

REDEDICATION CELEBRATION AT SHAWANO AIRPORT



A special event Saturday at Shawano Municipal Airport celebrates completion and reopening of Runway 1230 with a fly-in, displays, discovery flights and a rededication ceremony. **SEE COMPLETE COVERAGE ON PAGES 3-11.**

MIKE DOOTSON

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WHAT'S HAPPENING



The Central Wisconsin Military Show returns Friday and Saturday to the Motorama Auto Museum Event Grounds in Aniwa. See listings below.

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FRIDAY, AUG. 20

GILLETT: Oconto County Youth Fair, Zippel Park. Flea market and craft vendors 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Exhibition area open 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Truck pull 7 p.m. Music by NashVegas 7-11 p.m.

ANIWA: Central Wisconsin Military Show, 9 a.m.-9 p.m., Motorama Auto Museum, 4381 Stradale Lane. Historic vehicles and memorabilia, swap meet, reenactor encampment, live music. \$10, 12 and under free, supports veterans service groups.

SATURDAY, AUG. 21

GILLETT: Oconto County Youth Fair, Zippel Park. Flea market and craft vendors 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Exhibition area open 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Horse pull, 9 a.m. Music by The Natural Talent 1-5 p.m. Farm tractor pull 6 p.m. Music by

Revolution 7-11 p.m.

ANIWA: Central Wisconsin Military Show, 9 a.m.-6 p.m., Motorama Auto Museum, 4381 Stradale Lane. Historic vehicles and memorabilia, swap meet, reenactor encampment, live music. \$10, 12 and under free, supports veterans service groups.

SHAWANO: Airport Reopening and Runway Rededication, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Shawano Municipal Airport, 248 Airport Drive. Wheels & Wings Displays, car show, EAA Young Eagles Discovery Flights (Fee) 9:30-11:30 a.m., rededication ceremony 12:30 p.m.

BREED: Music by Grand Union, 3-7 p.m., Arrowhead Saloon, 13486 County Road AA.

SUNDAY, AUG. 22

SHAWANO: Zurko Promotions flea

market, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., Shawano County Fairgrounds, 990 E. Green Bay St.

GILLETT: Oconto County Youth Fair, Zippel Park. Exhibition area open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sale of Champions noon. Music by Sugarbush Boys 1-5 p.m.

OCONTO FALLS: Oconto Falls Flea Market, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Memorial Field.

SHAWANO: Music in the Park featuring Blue Notes, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Memorial Park, 909 S. Lincoln St. Bring a lawn chair.

TUESDAY, AUG. 24

OCONTO FALLS: Oconto County Farmers Market, 4-8 p.m., Highland Plaza, 323 E. Highland Drive.

FRIDAY, AUG. 27

TIGERTON: Lumberjack Days, Community Park, 236 Pine St. Bean bag tournament 6 p.m.

SATURDAY, AUG. 28

BOWLER: "Stars, Cars and Handlebars," 9 a.m.-4 p.m., North Star Mohican Casino Resort, W12180 County Road A. Car and motorcycle show, food trucks, DJ.

TIGERTON: Lumberjack Days, Community Park, 236 Pine St. Bean bag tournament 10 a.m., kids activities and bike giveaways, strongman/woman contest 2 p.m., free corn roast 4:30 p.m., live music with Starfire 2 p.m. and Bad News 7 p.m., crowning of Lumberjack Princess between bands around 6:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, AUG. 29

TIGERTON: Lumberjack Days, Community Park, 236 Pine St. Parade 1 p.m., face painting and balloon artist 1:30-4:30 p.m., lumberjack competition 2 p.m., live music with the Drovers 2-6 p.m.

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SHAWANO AIRPORT TO REDEDICATE RUNWAY



Suring pilot Mike Dootson takes off from the newly rebuilt Runway 1230 at Shawano Municipal Airport.

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Runway rehab smooths a bumpy ride



Tony Crawford, Grafton, follows a carefully plotted pattern as he sprays the informational markings on the rebuilt Runway 1230 at Shawano Municipal Airport. CrowleyConstruction, Wauwatosa, was hired to place the markings.

CAROL RYCZEK | NEW MEDIA

Pilots can tell the difference.

Completion of a \$1.8 million upgrade of Runway 1230 at the Shawano Municipal Airport, 248 Airport Road, Shawano, was immediately noticeable, said Mike Dootson, a Suring pilot who experienced the surface before and after the upgrade.

Cracks in the asphalt and its sealcoating on the 3,900-foot surface felt bumpy to pilots, he said. As the cracks opened, he said pilots feared that loose stones from the surface below would bounce up and damage their planes' propellers.

Those issues are no longer a problem, Dootson said.

The project meant removing all of the material from the old runway and replacing the blacktop, said Bruce Milavitz, airport commissioner and City of Shawano mayor.

According to Stephanie Senst, project engineer with Westwood Infrastructure, a civil engineering firm, the runway's condition made it eligible for federal funding.

"Asphalt has a certain service life," Senst said.

According to Senst, this project

cost of just over \$1.8 million. That money paid for the runway, the taxiway and the runway lighting. She also said that the project fell under the umbrella of coronavirus funding. She added that traditionally, funding is 90% federal, 5% state and 5% local.

Repaving, rather than resurfacing, the runways allows for a smoother ride for planes that land and take off from the airport, Senst said.

"Before we had repaved this runway, they do some minor rehabilitation work to try and extend the pavement life," she said. "They had done a slurry seal on this runway. They did some crack sealing on this runway, and it was to the point where if you put your shoe down on the crack, the crack was longer than the length of your shoe."

This was a real concern to those who use the airport to fly and caused, in part, the project to be expedited and brought to the forefront.

Senst said that projects like these are often put into the forefront of work that needs to be done because of the importance of making sure primary runways are safe and usable.

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“The way that the Federal Aviation Administration views this project, is that they highly prioritize primary runways,” said Senst. “This project, specifically being a runway project, ranked very high on their priority list. So this project was funded through discretionary funding.”

Northeast Asphalt is the general contractor on the project. The grading contractor is Relyco Inc. The electrical subcontractor is Merkel Company, and Wisconsin Interstate is doing the restoration and landscaping.

After resurfacing, the runway was opened, but Clarence Schampers, airport manager, said painting meant at least a day of closure to make sure that the striping pilot information had plenty of time to dry.

While the main runway was being repaired, a secondary, 2,200-foot runway was available, but traffic was down at the airport, he said.

Updated from a story by Luke Reimer, NEW Media reporter



Expansion of hangars, such as this one at Shawano Municipal Airport, is on the long-range plans for the airport. In this hangar, Mike Dootson checks over his small plane before venturing out.

CAROL RYCZEK | NEW MEDIA

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Airport commission salutes history, plans for the future

City-county facility has been developing since the 1940s

By **DOUG ENGEL**
Special to NEW Media

Editor's note: This brief history of the Shawano Municipal Airport was written by airport commission secretary Doug Engel on behalf of the airport commission.

Area aviation enthusiasts and the Shawano Airport Commission are looking forward to the airport's Aug. 21 re-dedication celebration.

The event marks the completion of its most recent primary runway and taxiway rehabilitation project.

This \$2.3 million project, following closely on the heels of the \$850,000 new terminal construction project, represents another milestone in the continued development and investment in this significant community asset.

These investments have taken place through partnerships with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and general aviation funding grants, along with funds from the Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics — making the project possible with minimal local funding.

This funding mechanism puts aviation fuel tax money back into infrastructure projects, such as those at Shawano. Other projects funded over the years include the security fencing, fuel storage and vending system, as well as earlier runway projects. This enables small community general aviation airports a meaningful and highly leveraged source of funds for eligible projects with strong community impact.

Later this summer, the airport will undertake yet another project to refresh its airport layout and long-term development plan. This was last done nearly 20 years ago and lays the foundation for future projects — including a runway extension, development of additional hangar space, addition of visual landing aids, reno-



Twenty-one vintage planes were on site at the Shawano Municipal Airport in July. Planners hope to encourage more clubs and individuals to see the airport as a recreational destination.

CAROL RYCZEK | NEW MEDIA

vation of other infrastructure such as the seaplane base and resurfacing of the cross-wind runway, among other things. Shawano is among the first Wisconsin general aviation airports to undertake this generation of long-term planning projects.

Shawano has a long history of aviation dating back to the 1930s and the early days of flying. Local businessmen and women understood the need for an aviation connection. Aviators were regularly paying visits to local fields to avail of the recreational amenities in Shawano, as well as the presence of a viable airport in nearby Clintonville. It was used for flying parts out of the Four Wheel Drive during the buildup to World War II, later to become North Central Airlines.

It was time for Shawano to have a “real” airport. In 1940, sufficient land was secured on the Gumaer farm east of town on the lake. Within months, a charter was signed with the National Aeronautics Association (a precursor to today's Federal Aviation Administration) and land cleared to establish the airport.

Shortly thereafter, a site was cleared on the shores of the Gumaer property for the establishment of a seaplane base. The grand opening of the airport in 1940 drew a crowd estimated between 3,000 and 4,000 people and included presentations by



Shawano Municipal Airport Commission secretary Doug Engel watches as the last steps of painting and landscaping are completed on the runway.

CAROL RYCZEK | NEW MEDIA

Steve Whitman (already an aviation legend and pioneer, whose planes hang in the Smithsonian). The director of the National Aeronautic Association stated that “Shawano had the potential to be one of the finest general aviation landing areas in the upper Midwest, and the gateway to the north.”

Additional land was subsequently

secured from the Lemhouse family farm to the south. Over the years, parcels were acquired to the east as well as along what is now the Mountain Bay Trail to comprise today's 300 acres of airport property.

Following WWII, the airport was named after Wilmer Zeuske. A WWII aviator from Shawano, Zeuske died from enemy fighter aircraft fire



Availability of fuel is an important draw to Shawano Municipal Airport, according to Clarence Schampers, airport manager. Schampers is helping pilot Craig Kramer, of Dyersville, Iowa, refuel his Ercoupe 415-C during an Ercoupe Owners Club visit in July.

CAROL RYCZEK | NEW MEDIA



The terminal at Shawano Municipal Airport, "Gateway of the North," includes a pilot's lounge and weather information. Pictured here is the terminal's dedication on Oct. 15, 2019.

FILE | NEW MEDIA

during a bombing mission over Burma while en route to Kunming, China, as part of a Flying Tigers contingent of B25s.

Shawano was also home to Fritz Wolf, who, at that time, was already a member of the Flying Tigers. He subsequently went on to become a WWII ace, having downed five enemy aircraft over the course of his Air Corps duty.

Over the years, many others have

left a mark at the Shawano Airport or have benefited from having learned to fly — or having caught the "bug" — watching planes fly in Shawano. Shawano was one of about 60 high schools in the United States with an aviation program initiated in 1965 with a federal grant to stimulate interest in aviation careers. This program continued over many years and was initially lead by Fred Davel, a longtime educator in Shawano.

REDEDICATION SCHEDULE

WHAT: Grand Reopening and Runway Rededication

WHERE: Shawano Municipal Airport grounds, 248 Airport Road, Shawano

WHEN: Aug. 21, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Rain date, Aug. 22.

COST: Admission to the grounds, free

ACTIVITIES:

Aviation display, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Car show, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Learn to Fly—Intro Discovery Flights with PilotSmith Inc. (Fee required)

EAA Young Eagles for youth age 8-17: 9:30-11:30 a.m.

Runway re-dedication ceremony: 12:30 p.m.

For information, go to www.shawanoairport.com

Today, quite a few folks owe their initial flying instruction to elements of this program. A number of operators have run flight schools, charter flights, plane rentals, scenic flights and aviation fuel sales at the airport over the years.

This role today has been assumed by Shawano Flying Service, which continues to function as airport manager with Clarence Schampers, owner. The airport commission recently announced the addition of PilotSmith Inc. as the new provider of flight instruction in Shawano and is excited about the capabilities they bring to our community. Plans are underway to further expand the service capabilities of the airport in the near future.

Shawano Municipal Airport is home to about 30 aircraft of all sizes, shapes and models, including one he-

licopter. These aircraft are stored in 13 privately owned and two airport-owned hangar buildings, with the privately owned buildings subject to land leases from the airport commission.

The primary runway is 3,900 feet by 75 feet, generally east/west, with pilot-controlled lighting, and further supported by an IFR (Instrument Flight Rules) approach from both east and west. This makes the primary runway an all-weather facility under most weather conditions. The secondary runway is primarily north/south and is 2,400 feet by 75 feet, also with pilot-controlled lighting.

Adjacent grass areas provide space for small aircraft to land, at pilot's discretion, and with other conditions permitting. Shawano's seaplane base, adjacent to the airport on Shawano Lake, is one of only a couple in the state with this sort of proximity, and is a very unique asset. The recent addition of a fuel cart enables fueling of seaplanes at the dock, increasing the utility of the airport for those non-amphibious seaplanes needing water-based service.

Airplanes of all sizes and types use the airport. While most of the aircraft currently based in Shawano are single-engine and small twin-engine aircraft, runway capabilities enable small corporate or private jets to use Shawano as a destination airport.

The airport commission is currently working on a variety of initiatives to enhance activity at the airport, increase the visibility of it within the flying community and partner with business to enhance the value of this important community asset. Where possible, federal, state and local funds will be leveraged to take advantage of funding sources and other support tools intended for general aviation airports such as Shawano.

In the meantime ... stop in and see the airport. Ask for a tour. Talk to a pilot. Ask for a ride. Renew your thoughts about getting started in flying. Think about taking a Discovery Flight with PilotSmith Inc. Look into an EAA Young Eagles flight for the 8- to 17-year-olds in your family. It just might launch a career. Check out our website, ShawanoAirport.com. Encourage your flying friends to visit our airport, our new terminal and our newly refurbished runway.

Written on behalf of the Shawano Airport Commission:
John Seidel, chairman; Doug Engel, secretary; Bruce Milavitz, treasurer; Kevin Barkow, city representative; Dick Olson, county representative; Al Timmerman; Mike Bloedorn

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Leaders hope airport will help local economy take off

By **CAROL RYCZEK**
NEW Media

What can a 3,900-foot strip of asphalt do? In the right place, with the right kind of maintenance, it can do a lot, according to Shawano Mayor Bruce Milavitz.

"As a pilot, it opens up a lot of destinations. As a community member, it means a lot of excitement and growth. And as an official, it gives the city the opportunity for future development and growth," said Milavitz, a who pilots his own plane and serves as treasurer for the Shawano Municipal Airport.

The airport is celebrating the completion of the reconstruction of Runway 1230, a 3,900-foot asphalt entry and exit to the 13,000 to 19,000 private and commercial planes and helicopters that use the airport every year. A re-dedication will be held at the airport Aug. 21.

Shawano Municipal Airport is a joint project of the City of Shawano and Shawano County, with a board of commissioners who do the oversight and planning.

The runway improvement, as well as the construction of a new terminal in 2019, are part of an effort to make the airport a focus of economic development, said Peter Thillman, chief economic development officer at Shawano County Economic Progress, Inc.

"We have a real special airport

here," Thillman said. "It's one of the few in the country that has an airport and a seaplane port. There is tremendous opportunity there — a unique asset for the community."

"We want to attract people from all over," Milavitz said. "We have restaurants, hotels with walking distance, a courtesy car. There is a marina within walking distance. They can fly in, get a courtesy vehicle, rent a boat to go to a restaurant," he said.

He added that the recently remodeled terminal makes it attractive for businesses to bring in investors or clients.

The impact of the airport reaches beyond its chain-link boundary, Thillman said.

As more industries and retail stores count on "just-in-time inventory," where items are delivered as needed and not stored, a local airport becomes even more valuable, Thillman said.

The airport in Little Chute, near Appleton, already hosts aircraft maintenance facilities. Amazon located a large distribution center in nearby Greenville to take advantage of the airport's resources. Other airports can expect a growing interest from shipping companies, and Shawano could be one of those, he said.

From a convenience standpoint, he said, having an upgraded, modern airport in Shawano will help businesses bring in potential employees or schedule face-to-face meetings.

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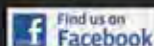
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Because tourism is such a strong part of Shawano's economy, a long-range plan for the airport needs to spotlight the ways the airport can be a tourist asset, he said. One option might be reaching out to seaplane owners. Although many seaplanes can also land at a conventional airport, the combination of airport and seaplane base is so unusual that it can be a focus for new tourism venture, Thillman said.

Even the airport itself can be an attraction, Milavitz said.

"Flight school, scenic flights — fly around the lake," he said. Tourists can see the airport as a place with family activities. An airport doesn't automatically mean tourists leave the area, he said, but that local people and tourists have an attraction right here.

"I'm passionate about the fact that our community has this airport," Milavitz said.

Future plans are being developed, Milavitz said, and will emphasize the opportunities to expand businesses near the airport as well as the convenience of a having a general aviation airport.

At Shawano, pilots can land for

free. They have access to specialized fuel 24 hours a day; they have access to the terminal with wireless internet, a lounge, a conference room and a courtesy car.

Future development plans call for an extension of 1,000 more feet to Runway 1230, he said. The additional length would make the runway more accessible for corporate jets but still under the 5,000-foot threshold that would require more regulation.

Although some small jets can land at Shawano now, the runway addition will open up the airport to many more commercial aircraft, he said.

"People want to be able to bring a corporate jet in," Milavitz said. "We can do that for a few, but only a few, now."

He said he would also like to see more hangar development and construction of "condo" hangars, where a small residence is built above or next to the hangar.

That concept is something that Thillman supports.

"If you have your airplane here, you aren't going to want to park it outside. And you're going to be spending your money here," he said.



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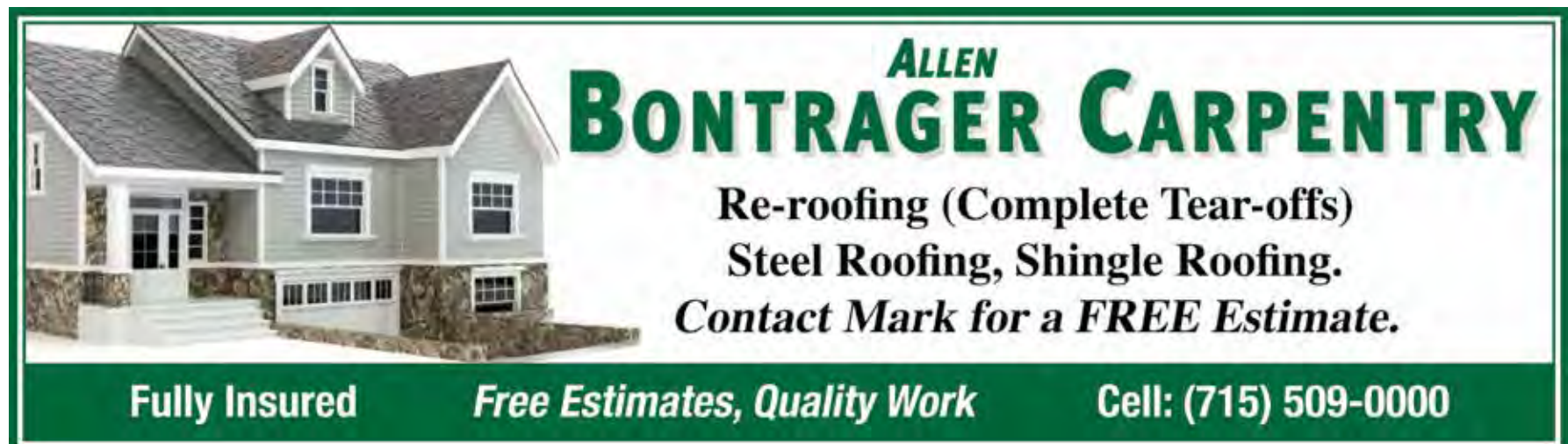


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Future development depends on new pilots

Programs hope to inspire interest in aviation careers

A program to inspire young people to consider aviation as a career will be coming to Shawano for the Shawano Municipal Airport re-dedication Aug. 21.

The Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) will bring the Young Eagles program to the event with the hope of inspiring young people to develop an interest in aviation, said Peter Thillman, chief economic development officer for the Shawano Economic Development Inc.

Through Young Eagles, youth ages 8-17 can take a free ride-along in a plane, as long as a parent is present on the grounds.

The EAA provides the liability insurance, Thillman said, and pilots volunteer their time.

Information supplied by the Shawano airport reports that to date, more than 2 million young people have become EAA Young Eagles.

The program is free, but partici-

pants need to fill out a registration form in advance of the flight.

Information on the EAA Young Eagles program and event registration are available on the EAA Young Eagles website at www.eaa.org/ea/youth/free-ye-flights or through event coordinator Alan Timmerman, at 920-494-2669.

Young Eagles flights will be provided as time and available aircraft permit and only during the hours indicated. Sign-up is encouraged. Young Eagles flight registration will be available on site, but availability may be limited.

In addition to Young Eagles, Thillman said he hopes to see anyone with an interest in an aviation career come to the event to talk to pilots and others in the aviation industry. As with many industries, there is a need for workers, and jobs can cover everything from sales to engine maintenance, he said.



The Ercoupe Owners Club brought 21 vintage planes to the Shawano Municipal Airport in July.

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