



Durango-La Plata County Airport Newsletter – Fall 2016

Seasonal Los Angeles Service Returning

The Durango-La Plata County Airport (DRO) is pleased to announce that American Airlines will offer a second consecutive year of seasonal nonstop service to Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) in 2017. Flights will run every Saturday beginning June 3rd through August 19th, providing passengers with direct access to Southern California, as well as improved connections up and down the west coast and to Hawaii, Asia, and Australia.



Key performance measures during year number two of seasonal Los Angeles service will include improved awareness of the route in both SW Colorado and Southern California, and increased load factors (the percentage of seats sold). The success of these measures will help to determine if a west coast hub fits into American Airlines' long-term route network plans for DRO.

In addition to seasonal nonstop Los Angeles service, American Airlines continues to operate daily departures to both Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport (DFW) and Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport (PHX) on a year-round basis. Each of these destinations offer hundreds of connections both domestically and internationally.

2016 Aviation Celebration

The 2016 Aviation Celebration was a great success!

Nearly 2,400 members of the community had the opportunity to view military and private aircraft displays, talk to pilots, and learn about the airport and its role in the regional economy. The Celebration also included food vendors, music, activities for children, fire & rescue equipment tours, airport snow removal equipment tours, and many door prizes. Admission and parking were free to the public.





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The headliner for the show was the US Army Golden Knights parachute jump team, who performed two exciting skydiving routines despite mechanical setbacks with their aircraft. A large thanks is owed to the 4th Infantry Division Combat Aviation Brigade from Ft. Carson, who stepped up by offering their CH-47 Chinook helicopter as an alternate jump platform.

Terminal Improvements

In order to improve the look, feel, and functionality of the airport's terminal facilities, several capital improvement projects have been scheduled for the fall of 2017.

New carpeting has been installed in the non-secure portions of the terminal, replacing worn and outdated floor coverings that have long outlived their useful life. Fresh seating has also been installed in the same areas. Passengers will now notice a consistent feel throughout all areas of the terminal building.

The staff at DRO strive to make the terminal facilities as comfortable and user-friendly as possible, and we are always searching for ways to further improve our facilities to meet the needs of the traveling public.



Before



After

Frequent travelers have likely noticed the growing potholes in the airport's main parking lot exit and entry lanes. These problem areas are scheduled to be paved in late November, just in time to beat the winter season.





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Aircraft De-icing

The falling temperatures have ushered in the start of aircraft de-icing season.

Frozen contamination such as frost, snow, and ice can cause leading edges on aircraft to become rough and uneven, thus disrupting the smooth air flow that is critical to the production of lift.

Additionally, control surfaces can become disabled by snow and ice, greatly limiting a pilot's ability to safely maneuver an aircraft.

All of this means that aircraft de-icing is incredibly important in preserving the safety of flight. Aircraft of all shapes and sizes are de-iced during the winter season at DRO. These services are provided by either the airlines themselves or the airport's Fixed Base Operator (FBO), Avflight.

De-icing itself is accomplished by spraying heated propylene glycol onto the surface of an aircraft. This chemical acts to remove frozen contamination from the aircraft prior to take off.

During active precipitation, and especially if a holdover time is anticipated before an aircraft can take off, anti-icing chemical is typically applied as well. Anti-icing chemicals act to prevent precipitation from binding to the aircraft surface after it was been cleared of contaminants by de-icing.

The next time you are flying during the winter season, take a look outside of your window to observe the important de-icing operations that are taking place.





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Employee Spotlight

Vivian Bedford, Durango Deli

By Barb Powers

You may have noticed the same vehicle in the first spot by the south terminal door, day in and day out, parked there long before the crack of dawn. It belongs to Vivian Bedford, who has worked for the airport for over 23 years.



Vivian arrives between 3:00 and 4:00 am, early enough to prepare all those delicious pastries and hot foods her customers enjoy each day. She's ready to open by 5:00 am sharp. Once in a while, Vivian will help an early morning customer over in the gift shop, too. A typical work week for this energetic woman can last anywhere from 40 to over 50 hours a week.

Born in 1934, Vivian grew up in Maine in a large family, including 20 aunts and uncles on her mom's side, and 10 on her dad's side. Vivian herself had five sisters and one brother, all being raised in potato country. Potatoes? Apparently Maine has as many spuds as Idaho! At four years old, Vivian's parents started teaching her good work habits on her uncle's 600+ acre farm where she helped pick potatoes. Ever the multi-tasker, if everyone else was busy, she also took on milking the family's cow.

When Vivian was in high school, she first worked for JC Penney. Later, she was hired by New England Telephone & Telegraph as an operator at a switchboard, plugging in cords to connect calls. She recalled when the guys from the air force base called in, they'd say, "Hey, chick, wouldja connect me to...." Times sure have changed!

After living in Maine for 21 years, Vivian moved to California for 24 years, and also lived in Arizona for a year. In the midst of all that, she married Ralph Bedford, and they made their way to Bayfield, Colorado. They remained together for over 55 years until his passing about five years ago. In Bayfield, Vivian cooked at New Life, and also worked at the Mini Merc.

One day, a security employee from the airport came in to the Mini Merc, and suggested Vivian apply for a job here. Sure enough she did, first coming on board with the custodial crew in March of 1993. The airport was a bit smaller then, and many of the employees wore several hats. Vivian started helping with everything from moving baggage around to covering the snack bar. And so began her long career here at DRO, which continues to this day.