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George C. Ford

George Ford has spent decades covering business news across Eastern Iowa. Ford is a native of Lexington, Ky., but has [...]

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Updated: 28 March 2013 | 1:49 pm in B380

Record passenger month for The Eastern Iowa Airport

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February was a record-setting month at [The Eastern Iowa Airport](#).

The regional airport recorded 79,359 passengers in February, eclipsing the previous same month record of 78,738 passengers in February 2006. There were 40,466 departing travelers in February and 38,893 arriving passengers.



(Kaitlyn Bernauer/The Gazette)

The record passenger count was set despite the fact that there were fewer flights with slightly more seats available in February than in the same month of 2012. Airlines serving the airport provided 869 flights with 50,486 seats last month, compared with 888 flights with 50,394 seats available in February 2012.

On a year-to-date basis, the departing or enplaned passenger count is up 10.5 percent to 78,872 from 71,371 through February 2012.

Heather Wilson, director of marketing and communications at The Eastern Iowa Airport, said the record passenger count in February translated into higher parking lot and concession revenue.

"Everything is looking good," Wilson said. "At this point, we feel we are over the initial pullback from AirTran leaving the Quad Cities. We believe this is real growth for us, rather than just reabsorbing the passengers who were traveling through the Quad Cities."

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Wilson said the number of flights increased in March to 1,043, up 3.4 percent from 1,009 in March 2012. That increased the number of seats by 5.2 percent to 62,906 this month from 59,808 in the same month last year.

"We added another flight to Atlanta, which really makes a big difference," Wilson said. "Allegiant Air also added flights for spring break, so we also should see a little bump in our March figures."

Don Swanson, director of finance and administration, told the Cedar Rapids Airport Commission on Monday that operating revenue is \$8.9 million for the current fiscal year, up 4.3 percent from the same period in the last fiscal year. Swanson attributed the higher revenue to increases in customer facility charge revenue, passenger facility charge revenue, parking revenue, car rental concession revenue, and restaurant concession fees.

Operating expenses so far are \$4.8 million, up 12 percent from the same period in 2012. Swanson said the higher expenses are due to storm damage repairs, full employment, and an increase in fuel prices.

Net operating income is \$4.2 million, down 3.1 percent from the same period of 2012, but up 19 percent from budget.

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