

## **St. Louis Regional Airport Interview Outline**

Dave Miller – Narrator

Trent Morgan – Interviewer

Place of Interview – St. Louis Regional Airport Admin Building

Date of Interview – 7-13-2018

History of the St. Louis Airport

### **Introduction**

Greetings...This is Trent Morgan interviewing David Miller on Friday, July 13, 2018...

Can you please state your name and your title at St. Louis Regional Airport...

The Narrator, David Miller is the Airport Manager

### **Narrator background**

Can you please provide your...

Background and education

How did you get involved with the STL R. Airport?

What interests do you have with aviation?

What is the STL R. Airport mission and purpose?

Current usage and flight information?

Jobs and general information about the STL R. Airport?

Flights a day? – Flights a year?

### **Narrator involvement with STL R. Airport**

What is your goals as Airport Manager for the St. Louis Regional Airport?

### **History**

I noticed the airport was created in 1946 what was the purpose in 1946?

Can you expand on the History of the early days of the Airport?

Was it commercial or just for individual use?

What year did the Airport have expansion?

Famous planes or pilots use STL R. Airport?

Significant events or news about its history?

Military usage?

Presidents or government ever use?

What are you proud about with St. Louis Regional Airport?

What do you know about the two cemeteries on the Airport?

Abstract Developed by – Trent Morgan

Date: July 13, 2018

## St. Louis Regional Airport Interview Log

Fill out for entire interview at approximately 3-5 minute intervals, indicating what is discussed at each interval.

<u>Minutes</u>	<u>Brief Statement of What was Discussed</u>
0:15	Introduction
0:36	Background information – Grew up in Salina, Kansas Kindergarten – 12 <sup>th</sup> grade Salina, Kansas University of Denver – BA in Business Administration
0:58	Begin his military career in the Air Force Picked up a Master’s Degree in Public Administration
1:15	Air Force career – Pilot Flew the heavies – KC135 (Boeing 707) - Gas station in the sky & B 52’s Bombers 2000 hours in flying time in each airplane Total of 5000 hours flying planes in the Air Force
1:51	Civilian Education kicked in... noticing you can’t stay in the cockpit forever
2:00	Understanding what airplanes on the ground and in the air need
2:15	Career in airport management experience
2:48	Being Chief of Base Operations in the Air Force at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota Learned about administration of air fields and civil engineering
3:35	Duties of the Airforce got into Command Control Element “Command Post” Job Duty – Controller – advanced to chief of Command Division at Minot Airforce Base
3:57	Learned about how to handle stress, emergency situations and having to make decision on the spot for an airport
4:20	Highest rank – retired as a major in the United States Airforce Qualified for OTS and Pilot School
4:35	Operational airplanes after pilot school KC135 – Took him all over the world
4:55	Cross trained to the B 52s

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- 5:17 Building trust between bomber pilot and tanker pilot
- 5:24 Iranian Hostage situation – Commander of a Special Detachment that flew out of Anderson Airforce base in Guam
- 5:40 Flying missions out of Guam all the way up to the Indian Ocean  
Show the flag in response to the Iranian hostage situation  
Most of the missions were 38 – 42 hours long
- 6:04 Jet engines leaking oil  
One mission had four engines shut down on one side of the plane
- 6:21 B52s still in use today  
Eight different models of the B 52 – A through H  
He flew the F, G & H  
Only model still flying is the H Model – turbo fan blow bye engines
- 6:48 B52's designed in the mid 50's  
Wing span of B52s  
Training wheels on the wing tips  
147 feet from tip-to-tip of wing
- 7:20 Both airplanes can carry an incredible amount of fuel  
Both the KC135 and B52 can carry more weight in fuel than the wright of the aircraft
- 7:59 Military Career spent in the Dakotas  
Tour of Duty at Clark Air Base in the Philippines
- 8:08 Strategic Air Command went to Southeast Asia on a temporary duty basis  
Never assigned to a base in Vietnam he had 888 days of flying missions in Southeast Asia, flying out of Okinawa, Guam, Thailand, and Taiwan.
- 8:31 Enjoyed being in the service and being out..." I would do it all over again"
- 8:40 Job opportunity to get to St. Louis Regional Airport  
Managed seven different airports in five different states
- 9:02 Moved more as a civilian than in the military
- 9:12 Career Progression  
Assistant Airport Manager in Flint, Michigan  
Bismarck, North Dakota – Loved North Dakota

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Juneau, Alaska Airport – five years of service  
Ketchikan, Alaska Airport – managed for one year

- 9:46           Saying in Alaska – “If you’re in Alaska too long you won’t fit anywhere else”
- 9:58           Time to return to the lower 48 – opening in Montrose, Colorado
- 10:10          Not a happy ending – Airport Management Career field  
More often get fired for doing their job more than because of not doing their job
- 10:25          Running an airport is a complex situation  
Deal with Federal, State, and Local Governments
- 10:36          Air space is controlled by the Federal Government  
Airplanes are controlled except by the military are controlled by the private sector
- 10:44          Airports are owned by individual municipalities
- 10:54          Complex process to get something done
- 11:15          Philosophy was different in Montrose, Colorado
- 11:21          Position came open here
- 11:28          Corruption problem before I got here
- 11:37          Previous staff had charges filed against them  
Most cases were dismissed or reduced
- 11:58          System worked with getting a new board
- 12:20          Starting looking for a new airport manager
- 12:32          Six people were being interviewed
- 12:44          Only one standing for the job
- 12:55          Give credit to the Airport Attorney
- 13:05          Public corruption problem  
Needed to bring a hired gun to clean things up

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- 13:16 Nine months to a year to get everything cleaned up
- 13:20 Came in 2003 to manage the airport
- 13:45 Airport mission and purpose  
Provide a safe environment for aircraft to take off and land “primary goal”
- 14:09 Airport is a real player for the community
- 14:18 Economic impact – aeronautical and nonaeronautical  
Aeronautical – control tower, West Star Aviation, anyone who repairs airplanes or provides flight instruction
- 14:34 Nonaeronautical – restaurant and other businesses
- 14:40 Drive down Highway 140  
QuikTrip, Arbys, Ace Hardware, Helmkamp Auto, Liberty Bank...all on Airport Property
- 15:03 Land Lease
- 15:06 UPS Sorting Facility  
Only between Fairview Heights and Springfield
- 15:49 West Star Aviation  
Sixty percent of revenue comes from West Star
- 16:23 No landing fees at St. Louis Regional
- 16:58 Corporate Traffic  
Reliever Airport
- 17:46 No Commercial air service at this airport  
Over 140 small planes at the airport
- 18:10 West Star Aviation “Wow”  
Global Market  
Ten percent of revenue comes from overseas sources  
Contract with the Egyptians nine airplanes a year
- 18:36 Need a book to find out where the planes are coming from

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- 18:55 Bringing US dollars back
- 19:10 International Exporter
- 19:26 Jobs- Over 500 at St. Louis Regional  
West Star just topped at 400  
Other locations for West Star  
System wide over 1000 employees  
Consider East Alton location their corporate head quarters
- 20:32 Flights a day or year  
70,000 a year at the high end as low as 40,000 a year
- 21:10 Fueling services is West Star
- 21:44 History of the Airport
- 21:59 1946 date of creation
- 22:08 History from 1928  
Wood River had a flying college here
- 22:23 1946 date unique it is a post-World War II Airport
- 22:26 Lambert and Scott Field from the 1920's
- 22:48 Walston Aviation Company  
Built up the largest Cessna Business (small single engine airplanes) in the world
- 23:21 Premier Air Center took over
- 23:40 Became West Star Aviation
- 24:03 Famous records of pilots or planes
- 24:10 My watch  
Bill Clinton – post presidency  
Joe Biden – Vice President
- 24:36 Other people from time-to-time come to get their airplanes serviced
- 25:05 2008 economic down-turn

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- 25:25 Get a Falcon Fifty (airplane) for .50 cents on the dollar  
West Star jumped on the opportunity  
Called MRO (Maintenance Repair and Overhaul)
- 26:05 Expansion and Runways  
Two Runways – two set of approaches  
Runways intersect  
Winds go out of limits
- 27:40 Training pilots to land in cross wind  
Above all flood plains – only airport
- 28:36 Charles Lindbergh  
Jerseyville Airport landing
- 28:50 Military use  
C9's operated out of here  
Instrument approaches  
Tangent location  
KC135 – twelve and fifteen pilots training
- 30:45 Brag about instrument approaches  
ILS System  
Three approaches  
Only one left
- 32:22 Scott Airforce Base Flying into third world countries using the above approaches
- 32:35 Any airplanes crash?  
F18 Super Hornet  
Why was it here (F18)?  
Harrier Jump Jet trained here  
Pilot error for F18 crash  
Smaller planes crashed / minor damages
- 35:42 Makes you proud about St. Louis Regional  
How it's Governed by a board
- 37:37 Cemeteries on property  
Pruitt of Moreland Road – Civil War Veterans  
Revolutionary War and War 1812  
Montgomery Cemetery

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After the interview, I had already packed up the equipment, Mr. Miller told me how Barack Obama accepted his Illinois Senate confirmation in the administration building. He arrived at the airport and heard the news about him winning the nomination. Senator Obama accepted the nomination at the St. Louis Regional Airport Administration Building. Here are the pictures to commemorate the event in 2004.



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