

*Advancing Aviation – Advancing New York!*

# Air Currents

NEW YORK AVIATION MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION • VOL. 9 NO. 1 • SUMMER 2007

## Join Us!

**New York Aviation Management  
Association (NYAMA)**

## *2007 Fall Conference and Exhibit Show*

**October 3-5, 2007**

**The Queensbury Hotel, Glens Falls, NY**

### Conference Highlights

#### Conference Sessions

Our 2007 conference will offer an exciting forum for education, networking and a professional exchange of knowledge and innovation for all attendees. The conference sessions are designed for small general aviation and large commercial service airports, FBOs, 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 Peer Review Training Program** Over the last two years, NYAMA has provided a series of peer review training programs designed to create a forum for airport staff to learn and discuss operations-related issues with peers. On Wednesday, NYAMA will host a full-day formal peer review training workshop on Wildlife Management, led by USDA Wildlife Services. The program will meet Part 139 certification requirements, but be broad enough to be of interest to airports of any size that deal with wildlife issues.
- **Wednesday Evening Welcome Reception and Exhibit Show Opening** Stop by our Welcome Reception from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. and get to know some of the other Conference attendees. Exhibitors will have their displays set-up, and our networking opportunities will give you a chance to learn more about industry trends.

*Continued on page 3*

### NYAMA Secures Legislative Victory!

After a long struggle, this year's State budget included language that will allow for the transfer of \$2-\$3 million annually from the unused portion of the state AIP matching funds to the AIR 99 program. For the complete story, be sure to read the NYAMA Legislative Update on page 4.

NYAMA recently supported AOPA in a lawsuit regarding a law requiring background checks for pilot training. The judge ruled the law Unconstitutional. This is a big victory for AOPA and NYAMA!

### Speaker Highlights

*Thursday, October 4*

**Opening Session** – NYSDOT Update with Don Hannon and FAA Update with William J. Flanagan, Manager, FAA Airports Division, Eastern Region and Steve Urlass, Manager, FAA New York Airports District Office will present the FAA update

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

– Join Charles Everett, Jr., Manager, National Planning and Environmental Division FAA, Office of Airport Planning and Programming as he discusses "The Future of Aviation."

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**William R. Vanecek**  
President

## Word on the Wing

*From the  
President*

### *Dear Friend of Aviation:*

I hope you are all enjoying the summer and making the most of the nice weather we've had. We are mid-way through the year and I look back at a busy first-half for NYAMA. As usual, legislative concerns took much of our time and attention as we continued to advocate for sales tax relief for the purchase of GA aircraft, and pursued other aviation-supportive initiatives. The Association was pleased to claim victory on one budget-related issue—legislation that makes unused AIP state matching funds available through AIR 99 for capital improvement projects.

Each year the state allocates funds for the state match of AIP, not all of which is used due to the amount and way in which the federal funds are awarded. These unused funds have not been available to the aviation community as the appropriation required they be used for the stated purpose (AIP). Legislation passed during the budget process will initiate a yearly computation of what was required for AIP, and move the unused portion into the AIR 99 capital improvement program.

NYAMA has had initial discussions with DOT to determine how those funds will be made available to airports. Initially, we expect grants to be allocated using project submissions received through the Bond Act AIR 99 component process.

The Association continued its successful Peer Review Training program beginning with two programs in early June—Table Top Exercises and Environmental Issues. Thank you to Joel Russell of Albany International Airport for his leadership in helping oversee these programs. Two more are scheduled for September and October, the latter to be held in conjunction with the fall conference. Check your mail for more information in coming weeks.

Speaking of the fall conference, program details are almost complete and we expect the registration brochure to be mailed out in the next couple of weeks. Our keynote speaker Charles Everett will be discussing the impact of very light jets on the aviation industry. We are also pleased to have Eclipse Aviation participating, and a number of other qualified and engaging speakers.

I also want to take this opportunity to let you know of the Board's intention to update the Association's strategic plan. About four years ago the Association underwent an extensive strategic planning process, developing a comprehensive analysis of the organization's operating environment, and identifying a number of tangible, well-defined goals and objectives. I believe we have been successful in reaching many of the goals, which has led us to begin the process of updating the plan and charting out the next phase of our organization's growth. Stay tuned as we provide ongoing updates to that process.

Thank you as always for your ongoing commitment to the Association. Please don't hesitate to contact us should you have any insight or ideas on furthering the organization's goals and objectives.

Sincerely,

William R. Vanecek  
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.

### *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

### • Thursday Evening Exhibitor Reception

Join us for some NYS Wines, Cheeses and Chocolates at the Exhibitor Reception from 5:30 – 7 p.m.!

### Exhibit Show

Discover the latest products and services in the aviation industry at the 2007 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.

### Association Fun

As always, the conference will include a golf outing on Wednesday, October 3. And those who don't golf are welcome to join the hike up Sleeping Beauty in Lake George and witness panoramic views, or explore Glens Falls at your leisure.

### More Information

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

## Thank You Sponsors!

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### Sponsor Today!

Become a 2007 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).

## Local airports get substantial grants

North Country airports have been awarded grants totaling \$822,841.

The Town of Harrietstown will receive \$437,000 of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) funding, which comes through the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), announced Sen. Charles E. Schumer and Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton. The money will allow pavement maintenance and prevent future deterioration of the terminal apron at Adirondack Regional Airport.

The Town of North Elba will receive two grants totaling \$305,841 for the Lake Placid Airport. Funding of \$115,841 will be used to improve the terminal building, and \$190,000 will be used to remove obstructions.

The Town of Massena will receive \$80,000 for Massena International Airport-Richards Field to conduct a runway-approach survey.

"This is great news for the North Country," said Schumer. "The Adirondack Regional, Lake Placid and Massena airports are important general aviation facilities in this region. Not only do they provide local aviators and tourists with a base of operation, but they also allow businesspeople to access the North Country area easily. I will continue to fight for federal funds to help these airports remain a key component of economic growth in the region."

"This is welcome news for New York's North Country," said Clinton. "Maintaining safe and efficient airports is critical to the region's economy and continued growth. Any support we can offer for airport improvements promises to make a positive impact on the whole region."

*Continued on page 4*



*Continued from page 3*

The Town of North Elba will use the \$115,841 in federal funds to improve the terminal building at the Lake Placid Airport, due to the space's current age and condition. The grant of \$190,000 will be used to remove obstructions at Lake Placid Airport to enhance safety and comply with federal regulations.

The Town of Massena will use the \$80,000 in federal funds to conduct a runway approach survey as part of its Airport Master Plan update.

*Reprinted by permission from  
The Press Republican ■*

# NYAMA 2007 Legislative Session Report

*by Bruce W. Geiger*

Although the 2007 Legislative Session started on a positive note, with several government reform measures being enacted at the urging of the new Governor, Elliot Spitzer, and the State Budget adopted on time, relationships at the Capitol deteriorated to the point where many issues were left unresolved at the end-of-June recess of the regular session. Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver and Governor Spitzer agreed on very little and the negotiating process, which is usually furious at this time of year, ground to a halt.

Legislative leaders did indicate that they may be reconvening at a special session to address some unfinished business, including nearly a billion dollar Capital Projects Budget and NYC Mayor Bloomberg's Lower Manhattan congestion pricing proposal.

## 2007-2008 State Budget Victory!

The final State budget included language that will allow for the transfer of \$2-\$3 million annually from the unused portion of the state AIP matching funds to the AIR 99 program.

While short of allowing the transfer of the full amount of unencumbered AIP funds, the language accomplishes a long-sought NYAMA goal; providing for a recurring source of state revenue for aviation programs that are not traditionally funded through the AIP program.

## GA Aircraft Sales Tax Exemption

Despite the Senate's repeated passage of bills and budget amendments to exempt purchases of GA aircraft from sales tax, and Assemblyman Robin Schimminger's steadfast support, NYC Assembly Democrats continue to object to our legislation which, in their view, would provide tax exemptions to rich people who can afford to buy planes for their personal use.

The Government Affairs Committee and the Board of Directors have pursued every available option to address the aircraft sales tax issue, including amending the Tax Law to broaden the definition of "commercial aircraft" so that more planes would qualify for the exemption, and promoting the designation of airports as Empire Zones.

By designating certain airports and the immediate surrounding areas as Empire Zones, businesses operating within these zones would be eligible for a variety of tax advantages. NYAMA worked with the legislature to advance this concept and it was embodied in the Upstate Now legislation, passed by the Senate. The Upstate Now bill is designed to revitalize the Upstate economy. The measure includes provisions to reduce aviation fuel taxes and to create "airport development zones" adjacent to airports.

## Other bills of interest to the Aviation Industry which passed both houses of the legislature are:

- **Security of Pipeline Facilities (A 9086-A Gianaris -- S 6167-A Skelos)** The bill directs the director of the office of homeland security to review the security of commercial aviation fuel, petroleum and natural gas transmission facilities and pipelines. It authorizes the director to report on measures taken to protect critical infrastructure of aviation fuel, petroleum and natural gas transmission facilities and pipelines. The director would be empowered to mandate compliance with the recommendations of the report.
- **Airline Passenger Bill of Rights (S 5050-C Fuschillo -- A 8406-B Gianaris)** The bill creates a consumer bill of rights regarding airline passengers. The measure enumerates services to be provided to passengers of aircraft who have boarded the aircraft but have been delayed for more than three hours time to include electronic generation for the purpose of providing fresh air and lights; waste removal services so that onboard rest rooms may be utilized and; drinking water and other refreshments. It requires all carriers to clearly and conspicuously post consumer complaint information and contact numbers including address along with an explanation of

*Continued on page 5*

rights and basic rights. The bill further provides for a civil penalty of up to one thousand dollars per passenger per violation. The bill also creates the Office of the Airline Consumer Advocate within the NYS Consumer Protection Board and the duties thereunder and requires it to refer to the office of the Attorney General in regards to levying any action.

### DOT Commissioner Astrid Glynn Senate Confirmation Hearing

NYAMA was invited by Senator Thomas Libous to present testimony before the Senate Transportation Committee regarding the nomination of Astrid Glynn for Commissioner of DOT. Executive Board Member Marshall Stevens presented testimony on behalf of NYAMA.

The testimony was well received by the Committee, most clearly seen in the comments and questions directed to Ms. Glynn by the Committee members. Senator William Larkin strongly voiced his desire to see the sales tax relief initiative extended to include the purchase of general aviation aircraft, citing the economic benefits realized in communities around the airports and the current inequity with neighbor states that puts New York at a competitive disadvantage. Sen. Bill Perkins (D-New York) expressed interest in Marshall's comments; particularly in terms of the impact aviation has on the economy, and asked Ms. Glynn to comment. She responded that she realizes aviation is a very mobile method of transportation which must be fully appreciated. She also commented that she understands the importance of business aircraft to small airports and their local economies, and will support aviation throughout the many regions of New York.

### Background Checks for Pilots

With respect to the law suit, AOPA filed a motion for summary judgment. The Federal District Court in Albany heard the case on August 2, 2007 and found in favor of AOPA. A ruling was issued that the state law to require background checks for pilot training is Unconstitutional (i.e. violates the Supremacy Clause). Consequently, the judge's ruling immediately prevents New York State from implementing and enforcing the new law. The Attorney General now has 30 days by which to appeal the decision. ■

## Legislative Q & A with Schimminger

### 1. *Why do you feel strongly about supporting sales tax relief legislation for the purchase of general aviation aircraft?*

As Chairman of the Assembly's Economic Development, Job Creation, Commerce, and Industry Committee, I continually sponsor and support legislation that will spur new industry and business growth, encourage existing New York businesses to expand, and entice out-of-state businesses to locate in New York, thus encouraging economic growth and job creation, recruitment, and retention.

I sponsor and strongly support sales tax relief legislation for purchase of general aviation aircraft in order to continue to ensure that New York State is competitive with other nearby states that already provide sales tax relief related to aviation activities. Further, companies that may have looked to other states, with friendlier aviation tax provisions, would look to New York to locate or relocate their operations within this state.

### 2. *What is your position and thoughts on aviation in New York State?*

New York's airports are important engines that fuel economic growth in surrounding communities and throughout the state. In addition to the 18 airports which provide commercial service, the state is home to hundreds of other general aviation airports that provide many services necessary for the smooth operation of New York's business, medical emergency, and law enforcement communities. Without this aviation infrastructure, our state would be at a great disadvantage.



*NYAMA President Bill Vanecek presents plaques to Senator Larkin (top) and Assemblyman Schimminger (bottom).*

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## Wanted: Airport Manager

Plattsburgh International  
Airport, Clinton County NY  
\$55,531 - \$75,850  
Closes August 31, 2007  
E-mail: [gibsona@co.clinton.ny.us](mailto:gibsona@co.clinton.ny.us)  
(518) 565-4554

Scenic Clinton County is located in the Northeast corner of New York State, bordering on beautiful Lake Champlain. With the majestic Adirondack Mountains and numerous lakes, rivers and tributaries, it is an ideal place to live, work or visit. Enjoy fishing, swimming, boating, hiking, camping or virtually any outdoor activity in our county. We are the home of Plattsburgh State University College, Clinton Community College, and PARC (Plattsburgh Airbase Redevelopment Corporation – formerly Plattsburgh Air Force Base). If you like fresh air and beautiful scenery, Clinton County is for you!

The Airport manager position is highly responsible management work involving the operational and maintenance functions of the county's airports to ensure safe, efficient, legal and profitable airport operation. Work is performed under the general direction of the County Administrator and the County Legislature, with wide leeway permitted for independent planning and laying out of work details in accordance with established policies and procedures. Supervision is exercised over all persons assigned to operate the airports. The incumbent does related work as required.

Go to [www.clintoncountygov.com](http://www.clintoncountygov.com), click on **Personnel Dept.** link and got Job Postings. Download application and send with diploma, transcripts, and all supporting documentation to:

**Clinton County Government  
Personnel Department:**

*Alan Gibson  
137 Margaret Street  
Plattsburgh, NY 12901*

# In Memoriam

## Burt W. Weidenkopf

Burt W. Weidenkopf, 89, of Syracuse, died July 8, 2007 after a short illness. A native of Lakewood, OH, he lived in the Syracuse area since 1963. Mr. Weidenkopf was a pilot in the 491st Bomb Group flying B-24 Liberators out of England during the Second World War. He went to the Case School of Applied Science, Cleveland, OH and studied Electrical Engineering. After the war, he was the maintenance supervisor at Cleveland Hopkins Airport and later became the deputy commissioner. Mr. Weidenkopf was the Commissioner of Aviation for the City of Syracuse for 21 years, retiring in 1984. He was the Director of the Airport Operators Council, International and Co-founder and second President of the NY Airport Managers Association. Mr. Weidenkopf was an active member of the Syracuse University Thursday Morning Roundtable and the Quiet Birdmen, a pilot's organization.

Surviving are his wife, Virginia of 64 years; his son, Nicholas (Polly) Weidenkopf II of Coppell, TX; his grandsons, Steven (Kasey) Weidenkopf of Springfield, VA and Adam Weidenkopf of Grand Prairie, TX; five great-grandchildren; and two sisters, Janet (Bob) Lipski of Austin, TX and Nan (Bob) Goshorn of Novi, MI. Final internment will occur at the Dallas Fort Worth National Cemetery. Contributions may be made to the Rescue Mission of Syracuse, PO Box 11122, Syracuse, NY 13218. Arrangements by Fairchild & Meech DeWitt Chapel.

*Published in the Syracuse Post Standard on 7/12/2007. ■*

## Ronald Durand, Jr.

It is with sadness we share the news of the death of E. Ronald Durand, Jr. Ron passed away September 20, 2006 after a three month battle with cancer.

Born in Mineola, New York, Ron spent the most of his adult life in Rochester, NY. He graduated from Aquinas Institute in Rochester in 1955 and went on to earn a Bachelor of Science degree at the University of Notre Dame in 1959. While there, he met his future wife, Elizabeth King. After graduating from Notre Dame, Ron enlisted in the United State Marine Corps where he was selected for flight school. He completed flight training in Pensacola, FL and became qualified as a carrier pilot, flight instructor, helicopter flight instructor and instrument flight check pilot.

Following their 1962 wedding in Rochester, Ron and Elizabeth moved to Corona del Mar where he served at the Air Facility in Santa Anna/El Toro air base prior to beginning his tour of duty as a helicopter pilot in Vietnam. During the war, Ron was highly decorated and flew countless rescue missions. His commendations include six Air Medals, a Silver Star and two Gold Stars, the National Defense Service Medal, and the Presidential Service Badge. During the Johnson Administration, he flew Marine One, the Presidential Helicopter.

After retiring from the Marine Corps, Ron enrolled in law school at the University of Notre Dame, graduating in 1969. Upon graduation, he and Elizabeth returned to Rochester. There, Ron worked in the identification industry for many years where his company Macro Industries pioneered photo identification technology and processing. Ron later became the Director of Rochester International Airport, which he brought through major restructuring, renovations and expansion as well as the hallmark landings of the Concorde and Air Force One. Throughout the years, his livelihood involved his love of flying. Ron piloted helicopters for the Rochester Police Department and the US Forest Service (as a volunteer) and tours over Niagara Falls.

In all his ventures, Ron was known for his graciousness, warmth, and wit. He will be missed. ■



# NYAMA Members Advocate for Aviation

NYAMA members gathered in Albany in mid-March for the Association's annual Advocacy Day. The event is the keystone of the organization's lobbying efforts, providing an opportunity for members to educate lawmakers regarding statewide and regional issues affecting the aviation industry.

## Seeking Sales Tax Relief

Several key issues were presented to legislators. Chief among them was NYAMA's ongoing effort to see legislation passed to exempt the purchase of general aviation aircraft from sales tax. This important piece of legislation would position New York to compete with neighboring states which currently have similar exemptions in place, and is timely given the advent of the very light jet market.

While NYAMA continues to receive strong support for this legislation from the State Senate, current support in the State Assembly is not yet strong enough to gain passage of the legislation. The Association continues to work with both houses and the Governor's office to communicate the importance and value of this legislation on local economies.

## Transferring Funds

Another important initiative pursued by NYAMA during Advocacy Day was the transfer of unused AIP state match funds to the AIR 99 program. Each year the State appropriates \$8 million for the state match of federal AIP grants, not all of which is necessarily used. NYAMA proposed legislation to make those funds available to the AIR 99 capital fund by moving the unused amount after the state-match is determined.

In the weeks following Advocacy Day, NYAMA saw success with this initiative. Due in part to NYAMA members' efforts, as well as strong leadership by the bill's sponsor Senator Owen Johnson, the changes in legislation were included in the final budget bill. NYAMA will be working with DOT in the coming months to work through the regulatory language for the actual fund transfer.

## Looking for Change

Other issues discussed during Advocacy Day included seeking dialog and amendments to the pilot background check legislation passed last year, as well as support for a dedicated fund for airport development.

Working with AOPA, NYAMA has sought changes to the pilot background check which currently requires any person desiring pilot training to undergo a State background check. The law is flawed in many respects, but most directly in that it preempts federal regulation and authority. NYAMA's chief concern is the unnecessary delays and hurdles the legislation will pose for current pilots and student pilots from pursuing training in New York. Because the legislation only affects New York State, it is very easy for discouraged students to travel across state lines to obtain training.

As of this time, we have been unable to gain support from the bill's sponsors to amend the current law. AOPA is proceeding with a lawsuit similar to those filed in other states facing a similar situation, and hopes to achieve a court decision to protect the industry from this and other federal preemption issues. ■

*Continued from page 5*

3. *What are your legislative priorities for the upcoming legislative session?*

My legislative priorities for the 2007-2008 sessions vary in topic and scope. From creating new crimes relation to sex offenses, to establishing a blue ribbon commission to review the existing Taylor law, to reforming the state's Medicaid program, I have a wide array of priority bills. However, I continue to focus on initiatives that help to boost the states jobs and business climate and I have several bills that aim to reduce taxes and expand programs that help businesses compete in today's global economy.

4. *Why did you enter public service as a legislator?*

I entered public service to be of service to the community in which my family and I were raised. I consider it a great privilege and honor to serve in our state's legislature, and I work very hard every day to fulfill the trust that I've been given. ■



# AirCurrents

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119 Washington Avenue • Suite 300 • Albany, NY 12210  
(518) 432-9973 ph • (518) 432-1712 fax  
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The Association is committed to the promotion of airport development and representing the needs of New York State's aviation industry.

AirCurrents reserves the right to edit all submitted articles for content and format. Please address any comments or questions in care of the Editor to: AirCurrents, 119 Washington Avenue, Suite 100, Albany, NY 12210, (518) 432-9973, email: info@nyama.com.

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# Announcing a new A.A.E.

On April 22, 2007, Marshall B. Stevens, A.A.E., Airport Manager, Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport, Queensbury, NY, successfully completed all three phases of the accreditation process and earned the distinction of Accredited Airport Executive, A.A.E.

To qualify for this distinction, Stevens passed a 180-item multiple-choice examination, wrote a comprehensive management research paper, and demonstrated, in the final interview by a panel of A.A.E.s, his knowledge of airport management, business administration, and general transportation economics. This achievement attests to his ability to meet these stringent requirements and his experience in managing a public airport. His management research paper titled "Airport Master Planning at Non-Hub and General Aviation Airports" makes a significant contribution to airport management.

By fulfilling all the requirements leading to the title of Accredited Airport Executive, Stevens joins a select group of individuals who have earned this designation within the Accreditation Program. At present, fewer than 10 percent of AAAE's members throughout the country have earned this distinction.

Send your congratulations to Marshall at (518) 792-5995 or [airport@warrencountydpw.com](mailto:airport@warrencountydpw.com). ■

