



IPA Newsletter March 2010

From the president...

Greetings, IPA Members.

I would like to start with an apology for being so late with this newsletter; I really did intend to communicate with you more often. It's been a very busy fall and winter for me, at work and personally, in addition to my duties as your president and as newsletter editor for the Champaign EAA chapter. And I admit, I'm not much of a writer and sometimes have trouble motivating myself. But I promise you won't go this long between newsletters again.

Last fall I sent out post cards asking for your e-mail addresses, so we could transition this newsletter to electronic distribution. So far, the response has been less than we had hoped, and we still only have e-mail addresses for about two-thirds of the members. If you are receiving this newsletter in printed form and have e-mail, please send the address to Vice President/Membership Director John Salz at jsalz@illinoispilots.com. The Board of Directors is still discussing ways to accommodate members who don't have e-mail, or don't wish to receive their newsletter through e-mail, and we are leaning towards a two-tiered dues concept where members who opt for a printed newsletter could pay a surcharge for the printing and mailing. No decision has been made yet, but it was noted that the dues notices usually go out in April, so the Board will need to set the dues structure before then. Another option available to most members who don't have their own computer would be to use a computer available at most libraries and many

other public places and view the newsletter on the web site at www.illinoispilots.com. I have heard from a few of you who just don't have the computer skills and need to have the printed copy, and one way or another, those members will be accommodated.

Scholarship

As you know one of the functions of IPA has been to fund an annual scholarship for an Illinois student in an aviation program. This year the Board of Directors increased the amount of this scholarship from \$500 to \$750, acknowledging the increasing cost of education, with the hope of increasing it at some point to \$1000. This increase was made possible in large part by the fund raising efforts of the Springfield Chapter, notably their past president Jim Long. Most of the scholarship is funded by a \$2 contribution from each member's dues, but to sustain the increase, at a time of decreasing membership, the contribution would need to be increased. In order to do this the board will have to cut expenses in other areas, and this is a small part of the decision to distribute this newsletter electronically after the loss of America's Flyways. A final decision is yet to be made.

Paxton Airport

In December, Vice President John Salz and I addressed a Paxton City Council meeting, where a vote was scheduled to close the airport. Everyone from the standing room only audience who spoke on this subject, including aircraft owners, hangar tenants, and several local business owners, was in favor of keeping the

IPA Newsletter March 2010

airport, and in the end the motion to close it was voted down.

However the win is probably only temporary, as the runway is aging and only has a few years of safe usability, and it seems clear that the city is not going to spend the money to rebuild it when the time comes.

TRACON Consolidation

In February there was an informational meeting about FAA's plans to move the Champaign TRACON services to Elgin. The new digital radar installed at CMI two years ago offers the capability to transmit the image remotely, allowing consolidation of TRACON facilities. I was unable to attend the meeting, but talking to others who had attended, the meeting was sponsored by NATCA, and the information presented seemed more concerned with the loss of union jobs than with any affect on pilots or aircraft operations.

Annual Meeting

The IPA Annual Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, May 15 at DeKalb. Details are still being worked out, but there will be some safety seminars and vendor displays, and Dr. Susan Shea, Director of Illinois Division of Aeronautics, will speak during the lunch break. Weather permitting, there will also be some flying activities in the afternoon. Last year the flour-bomb, spot landing, and balloon burst competitions were all made quite challenging by gusty winds, but were still a lot of fun. For those of you who have not attended an Annual Meeting recently, this is also where the members will elect the Board of Directors, who will then elect the officers, giving the members a direct say in the operation of the Association. Also, since there are almost always more

openings on the Board than candidates, I would encourage any member who has an interest in the future direction of IPA to consider serving a term on the Board of Directors.

University of Illinois-Institute of Aviation

Just as I was putting this newsletter together, I received an e-mail from Ted Gonsiorowski, president of the Illini Area Chapter, who is also Assistant Airport Manager at U of I Willard Airport that the future of the Institute of Aviation may be in question. With the state's budget shortfalls and inability to pay its bills, the University is also having financial troubles, and the Institute of Aviation is one of the units getting a close look as an area to cut expenses. I'm not sure how great the chances are at this time, but it seems the interim Chancellor has appointed a Project Review Team to study the matter. This also raises the questions, without the student activity, will there be enough traffic to keep the tower, and will the University even keep the airport without the educational unit to support? As an Institute of Aviation alumnus, I will be watching this one, and will keep you informed.

Until later, (which I promise will not be so long next time,)

Dave Claxon,

IPA President