



Bismarck - Mandan, North Dakota

From the Left Seat...

Meeting Schedule

***Saturday
4/21/07***

10:00 AM

***Mandan
Airport
Pilots
Lounge***

My move to Bismarck marked a watershed in my aviation career. I was an air traffic controller at Salt Lake City center. This was in September of 1981 and I had never been to North Dakota before. My first thought was, "What in the world is the FAA doing to me now?" The FAA in all it's wisdom had sent me to Bismarck because I had radar experience as an airport terminal radar controller. All of our local Bismarck air traffic controllers had gone on strike and were unfortunately fired by President Reagan. Why any controller in Bismarck felt the need to go on strike is beyond me, over worked I guess? Bismarck was an IFR facility then but did not have radar. When I got here we worked IFR traffic the old fashioned way. That was by separating IFR traffic from pilot position and altitude reports and of course visually sighting the aircraft from the tower. I was younger then and had greater eyesight.

We installed and implemented the Bismarck radar in October of 1982, building the operating procedures that are pretty much in use today. I'm sure some changes have been made to coincide with the times.

We still did not have any qualified radar controllers except the tower manager and myself, so serious training began. Most of the controllers I trained are gone now into many different management positions with the exception of one controller. He is still here and about ready to retire like me. The current manager reported to Bismarck as a controller about the time I was leaving for future training assignments. He is doing a great job now as the tower manager. I'm very proud of all the air traffic controllers I've trained.

I met my wife (Marlette) here in Bismarck and so here I am 26 years later come September back here in Bismarck enjoying the good life of North Dakota. It is this Arizonan's home now and I'm proud to be a North Dakotan. I've become totally involved in North Dakota aviation and do not like to see any person or entity mess with the fantastic system we have. As your EAA President and Chairman of the North Dakota Aviation Council I welcome the challenge before us with the proposed FAA changes to our system. I urge you; get involved. Most important keep in touch with each other and share your experiences. Remember, the future of North Dakota aviation is our responsibility and destiny, Thanks.

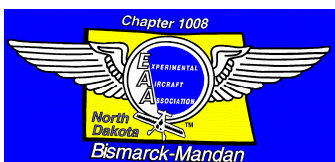
"CLEARED FOR TAKEOFF", Darrel

When once you have tasted flight,
 you will forever walk the earth with
 your eyes turned skyward, for there
 you have been, and there you
 will always long to return.

Leonardo Di Vinci



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All meetings of EAA Chapter 1008 are open to
 anyone with an interest in aviation.

EAA... We Fly for Fun!!

Meeting: April 21, 10:00 a.m., Mandan Airport