



# NRRA News Winter 2024

A mile of road  
gets you a mile.  
Our mile of  
runway gets you  
anywhere.



This airport means business!  
Proudly serving the New Richmond area since 1964

## The Big Six Oh

2024 represents the 60th anniversary of the commissioning of New Richmond Regional Airport. Good news . . . We're only five short years away from Medicare eligibility. Here's a quick look back at how oh-so-far we've come.

New Richmond Municipal Airport, as it was known back in 1964, was originally designed as a recreational facility complete with a three thousand foot primary runway 13-31 and a secondary turf runway 4-22 measuring slightly less than twenty four hundred feet. Sure the occasional biz aircraft stopped in, but it was a rarity. The facility was maintained by the New Richmond Street Department and managed by the City Clerk. At the airport opening in July of 1964, New Richmond Mayor John Van Meter who also served as the publisher of the local newspaper, convinced the facility was a waste of scarce city funds, made his feelings known in his weekly newspaper column by labeling the facility "Idle Field Airport". Ouch. The local pilot group took offense to this and fabricated and planted a sign that read "Van Meter Field" out of defiance.

Looking back, he wasn't exactly wrong. The airport was underutilized and unsupported locally for a couple of decades. I grew up on the north side of New Richmond and made many, many trips to the airport on my prized Huffy, and seldom saw any signs of humans around.

The late 80's saw city building inspector, Wally Habegger, take on the additional duties of airport manager under his work umbrella. The airport took on more of a business feel in late 1992 with the first major airport improvement project since the airport was opened. Finally signs of life started to appear. Out went the old, sketchy as hell, three thousand foot runway that varied in elevation dramatically, and in came a new four thousand foot runway that was realigned to what you see today as runway 14-32. One of the first self service avgas fueling facilities in the state was also in operation here by the end of 1993 operated by local scrap metal dealer Harold Wolver.



One of about 400 photos of my first flight home to a very rustic New Richmond Municipal Airport landing on runway 31 in a Mankato State Cessna 152 (biggest thing I had ever flown) on March 1, 1989. What's with the barbed wire fence? No FBO was available. There was a phone booth though. Classy.



Photo courtesy of mom

I became the airport's third ever manager in March of 1995 at the age of twenty-four after being hired by the airport commission and earning two hundred bucks a month. I picked up the airport maintenance duties from the Street Department and oversaw a facility that included about twenty-eight hangars, thirty-three or so aircraft, and two based businesses. I started flight instructing in earnest later that year flying nearly one thousand hours a year the hard way for the next few years. As it turns out, student pilots go on to buy airplanes and build hangars. Who knew?

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By the late 90's, the south hangar area had grown to near capacity with 44 hangars and very little room for growth. Nearly 90 aircraft were based at the airport. I recall some of the FAA forecasts back then indicating the number of based aircraft by the year 2000 would be 44 and then drop to 38 by the year 2020. Big swing and a miss. We were all proud to prove them wrong. Aviation businesses Griggs Aviation, Baumann Floats, DW Aviation, Top Flight Avionics, Mike Demulling Flight Instruction, and pilot supply store Plane Nutz all operated at the airport.

In late 2000, a parallel taxiway was constructed the full length of runway 14-32 and a couple of taxiways were built creating the north hangar area bringing some much needed hangar space. The timing was perfect for us. The metro area airports had little to no room for new hangars in the early 2000's. We capitalized

on this and saw dozens of hangars erected with good old New Richmond being the only show in town. I recall being scolded by a metro area airport manager back then "You're stealing our pilots!" I fired back with "No. You are just underserving them." You may recall the Hangar Show (think of a home show, but for future hangar owners) we had at the local technical college with local hangar builders, lenders, and door manufacturers setting up shop and displaying their abilities for an evening. It was fantastic.



Aerial photo of the airport in the spring of 2022. Eight additional hangars have been erected since this photo was taken.

## Announcing the first ever **HANGAR SHOW**

Sponsored by New Richmond Municipal Airport  
www.airport.com

Hangar Builders · Lending Institutions · Door Manufacturers  
All in one location!

Thursday

# March 23rd

6 - 9 PM

On the campus of WITC  
1019 South Knowles Ave. (STH 65)  
New Richmond

**FREE  
ADMISSION!**

This first time event is styled like a home show. Everything for the future aircraft hangar owner under one roof! If you are considering building a new hangar or updating an existing hangar at any airport - this show is for you. Stop by!

Call 715-246-7735 for more information

Representatives from Butler Buildings, Mecards, Martin, USC, Walters, Lester, Wick, Northland, and many more!

Above: A flyer that was created for the hangar show back in 2000 .

We also installed an automated weather observation station (AWOS) on the east side of the airport. From 1995 until 2000, the only official weather source at the airport was me, taking manual weather observations five or six times a day and completely guessing at cloud heights. Thankfully, I was happy to be replaced by the AWOS and welcomed the 24/365 coverage and precision it offered.

The airport had its first fuel trucks on site circa 2003 and had the ability to deliver single point jet fuel upping the airport's street cred just a bit.

The corporate hangar area was constructed in 2005 along with an additional taxiway in the north hangar area. Better change our name. We are now known as New Richmond Regional Airport strictly for the coolness factor. We were trying to pick up the business vibe and it worked.

Thanks to the fine folks at the National Weather Service in Chanhassen, the airport started getting a terminal aerodrome forecast (TAF) in 2006 allowing a precise aviation forecast that is updated every six hours for the airport and a five mile radius. A full service FBO was constructed in the north hangar area along with our first corporate hangars. In 2007, runway 14-32 was extended to five thousand five hundred feet and the original portion of the runway that was installed in 1992, was reconstructed. For the first time ever, the airport was now a legitimate business aviation facility.

That brings us to today. Unofficially, the airport has over 250 aircraft on site, which is the most of any airport in Wisconsin. Only a 600% + growth rate. Not too bad. As for hangars, we have 117 hangars either up or under construction. Once again, the most in Wisconsin by far and a 300% + growth rate. Thank you St. Croix Crossing for making this possible. The airport continues to grow and is home to dozens of employees and many aviation businesses. Thanks for sticking with us on this wild ride!



## Airport Master Planning

The much anticipated and FAA mandated airport master plan is underway. A master plan is a comprehensive study that is used to determine the development plans of an airport over the next twenty years. Last year, Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics selected engineering firm SEH to create the plan with a completion date of next year. The project kicked off with a presentation at the airport commission meeting held last month.



One of the very important steps of the plan is to gather input from airport users. This data is used to document current airport use and help determine future development priorities. Surveys are being sent to hangar owners and airport users via email and USPS. **I have a big request . . . Please take a few minutes and complete a survey for me.** You can also scan the QR code above to access a survey from a mobile device or you can use this link : <https://forms.office.com/r/65QyDSakaB>

The survey window is only open for a few weeks. Your help is very much appreciated. The more responses we get, the better.

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## 2024 Projects

This will be a year to remember. We have a couple of projects that will occur this year. The first one will get started in May with the micro-surfacing of parallel taxiway Alpha and connecting taxiways to runway 14-32 as well as the taxilanes between hangar rows 11-12 and 13-14. We had something similar done on the south end of the airport in the mid 2000's. A thick mixture of water, asphalt emulsion, and aggregate will be applied to the area and then the pavement will be restriped several days later. This will help extend the life of the pavement that is nearly 24 years old.

The reconstruction project planned for the south hangar area is still creeping along. My best guess is this will be let out for bids in March at the earliest or more likely April. No official date is listed on the DoT website yet. Working the problem backwards means we are probably looking at construction in late July or early August at this point. The 35-40 day project will replace pretty much all of the

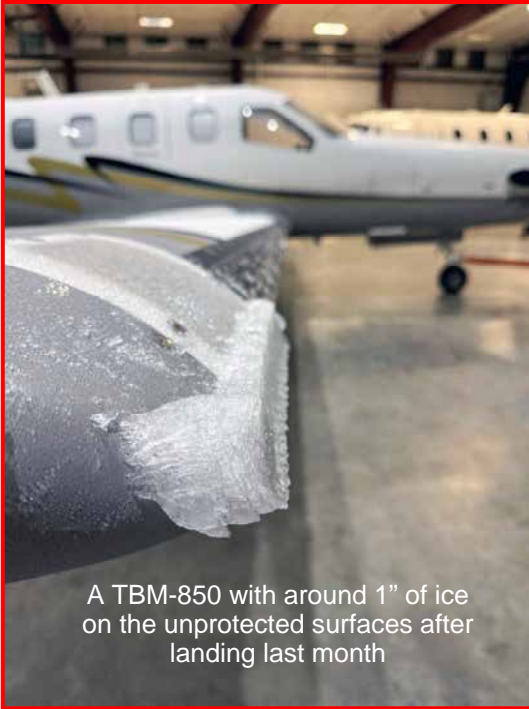


pavement in the south hangar area, including Airport Road and the auto parking lot. I mentioned before the project got a bit more complicated when the FAA informed us we needed to widen the taxilanes between the hangar rows and then narrow taxiway Bravo, which is the main feeder for the south hangars. Drainage improvements are also planned. More info as it becomes available.



## Dah Dah Dot Dah Dah. I'm Lovin it!

The winter of 2024 has been amazing so far. To date, the airport has used exactly zero gallons of runway deicer. That's nada. If this were soccer, I'd say nil gallons. I don't recall that happening. Ever. We've only needed to apply aircraft deicer to one aircraft, too. This is an absolute gift. We'll take it. Historically, we seldom use runway deicer beyond mid February since the sun tends to heat up the pavement enough by then. So far, so good.



A TBM-850 with around 1" of ice on the unprotected surfaces after landing last month

After the 100 + inches of misery in the winter of 2022-2023, the lack of snow is very much appreciated. Ironically, the amount of flying days available to recreational pilots last month was down compared to last year. The airport experienced a ten day stretch of low clouds and poor visibility, which drastically limited flying to anything but business aircraft.

The lack of snow is also giving airport personnel a chance to catch up on repairs on our fleet of snow removal equipment. The workhorse this year has been the 2006 New Holland tractor equipped with a 14' runway sweeper. We've put about 15 hours on the machine so far this season. A couple of the plow trucks were used to make quick work of the early season wet snow, but overall have had it pretty easy. I don't think we've used more than 150 gallons of diesel so far.



Heavy frost on a biz jet requiring a quick spray down

One thing you may notice (or not) is the lack of brush along the east side of runway 14-32. The airport purchased a heavy duty brush mower that attaches to a borrowed skid steer. The nice weather has allowed airport personnel to attack the brush along the runway. It chops through 3 to 4 inch diameter branches without even missing a beat. Once again, ironically, the nice weather is proving to put a stop to even that operation since it's getting a little too soft for the skid steer to operate. If things firm up again, we'll start working around the windsock near the approach end of runway 22 by turning big sticks into very little sticks using pure mechanical violence.

## Wildlife

Just a heads up, two coyotes and a decent sized fox are wintering on airport grounds. One of the coyotes has very dark fur and seems to hang out near the AWOS unit on the east side of the airport. The fox is hanging out in storm drains around the airport and was even captured on airport security cams sitting on the sidewalk in front of the self service FBO last night.



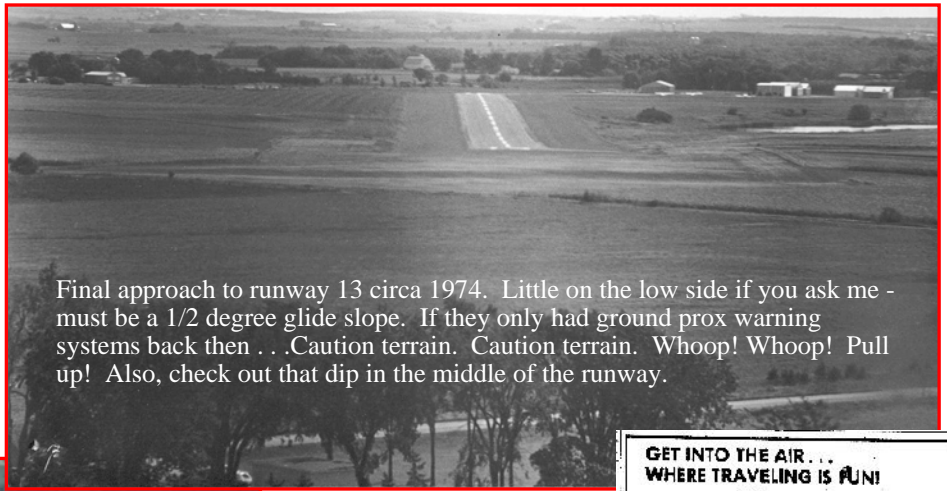
FROM HIS FOOTPRINT, HE LOOKS LIKE A BIG FELLA.

The New Richmond Public Works aerates Hatfield Lake each winter to avoid freeze outs of the fairly shallow water. Numerous geese and even swans are using the open water created by the aerators. Pretty unusual to see this time of year.





The old airport sign that was destroyed in a storm circa 2003.



Final approach to runway 13 circa 1974. Little on the low side if you ask me - must be a 1/2 degree glide slope. If they only had ground prox warning systems back then . . . Caution terrain. Caution terrain. Whoop! Whoop! Pull up! Also, check out that dip in the middle of the runway.



The airport looking northwest circa 1999. We had a lot less to mow back then. But it sure seemed like a lot at the time.

At right: Newspaper ad from 1964 for Hawks Flying Service (flying club).

**GET INTO THE AIR . . . WHERE TRAVELING IS FUN!**

**MEMBERSHIPS AVAILABLE IN HAWKS FLYING SERVICE**  
New Richmond

Choice of 2 or 4 Place Planes

MEMBERSHIPS	
2 Place Plane	4 Place Plane
\$100.00	\$400.00
4 Place Membership Allows You to Fly 2 Place Plane, Also	

Contact: Bill Tidwell - Phone 848-2281 after 4 p.m.



North hangar area in May of 2002, 18 months after the hangar area opened. Times were good!



Looking northwest summer of 2001



Corporate/FBO area under construction in the summer of 2004

Pics from the past.







Looking southeast.  
Photo taken October  
18th, 2005. 4,000'  
runway 14-32 at the  
time.



Looking southeast.  
Photo taken October  
15th, 2010. General  
aviation was still on  
the rebound from the  
great recession.



Looking south. Photo take September 10th, 2023 after a really dry summer. Three hangars have gone up since the photo was taken.

The airport has never done better.



# The DAR

## Daily Airport Randomness



3000' above New Richmond on January 6th



Annual Christmas party held December 1st. Over 100 people attended



The lilac bushes are budding.



New airport maintenance truck. It's a 2015 Ford F250 Super Duty purchased locally.



Hatfield Lake completely ice free on December 28th



### Hangar Space - To Build

The north hangar area (rows 11 through 20) are now fully leased. There is room for a corporate hangar south of hangar 11-20. The airport is accepting proposals.

**NEW!!! Five 100' x 100' hangars or larger are available to build in the northeast hangar area available this spring. Names are being added to a waiting list. Call Mike Demulling at 715-246-7735 or email [Mike@NRairport.com](mailto:Mike@NRairport.com)**

**Hangar Space - To Buy** Nothing at the moment. Most hangars sell off market by word of mouth.

**Hangar Space - To Rent** - New! Hangar 9-2 in the south hangar area. Unheated room for a single engine aircraft available immediately. Call or message David at 715-222-9831

Go to the airport website for an up to date listing of what's available.





A few last things -

- As luck would have it, one of the 400 watt metal halide bulbs in the rotating beacon went out during the cold stretch in mid-January. Airport personnel climbed the beacon and swapped the light in sub-zero wind chills. Then two days later, the other bulb went out. Oh c'mon. Back up we went. The beacon is now fully operational. I don't think we quite got the 10,000 hours of use out of the bulbs as advertised.
- The airport is partnering with local electrical contractor Neo Electrical Solutions on an experimental alert system that will notify the airport personnel if the runway lighting circuit goes offline at an unscheduled time. Known as the Airfield Advanced Warning System, airport personnel will receive an email or text alert indication. NRRRA will be the first airport in Wisconsin to receive the system.

- Speaking of lights . . . I mentioned in past newsletters continual use of high intensity (aka giving it the old 7 clicks) is hard on the lighting circuits. The lights are typically on low intensity during the night and can be pilot controlled using microphone clicks up to medium and high intensity. The lights time out after 15 minutes and revert to low intensity unless a pilot reactivates them. Last year we smoked a bunch of very large, expensive and hard to find capacitors in our runway lighting regulator most likely caused by flight students and instructors repeatedly using high intensity during the daytime when high intensity typically isn't needed. Guess what? In December it happened to our taxiway lighting circuit. Another capacitor got smoked. Thankfully, a used one was found using the old dynamic resource allocation method (borrowed it from a working one, need to return it later). The lead time on a new replacement was about four months. Another thousand bucks down the drain.
- More lights. New Richmond Utilities swapped out our last three remaining high pressure sodium lights with 30,000 lumen LED flood lights near the south ramp last month. They certainly do the trick. We'll need to do a little re-aiming to keep the glare down this month.

- As part of the ongoing airport master plan project, airport surveyors were out verifying the airport property lines, runway coordinates, and other items in December. Users of runway 4-22 may notice additional white runway markers were installed to more clearly define the runway ends. Officially, runway 4-22 will be shrinking just a bit on paper. In reality, the entire grass area southwest of taxiway Alpha will still be available for takeoff and landing.

- I mentioned previously that personal property taxes in Wisconsin are no longer a thing. Hangars are now classified as real property. Not much is really going to change, including the values of the property and amount assessed. Hangar owners will most likely see new property ID numbers assigned and a few other minor administrative things prior to the tax bills being sent out next December. Watch for communication from the city offices on this issue.

- May 18th is the date. I heard from Mitch Campeau from Johnson Motors that the **2024 fly-in and car show** is a go. Last year's event was fantastic. Proceeds went towards the VFW sponsored Freedom Park project just west of the airport. I'm pretty sure the same thing will occur this year. Maybe we'll even throw ourselves a 60th anniversary bash afterwards? We hope to see you there.
- Aircraft detailing business owner Brandon Peterson is offering his services at NRRRA. He has over 8 years experience in the detailing field. Call him at 651-491-1713 or by email at [stcroixdetailing@gmail.com](mailto:stcroixdetailing@gmail.com).







# New Richmond Regional Airport User Survey

Your input will help! The City of New Richmond and WI Bureau of Aeronautics are working to complete an Airport Master Plan. You can provide meaningful information to help document airport use, current needs, and long-term improvement priorities.



Scan the QR code above or use the link below  
to take the survey.

<https://forms.office.com/r/65QyDSakaB>





## Airport Business Directory:

### FBO Services:

East Metro Jet Center - eastmetrojetcenter.net . Full and self service FBO services  
New Richmond Airside Rental - Car rental for pilots and pax - A service of East Metro Jet Center

### Aircraft Detailing:

Brandon Peterson - 651-491-1713 or stcroixdetailing@gmail.com

### Aircraft Fractional Opportunities

Divvy Jet - Chad Halvorson DivvyJet.com

### Aircraft Maintenance:

Indianhead Airways Nick Jilek - nick.jilek@smcltd.com  
New Richmond Aero - NRAero.com

### Aircraft Parts and Services:

NDT Solutions (NDTS) - ndts.com  
Prototype Machine - PTMachineinc.com

### Aircraft Sales:

Eagle Air - eagleair.us  
Elevated Aircraft Sales - elevatedaircraft.com

### Avionics:

Perceptive Avionics - perceptiveavionics.com  
Top Flight Avionics - topflight@centurytel.net

### Flight Instruction:

Mike Demulling Flight Instruction - Mike@NRairport.com  
Nate Hartigan - nathaniel.w.hartigan@hotmail.com

### Hangar Space:

Wings of Wisconsin - wingsofwisconsin.com

## Local Fuel Prices

**100LL**

**\$5.19 at the pumps or  
add \$.50 for truck service**  
(National average \$6.21)

**Jet A**

**\$5.99 for truck service**  
(locally based aircraft pricing and Corporate Aircraft  
Association pricing available)

**Thanks for making this airport great.  
Hope to see you here soon.**

Thank you

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Previous issues of NRRA News are available on the  
airport website.