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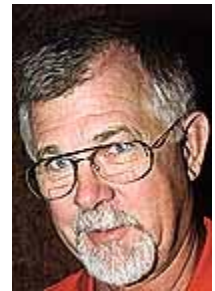
Aviation board adds 5th member

By Bill Gisel

AUBURN — Philip Rader of Waterloo was named by the DeKalb County Commissioners Monday as a fifth member of the Board of Aviation Commissioners.

The additional seat on the board was created this year by an act of the Indiana legislature.

Rader, a Democrat, is a retired railroad engineer and will be the only currently licensed pilot on the aviation board. He has been flying for 30 years, he told the commissioners.



Rader

Other members of the aviation board are Jim Mason, president and the only other Democrat; Brad Stump, treasurer; George Wappes, secretary; and Jeff Turner.

Rader's term will expire Dec. 31, 2008.

The aviation commission has sought to expand its membership from four members to five for a number of years. The primary reason is to make it easier to have a quorum present for monthly meetings.

"I think there were two occasions during the past year when we lacked a quorum," said airport manager Russ Couchman.

Stump attended Rader's interview session with the Commissioners. He said duties of the individual board members no doubt will be redefined with the appointment.

Rader said he hoped to be an asset to the board, and expressed his interest in general aviation.

"General aviation has been suffering, with the cost of recreational flying up substantially," he said. Aircraft today represent a substantial investment, with high insurance and operational costs. "Aviation gasoline is \$3.50 to \$4 a gallon," he said.

In a related matter, Stump said Mid America Avionics has notified the aviation board that it will be moving to the Huntington airport.



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The company provides and repairs avionics equipment in aircraft and has been a substantial economic contributor to the airport and Victory Aviation, the airport's fixed-base operator, Stump said.

"It hurts us, and it hurts Victory," he added. He said Couchman is negotiating with Mid America to keep a satellite operation at the DeKalb County Airport.

Mid America leased space from Victory Aviation, and Victory also benefited from fuel sales to aircraft coming for service, Stump said.

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