

Wild Rose Airport Association Newsletter
P. O. Box 85, Wild Rose, WI 54984

Autumn 2009

Welcome to the Newsletter of the Wild Rose Airport Association. I think this is the first newsletter that we've had for a long time. It will be my job to see it is not the last one for a long time. I was elected president of the WRAA last summer, succeeding Dean Riley, who had held things together for several years prior to that. At the group's lunch in mid-July we gave Dean a standing ovation for all his tireless efforts on behalf of the beautiful little patch of ground known to pilots as "W23," and to all of you as Wild Rose Idlewild Airport.

Idlewild has always been a busy place, going all the way back to its founding in 1947. Right after World War II, many small towns felt that a community airport would be a necessity. Airplanes had played a huge role in the victories during the war and everyone was sure that airplanes would be the key to success in peace time as well.

Wartime pilots would certainly all want to have their own airplanes. Civilians, inspired by the daring deeds of military pilots, would be taking lessons by the thousands and the air would be full of commercial and private airplanes...The airways would surely be more crowded than the highways by 1950.

As we all know, that's not quite what happened. Idlewild has continued to play a role in the life of Wild Rose and for pilots throughout Wisconsin, but not in the way that was predicted. It hosts some business traffic occasionally, of course, but its main role is in recreation...Providing the first flying experience for many children of all ages, inspiring dreams of flight for others, encouraging some to even get lessons, earn their pilot's license, buy or restore an airplane, and even build their own airplane from scratch.

It's hard to imagine, but this little airport currently has at least four airplanes under construction, several already completed and flying, and two antique planes that were recently restored and are currently flying.

We tell these stories to you, the members and sponsors of the Airport as a way of saying 'thank you' and as an invitation to all of you to get even more involved in the life of this very special piece of Wisconsin. We especially need your help right now, as we've decided to 'stretch our wings' and spruce things up around the place a bit. Earlier this year the members in attendance at our monthly meetings voted to embark on three significant projects at the airport:

We decided to build a 15' extension on the back of the club hangar. The club hangar is where we serve the breakfast and pig roast the first Sunday of each June. The Fly-In, Drive In/Breakfast/Pig Roast is the only fundraiser we do each year, and the big crowd usually fills the hangar to overflowing, with too many people having to eat outside or just stand and wait. The kitchen and serving area were right in the main hangar, leaving much less space for tables, chairs and hungry diners. The new addition moves the kitchen and serving area into its own space, freeing the entire hangar area for diners. We're hoping the extra space will encourage even larger crowds and more income for airport maintenance and repairs. Total Cost, approximately \$7,000

Airport Association member Don Mahn has been the 'straw boss' on the construction project. The addition is closed in, insulated, the drywall is up, and painted. Four big serving windows will help the flow of diners go very smoothly. We all owe a great big thank you to Don and Mary Mahn, Don and Harriet Nickel, Chuck Meisner, Brett Wilke, Ron Bender, Jim Romenesko, Ken Jaschob, Bert Ruediger, Barney Barnhart, and all the other volunteers who helped make the project possible. As with most volunteer projects, both dollars and elbow grease were needed to get the job done. The elbow grease has exceeded the dollars so far!

The grassy spaces between the rows of hangars where the airplanes taxi out for take off, have become very rough and uneven. The melting snow of spring leaves large muddy areas, making it

impossible to use some of the hangars several weeks each year. We've contracted with Hudziak Excavating to regrade and smooth the taxi ways, creating enough slope to carry water naturally to the east where it will drain away. That work should be done in April of 2010. Total cost, \$2,200

The very first thing all visitors see when they arrive at Idlewild is the maintenance building. It sits on the right side of the main driveway and though it was built by skilled hands and with the best materials available at the time, it's looking pretty rough. There are many holes in the steel siding and the paint job is pretty well shot. The members voted to have it professionally caulked, repaired and repainted, after receiving a very good bid for the job and deciding that we probably could not buy the supplies and paint and do the job ourselves for less. When you visit the airport next spring you'll notice the difference, as we expect the job to be done by mid April. Total cost, \$1,000

OK, that's the update for you, now here's the challenge. The three jobs that we've tackled were all necessary and overdue. The treasury for the association has adequate funds to pay for all the projects, using money earned by previous fly-in/drive-in/breakfasts/pig roasts. But, without other funding, the treasury will be dangerously close to empty, possibly short of money for ongoing maintenance, such as snow plowing, mowing, and other grounds repairs.

We are currently accepting donations to help pay for the materials used in these projects. A donation of any size will be appreciated and we guarantee it will be put to good use. Rosie Stark, our treasurer, will carefully handle each donation and, if you have a preference, she can even earmark your dollars for the kitchen addition, the grading project or the repair and painting of the maintenance hangar. Be as generous as you can, but every gift will be appreciated! Rosie's address is W5423 Sunset Drive, Wild Rose, WI 54984

So, sleepy little Idlewild is getting all spruced up and ready for another year of great activities and fun in 2010. We look forward to seeing you there next summer and hope that you can attend the monthly meetings (1:00 p.m., second Sunday of each month, April through October,) and maybe even volunteer to help with the fly-in/drive-in/breakfast/pig roast in June. If nothing else, just stop in, poke your head into any open hangar door and see what's shakin' at Idlewild!

Watch for the next newsletter in a couple of months, hopefully just as winter is winding down and we're all fired up for spring. We'll try to throw in some pictures for future newsletters along with the news.

See you at the airport!

Thanks for your support,

Chuck Brownlow, president, Wild Rose Airport Association