Airport News

From DAA

Dyersville Area Aviation

Not to be confused with DIA – Denver International Airport

Spring 2015

President
Craig Kramer 875-7121

Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer
Dave Kramer 875-8590

Board Members

Dave Kramer	875-8590
Fred Lansing	252-3489
Ron Radloff	875-9101
Keith McCarraher	921-3203
Craig Kramer	875-7121

City Representatives

Website
www.dyersvilleairport.com

It has been a long uneventful winter. This year we did not plow the snow. We do not have the equipment or the manpower to maintain the runway in a timely manor. Consequently, the airport was used at pilot's discretion. . Now that the snow is gone and the runway in good shape the traffic has picked up.

College students are coming home on Spring break. Some students are lucky and get the opportunity to fly home. Clare Kramer, junior at the University of Minnesota was one of those students.

Craig Kramer flew to St. Paul Downtown airport, picked up Clare and was back home in less time than it would take to drive one way.

Airport gets its annual rolling

Before Steger Construction equipment is transferred to construction sites, Jim Wessel was able to use one of their rollers to smooth out the runway.

DO YOUR FLIGHT PLANNING ON THE GROUND, - - - AND THEN SOME
A FUEL MANAGEMENT STORY by Craig W. Kramer

On a morning in 2014, I awoke at 4:30 to check weather and finalize a VFR flight plan from Dyersville (IA8) to Rock Hill, SC (UZA), with fuel stops in Illinois and Kentucky, my father, another pilot, and I planned to take my son to visit his cousin in Charlotte, NC in a Cessna 172. It was going to be a long day in the air, but we figured to be home before nightfall.

I went to my office to log into DUATS for a route weather briefing and check for NOTAM's and TFR's. When I had the information from DUATS, I called flight service for a verbal briefing. I was surprised as to how terse she was, and I believe that she was having a bad day. Nonetheless, she gave me the information I needed to be comfortable to depart.

Although we made it to a Kentucky airport safely, we declared an emergency landing due to fuel shortage. The following quotes are excerpts from the report I submitted to an FAA agent and included in a NASA Report.

"I went to the airport, fully fueled the airplane and departed from our home airport. The takeoff was a soft/short field type due to the length of our runway, the length of the grass on the runway and my load of two passengers and one duffel bag. I retracted the flaps after flying over town and made the ascent to cruising altitude of 3500 MSL. When I reached cruising altitude I leaned the mixture according to the POH. During the first leg of the flight I was cruising at 3500 MSL and getting a little push from a tailwind. I was monitoring my ground speed and it was consistent throughout this portion of flight. The first fuel stop was exactly 2 hours into the trip and both fuel gauges indicated that my tanks were more than half full. The next stop was planned to be 90 minutes according to my navigational equipment so I thought I had enough fuel to make the airport with reserve fuel, so I continued without the first fuel stop. I was very conscious of my fuel situation as I continued to monitor the fuel gauges. I was also monitoring my ground speed.

By the time I had flown well beyond the last available alternative fuel stop before my planned stop, my fuel gauges read one quarter full but were heading toward empty at a faster rate than the first three quarters of the burn. I also noted that I had lost about 10 mph of ground speed for about 10 minutes during this last portion of flight so I considered turning around and going back. I quickly realized that I

was midway between the alternative and (fuel airport), so turning around into a headwind was not a viable option."

About 30 miles from (fuel airport) I dialed in their AWOS and got the standard winds and active runway. We had just flown over another alternative fuel stop, but decided that we had enough fuel to make it to (fuel airport), so we continued on. To this point there had been no mention of any NOTAM's that (fuel airport) was closed for runway resurfacing.

"I was getting uncomfortably low on fuel when I announced my approach at 10 miles and the FBO informed me that the airport was closed. I was beginning to plan my descent from 3500 MSL to pattern altitude. Instead I pulled the throttle back to 1500 RPM and trimmed the nose up to slow the plane, conserve fuel and buy time. While the airplane gained 500 feet in altitude I made a standard rate turn to the left trying to identify an alternative landing area. I noticed that my fuel gauges were both bouncing off of empty so I knew I had some fuel. There were three restricted airports within gliding distance but I was unsure of their condition. I asked the FBO whether it was possible to land and was informed that I needed to declare an emergency to do so. I believed that was my best option to land safely. I was five miles from the airport at 4000 MSL and had slowed to best glide speed. I deployed 30 degrees of flaps and slipped the airplane to lose altitude in a steep descent. The angle of my approach was extreme so just prior to the flare I throttled up and made a smooth landing.

Because the airport was closed I could not depart so we rented a car and continued our journey on wheels."

Although he was instrumental in making the decision to declare the emergency, I did not include in the report that there was an experienced copilot on board assisting with navigation and decision making because there was no need to implicate anyone but myself.

The airport manager guided me to parking near the FBO, and explained that he had to call the FAA because of the emergency declaration. He refused to fuel the plane because of the pending investigation and suggested that I wait to speak with the agent when he arrived. I also asked if there was a NOTAM issued regarding the closing of the airport, and why that would have been missed by the flight briefer and DUATS. He replied that there had been a NOTAM posted on the internet for several weeks because several others had to find temporary homes for their planes. To this day I do not know where "on the internet" this NOTAM was posted.

At this time it was 11:00 a.m. I borrowed a ladder from the FBO and checked the fuel levels. The right tank indicated 3 usable gallons and the left tank indicated that I was into the unusable fuel. We had some decisions to make, and it was becoming apparent that we were not going to be allowed to leave in the airplane, so we attained a ride to the nearest car rental and got lunch. We returned to the airport and waited nearly an hour for the FAA agent, who arrived at about 1:00 p.m.

The agent and I sat in a conference room and talked about the events that led to the emergency declaration, and then we went to inspect the airplane. The fuel levels had balanced between the two tanks, and I had about one and a half gallons of usable fuel. The agent explained that I made the right decision in declaring the emergency and waiting for him because he usually doesn't have a pilot available to speak with him in an investigation. They were either dead or hospitalized. We exchanged contact information so I could write and submit the report.

This e-mail came as a follow-up from the FAA agent prior to the completion of the report. I had myself convinced that the flight briefer had, in fact, told me that (the airport) was closed and I failed to change my flight plan accordingly. This paragraph came as a welcomed relief.

"Craig,

… I have several other pieces of information for you. First, after reviewing the audio file of your conversation with LMFS the briefer <u>did not</u> tell you that (the airport) was closed, or that a runway at (the airport) was closed. Your account of that conversation was spot on in my opinion.

Thanks again for the update. Have fun at Oshkosh."

I wrote and submitted my report to the agent while at the EAA Fly In at Oshkosh, WI. This was fortunate because I had the opportunity to speak with representatives from AOPA legal services who gave me a little guidance in referring to the Pilot's Operating Handbook and using some other aviation language.

After I submitted my report, the agent closed the case with this e-mail.

"Craig,
Thank you for providing the statement below. Based on my investigation which included an interview with you, interviews with personnel at (the airport), a review of the NOTAMS, Weather, LMFS recordings, and finally your statement, I believe that this occurrence should be closed informally, with airman counselling. I conducted that counselling on the day that we met at (the airport). You may consider this matter to be closed.

That said I would like to add a couple of things for you to go forth with. First off your attitude throughout this matter was exemplary. That helped me to obtain the facts which resulted in your landing on closed runway quickly and thus helped me to close the matter. Ultimately your attitude played a pretty big part in determining the suitability of informal action. Next, your flight planning for this flight was not what it needed to be. I know that you realize that fact, and I suspect you gained some valuable experience through this flight that will keep you safe in the future. Finally, when push came to shove you made a very difficult decision to land at a closed airport rather than risk a fuel exhaustion accident. I believe that you made the best choice and I commend you for it. In my discussion with the manager at (the airport) he made it clear that you communicated your needs and allowed them time to move men and equipment out of harm's way prior to landing. This shows a level of professionalism that I would expect to see in an ATP and between this and your attitude in dealing with me I believe you to be an example for other airmen.

Finally I want to challenge you to help prevent fuel exhaustion incidents by sharing your story. A place to start is the NASA ASRS report but please consider going a little farther than that. Tell your fellow pilot the next time you're hangar flying so that they can benefit from your experience.

Thank you again and if you need anything please feel free to call me."

All of this being said, I did learn a great deal about our airplane, fuel management, dealing with the FAA and preparing for the unexpected.

After Oshkosh, my co-pilot and I flew his Ercoupe back to (the airport) to pick up the 172. When we landed we saw the airport manager traveling away from the FBO. We had the airplane filled with fuel and learned that a war bird had also made an emergency landing there on his way to Oshkosh. His plane was grounded until the airport re-opened during the week of the Fly-In. I suspect that the airport manager got a valuable lesson from the FAA regarding NOTAM's. The airport manager did, however, waive the tie-down fee for the three weeks our plane was grounded.

Worthington Ballpark

Airline Humor

Heard on Southwest Airlines just after a very hard landing in Salt Lake City: The flight attendant came on the intercom and said, "That was quite a bump, and I know what y'all are thinking. I'm here to tell you it wasn't
the airline's fault, it wasn't the pilot's fault, it wasn't the flight attendant's fault. It was the asphalt."

Dyersville Area Aviation
104-5th St. SE
Dyersville, Iowa 52040

www.dyersvilleairport.com