fuel and avgas to the cents-per-gallon method.

The Legislature, primarily the Assembly, took exception to this interpretation and claimed it was contrary to the original intent of the Legislature and the Governor when they enacted Chapter 35, which was to apply the change only to gasoline and diesel used in automobiles.

Consequently, in a "Budget Clean-up Bill" (S8471) enacted during the last day of the 2006 regular legislative session, the Legislature and the Governor agreed to make the clarification that only motor fuel and diesel motor fuel sold at retail for use in motor vehicles qualifies for the sales tax cap. The State Tax Department has prepared a revised TSB to reflect the new changes. ■

# Owner of airfield hopes business takes off

## Thomas Brelsford welcomes pilots of small aircraft at reopened Owasco Airfield

That's what Thomas Brelsford hopes will happen with his newly reopened Owasco Airfield on Long Hill Road in Venice.

An open house began Saturday and continues today to reintroduce the airfield to pilots of small aircraft, ultralight owners and people who just like to see airplanes.

Built in 1968, the former Newhart Airfield was closed in 1990 and lay dormant. Weeds, brush and small trees overwhelmed the grass east-west runway, tie-down area and grounds. The wooden hangar building was on the verge of collapsing.

"My mother was up here from Connecticut visiting friends in Locke in late 2004 when she found out the airfield was for sale. She told me and I was intrigued," Brelsford said.

A pilot since his teens, Brelsford had retired as a pilot for the state of Connecticut's environmental conservation enforcement department. "I came up in the winter, looked at it, walked it, researched the area and felt there was potential if it was reopened," he recalled.

"I decided to take the jump and bought it in April 2005," he said.

"We are losing one to two of these small country airfields a month in the United States, mainly due to pressure for housing developments. Reopening a closed airfield is rare, but it's a big deal to the aviation world," he said.

Brelsford spent countless hours, effort and money getting the field back into shape for Federal Aviation Administration and state approval. He cut down more than a hundred small trees from the 2,000-by-50-foot runway. He mowed, rolled, mowed again and filled in holes to make the runway safe.

The hangar, which holds five small planes, was shored up with metal trusses. New electrical service was set up.

Saturday saw about a dozen pilots fly their aircraft to the field as a show of support and to check out the new facilities.

Bill Volcko, of Skaneateles, flew in on his 450-pound Challenger ultralight. "I love flying. The view is unbelievable from up there," Volcko said.

Bill Keagle lives just down the road in Moravia. He used to fly an ultralight, but sold it when the airfield closed.

"It's great to see it reopened. I thought for sure it would be sold for housing," he said.

"Maybe I'll get back into flying again," he said, looking at the blue skies.

*By David L. Shaw. © 2006 The Post-Standard. Used with permission.*

## ITH Assistant Airport Manager Earns AAE

On Sunday 23 April 2006, Tony Rudy, Assistant Airport Manager at the Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport passed the third and final phase of the rigorous Association of American Airport Executives (AAAE) exam to become an Accredited Airport Executive. To become accredited candidates must:

- Pass a 180-question written exam,
- Write a management research paper of 30-50 pages for the AAAE Library providing guidance in dealing with a unique aspect of airport management or operations,
- Undergo a 2-hour oral examination by a panel of airport executives dealing with all aspects of airport management and operations. This panel covers Planning & Engineering, Operations & Maintenance, Communications & Marketing, and Finance & Administration.

Typically the accreditation process takes between three and five years. This is a highly regarded achievement within the national airport community. Currently there are approximately 350 accredited airport executives in the country including just 3 (now 4) in New York State.

# Canadian Aerospace Company coming to Plattsburgh International Airport

## Canadian aircraft firm plans local site, 700 jobs

A Canadian company plans to build an aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul facility at Plattsburgh International Airport that is expected to employ more than 700 people within five years.

Gov. George Pataki was in Plattsburgh Monday to announce that Laurentian Aerospace Corp. plans to build a 262,000-square-foot, two-bay hangar complex, at a cost of \$64 million, on the ramp at the airport.

"This is one of the great underused facilities anywhere in this country. Within five years, there will be 1,500 jobs at Laurentian," Pataki said. "For all those graduating at Clinton Community or other schools, there will be a job right here in Clinton County waiting for them."

### WORK STARTS IN FALL

Construction is scheduled to start Oct. 1, allowing partial operation by the next summer and full operation by April 2008.

If market conditions permit, the company would like to build a second complex, at a cost of \$50 million, with the same size and employment figures, by 2011.

There is even the possibility of a third, fourth and fifth facility in the future, Plattsburgh-North Country Chamber of Commerce President Garry Douglas said.

"This is the home run we've been looking for for 10 years," Douglas told the Press-Republican.

Douglas said the company is expected to create an effect for the area similar to what Bombardier did, with other support companies locating nearby.

He expects that to create as many jobs as Laurentian Aerospace itself.

Addressing the crowd under a tent on the airport ramp, Clinton County Legislature Chairman Jimmie Langley said, "Times are very bright in Clinton County, and we're pleased to share some sunshine with you."

He thanked Laurentian Aerospace for selecting Plattsburgh.

"I know you'll be happy with your selection and look forward to forging this partnership," Langley said.

### LASER TECHNOLOGY

The facility will service wide-body aircraft, such as the Boeing 747 and the Airbus A300. Each bay will feature state-of-the-art, computer laser-guided docking systems valued at \$6 million each.

Douglas said many of today's wide-bodied aircraft are aging and in need of maintenance. Airlines have traditionally done that work in-house but are now outsourcing such work as they are driven to reduce costs.

Laurentian Aerospace President and Chief Executive Officer Paul Gobeil said most of the current players in this market are operating from 30-to-40-year-old hangars that were not designed to handle these types of planes.

He said it takes about 20 people up to a day and a half to load or unload a plane from traditional maintenance and repair hangars.

The laser-guided system, currently in use only in France and Dubai, eliminates those delays, saving time and money.

Gobeil said an airline loses about \$10,000 an hour when an airplane is on the ground, so reducing that time will be critical in attracting customers.

"This will save an airline \$500,000 every time they come in for a C or D check," Gobeil said.

### COMPANY LEADERS

Douglas said Gobeil and Executive Board Chairman Pierre Jean Jeannot are both extremely credible, established leaders in the Canadian business community.

"They'll open a lot of doors for us," Douglas said.

Jeannot joined Air Canada in 1955 and contributed to the development of the "black box" flight-data recorder. He was named senior vice president of marketing and planning in 1979 and later chief operating officer.

Jeannot was appointed president of Air Canada effective June 1, 1984, and remained in that position until 1990. During that time, he oversaw the privatization of the company.

Jeannot was director general of the International Air Transport Association from January 1993 to June 2002, at which time he was awarded the lifetime title of director general emeritus. He served on the Board of Scotia Bank for 14 years, including 10 years on its Executive Committee.

Jeannot currently serves on boards at Scotia Bank, SECOR Consulting, TUG Technologies and the Travel Success Group, as well as a number of other companies. He is also president of Jinmag Inc., a management and investment company, which he created in 1990. He was appointed chairman of Thales Canada Inc. on May 1, 2003.

The two men are more than tenants, Douglas said, and local leaders have committed to exceeding their expectations on every request.

"These guys have become friends. That relationship will serve us well. They can open doors for us. That is already happening."

*By Dan Heath, The Press Republican, Reprinted with permission.*

# AirCurrents

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## Congress to Tackle Key Bills in September

Congress has adjourned for the traditional August recess, leaving a long list of items on the congressional agenda. The House and Senate are scheduled to return to Washington for business in early September, but congressional leaders have announced plans to send lawmakers back home late in the month to campaign full-time until election day. That schedule virtually ensures that Congress will be forced to return after the elections for a "lame duck" session to complete work on must-pass spending bills and other essential items.

One of the items that is likely to see action when Congress returns in September is the annual spending bill for DHS, which includes funding for TSA and a number of airport priorities. Both the House and Senate have passed versions of the legislation, H.R. 5441, and work already has begun to reconcile differences between the two versions of the bill.

Lawmakers likely will meet early in September to complete conference negotiations with the hope of passing a final bill prior to the beginning of the new fiscal year on Oct. 1. As part of the negotiations, lawmakers will make final decisions on funding for in-line explosives detection system (EDS) installation (\$344 million for that purpose in the House bill and \$421.5 million in the Senate bill), EDS purchases and maintenance, checkpoint support and other key items. The DHS funding bill likely will be one of the only annual spending measures that will be completed prior to the elections.

The funding bill for DOT and FAA in contrast, is likely to languish until after the elections. The House approved its version of the DOT spending bill, H.R. 5576, on June 14, and the Senate bill has worked its way through committee consideration but has not yet been considered on the Senate floor. If enactment is postponed until later in the year, Congress will be forced to pass a continuing resolution to fund DOT and FAA operations until a final bill can be enacted into law. The DOT spending bill includes funding for a number of key airport priorities, including AIP, ATC modernization, the FAA Contract Tower and Contract Tower Cost-Sharing Program, the Small Community Air Service Development Program and Essential Air Service. Both the House and Senate have rejected calls from the administration to cut AIP funding to \$2.75 billion from the \$3.7 billion level authorized by current law. *Condensed and reprinted from AAAE Airport Report.*