

# MIDWEST FLYER

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# Live Well, Be Well, Fly Well

by Craig Fuller, President  
Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association

I hope you made it to AOPA's Aviation Summit a few weeks back – it was a great event! If you did, you're sure to have noticed something new – the Health Pavilion – where we provided screenings, discussed important health-related issues, and answered your medical certification questions right on the exhibit hall floor.



Craig Fuller

We introduced the Health Pavilion because we recognize the importance of “flying well.” Good health has always been important to aviators and AOPA has always offered tools like a list of FAA-accepted medications, assistance with medical certification questions, and TurboMedical®, AOPA's interactive medical application planning tool.

But now we're offering something more – AOPA's Medical Services Program. Designed specifically

with the needs of pilots in mind, the program is aimed at keeping you healthy and keeping you medically certificated to fly, now and for years to come. With two levels of service and a low annual fee, it offers just the services pilots need.

You'll get unlimited access to AOPA's team of medical certification experts, and you may choose to include a full medical file review in your plan – especially valuable if you are facing an illness or seeking a special-issuance medical certificate.

You'll also have access to a tremendous health management Web site, WorldDoc. You can use the site to learn more about your medical conditions and how they may affect your decision to fly, compare prescription prices at pharmacies in your area, and use the robust assessment tool to help you manage your health.

You'll also have the option to securely store your medical records electronically, giving you access to your health and prescription

information anywhere in the world – a great benefit if you ever become ill, or forget your medications while traveling.

The AOPA Medical Services Program also comes with a free prescription discount card you can use to save 15 to 60 percent on medications for you and your whole family. It can offer substantial savings, even if you already have a prescription card as part of your existing health insurance. And it can be used to reduce costs for parents or adult children who may not have prescription benefits.

Finally, we'll send you a bi-monthly newsletter focusing on wellness issues that matter to pilots, including changes to FAA medical certification policies and procedures that may affect your flying.

You can learn more about the program online at [www.AOPA.org](http://www.AOPA.org) or by calling AOPA at 800/USA-AOPA. I believe in flying well, and I believe this program offers an exceptional value to help you do just that. □



by Bill Blake

AOPA Great Lakes Regional Representative

## We All Benefit From Air Tours

One of the most worthwhile and fun things I have done as a pilot in recent years was to participate in the 80<sup>th</sup> Annual

Michigan Air Tour, September 11-13, 2009, on behalf of AOPA. My wife, Nancy, and I accepted an invitation from Air Tour Director Phil Seizinger to join the group, which started at Oakland County International Airport (PTK), Waterford, Michigan, and made stops at seven (7) airports over the three (3) days.

The purpose of the tour was to demonstrate to the communities visited the economic importance of their airports. At each stop, the president



Bill Blake

of the Michigan Aviation Association (sponsor of the tour for the last 30 years) made a presentation to local officials, community members, and media about the economic impact of the airport based on data furnished by the state of Michigan. Twenty-eight (28) airplanes flew the tour this year, including a Chinese Yak and some experimental aircraft. Seven (7) aircraft came down from Canada. Canadians have been participating in the tour the last few years, and have liked it so much, that they started a similar tour in Canada two years ago. Some of the Michigan pilots flew up for that event held last June.

I urge Michigan pilots to join the tour next year, and airport managers

and fixed based operators to help promote the event, even if your airport is not included on the tour. Every time a general aviation airplane moves and a pitch is made about the benefits of a general aviation airport, we all benefit. I also urge pilot groups, airports, and fixed based operators in other states to develop their own state air tour.

After the air tour, I attended the Michigan Association of Airport Executives (MAAE) annual conference held this year in Gaylord, Michigan. Airport managers were concerned about how the downturn in the economy was hurting their airports and the possible funding of future airport improvements. The association said that it supports increasing and changing the state aviation fuel tax from 3 cents a gallon to a percentage tax. AOPA opposes a change to a percentage tax, and believes aviation should receive the benefit of at least a portion of the state sales tax on aviation products before any consideration is given to a fuel tax increase.

I attended the Illinois Public Airports Association (IPAA) annual conference in Galena, Illinois, the last week in September. Illinois is also in financial difficulties, although the state did recently pass a capital improvement funding bill that included money for airports. Airport managers expressed similar concerns about the reduction of airport operations and aviation fuel sales. However, one airport in the Chicago area reported increased fuel sales for the month and hoped that signaled the beginning of a turnaround.

The Aviation Association of Indiana (AAI) held its annual airports conference in Plymouth, Indiana, October 13-16, 2009, which I also attended. The state aviation director for Indiana had the unpleasant task of announcing that the legislature had not provided adequate funding to allow the state to provide all of its 2 ½% matching share for federal airport improvement grants. For airport sponsors (i.e. municipalities

and counties which own public-use airports), that means in addition to the 2 ½% the sponsor normally provides for such grants, the sponsor will have to make up the shortfall of the state's share in order to receive any federal grant money. I suspect that will be very difficult for some of the small general aviation airports. This unfortunate situation adds fuel to the idea being considered by the AAI strategic planning committee to advocate moving the state aviation office out of the Indiana Department of Transportation to some entity that will work harder to achieve adequate state resources for aviation.

At all three (3) of the above state airport conferences, representatives from the FAA Great Lakes Region spoke about concerns over the federal reauthorization of the FAA and its programs. Congress has not been able to agree on a long-term reauthorization. The agency has been

operating under a string of continuing resolutions, which fund the agency on a pro rata basis of the last annual authorization, making it difficult to plan and execute projects. Hopefully, by the time you read this, Congress will have reached an agreement.

You can play an important role in the future of general aviation. Keep informed and let your state, local, and federal elected officials know your views.

For more information on these and other issues facing general aviation, please go to: [www.aopa.org](http://www.aopa.org). □

**MAKE PLANS TO ATTEND  
AOPA AVIATION SUMMIT  
NOVEMBER 11-13, 2010  
LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA  
[www.aopa.org](http://www.aopa.org)**



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for Minnesota State University.**



## Flying Well

We're living longer and flying longer--good news for all of us who love to take to the air. We're also seeing lots more pilots get special issuance medical certifications, even with conditions that would have been disqualifying just a few years ago. Did you know, for example, that the FAA has medically certified five heart transplant patients to get back in the left seat?

But the rapid changes in medicine can also be confusing. That's one reason I am so proud to announce AOPA's Medical Services Program. Designed by pilots, for pilots, the program is aimed at keeping you healthy and medically certificated to fly, now and for years to come. With two levels of service and a low annual fee, it offers just the benefits pilots need.

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Craig L. Fuller  
AOPA President and CEO



For more information on the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association and the issues that affect your flying go to [www.aopa.org](http://www.aopa.org) today.