CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT
Rory Kirkendall

Our Customer Spotlight this issue features Rory Kirkendall, a local helicopter enthusiast and pilot.

Some pilots can remember when they first developed a passion for aviation, but for pilots like Rory, it goes back to their earliest childhood days. His father was a Huey helicopter Crew Chief in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War, and he transferred that experience into a career as a helicopter and airplane mechanic. His work brought him to Alaska, where Rory was raised. They had a Pa-18 Super Cub, so Rory grew up flying around in a car seat. “When I was five or six, Dad put a stick in the back seat,” Rory remembers. “And I got to fly for the first time. He told me to follow the river, so I took him seriously and followed every single curve of that river.”

Although he has lots of unlogged hours in a plane, Rory has never pursued an airplane private pilot license. Instead, after finishing high school he attended Hillsboro Aero Academy in Oregon. There he received his private, commercial, instrument, and flight instruction ratings in rotorcraft-helicopter. “I just started going with helicopters and it hasn’t stopped!” He said.

The helicopter industry is not as vast as their airplane counterparts, so to succeed, a helicopter pilot must find a career niche. Rory has worked a variety of jobs in the past ten years, including a short time as a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Inspector. He has found his niche though in the utility and powerline industry. Currently, he is working for Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), one of four power marketing administrations within the U.S. Department of Energy. At this point, he mostly flies his helicopter on powerline patrol. However, in the future he hopes to do more work with linemen on powerline maintenance.

Helicopters are the preferred form of aircraft for powerline work, as they are made for low-level flying and allow for more maneuverability around the lines. WAPA is in the process of acquiring new equipment to work directly on the powerlines, including a chair on a sturdy rope that attaches to the bottom of a helicopter. Any work near powerlines is very precise and requires pilots to be extra attentive. Rory’s goal is to never, ever “bounce off the wires.”

Because of the cost of flying helicopters, Rory rarely flies on his own outside of work. That doesn’t diminish his enthusiasm for his job though. “I’ve found my passion in flying helicopters,” he says. “And I make sure to not lose that when I’m flying for work. It’s a job that requires responsibility.” Even though most of his flying is for work, his passion for aviation extends to his family. Rory’s wife is also a helicopter pilot, although she hasn’t flown lately as she is busy raising their two and four year old children. The aviation gene has travelled down through their family, and the kids have been inundated from the beginning. Rory’s wife flew quite a bit when pregnant with their first child, so the oldest already has lots of flight hours. The little ones love when they get to go flying and always ask afterwards, “Daddy, am I a real pilot guy now?” Rory and his wife hope their kids will follow in their love for aviation, whether it’s a career or hobby, helicopters or airplanes, or as pilots or mechanics.

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SPOTTED ON THE RAMP

KBIS had a unique visitor when U.S. President Donald Trump visited ND on September 6th: a Boeing C-32, the military personnel transport version of a Boeing 757, operating as Air Force One.

CUST. SPOTLIGHT

Continued

For anyone interested in pursuing a passion for helicopters, Rory has some sound advice. “When people think of helicopter pilots, they think military,” he says. “But in reality, there’s so many niches you can go into with helicopters.”

The first thing to do is go for a demo helicopter ride, as it’s the only way to find out if you like it or not. If you do decide to pursue your helicopter license, consider going to a larger school for flight training. All in all, it’s going to cost more than flying airplanes, but in Rory’s opinion it’s worth it. “I know those airline pilots are jealous of helicopters,” he says jokingly with a grin. “Runways are for beauty queens. Helicopters are real flying, stick and rudder, fly by the seat of your pants.”

SAVE THE DATE

Bismarck Aero Center’s Annual Holiday Kuchen Party
Friday, December 15th • 3-5pm

MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT RECEIVES FAA REPAIR STATION CERTIFICATION

It was a long and detailed process, but Bismarck Aero Center has recently been approved by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to become North Dakota’s newest complete Repair Station.

Under the Repair Station certification (under title code 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 145), aircraft maintenance facilities are able to provide aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul services with more FAA oversight in processes and procedures. Repair stations are also held to higher standards by the FAA in areas such as quality control and training.

What does this mean for our customers? “Our complete in-house repair station now allows more flexibility and faster turnaround times. Thus, giving customers the support they have come to expect from us,” states Howard Burns, Director of Maintenance at Bismarck Aero Center. “For our business, this is the next step for us to be able to do more for our customers and make sure that we do our part to keep them safe.”

Along with the Repair Station, the Bismarck Aero Center maintenance department has also been recognized by the National Air Transportation Association and the FAA for annual training of 100% of all company maintenance technicians. Both organizations acknowledge companies that continually work to increase safety in aviation transportation. A company must invest a minimum of 12 hours of training in their employees each year to be considered.
BISMARCK FLY-IN TAKES ANOTHER STEP WITH FUNDRAISING FOR SPEECH THERAPY CENTER

It was a beautiful day on September 10th as over 1,000 people came out to the Bismarck Fly-in & Drive-In Pancake Breakfast. This was the 7th year of the event and was the best yet. It hosted more people and raised more funds than in prior years and as always, the funds go to support the Scottish Rite Speech Therapy Center for Children in Bismarck, ND.

New at this year’s event, Sanford Air Medical graciously donated a 20-minute ride on their brand-new Bismarck-based medical helicopter. The helicopter was on display during the whole event as well. Attendees were able to hop inside it and see all the unique features that allow it to save lives every day around North Dakota. Along with Sanford Air Med, the event had nine other aircraft and vehicle displays, clown Donny “Silly Goose” Gooslin, aircraft simulators, aircraft rides and much more.

We were very fortunate that every year this event continues to gain popularity. It has really become a staple event that people look forward to in the Bismarck/Mandan community.

Make sure to watch for the 8th annual Bismarck Fly-in next year as we go for another record year of people and funds raised!

Special thanks to all the following:

Aircraft Displays:
- Bismarck Air Medical
- Civil Air Patrol
- ND Game & Fish

Table Top Displays:
- KLJ
- Donny “Silly Goose” Gooslin
- HealthSource

Our Great Volunteers:
- Masonic Lodge
- Rainbow Girls
- BAC staff
- University of Mary’s Speech Therapy Program

CONGRATULATIONS!
Ray Brooks & Emily Gerhart

Two Bismarck Aero Center employees recently received new pilot ratings! Ray Brooks, Lead Flight Instructor, passed his Multi-Engine Rating checkride. Emily Gerhart, full-time Flightline Technician, passed her Instrument Rating checkride. The next steps for Ray are to keep working towards his Instrument and Multi-Engine Instructor ratings. For Emily, she hopes to get her A&P license. She is working towards her goal of becoming a missionary bush pilot in the Phillipines. Congratulations to Ray and Emily, keep up the good work!

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT
TXi Flight Displays

Calling all pilots looking for the newest state-of-the-art flight display system! Garmin recently announced the release of the touchscreen G500 TXi and G600 TXi TXi flight displays, as well as the Engine Information System (EIS) TXi. The TXi products incorporate greater situational awareness tools and innovative features set into a contemporary avionics platform, complete with a clean-sheet touchscreen and vibrant presentation.

Pilots have three display options, including a large 10.6-inch displays and two 7-inch display versions, in portrait and landscape orientations. The 10.6-inch display can operate as a primary flight display, multi-function display, or operational EIS, and all are easily customizable. The 7-inch display can be dedicated to any one of those functions.

All in all, the TXi Flight Displays not only improve situational awareness, but gives you the tools to make flying even more fun. To get more information on the TXi Flight Displays and all their uses, contact Lead Avionics Technician Kris Hexom at 701.223.4754 or krish@bismarckaero.com.
QUARTERLY RECAP
Look at all the fun we had!

1. The Sanford AirMed team donated a free ride in their brand new helicopter to be given away at the Fly-in Breakfast.  
2. A new record: over 1,000 people attended the Fly-In this year!  
3. A pair of Trick-or-Treaters enjoying the airplane cutout at the BAC booth for the 2017 Zoo Boo.  
4. BAC employees & friends were all smiles while volunteering at at this year’s Zoo Boo.  
5. Tim Baltzer with just one of the 300+ people who came to support him at Props & Hops.  
6. Tim with all the BAC & MAC employees come together to support him & his battle against cancer.  
7. Check out this group of future pilots from Perfect Start Preschool who came to tour BAC!  
8. We’re excited to announce BAC was named one of the 50 Best Places to Work by Prairie Business Magazine for the 4th year in a row!
NEW PROMOTION
Shae Helling Named Director of FBO Operations & Marketing

We are proud to announce that Shae Helling has been promoted to Director of FBO Operations & Marketing. An Alexander, ND native, he has been with Bismarck Aero Center (BAC) for 5 years where he progressed from Marketing Intern to now leading a team of aircraft refueling experts.

As a University of Mary graduate, Shae has a Bachelor’s in Marketing and Business Administration and a Masters in Project Management. While in school, he was awarded the University of Mary Presidential Award and the 2012 Marv Borgelt Award for outstanding senior in the School of Business. In addition to his work, Shae volunteers his time in the community with the Young Professionals Network and with the Bismarck/Mandan EAA Chapter.

The role of aircraft refueling is an important position in the Bismarck-Mandan Community. Here at BAC, we are often responsible for providing a transient visitor with their first impression of the community through friendly hospitality and competent fuel service delivery.

Shae’s new position at BAC combines his leadership strengths in relationship building and marketing. Shae has a team-first approach and is steadfast in his commitment to ensuring that continued results at BAC come from the hard work and empowerment of a unified team. This unified team is one of the primary reasons why Bismarck Aero Center continues to be named one of the 50 Best Places to work by Prairie Business Magazine. Shae will also continue to lead all marketing strategies for Bismarck Aero Center.

FIRST ANNUAL EVENT IS A HOPPING SUCCESS
Props & Hops at the Mandan Airport

It is always amazing to see the local community come together to support one of their own, but it’s even more amazing when it takes place in your own hangar. On October 12th, over 300 people came out to the Mandan Aero Center for the 1st Annual Props & Hops event.

The event was a great success. It featured a combination of local craft beers and delicious Taylor Made BBQ appetizers, accompanied by great music from local musician Ben Suchy. There were plenty of great aircraft on display including an Ercoupe, a Cessna 195, and a Bell 206 helicopter. The night was concluded with a silent auction that went down to the last minute on a few items.

Throughout the entire event, everyone wanted to talk to one man in particular: Tim Baltzer. Tim, an Avionics and Maintenance Technician currently working at the Mandan Aero Center, has been battling terminal Leiomyosarcoma cancer for the past two years. It’s been a tough battle for Tim, but his joyful smile has stayed through it all. All proceeds from the event went to help Tim in his battle.

Thank you to everyone who came out to support Tim and this event. A special thanks to our great sponsors: Silicon Plains, Rick Anderson, Taylor Made BBQ, Main Street Drive Thru Liquor, J&S Heavy Haul, Northern Plains Equipment, Clear Skies Aviation, Double M Helicopters, Face & Jaw Surgery Center, Harlow’s Buses, Sales & Service, Propworks, Propeller Systems, National Medical Resources, American Plumbing.

Thank you also to all our employees and the EAA Chapter 1008 folks who volunteered your time. All your efforts made this event a wonderful success!

MAINTENANCE CORNER

“Some operators of the Teledyne Continental 520 and 550 series engines have been worried about a new impending Airworthiness Directive (AD). This AD would force owners of these engines to have a new camshaft gear installed when the engine gets to be 12 years old or within the next 100 hours, if it is already 12 years old. These engines are in single and twin Cessnas, Bonanzas, Barons, and Cirrus’ to mention a few airframes. The FAA decided it was unnecessary to issue this unreasonable AD, as there have not been many failures and it would have affected approximately 26,000 engines waiting for new gears to be supplied. Just imagine the back orders! Thousands of planes would have been sitting on the ground waiting for someone to locate a new gear. The new camshaft gear is a bit thicker and can be an option to have changed out during an overhaul. It’s up to you, but it might be a good idea to get it changed. Happy Flying!”

- Mike Aarestead, MAC Director of Maintenance
UPCOMING EVENTS

Dec. 15th
Holiday Kuchen Party at Bismarck Aero Center (BAC)
(All BAC family & friends are welcome)

Dec. 17th
The Birthday of Aviation

Feb. 6-9th
NBAA Schedulers & Dispatchers Conference (Long Beach, CA)

March 4-6th
Upper Midwest Aviation Symposium (UMAS) (Fargo, ND)

TRIVIA

The NBAA’s Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition (NBAA-BACE) is the world’s largest aviation gathering of its kind. Held this October in Las Vegas, NV, there were over 1,000 indoor exhibitors and nearly 100 business aircraft on static display. How many business aviation professional attendees did NBAA-BACE host?

a) 19,000 attendees  c) 12,000 attendees

b) 27,000 attendees  d) 32,000 attendees

Submit your answer by 11/25 for a chance to win a $25 gift card! Contact Nicolette Derosier at 701-223-4754 or nicoletted@bismarckaero.com.

Last newsletter’s correct answer was D. It wasn’t until the 1960’s that an aircraft was designated specifically for aerial firefighting. The Grumman TBM Avenger was the first aircraft modified and dedicated to the job. Congratulations to Jason Sauer for being this quarter’s lucky trivia winner!

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

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