



## Washington Airport Management Association

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### Letter to the Membership – Annual WAMA Conference – May 21, 2015

Fellow WAMA Members:

Breaking away somewhat from my usual Letter to the Membership format, my remarks offered at the 2015 Annual Conference are less about the details than they are about the bigger picture. We have much to celebrate.

#### Washington State Aviation Alliance (WSAA)

I had the good fortune of being directed by WAMA's Board of Directors to administratively serve the Steering Committee charged with creating a state aviation alliance. This placed me in a ringside seat for one of those incredible career moments that I can honestly say I have experienced less than a dozen times. Observing the tremendously effective collaboration and communication skills of Kandace Harvey, Les Smith, Tristan Atkins, David Ketchum, and David Ulane was truly joyful. It was obvious that all were motivated by a single altruistic purpose – creating a structure for the best alliance possible. Everyone brought unique perspective and insight to the table. There were no hidden agendas, no infighting, no concerns about turf. Every single conversation was all about “How do we make this work?” The whole was definitely greater than the sum of its parts. Based on what I have seen thus far, I have great expectations for the success of this new statewide aviation organization. You should too.

#### Legislative Advocacy

This has been an exceptionally active year in Olympia for WAMA. At this writing, the Aviation Excise Tax bills, SB 5324 and HB 1526, remain under active consideration for implementation. This is as far as this issue has ever progressed in the state legislature. Legislative Committee Chair Ryan Sheehan and WAMA Legislative Consultant Susie Tracy have gone to great lengths to make this aviation revenue change a reality. Kudos as well goes to WSDOT Aviation, WSCAA, WPA, and AOPA for their active presence before the Senate and House Committees. Good things happen when an effective team is highly engaged.

Member Support

One of the most gratifying elements of this organization is the opportunity to support each other. Whether by e-mail or phone, members are reaching out to the organization and to each other, either asking for or willingly providing experience and critical subject area knowledge. With the resources available within WAMA, no one needs to feel alone when dealing with any issue or unexpected challenge. Thank you for continuing to support each other the way you do.

Board Strength

I have an associate in another industry who is in the unenviable position of working with a dysfunctional Board of Directors. When I hear the many stories being relayed of power struggles, lack of communications, lack of a common strategy, splintered decision-making, and unsupported expenditures, I want the WAMA membership to know how strong your Board and Officers are. There is tremendous leadership being exercised throughout. I suspect you probably already know that. Conference attendance has broken records the last few years, the Association is a significant force in statewide aviation, we are operating from a position of highly monitored financial strength, there is a new website, and communications to and from the membership is well received. I have the pleasure of working with eight incredible WAMA volunteers and I appreciate their direction and support of my work every day.

Tom Eller Scholarship

History corner... As we revised the scholarship/grant documents this past fall, the question was asked "Who is Tom Eller, for whom our Scholarship is named?" Given that the scholarship was created in March 1993, corporate memory of Tom was not to be found among current Board and Committee members. Thus began a low key search for more information so that future award winners would know in whose path they tread. A connection was made with former WAMA President Bill Conley who personally presented WAMA's scholarship approval letter to Tom and his wife Linda during Tom's final hospital stay. Both Linda and Tom's brother Bob were also reached and they were amazed, and very grateful, to learn that the scholarships remain in Tom's name. The information these three and others provided about Tom's kind character, strong mentoring ability, and exemplary legacy while Omak Airport Manager is now available to all, and especially our scholarship applicants, on our website. He was someone we could all aspire to be.

Conference/Education Committee Appreciation

Plain and simple, this conference doesn't happen without John Haakenson, Jennifer Skoglund, Kelly Thompson, Dianna Beeler, Cyndy Hendrickson, and Sandra Engstrom. Every other Board member also played a significant role. Please extend your gratitude at every opportunity.

And that's the latest from the shores of West Seattle...

Sincerely,

*Warren Hendrickson*

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Executive Officers, Board Members and Executive Director

Kandace Harvey, President; Ryan Sheehan, Vice-President; David Field, Secretary; Jennifer Skoglund, Treasurer

John Haakenson, Deb Wallace, Jamelle Garcia, and Rob Hodgman, Board Members

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