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A Heart to Heart Chat about Blood Pressure

by Charlie Spence, Aviation Writer and IFA Member

The heart and eyes are two of the most important elements of a flight physical. If you have problems—or think you might have problems—with either, don't become discouraged. Remember, the FAA wants you to keep flying so long as you are not a danger to yourself or to the general public.

Blood pressure is one key, not only for your heart but also for your eyes because it can damage the small blood vessels in the retina. If during a flight exam the blood pressure readings stay consistently lower than 155/95 all is well. Anything higher than that requires action. Initially, you might be asked nothing more than to take blood pressure readings twice a day (morning and evening) for three days. If four of the six readings show below 155/95, again all is well.

If the three-day blood pressure checks are higher than the qualifying numbers, further steps need to be taken and with them you will probably be able to get that coveted medical certificate. Your family physician can often get you on a medication regimen that will adequately control high blood pressure. Once stabilized without any significant adverse effects, certification can again be considered.

The cause of high blood pressure in most people is unclear. About one in every four American adults has it, so unless you take the right precautions, there's a one in four chance blood pressure questions can affect your coming flight physicals, not to mention other aspects of your life.

Getting around a problem is never as good as avoiding it all together. So what can you do to keep blood pressure under control? Just take some sensible steps.

Keep your weight under control. Being overweight can make you from two to six times more likely to develop high blood pressure than if you stay within your acceptable limits. Knocking off even just a few pounds can help you prevent high blood pressure. Also important is to eat a proper diet. If your blood pressure is high, reducing your salt intake will help to reduce it. If it is at acceptable levels, reducing salt intake, will help to keep it that way. Before you undertake a new diet, be sure to check with your personal physician.

Get regular exercise. You can lower the risk of getting high blood pressure by 20 to 50 percent if you avoid being a couch potato (or in today's lingo more of a computer cucumber) and get some regular exercise. Doctors say this doesn't mean you must run marathons or become a tri-athlete. Doing daily light physical activities can help to keep those numbers in

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Don't Get Soaked When It Comes to Water Damage

Water damage claims hit the American public hard each year, with 25 percent of homeowner-related insurance property losses involving claims related to water or freezing. These claims result in an estimated \$6.8 billion worth of property damage each year, according to the Institute for Business & Home Safety. IFA members have the opportunity to apply to purchase a MetLife Auto & Home® policy at special group discounted rates to help protect their property from water damage.

Haven't taken out a MetLife Auto & Home policy, yet? Don't worry—it's not too late. You have the opportunity to apply to purchase quality group insurance at special group rates that are designed to save you money, with hassle-free payment options, and personalized service. A variety of policies are available to you through this program, including: auto, mobile home, recreational vehicle, and personal excess liability ("Umbrella").

For more information, free insurance reviews, and no-obligation premium quotes, call the toll-free MetLife Benefits Line at 800-888-2308 or visit www.iflyamerica.org/metlife.asp. Be sure to mention Group Code BGX. ■

MASON CITY—THE MUSIC MAN'S HOME

by Charlie Spence, Aviation Writer and IFA Member

If you've seen the stage production or the popular motion picture *The Music Man* you know that although the production sings about "trouble right here in river city," it's good old fashioned standards and plenty of citizen aggressiveness that make all come out well in the end. That can be your achievement—all coming out well as you take a trip to the town that inspired the Warner Bros. motion picture *The Music Man*—Mason City, Iowa.



'Lady of the Lake' offers passengers a picturesque ride on Clear Lake.

Photo courtesy of Iowa Tourism Office

Mason City is the hometown of Meredith Willson, the internationally renowned composer and creator of *The Music Man*, as well as the setting for his musical. One of the first places you will want to visit is Willson's boyhood home, where he was born and spent the early years of his life soaking up middle American culture. Then travel back to 1912 at the Music Man Square, where you will step into a streetscape with its ice cream parlor/soda fountain and other nostalgic places made famous in the Warner Bros. production. Here you will find Willson memorabilia and items related to his creative musical career. Willson also wrote the musical *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*, which became a Broadway success in 1960. His other compositions include *Seventy-Six Trombones*, *It's Beginning To Look A Lot like Christmas* and *May The Good Lord Bless You And Keep You*. The streetscape is free but there is an admission to the museum.

In the museum, you will see the importance of music in Willson's life and to all American culture. You will enjoy exhibits ranging from Civil War bands to Victorian parlor music to swing bands. Also included is a replica of the studio in his California home and the actual piano on which he composed many of his hits.

Another well-known entertainer grew up in Mason City—Bil Baird who was a master puppeteer. His shows appeared world-wide, at world's fairs, in motion pictures, and on numerous television programs. You'll see a large collection of his work at the Charles H. MacNider Art Museum in Mason City, including the puppets featured in the motion picture *The Sound of Music*. Besides puppets, you will also find American art, a range of ceramics, films, and special events at the museum.

At the local airport, the Kinney Pioneer Museum lets you experience life on the Iowa frontier. Here, visit a one-room school house, blacksmith shop, old jail, and if you drop in on weekends, you'll see demonstrations of pioneer crafts and trades.

As much as you will enjoy these attractions, there is much more at Mason City than just museums and the magic of a mighty motion picture. Here you will also find the last remaining hotel designed by famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright. Six hotels were designed by Wright and Mason City claims the only one still standing. The hotel is undergoing restoration during 2009 and is slated to be completed by the end of 2010.

Wright's designs were the most famous of the Prairie School style of architecture popular in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and common to the mid-west. You can visit Wright's residential home where a new architectural interpretative center is expected to be completed by June 2010 to help visitors understand this unique style of design. It is just north of the National Historic District, which is the largest collection of Prairie School designed homes on a unified site. You can tour a residential home and watch a slide show of Prairie School design.

Mason City has a myriad of things to intrigue, entertain, and attract you. For a nostalgia moment, if you are a devotee to the world of music, over by the airport you will find Clear Lake and the Surf Ballroom. This is the final performance location of Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens, and "The Big Bopper" Richardson before their fateful trip on February 3, 1959. You know with the name of Clear Lake, the community must be near a body of water. From

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New Look for IFLyAmerica.org—Set Up Your Online Member Account

IFA's website has a whole new look with a new valuable and informative Members Only section—and a quick, easy process for you to gain access to it at www.iflyamerica.org. To set up your online member account, click on "Join IFA" on the IFA homepage. Enter the email address that you would like to have as part of your member record. This will also be the email address that IFA will use to communicate with you. Enter your personal information into the member application.

When you get to the payment page, click on "Have an offer code?" Enter the first six digits from your IFA Visa® card as your offer code (*note: in no way are you giving us access to your credit card account or anyway to bill your account with these first six digits*). By following these instructions, you will be able to set up your FREE IFA online member account. Remember, your IFA membership is FREE for as long as you carry the IFA Visa card.

Once your account is created, your password will be e-mailed to you.

Problems? Questions? E-mail us at admin@iflyamerica.org or call us at 508-534-9893, and we'll provide prompt assistance. ■

IFA Travel Insurance: What You Should Always Carry When Traveling

Many travelers think their health insurance, homeowners insurance or even their credit card will provide adequate travel insurance protection. This is not always the case.

Travel insurance can help in the following circumstances.

- Your plane makes an unscheduled stop because of weather. The flight is then cancelled. How do you get your family home?
- If your sister-in-law becomes seriously ill and you choose to cancel your trip, what happens to your non-refundable deposits or pre-payments?
- You are in Europe and your wallet or purse is stolen. How do you get cash and replace your passport?
- A family member falls ill in the Caribbean. Who will arrange and pay for medical evacuation?

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MASON CITY DETAILS

How to Get There

The Mason City Municipal Airport (MCW) is only five miles west of the city. It has two paved runways: 13/30—5502x150 asphalt, and 18/36—6501x150 asphalt. Approaches are: LOC, ILS, ILS-BC, R-NAV/GPS, and VOR/DME.

No landing fee.

Unicom 123.0: approach through Minneapolis Center FSS: Fort Dodge

Fuel: Jet and 100LL

Where to Stay

Nine inns and one bed & breakfast offer convenient lodging and various rates, all relatively close to the airport and center city. Decker House bed & breakfast is in an historic house constructed in the 1890s. Rates will vary from \$85 to \$175 per night. Make your reservations before you go through IFA's Online Travel Booking Service at www.iflyamerica.org/travelservices/travelservices.asp. Significant hotel and car rental discounts may apply.

Where to Dine

Choose anything from fast food, to bar and grill, to fine Midwest dining at any of the nearly 100 restaurants in Mason City. Although far from any coast, Mason City offers several fine steak and seafood establishments.



ON THE HORIZON

Air Shows

Representative air shows are listed below. We recommend that you contact the show to confirm the information as dates can change without prior notice. For a full air show listing and to link to air show websites, please visit www.iflyamerica.org/airshow_search.asp.

September 5-7

• Cleveland National Air Show, OH

September 7-13

• Stearman Fly In, IL

September 10-13

• Greenville Int'l. Seaplane Fly In, ME

September 11

• NAS Fallon Air Show, NV

September 11-12

• Kirksville Regional Air Festival, MO

• Thunder Over Nampa, ID

September 11-13

• Great Reno Balloon Race, NV

September 12

• Rotary Air Show Plus, NM

September 12-13

• Winston-Salem Air Show, NC

• Blue Ash Airport Days, OH

• California Capital Air Show, CA

• Mid-Eastern Fly In, OH

September 13-20

• Gaslight Festival Balloon Events, KY

September 16-20

• National Championship Air Races, NV

September 18-19

• Fairbault Airfest and Balloon Rally, MN

September 19

• Santa Fe Air Show, NM

September 19-20

• Scott AFB Air Show, IL

• McConnell Air Show, KS

• Hickam AFB Air Show, HI

September 25-26

• Chico Airfest, CA

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mid-May through September a picturesque paddlewheel boat offers dancing to live music or a relaxing evening sitting and admiring a beautiful sunset.

About 25 miles north of Mason City you can try your luck at the Diamond Jo Casino at Northwood. The casino features more than 900 slots, black jack, craps, roulette, and pai gow poker.

Mason City is the home of the Iowa Traction Railroad, the last remaining electric freight-hauling railroad. There is a good chance you will get a glimpse of this one of a kind train if you travel along 19th Street SW, which runs parallel to the tracks.

Your visit can be either one of self exploration or a series of guided tours. Along one of the tours you will cross "The Meredith Willson/Music Man Footbridge." It crosses Willow Creek and was named to honor one of the city's most prominent citizens and to recall the

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PILOT QUIZ – AVIATION FIRSTS

Many firsts stand out in the memories of pilots—the first solo, first cross country flight, and first passenger. How many of these firsts can you identify?

- Even without a pilot's license, who was able to fly, carry passengers, and give flight instruction because he did it before a license was required in the U.S.?
 - Eddie Rickenbacker
 - Charles Lindberg
 - Wiley Post
- In 1931, who made the fourth around-the-world flight by aircraft?
 - Wiley Post and Harold Getty
 - Charles and Anne Lindbergh
 - Jimmy Doolittle and Roger Williams
- Who was the first pilot to fly solo around the world?
 - Jimmy Doolittle
 - Wiley Post
 - Roscoe Turner
- What pilot experimented to achieve the first successful pressurized flying suit?
 - Amelia Earhart
 - Laura Ingalls
 - Wiley Post
- The first "Winnie Mae" was a well-known airplane. Who was the owner who piloted it on its last flight when it crashed and was destroyed?
 - Laura Ingalls
 - Roscoe Turner
 - Wiley Post
6. After centuries of people dreaming of flight, who made bold attempts but had colossal failures?
 - Louis-Charles Guille
 - Jean Pierre Blanchard
 - Leonardo da Vinci
- In 1911, who was the pilot who started naval aviation by landing an airplane on a battleship?
 - Glenn Curtiss
 - Orville Wright
 - Gordon Bennett
- Who was the first woman pilot to fly over the North Pole?
 - Amelia Earhart
 - Jacqueline Cochran
 - Sheila Scott
- Who was the first woman pilot to fly faster than the speed of sound?
 - Jacqueline Cochran
 - Alice Fuchs
 - Jean Bird
- Who was the first U.S. President to fly in a helicopter?
 - Harry S. Truman
 - Dwight D. Eisenhower
 - John Kennedy

Key to Answers: 1c, 2a, 3b, 4c, 5a, 6c, 7a, 8c, 9a, 10b

Heart to Heart...continued from page 1

Keep your alcohol consumption under control. There is an FAA regulation of the allowed time between bottle and throttle, and setting limits on drinking at other times can help keep blood pressure problems away. Experts say men should limit their intake to no more than two drinks a day. According to the "Dietary Guidelines for Americans" women should keep it to no more than one drink a day.

Stress can make your blood pressure go up. Money and economy concerns are major causes of stress. As the economy worsens, stress levels rise. According to surveys by the American Psychological Association reported in WEB MD, the top stressors for Americans are money—81%, and the economy—80%. If you find stress starting to raise your blood pressure check with your doctor and try some steps to focus on other interests. Take up a new hobby, try something creative such as art or writing, get a pet or do some volunteer work.

So, don't worry about that next physical. It will add stress, and stress over time can contribute to high blood pressure. ■

Travel Insurance...continued from page 2

The IFA Travel Insurance Program makes it easy for you to analyze, compare quotes and purchase travel insurance, for any type of journey, from the top U.S. insurance providers. This unique, one-stop resource is quick, easy, and provides you the best available rates, benefits and coverage options, and the confident knowledge that your trip investment and personal well-being are protected in the event of cancellation or interruption.

In an emergency, you'd go to the ends of the earth for services like these – so why not just already have them in place? You probably already have your next trip in mind, so why not check out the IFA Travel Insurance Program right now? To learn more and get a quote, visit www.iflyamerica.org/travel-insurance.asp or call 800-487-4722. ■

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- **Other Hotel Discounts:**
#60093:
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 - Ramada, 800-462-8035;
 - Travelodge, 800-545-5545;
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bridge so prominent in the musical.

Band music in Mason City began gaining popularity in 1928 when the first North Iowa Band Festival was held to commemorate the town's 75th anniversary. The city still hosts this annual event honoring the musical culture and the townspeople still feature bands for the youth as *The Music Man's* Professor Harold Hill fostered.

In *The Music Man*, Professor Harold Hill brought music and joy to the people of River City. Today, the people of Mason City can bring music and joy to visitors.

This is an abridged version of this article. To read the full version, please visit the Flying Destinations section of www.iflyamerica.org. ■