

The Aero Center

RUN-UP

Bismarck Aero Center & Mandan Aero Center

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CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT

Featuring Tony Wood, Owner of Mountain Plains LLC



Our customer spotlight this issue features business owner and avid pilot Tony Wood. Tony lives in Watford City, ND, with his wife, Kylie, and their four kids, Jeanine, Bradley, Emilia, and Ezra. He owns Mountain Plains LLC, which got its start designing power lines for an electric cooperative in northwest North Dakota. Today, the company has grown to become a licensed Land Surveying and Engineering Firm, with offices in Bismarck, Watford City, Missoula, MT & Thompson Falls, MT. Their services include electrical consulting, right-of-way acquisition, land surveying, civil engineering, and utility locating.

Q: When did you first become interested in flying?

I grew up being scared to fly. In fact, I was almost 18 the first time my feet left the ground in a plane in my hometown of McCall, ID. It was the Centennial of the Wright Brothers, and the McCall Municipal Airport (KMYL) was celebrating them by having local pilots offer free flights in a Cessna 172 or 182. You had to be under 18 and I just barely made the cut. I never even flew commercially, until my first trip home from college my freshman year at the University of Mary. I did not grow up staring at the sky, wishing I could fly like many pilots do. However, my interest was truly peaked when it really sunk in that I could not see myself moving back to Idaho. I still desired to spend time with my parents, and I missed getting out into the Rocky Mountains. Driving to Idaho takes about 15.5 hours and flying commercially takes a full day, when you consider I live in a rural community in North Dakota and my parents live in a rural community in Idaho. I took a couple flight lessons and started ground school in 2010. However, I quickly learned I did not have time to give it the proper attention, as it was the first year I was full-time in my business.

Q: How did you become involved in aviation?

I started strongly considering aviation when I got to

Left photo: Tony's Cirrus; Right: Tony & his family

know Justin Voller, who has become a great friend of mine. He was a member of a group who owned a SR20 & SR22. A member had recently left the group and were looking to replace him. I knew it would be a lot of work and cost to get my license. I discussed it with Kylie and we decided there were three main points to this opportunity that made it appealing: 1) I knew I was joining a great group of individuals who would support me through my journey. 2) If I spent the money on purchasing my portion of the aircraft, I would be committed to getting my license. 3) We really took comfort in some of the safety features of Cirrus aircraft. I joined the group and spent 18 months working towards my private license, with the help of a few great friends and mentors. I earned my Private Pilot License on June 1, 2017. I recently earned my Instrument Rating on December 8, 2021.

Q: Who have been your aviation mentors? One thing that I love about aviation is how tight of a group it is. I have yet to meet a pilot that if I asked them to assist me in briefing a flight or analyzing a weather situation, they'd stop what they were doing and lend a hand. With that said, there are two individuals I owe credit to for successfully earning my license: Justin Voller and Luke Taylor. They both worked to teach me how to fly starting back in 2015 and they still receive regular calls from me, as I look for support through a new or technical situation.

Q: Do you use aviation for business or just for fun? If for business, how does it help? I do use aviation for business. As mentioned, I live in Watford City, ND. In addition to the office there, Mountain Plains has offices in Bismarck, Missoula, MT and Thompson Falls,

Continued on page two.

CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT *continued*

MT. I regularly fly back and forth to Bismarck, and I make the trip out west here and there. However, being VFR for many years made it hard to find times where the weather aligned with my schedule. I am looking forward to exercising my Instrument Rating to make those trips more often. Aviation is a game changer from the stance of time. Being able to cut down the travel time from office to office is very helpful in getting things done in person. Even during today's technology improvements, you simply cannot replace being somewhere in the flesh. I also use aviation for personal use. It has allowed me to frequently get back and forth to Idaho. Recently, my wife and I have also used it to chase our daughter's college hockey games around the country. This spring we made it to games in Michigan, Indiana, and Missouri, all because of aviation.

Q: What advice do you have for someone trying to get into aviation? First, I think it is very important for people to understand the commitment it requires. People hear how fast you can get from one place to another and think it sounds amazing. However, I had no idea when I first started my aviation journey of all the factors that would keep me grounded more times

than not. The license really cannot serve as a reliable tool until you have achieved proficiency, let alone your rating, for instrument flight. Additionally, you need to have access to an aircraft that is safe in IMC conditions. I bet I only got to make one out of every four to five long cross-country trips I desired to make when I was restricted to VFR. Second, I believe you have to be disciplined to treat it as a license to learn. Never lose respect for the risks associated with aviation. I have a tendency to push the limit in many aspects of my life. However, there is simply no room for that in aviation. The ground is not very forgiving. Third, make sure to develop a good support network of pilots. That will keep you safe and keep the journey enjoyable.



SPOTTED ON THE RAMP:

Boeing CH-47 Chinook

The Boeing Ch-47 Chinook took its first flight in the early 1960s and at a top speed of 170 knots, it was considerably faster than other utility and attack helicopters from that time. To this day, it is still one of the faster helicopters in the US military.



BAC is proud to be an Air Elite FBO & provide great service to all our customers.

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

Evolution Flight Display

Aspen Avionics recently announced you can trade-in your current Aspen Evolution flight display and trade-up to their new Evolution MAX display.

Checkout the new upgrades and reasons why you should consider the Evolution Flight Display:

- No backup attitude indicator is required with a single ProMax Primary Flight Display! Save yourself some weight and horsepower by pulling out your vacuum system and old attitude indicator
- New two-year factory warranty
- No backups required multi-display systems, too! Evolution 2000 (Pro MAX PFD + MFD1000 MAX or Evolution 2500 (Pro MAX PFD + MFD1000 MAX + MFD500 MAX systems
- STANDARD Synthetic Vision included – adds better situational awareness and overall safety, particularly in IMC conditions

- GPS-aided AHRS in the event of pitot-static failure – eliminates single point of failure

- New, vibrant colors with the latest aviation glass – Display is clearer, more readable, and sharper than ever before. Increased readability when dimmed and in direct sunlight

- Audio panel interface – Audio voice callouts in pilot's headset vs. a tone alert

- Higher reliability and faster refresh rates with latest generation processors – 4x faster than the legacy display

- Font and window enlargement – improves situational awareness by automatically enlarging the field you are changing

- Altitude intercept arc – Immediately see when altitude is reached - Clearly determine avoidance of terrain, comply with crossing restrictions, or enter the pattern at the desired altitude



Want to learn more about how to trade-in and upgrade your Aspen flight display? Reach out to me at krish@bismarckaero.com. - The Tech Guy, Kris

GET TO KNOW YOUR TECH

Jesse Foster, Flightline Technician 3

Q: Where are you from?

I was born in Washington and grew up there in the Yakima Valley, vineyard country. My family moved to Washburn, ND, when I was 13 and I graduated there in 2004.

Q: Where did you get your start in aviation?

My first interaction with aviation was at BAC. After burning out in the EMS field, I was working in a warehouse and heard an advertisement over the radio for open positions for flightline technicians. I had no idea what that was, but applied anyway in September of 2012. It is by far the longest job I've held.

Q: What is your favorite aircraft?

WWII-era Lockheed planes are my favorite, mostly just because I think they look cool. Especially the P-38 Lightning.

Q: What do you enjoy most about your job?

My favorite thing about working at BAC is that the nightshift hours suit me really well. Working mostly by myself for the bulk of my shift, then wrapping up the last few hours working with the other line techs and regular customers is a great ratio of solitude to socialization for me.





Bismarck Airport Ops brought their big equipment to shows student how they keep the airport open during a North Dakota blizzard.



Jon and Chris talked to 5th graders about their career as Air Medical Pilots



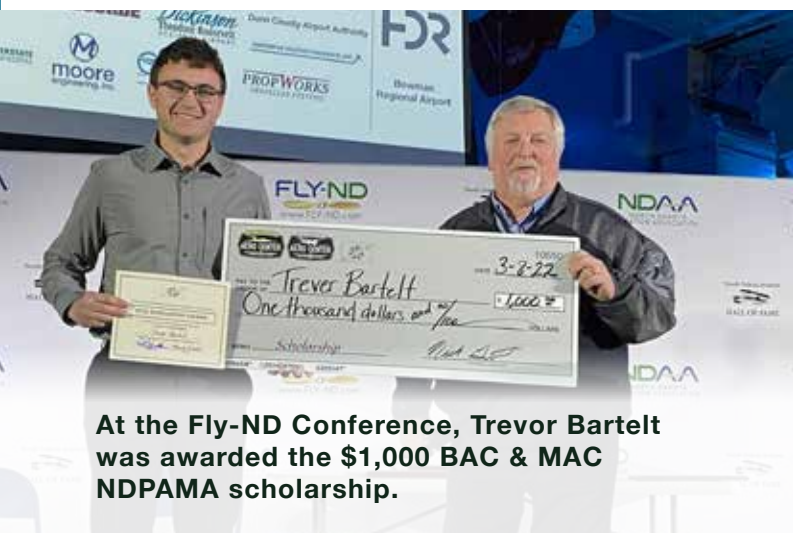
We had 834 fifth grade students at the Bismarck Airport for the Annual Aviation Career Day. This picture only shows *HALF* of the students!



Tracie and Shae recently went down to San Diego to represent our company



at the annual NBAA Schedulers and Dispatchers Conference.



At the Fly-ND Conference, Trevor Bartelt was awarded the \$1,000 BAC & MAC NDPAMA scholarship.



Kris Hexom received the Bismarck Aero Center FAA Diamond Award for Aviation Maintenance Technician Training for the eighth year in a row!

Upcoming Events



12 JUNE	Mandan Fly-In (Mandan Aero Center)
11 SEPT	Bismarck Fly-In (Bismarck Airport)
06 OCT	Props & Hops (Mandan Aero Center)

We recommend confirming upcoming events with local airports or organizers.

COME FLY WITH US *Flight Instruction Tip*

Emerging from the darkness beyond my landing light, a mesmerized coyote stood transfixed on centerline as my plane barreled down the runway struggling to lift off. Unable to stop, I yanked back on the yoke, desperate to rise the three feet required to clear the animal's back. Luckily, the plane obliged, and we rocketed up into the starry night away from the potential hazard below. Whether conducting an air assault with night vision goggles or cruising with the naked eye over the immense light display of Seattle's metro, I often look forward to night flights with glee. During daylight hours, we witness the hustle and bustle of trucks, cars, and people going about their daily lives. But at night, the world moves just a bit slower and it is often more peaceful up above.

With the rapid onset of summer, thermal activity and stronger winds can make daytime flights more turbulent, especially at lower altitudes. However, as the sky darkens, the earth and air cool off, resulting in a smoother ride. Pilots who choose to fly at night this time of year are often rewarded with a more serene and relaxing flight. Inexperienced or recency lacking pilots are often hesitant to go up at night, but with proper preparation and judgment, the benefits are safely attainable.

An in-depth weather analysis becomes more important at night, because of reduced visibility. It can be incredibly hard to discern the edge of a cloud bank and fight inadvertently into instrument conditions has a higher probability. A technique that I use to gauge whether

I am flying into poor visibility conditions is to note the distance I can see lights on the ground. When I initially depart the pattern, I make a mental note of how far away I can see lights, many nights this would be lights on the horizon. Periodically throughout my flight, I consciously reassess the distance I can see lights. If I can no longer see lights on the horizon, I can assume that visibility is decreasing. Fog can easily form overnight in cooler temperatures, and it is this deliberate assessment of distances that helps keep me safe.

I also rely upon my instruments more so at night than I do during the day. Not only for the safety against weather, but also for the lack of lights in general that we face at most rural airports in North Dakota. Takeoff can be especially unnerving if you are not expecting to climb into complete darkness. At many of North Dakota's rural airports, a pilot will transition from a well lit runway to complete darkness during their initial climb out. Our eyes take approximately 30 minutes to adjust and can't adapt quickly enough to the changing conditions. Therefore, a pilot can easily lose sight of the horizon and have difficulty identifying their attitude. To combat this phenomenon, pilots should more heavily rely on their attitude and airspeed indicators to ensure they are not pitching up too much or too little.

Night flying can be magical in ways with the glittering lights below and can be a much smoother and enjoyable experience.

Happy Flying! -Clint

*Interested in flight instruction?
Contact Clint: 701-223-4754 or
clintm@bismarckaero.com*



New Faces ✈️



MATT BAUER Flightline Technician I – Full Time

Matt joins Bismarck Aero Center as a Flightline Technician 1. Prior to coming to the Bismarck Airport, Matt developed a diverse background in the automotive industry. From automotive engine work to windshield replacement, he has done it all for cars. Matt has also worked for the Arco station next to the Bismarck Airport. Looking towards the future, Matt has started flight training with Clint and aspires to have a career in aviation as a professional pilot. Matt's references brag about his great work ethic and good attitude. We are looking forward to Matt joining our team and growing within the aviation industry.

Moving On Up

DREW MEISSNER Promotion to Lead Flightline Technician

We are excited to announce that Drew has been promoted to the Lead Flightline Technician position. Drew has been with Bismarck Aero Center since July of 2020 and has been a Flightline Technician for a few years before that. Since starting with BAC, his skill set, commitment, and leadership ability has proven to be a strong asset to Bismarck Aero Center and the FBO Team. Drew recently completed Dale Carnegie Leadership Training, giving him more tool to be successful in this new leadership role and help drive the team to reach their highest potential. We appreciate that Drew consistently exceeds the expectations of our customers, and we know that he will excel in his new position. As he develops, he will continue to raise the standards of our FBO team and help us provide excellent customer service.



GRANT ERWIN Commercial Pilot

Grant learned about BAC through our good friends at Cirrus Aircraft and has been working as a Flightline Technician since moving to Bismarck. Grant's formal aviation training was through the University of North Dakota as a Professional Pilot. Grant will start flying again with Clint, working through our FAA issued Letter of Authorization for Sight Seeing Flights and other related activities. Grant is also working on obtaining his CFI through Clint. Welcome back to the skies, Grant!

MAINTENANCE CORNER

Are you getting sick of rising fuel prices? If you don't have a fuel flow gauge, you might want to consider getting a fuel flow gauge for your aircraft. They can save you money on fuel by allowing you to see how much fuel you are actually using, which allows you to potentially fly at a lower power setting. Of course, this will lower your speed, but you'll be able to decide if it is worth the extra gallons of fuel to get to your destination a few minutes faster. There are multiple manufacturers that sell fuel flow gauges, but I recommend the Electronics International FP-5L. Installation requires installing a transducer

in the aircraft's main engine fuel supply line. The gauge and transducer will also need to be wired to the aircraft. Installation in most single engine pistons will typically take six to eight hours of labor and will require space on your instrument panel to fit a 2.25 inch gauge. In addition to saving fuel, you'll also get the added safety benefit of knowing how much fuel you have used and how much time is left before you run out of fuel. Feel free to give us a call, if you'd like to get an estimate of what it would cost to install in your airplane.

- Erik Peterson, Lead Maintenance Technician

Photo courtesy of the State Historical Society of North Dakota

Do you know your **TRIVIA?**

The original Bismarck Airport was in a cow pasture, but it moved to the lowlands of South Washington Street during the 1920s. This June, we celebrate 91 years since the first commercial flight at the Bismarck Airport! In 1931, _____ Airlines made the inaugural flight in a "Stinson Detroiter," built by Stinson Aircraft.

A. Hanford

C. Braniff

B. Mid-Continent

D. Northwest

Submit your answer by 6/15 for a chance to win a \$25 gift card! Contact Shae at shaeh@bismarckaero.com or message us on our Facebook page.

The answer to our previous trivia question was C. Archie League was hired as the first Air Traffic Controller, when the position was created in 1929. Congratulations to Steven Martens for being this quarter's lucky winner!

Keep up to date with events, aviation news & cool aircraft! Follow us at:

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