



Community

Independence Airpark Homeowners Association

By Ron Singh, President

11 July, 2025

Western Interlock Development

As many of you know Western Interlock is a local family owned company that manufactures paving stones for patios, driveways, walkways, walls, and other hardscaping uses. They are based in Rickreall, Oregon and had purchased additional land (27 acres) on the East side of the Airpark across Stryker Road with plans to develop a 90,000 square foot industrial building to manufacture paving stones and modular retaining wall blocks. If I remember correctly, the city approved their application in the spring of 2023 and Pegg Industries (the owners) were anticipating breaking ground in the Fall of 2024.

Ever since being elected President of the Independence Airpark Homeowners Association in 2024, I have kept in touch with Landon Pegg and have informed you of their progress. Not having seen any recent activity on the project site, I got in touch with Landon to get an update. Here's the latest news: Things have changed considerably... On July 1st, 2025, Pegg Industries sold it's assets to Basalite Concrete Products which is a family owned company based in California. The business name will remain "Western Interlock", Wyatt Pegg, President of Western Interlock plans to retire in the next few months, and his son Landon Pegg will stay on as General Manager of the new company.

Basalite Concrete Products is now the owner of the vacant land where the manufacturing plant was to be developed. At this point the plant expansion construction plans are on hold. Landon doesn't expect to see any construction this summer. Stay tuned!

Taxiway Signs

We are a unique community and now we have unique taxiway signs! If you know Vince Homer (one of our 2 mad scientists), you know his creativity knows no bounds. He is the creator of the 3D wall aviation art in the EAA chapter 292 hangar, the faux machine-gun for Ernie Moreno's DH2 world war 1 biplane, the designer and builder of a scale Bugatti type 35 car, and a whole lot more. So when he heard we needed to replace the aging taxiway signs, he

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went to work to design something unique. He produced full size models of signs and brought them to the Board for consideration. Once approved he arranged for the fabrication and put in a lot of his personal time to assemble and prepare the signs for installation. Just yesterday, we again commissioned him to design and fabricate the remaining “Aircraft Only” and “Private Property” signs. THANKS VINCE!



You may remember 2 years ago when I was the Taxiway Paving Project Manager, I had to sack (fire) Lee Nielson twice in a day for staying in the hot sun and never taking a break! He had been volunteering as a construction inspector. Well, he did it again - he offered to install 1 sign on his own to come up with a system for the work crew, and then snuck out and quietly installed them all on his own. This time I plan to upgrade his disciplinary action to include Tar and Feathers! ...Okay fine, he did a great job! THANKS LEE!

CC&R and ByLaw Update

You already should be aware that we (IAHA) are updating the existing CC&Rs and Bylaws. The CC&R Update Committee met numerous times last fall to modernize the rules. Once their work was reasonably complete, they held a joint work session with the IAHA Board. Changes were made to these documents based on Board comments and then forwarded to the IAHA attorney for legal review. The committee is currently updating the documents based on the attorney's advice and expect to hold another joint work session with the Board by the end of July.

We expect the Board to approve the CC&R/ByLaw updates for a community vote at the September Board meeting; conduct a presentation (on the changes) to the community by mid September; and conduct the vote (by mail) by early October.

Please remember that the CC&Rs are akin to a constitution for our community. They need to be reasonable, taken seriously by all homeowners, and enforced if needed.

Independence Airport Maintenance

If you are pilot/aircraft owner on the Department of Aviation's mailing list, you probably already know this. If not, read on: ODAV has plans to start a taxiway and apron surface sealing project during the month of September this year. The project is expected to take about 17 days and will cause sections of the taxiways and apron to be closed. The runway will remain open except for 2 days during this timeframe. ODAV will be sending out a start date and detailed schedule soon.

This will affect your abilities to transit your plane in and out of our Airpark. Check NOTAMS for the most current airport surface closures.

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History Revision

There are times when history does need to be revised... and this may be one of them!

Last year I gave a presentation to the Oregon State Aviation Board and again this year to the Independence Planning Commission about our Airpark. I began with a bit of history of the airport and based on articles and other sources, I stated that a temporary dirt strip was constructed for any aircraft that may arrive for the "On to Oregon Cavalcade" (part of Oregon's centennial celebration in August of 1959) ... *but that no aircraft arrived and that this event being the birth of the airport was just an urban legend.* I am now reasonably certain that I was wrong!

What changed? I was recently asked by the Independence Museum to help develop some posters depicting the history of the airport and I met with Amy Christensen (Museum Director) to provide her some photos and other information. She was aware of the conflicting stories of how the airport came to be and we both agreed to dig into this issue deeper.

Amy went to work, as any good museum curator would, digging through archives to get to the truth. She came across several newspaper articles and other information that sets the record straight.

Although I was aware of several commemorative flights in the 1990s that followed the old Oregon Trail, I now have learned that the "On to Oregon Cavalcade" celebration had an airborne aspect to it. A group of 27 aircraft from Portland, Oregon flew to Independence, Missouri and then flew back along the old Oregon Trail stopping at key cities along the way. *They arrived in Independence, Oregon as planned on Saturday, August 15th and, after a fly-over salute to the parade, landed on the little dirt strip prepared for them!*

Turns out that the urban legend may have some truth, and that that little dirt strip scraped in a grass field in 1959 may have been the spark that led to the birth of the Independence Airport (7S5).

Did you know that in 1993, 7S5 was officially re-dedicated as the "End of the Oregon Trail Airport"?

Air Tour Ends Trail

INDEPENDENCE, Or., Aug. 15.—The On to Oregon Air Cavalcade—made up of 27 private planes carrying 65 persons—arrived here Saturday after following the old Oregon Trail from Independence, Mo.

The cavalcade, sponsored by the Columbia Aviation club, left Missouri on Wednesday and made overnight stops at Cheyenne, Wyo., Pocatello, Ida., and Pendleton. The group had left Portland Aug. 8 and followed the Lewis and Clark trail to the Midwest, arriving last Tuesday. Overnight stops on the eastward flight were made at Helena, Mont., Bismark, N. D., and Omaha, Neb.

ALONG the route, Douglas Black, Portland pilot and tour chairman, presented mayors of the cities where the planes stopped with one cowboy boot each, donated by the Centennial commission. The mayors must come to the Centennial here to claim the other boot.

At Independence, Or., where the Junior Chamber of Commerce built a special 2600-foot landing strip for the planes, cavalcade members attended the wagon train parade and returned to Portland Saturday evening. Gene Waddle, a member of the state board of aeronautics, represented Gov. Mark Hatfield on the air tour.

As a contrast to the 23 days required for the wagon train to make the trip from Cheyenne to Pocatello, the air cavalcade made the distance in 3 hours.

From the Oregon Daily Journal - August 16th, 1959

From the Sunday Oregonian - August 16th, 1959

Planes Salute Wagons, After Flight Over Trail

INDEPENDENCE (Special) An aerial "wagon train," comprising 27 light planes, landed here Saturday morning after flying above the route earthbound prairie schooners followed a century ago on the Oregon Trail.

The planes, which left Portland for Independence, Mo., last Saturday, touched down here after a fly-over salute to the huge parade celebrating the arrival of the Centennial wagon train.

Pointing up the contrast in speed between the planes and the wagon train was the three-hour flight from Cheyenne to Pocatello. It took the Prairie

Schooners 23 days to cover the same distance.

On the flight to Missouri, the group traced the Lewis and Clark Trail with stopovers in Helena, Mont.; Bismarck, N.D.; Omaha and Independence. Last stop on the trip east was made at Kansas City Airport.

Old Trail Traced

Leaving for Independence, Ore., Friday, the flight halted overnight at Cheyenne, Pocatello and Pendleton.

At Pendleton the pilots were entertained by the Umatilla Pilots Assn., and were greeted by Gene Waddell, local restaurant owner, representing Gov. Mark Hatfield.

The tour was sponsored by the Columbia Aviation Country Club. Douglas Black, assisted by Stuart White, was tour chairman.

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