

RNPA

CONTRAILS

ISSUE NO. 171

AUGUST 2009



Steve Morris

RETIRED NORTHWEST AIRLINES PILOTS' ASSOCIATION



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Each Member!

The newsletter *RNPA Contrails* is published quarterly in February, May, August and November by the Retired Northwest Airlines Pilots' Association, a non-profit organization whose purpose is to maintain the friendships and associations of the members, to promote their general welfare, and assist those active pilots who are approaching retirement with the problems relating thereto. Membership is \$35 annually for Regular Members (NWA pilots, active or retired) and \$25 for Affiliate Members.

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AUGUST

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20 SEA Summer Picnic

SEPTEMBER

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Albuquerque Reunion

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9 SEA Christmas Party

13 MSP Christmas Party

JANUARY

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Future Reunions

Rapid City:
 Sept. 24-26, 2010
Omaha:
 Sept. 25-27, 2011

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 Pasadena, California, USA



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and Snowboard Club





President's Report: Gary PISEL



The Paul Soderlind Memorial Scholarship Fund

The Fund was established to honor and remember Paul Soderlind. When monies were raised for the bust of Paul a fair amount was left after the casting. It was decided this money would start the scholarship fund. While RNPA cannot participate directly in the scholarship fund we have encouraged pilot participation in raising funds for it. Your generosity has helped raise over 80 thousand dollars with which the committee has been able to grant several scholarships to the dependents of NWA personnel.

With the advent of the Delta merger the scholarship committee no longer had access to Northwest personnel mailing lists or RADAR. One option available was to join with the Delta Care scholarship program. It was determined that by doing so grandchildren and dependents of retired personnel would not be eligible. The scholarship committee determined that two main criteria should be in place. First; the name of Paul Soderlind should be on the scholarship. Second; dependents of all ages, children,

grandchildren and even great-grandchildren should be eligible.

At the Scholarship Board Meeting on June 9, it was determined that Wings Financial Federal Credit Union should be approached to handle the scholarship. Wings currently awards four scholarships. They have an in house committee to determine their recipient. Paul Parrish, CEO and President of Wings was approached and agreed to undertake the administration of the Paul Soderlind Scholarship.

All criteria for applying for the scholarship remain the same. Notice will be in the Wings bulletin as to when and how to apply. The name of Paul Soderlind will remain on the scholarship award. The only additional requirement will be membership in Wings Financial. There is a minimal charge of \$5.00 to open an account.

If you wish to contribute please send your donation to Wings Financial Federal Credit Union c/o Paul Soderlind Memorial Scholarship Fund.

See you in Albuquerque!



Treasurer's Report: Dino OLIVA

I am sending this treasurer's report early, as Karen and I will be leaving shortly for several months on the road, traveling about.

Now that NWA is no more, it is more important than ever for RNPA to survive so that we all continue the friendships we developed over the years at Northwest. Delta, in an effort to integrate the two airlines as soon as possible with the least amount of animosity, has done all within their power to prevent employees from being able to distinguish which airline they originally came from. For everyone's benefit we hope that the integration goes smoothly and that the airline is successful.

The problem we have is that there is no way that we can contact ex-NWA pilots as they retire in order to in-

IMPORTANT! PLEASE READ!

roduce them to RNPA, and to encourage them to become members. We encourage each and everyone of you to become recruiters and to contact any of your friends, both retired or still active, that are not members and let them know about RNPA. We have about 1350 members at this time. If we do not continue to add new members it will just be a matter of time before we wither away. Our future depends on each of you. Interestingly, I have received applications for membership from 5 pilots that have been retired for several years. Maybe they too are nostalgic and do not want to lose contact with all their old friends.

As for me personally, I look forward to every RNPA event that I am able to attend to renew old friendships. Without your help, this will all disappear way too soon.



COLOR!

Can you believe it?

When I first began helping Dick Schlader with this newsletter seven years ago, I asked him if he thought we'd ever be able to publish in color. He responded, "Yeah, when Hell freezes over!"

As far as I know Hell isn't even cooling down, but thanks to the ever-accelerating technology in printing, here we are.

How this all came to be is a little more complex than you probably care to hear. In a nutshell, it involved a state of the art new printing press that I came across, from which I got a very favorable price quote for color—roughly only 20% more than what I have been paying.

The really interesting development is that the printing house that I've been using for so long is actually going to buy a new press to compete with that quote. End result: I get my magazine in full color at that same price quote and get to stay with people I like and trust.

I learned long ago that one of the most difficult tasks in commercial printing involves getting black and white photos to print accurately. One single black ink simply cannot do what four "process" inks can. It has been a real struggle trying to get those black and white photos the way I would have liked them. Thankfully, those frustrating days are now behind me.

We are not anticipating a need for a dues increase any time soon because of going to color. If we need to in the future it will most likely be driven by USPS increases.

If you enjoy reading this full-color edition even half as much as I have relished putting it together you will have had a good time.

You can color me very happy!

BUT I'M ALSO A LITTLE EMBARRASSED

If you read the article in the last issue about David Rall's ditching in the South China Sea by Bob Johnson (p. 30) you will understand my chagrin. You should know that our Proofing Editor, Romelle Lemley, is as good as they come. Unfortunately, technical problems precluded her proofing any of it—just at a time that I, obviously, needed it most.

I had copied Bob's letter with OCR (Optical Character Recognition) software and never got back to "clean it up." Just so you know that Romelle is blameless in this.

FEATURE ARTICLE(S)

I am fully aware that most of you know about Paul Soderlind's contributions to aviation safety. After all, we "grew up" with and benefited first hand from his expertise.

Consider this a refresher course for us. By publishing this I am hoping to expose our new Delta family members to the one individual who has arguably contributed more to swept-wing aviation, both commercial and private, than anyone else since the first jets. If there is a contender I'd like to know about him.

SUE DUXBURY BOWS OUT

For the last nine issues, since February of 2007, Sue has written *Getting to Know You* with the intent of getting to know some of the ladies of RNPA. She has asked to be relieved of that obligation to pursue her personal writing and other interests.

You have my personal thanks for a job well done, Sue. It's not an easy task conducting an interview every 90 days. I'm sure the ladies will miss your efforts. I will miss the interesting stories of your subjects.

AND A NEWCOMER STEPS IN

Well, not really a newcomer. But a new Contributing Columnist. He has written two recent articles for Contrails. Even if you don't remember his name, you will no doubt recognize the style and the quality writing of James Baldwin.

He is still an active Delta pilot who has a few more years until retirement. (Oh, how tough it is to write that. He's really one of us.) His first few contributions will be exploring the cultural and operational differences of the two airlines—from the inside.

You can form your own opinion, of course, but I think Capt. Baldwin could hold his own against any columnist out there. I am thankful that he has chosen to grace our little magazine with his talent and insight.

AND OLD BOB IS STILL WITH US

Bob Root continues to add some sparkle and fun to every issue. How many newsletters can claim two such talented writers? Lucky me.

Lucky you!

Whatchabeenupto?



DOUG ROHRER

PAUL LUDWIG

JOEL TASTAD

Dear Gary,

I want to thank Bob Johnson and others in the NWA History Center for what they do to bring our history to life.

Particularly I want to thank Bob for his story in the recent Contrails of Captain Rall's ditching a DC-7C in 1960. At the time of the more recent ditching of US Airways' plane in the Hudson River, one of the national news channels compared the ditching in the Hudson to the filmed ditching of Pan American Airways' Stratocruiser near an ocean-going ship many years ago.

Rall's ditching was of course not filmed, but it was far more hazardous. As I recall, the flaming engine threw a prop into the fuselage prior to ditching. When the US Airways plane ditched I thought of Rall's ditching and wanted to alert the networks about it but being computer illiterate I could not find the story of Rall's ditching to send to the three main national news networks.

Captain Rall and his crew deserve praise still, and thanks to Bob, we have been able to read about it again and wonder what it would have been like if it had happened to one of us.

Thanks also for Contrails and to the people who make it look like the professionally created issue that it is.

Paul Ludwig

Of course, if it were all that professional there wouldn't have been all those typos in that article! -Ed.

During my years with NWA, I only got one autograph and that was from Neil Armstrong. For some reason I just never felt comfortable with the asking. Now I wish I would have been more bold.

One time on the 757, we were going from LA to Memphis. The flight attendant brought up some coffee and mentioned that we had Tennessee Ernie Ford with us. Really I said, "Where is he?" She answered that he was in the second row in first class. After she left, I told the copilot I was going back to say hello to him. (Yes, he put his O₂ mask on.) The seat next to him was vacant and I sat down.

During our brief visit, I related to him how after we got electricity on the farm, my dad got this fancy sound system which was a little suitcase shaped thing that played one record at a time. We might have had two records, but I only remember the 78 rpm album of Tennessee Ernie Ford hymns. Our ritual was that every Sunday morning, my dad would put that record on and turn it wide open. That was the wake up call for us kids to get up and get ready for church. It provided all of the background until we left the house.

He seemed touched and very appreciative of the story. Before I left, he said that if I ever wanted a ride in a B29, he could arrange it.

So, I didn't get an autograph, but I did get a rather unique offer from a most gracious man.

Thanks,
Joel Tastad

Hi Dino,

As usual, I'm late sending a check today due to being a snow bird and only getting back to the chilly Northwest just this past weekend.

We stayed in San Jose del Cabo almost 7 months this season. Even the evil swine flu didn't get us! We've moved into a new condo in San Jose with our own tennis court, pools, etc., and life is so good down there we hate to come back to Mt. Vernon, WA. However, the garden calls, as well as our two girls and the grandkids in the Mt. Vernon/Bellingham area.

Thanks again for your efforts.
Doug Rohrer



EILEEN HALVORSON

Dear Dino, RNPA Board and all volunteers,

Thank you for all your efforts to make RNPA a fun, well-rounded organization. Personally, I look forward to seeing you again in ABQ for this year's reunion. My sincere thanks to Mary Gauthier and Doug Peterson with their volunteers for this last Christmas luncheon in Seattle. The holiday decor, good food and gathering of NWA retirees is an annual event I wouldn't miss.

See you in September,
Eileen Halvorson

KEN LINVILLE

Dino,

Ten thousand Gomen Nasai's for my absent-minded, pea-brain neglectfulness and for adding even more work than necessary to your selfless efforts.

I should know that the first of the year brings with it the submission of my RNPA dues if I want to remain in the club. Notwithstanding my senility, I am indeed proud to be a member of this prestigious organization so I must get my act together.

Traveling between Honolulu and Seattle tends to confuse the USPS more than it should, so I didn't get my reminder this year. But, as I learned the first day I came to work at good old NWOA, there are no valid excuses for screwing up. I shall not let it happen again.

In a way, I find myself rather thankful I don't fly airplanes any more. I'm not at all sure I'd be mentally up for it. Same reason I sold my motorcycles, I guess. (I took a minor spill.)

For an update, Barry Long, Bob Wolf and I have been logging a few

hours on the golf courses in Hawaii this winter, (the cheap ones, of course). Pete Peterson comes over to join us every year as does Bob McAfee occasionally. Since I can't surf, cycle, or sun-tan anymore, golf seems to be about the only thing left. (Well, maybe a couple other little hobbies).

Dave Hopkins and I got to talking at the DLI last year about how much fun we seemed to both be having hanging around with some of our old high school classmates and, as a result, we got a group of them together (different high schools), for a cruise along the Mexican Riviera in March which turned out to be a blast.

Isn't it strange how people who didn't do what we did for a living think it's so cool? "Wow! You flew 747's?" It's almost a little embarrassing at times but luckily, our egos seem to be able to adjust to it.

Thanks again to all of you who make RNPA what it is. Your efforts are indeed appreciated by all.

Ken Linville



JEFF DIETZ

Dino,

Here is my check. I just wore my uniform for the last time... Next month we put on the D.A.L. uniform for the first time. After 30 years with NWA I never thought I'd be retiring with anyone else. I hope I will still be allowed to be a member of RNPA.

Jeff Dietz,
NWA (Anchorage)

got friends?

Do you have NWA friends, pilots and flight attendants that have not joined RNPA?

Talk to them, get them to join. Explain the fun we have at functions.

Better yet, why not give them a gift of the new full-color Contrails?

RNPA intends to be around for a long time.

With your help, watch our membership grow.

There are no letters

From the other guys

Whose "Been meaning to write"

Were just lies!

Burma-Shave

BILL DAY

Dear Gary,

Another year passes. I am not so sure about the rapidity of the passage of time. Each time I see a photo of myself I am caught unaware of the process of aging. I trust you are healthy and in good spirits. You live in a lovely city, which should add to the quality of your life. We are both healthy and challenged enough to keep the gray matter active.

The North Puget Sound RNPA members had our second annual Christmas Party on December 11, 2008. There were 47 members and guests present. This is our only annual event with the spouses or significant others present. As with 2007, this gathering was a success. Our group meets every third Thursday in LaConner, Washington. The dinner bell sounds at 1230 and the doors open at noon. The Nell Thorn is located on the backside of the Laconner Country Inn at the corner of 2nd and Washington. Airport pickups at Anacortes or Skagit Regional can be arranged.

LaConner bodes well with retired pilots living on Whidbey Island, the north suburbs of Seattle, and the Bellingham area. Our meeting place, The Nell Thorn Restaurant is a real find, for which credit goes to Claus Dassel. Those critics, who used to accuse the pilots of being a bit tight, would be astounded at the caliber of our chosen restaurant and the liberal spending retired pilots. Why not go out with class?

I trust you may find some of these photos to be of value for the Contrails publication. You produce an outstanding publication. The quality continues to astound me—well done.

May you personally grow in wealth, wisdom, and peace in 2009.

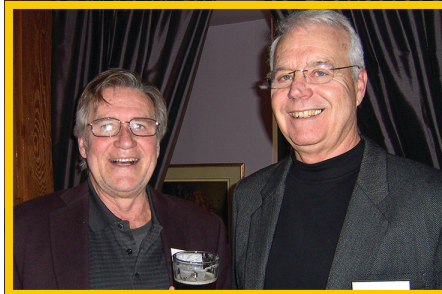
Bill Day



Bill Day, Sig Herman



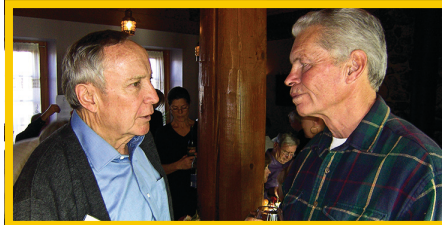
George Groth, Walt Mills, Ron Murdock



Claus Dassel & Kent Sawyer



Kathy Eglet, Bonnie Murdock



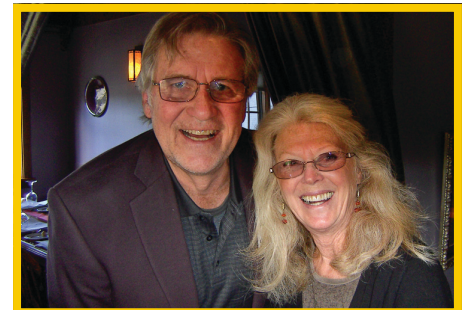
Cal McDonald, Web Bates



Skip & Kathy Eglet



David & Carol Wilder



Claus & Turid Dassel



Phyllis & Phil Miller



Steve White, Bill Barrott

BATTLE OF MIDWAY

The Incredible Victory

Norfolk Virginian-Pilot June 4, 1987

June 4, 1942. The date is as far away from us today as it was, then, from the Spanish-American War. Most Americans alive today were not even born then. Yet the battle for control of the tiny Pacific island of Midway fought that day—less than six months from America's apparently crushing defeat at Pearl Harbor—was the turning point for the war in the Pacific, a victory won against all odds, almost against reason.

Hindsight tells us that Japan, in attacking Pearl Harbor, bit off more than it could chew. (Throughout the war, the United States allocated only 10 percent of its military resources to the Pacific theater.) But knowing what did happen makes it hard, sometimes, to realize what might have happened. In particular, it makes it hard to remember how unlikely it was that the turning point in the Pacific should take place only six months after Pearl Harbor.

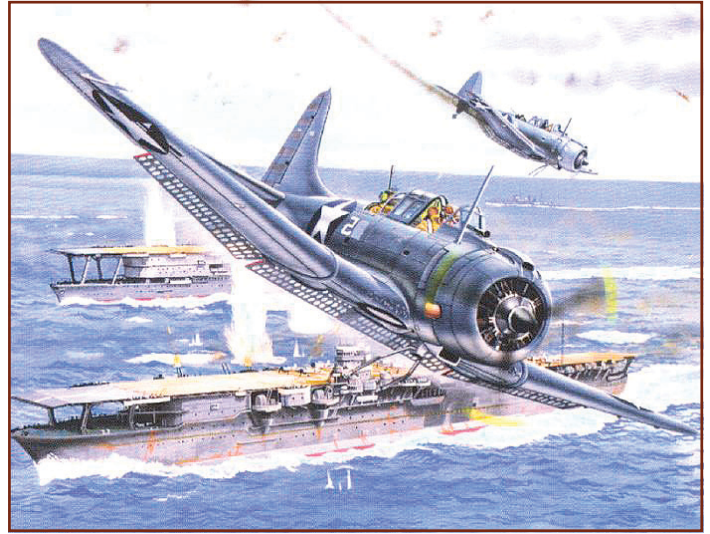
No one has ever improved upon this description of the significance and nearly miraculous nature of the Battle of Midway by Walter Lord in the foreword of *Incredible Victory*:

“By any ordinary standard they were hopelessly outclassed. They had no battleships, the enemy eleven. They had eight cruisers, the enemy twenty-three. They had three carriers (one of them crippled); the enemy had eight. Their shore defenses included guns from the turn of the century.

“They knew little of war. None of the Navy pilots on one of their carriers had ever been in combat, nor had any of the Army fliers. Of the Marines, 17 of 21 new pilots were just out of flight school—some with less than four hours' flight time since then. Their enemy was brilliant, experienced and all-conquering.

“They were tired, dead tired. The patrol plane crews, for instance, had been flying 15 hours a day, servicing their own planes, getting perhaps three hours' sleep at night. They had equipment problems. Some of their dive bombers couldn't dive—the fabric came off the wings. Their torpedo's were slow and unreliable; the torpedo planes even worse. Yet they were up against the finest fighting plane in the world. They took crushing losses—15 out of 15 in one torpedo squadron ... 21 out of 27 in a group of fighters ... many, many more.

“They had no right to win. Yet they did, and in doing so they changed the course of a war. More than that, they added a new name—Midway—to that small list that inspires men by shining example. Like Marathon, the Armada, the Marne, a few others, Midway showed



that every once in a while ‘what must be’ need not be at all. Even against the greatest of odds, there is something in the human spirit—a magic blend of skill, faith and valor—that can lift men from certain defeat to incredible victory.”

That incredible victory (the first naval action in history fought by airpower, with the fleets never coming within gunnery range) was won by men in their 20s and 30s, now aging veterans, who deserve to be remembered. Their battle was an epic—rarely equaled and never surpassed in history—of bravery against odds. It is a memory to cherish.

- Contributed by Vic Britt



It's sad... as our wings go away
To think of a happier day...
When red tails abound,
As we leave the ground.
Was it work, or really just play?

- Ray Alexander



MSP 2009 Flight Attendant Retirement / Reunion Party

"We're going to do a Go-Around"

Wednesday, October 21st
5:00 – 10:00 PM

The Sheraton Hotel
(former Raddisson South)
on 494 and Hwy 100

Due to popular demand we are hosting a cocktail and hors d'oeuvres style party this year. The cost is a little more for this type of party, but the fun should be more too. The hors d'oeuvre menu looks wonderful and we'll be able to spend the whole time munching and TALKING!

Our pilot colleagues and their wives and partners are welcome also.

The Sheraton Hotel's regular room rate is \$159 and they are very booked. An AARP rate of \$139 is available. The catering manager also suggested going to the travel/hotel accommodation web sites to see about lower rates like Expedia, Travelocity, etc.

We are excited about this new format and we think it will be really, really fun.

Tickets:
\$40 per person

Send requests to:
Jane Wallrich
12920 16th Ave S
Burnsville MN 55337
(952) 890-9796

CAPTAIN JULIE CLARK
2008 Katherine and Marjorie Stinson
Award Winner

Arlington, Virginia, September 25, 2008

The National Aeronautic Association (NAA) announced that Captain Julie Clark will receive the 2008 Katherine and Marjorie Stinson award. The Stinson Award was created in 1997 to honor the accomplishments of Katherine and Marjorie Stinson who were among the first eleven American women to be certified as airplane pilots through the Aero Club of America. Their flying school helped numerous U.S. and foreign pilots to earn their Aero Club licenses. The award recognizes a living woman for an outstanding and enduring contribution, a meritorious flight, or a singular technical development in the field of aviation, aeronautics, space or related sciences.

Julie will receive the Stinson Award on Monday, November 3 at the NAA Fall Awards Banquet.

Julie Clark is being honored for her "determination, enthusiasm and professional accomplishments as an airline pilot and air show performer that have provided inspiration and motivation to many women aspiring to a career in aviation."

Julie's passion for flying started as a young girl. As she scraped together anything she could to build flight time, Julie finally was hired by Golden West Airlines—the first and only woman to be hired by them. In 1977, Julie was hired by Hughes Air West (which eventually merged with Northwest Airlines) and became one of the first women to fly for a major airline. She retired from Northwest in 2003 as a captain on the Airbus 300 series.

In addition, Julie has performed before millions during her thirty-plus years as an air show performer, inspiring many others to learn to fly. In 2006 and 2007 she was named one of the "Living Legends of Aviation."

OK, One More Time



After much pleading, threatening and begging from some, I have agreed to do one more print run of my "Logos Flown West." All you procrastinators must take my word for it that this will be the very last chance.

After this last deadline there will be no more!

Orders must be postmarked not later than August 31st

Please send me ___ 8 x 10 (image size 6.2" x 9.3") photo(s) at **\$25 each**, postage paid, for a total of \$_____.
I will expect delivery in the second or third week of September, after the prints are made.

NAME _____

PRINT CLEARLY, PLEASE

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

ST _____

ZIP _____

Make checks payable to "RNPA" and mail this to: **Gary Ferguson**
1664 Paloma St.
Pasadena CA 91104

**ALL
PROCEEDS
BENEFIT
RNPA
DIRECTLY**

A RETIREMENT PARTY FOR A MACHINE?

One of our last 747-200s will be on display for the weekend at

The Museum of Flight, Boeing Field, Seattle October 3rd, 7PM

It is a celebration to mark the retirement of the 747-200 from the NWA fleet after nearly 40 years. It is open to all present and past NWA employees. We hope to co-celebrate with Boeing, as 2009 is the 40th anniversary of the 747 roll out.

We hope to have some of the original Boeing team at the party.

Information will be available on our web site, NWA747.com, including reservations for the party, discounted hotels, and other links.

Right now we have two discounted hotels. One at Sea-Tac and one downtown Seattle—Both at \$89 per night. Links will be on our web site.

The party will be \$30 per head with a no host bar. Reservations will be available through the web site after Aug 1st. Reservations will require full payment and company employee number to hold a spot.

We hope individual employee groups will organize separate activities over the weekend, such as golf tournament, harbor cruise, Boeing tour, etc. Contact JPH@NWA747.com for assistance.



Come help us celebrate!

Minneapolis Christmas Party

Sunday Dec. 13th



Chart House Restaurant

11287 Klamath Trail, Lakeville, Minnesota 952.435.7156

Social Hour: 5:00 Dinner: 6:30

Entrée choices:

1 Champagne Chicken **2** Baked Salmon Filet **3** Prime Rib

Cost: \$39.00 per person

Please make checks payable to: **Doug Wenborg**
Mail this section to: **4300 Hickory Hills Trail, Prior Lake MN 55372**

Name: _____

Entrée: _____

Spouse/Guest: _____

Entrée: _____

_____ People @ \$39 ea. = \$ _____

RSVP by Friday, Dec. 4th

Some Conversation From A Boat

Rode a boat today. Tried to talk with some of 231 other BRSC's. (Boat Riding Senior Citizens.) Somehow, we managed to converse, even though the noise level was way up there and the hearing aids were of little value.

Elsewhere in this issue can be found photographs taken during the annual Minneapolis (don't forget to include Saint Paul) RNPA Boat Ride on the St. Croix. I can report that everyone who got on board--got off. The photos should allow readers to determine if folks had a good time. Certainly, Vic Kleinstauber and his team are to be commended with a "Well Done!" If you read on, you will find out here, and only here, what seniors, many of whom are retired aviators, talk about when they ride a boat.

"Don't you have a defibrillator?"

"Yeah, I do."

"Has it gone off yet?"

"Not that I know of."

"My buddy has one. Went off twice. Both times he was in the shower."

"Well, they told me if I could get up after mine goes off, I don't have to call the ambulance."

"Whatcha been up to?"

"Just finished my home-built. (Jim Hancock show's photograph. Beautiful!) Flew it for the first time last week."

"How long did it take to build?"

"Two years."

"Does it fly upside down?"

Big grin. "Oh, yeah!"

"So, the ambulance driver we had recently in New York was at Ground Zero. He didn't get to go home for three weeks!"

"You guys in Minnesota got a senator yet?"

"Don't know. Or maybe, don't remember. Last I heard, Ole and Lena were gonna decide who won."

"Wife and I were driving back from Madison last week. Stopped in Menomonie at a Perkins for breakfast. I'd been really wanting one of their great breakfasts for about 150 miles. When it came, the eggs were all dried out and the hash browns were hash blacks and the whole thing was way too cooked.

Ate it anyway, didn't say a word except to my wife until we got up to pay. Wasn't going to say anything then, either—you know, Minnesota nice. So the manager lady says: 'How was everything?'

So, I said it was overcooked. You know what, she got mad! Acted like I insulted her or something. They need a policy like the military—don't ask, don't tell."

"Wonder why they wanted all of us on the front of the boat before we sailed?"

"Ferguson was taking a picture from the other boat."

"It's the BOW, not the front."

"About fell in the river."

"...no way! Size 6 at the most!"

"Think the tail fell off first?"

"Nah. Something else probably happened."

"Wonder if they will ever find the black boxes?"

"Ever notice since we retired, lots of planes going into water?"

"Isn't that defibrillator also a pacemaker?"

"Yeah—all of them are, I guess. The things are amazing. The docs hang a little ring around my neck or hook me up to a phone



and they can speed me up or slow me down and tell what I had to eat on last year's boat ride."

"...so there's this quaint little shop there and I found four of them for the price of one."

"Can you use all four?"

"I'll find some way. Can't pass up a deal like that."

"Don't recall any ground school where Abbott or Jake Jacobsen talked about automatic distress messages."

"Or engines that add power without the throttles moving in the cockpit."

"Or a bank limiter."

"Beep-beep, Pull up."

"I didn't look that good at 30."

"Yeah, I went to the VA a few years back. They found records showing my ears worked a lot better when I entered the Navy than when I got out, so they came up with these hearing aids, the batteries, and the whole works."

"Do they help?"

"Oh, yes."

"Mine don't."

"The RV gets about 10 miles per gallon downhill."

"Had surgery on a navel hernia."

"She was poking the needle around in my arm for about five minutes trying to draw blood. Couldn't find a vein. Next day, I was black and blue from elbow to wrist."

"Minnesota has a new law. The cops can stop you if you aren't wearing your seat belt."

"Yeah, and the guy who just shot past you on his Harley doesn't have to wear a helmet."

"Some of America's safety laws are pretty funny. Last year, some minor league third base coach in baseball got killed when a line drive hit him in the head. Now, the coaches have to wear helmets. They are about 90 feet from the batter. The pitcher is 60 feet, six inches from the batter and he doesn't wear a

helmet."

"There's a book out about baseball deaths. It lists about 850 from 1862 to 2007."

"What happens if the seat belt strap squishes your defibrillator?"

"...she's still flying! I don't know, but she must be about sixty."

"Can't smoke in the airport or cockpit, but the Pres can smoke in the White House."

"I'd hate her, but she is just so darn nice, I just can't!"

"...had a bunch of surgery because of a rectal abscess."

"Me too."

"Never thought I would be standing around on a boat with someone talking about mutual rectal abscesses."

"Me neither."

"Say, don't you write the Root Cellar?"

"Yes, I do."

"Great stuff. You should get a Pulitzer."

"Gee, thanks hon!"

From across the boat: "What the hell is a Pulitzer?"





When I see the airlines drop whatever love of aviation they have and replace it with consumer packaged goods-style marketing, it bothers me.

I understand that business is business and selling seats, hopefully for a profit, is priority #1. But why they seem to totally ignore their history, the very foundations upon which they built, escapes me. A case in point is the merger between Delta and Northwest Airlines. Specifically, I am irked that Delta seems to have chosen to ignore the opportunity to keep something very significant in its merger with Northwest: its pilot wings.

Delta and the Pharaohs

Delta reminds me of an Egyptian Pharaoh—and it's not because their logo looks like a pyramid. It's because of Pharaoh Thutmose III, who came to power in the latter 1470s BC. Queen Hatshepsut, Thutmose's predecessor (and mother), was a much beloved Pharaoh-Queen. During her reign Queen Hatshepsut accomplished much for Egypt. She built roads, temples and other public buildings. She expanded trade with far away lands and significantly improved the lot of her people. Hatshepsut was a much beloved populist. Her accomplishments were monuments to the greatness of Egypt. You would think Thutmose III would appreciate and remember this. But he would have nothing of it!

The Egypt Thutmose inherited had never been greater, yet he wanted all the glory for himself. Thutmose sent armies of workers across Egypt to systematically obliterate all evidence of his mother's reign. Her statues were torn down. Her name and image chiseled from the sides of obelisks, temples, and buildings wherever they appeared. Her name and memory and all that she had accomplished were completely erased. Thutmose was now in charge.

Creature Comforts, the U.S. Mail and Golden Wings

I thought of this the other day while flying on a Northwest flight. I have always admired the history of Northwest Airlines. It is (or was, anyway) America's oldest continuously operated airline and the fourth oldest airline in the world. Northwest was the first U.S. airline to operate aircraft specifically designed with the ultimate creature comfort for passengers: the Stinson SB-1 featured a completely enclosed cabin, and travel was never the same again.

Northwest, as nearly all airlines of its time, began as a U.S. Mail carrier. (One notable exception was Delta, which began as a crop dusting outfit.) Before Northwest introduced its Stinson in 1927, intrepid passengers flying on mail planes sat, literally, on bags of mail in the open cockpit. If

they were lucky, they were issued goggles. Business got so good that in 1929, Northwest's General Manager, Colonel Lewis Brittin, issued uniforms to his pilots. He also designed the wings for them to wear on their uniforms. Colonel Brittin designed wings with a globe in the center and the words "US AIR MAIL" prominently spanning the globe.

The Colonel submitted the Northwest pilot wings to the Post Office Department for approval. The Post Office was so impressed with the design it requested Colonel Brittin's permission to adopt the Northwest wings as the official winged insignia for all Air Mail pilots. As a result, the very first pilots from American Airlines, United Airlines, Continental Airlines, and many others wore the Northwest wings. For the last eighty years—virtually since the inception of commercial air travel in America—Northwest pilots have continued to proudly wear these golden "US AIR MAIL" wings. They represent not only Northwest pilots but also all the pioneering pilots who came before them.

Pharaoh Delta and the Marketing Jesters

Comes now the new Pharaoh Delta (and I'm not talking about the Nile) to banish every bit of history it has inherited. "Tear it down, chisel it away, destroy it! We are the new Pharaohs." Who knows what possesses the minds of those logo-look-de-jour marketing jesters of the New Court. I assume it's "branding" and "impressions" and "eyeballs" by the millions burn that red-orange triangle into their minds at every turn!"

It makes you wonder if any thought at all was given to the use of Colonel Brittin's historic pilot wings. You would think Delta might let up long enough to embrace this historic symbol, steeped in the very origins of its industry. It means so much, but today we're in the consumer business. High price consultants and pointy-headed designers will dictate every detail of your "look and feel" with no interest whatsoever in what got you there in the first place. This is unfortunate, because your customers and employees would actually appreciate not being treated like just another bunch of consuming robots. Respect your history. Honor it. Be proud of it and of all of those who brought you to where you are today.

Give Them Back Their Wings!

Pharaoh Delta: Put those golden "US AIR MAIL" wings back on your pilots—all of them! I am certain they will wear them proudly. These wings represent a universal history dating back to the very origins of the airline industry.

DIRECTIONS: From I-5 east on Hwy #18: exit onto **Auburn Way South** (Hwy #164) • turn left on SE 380th Place (Cooper's Corner) • turn right onto 160th Place SE • left onto SE 384th St. • left turn at 212th Ave SE • left turn at SE 376th St • right turn onto 204th Ave SE • right turn at end of road. **OR** From I-5 east on Hwy #18: exit at **Auburn-Black Diamond** exit • turn right to Green Valley Road • turn right at 212th Ave SE (218th ave SE andf 212th Ave SE intersection - green metal bridge at side of road) • turn right at 376th St • right onto 204th Ave SE • right turn at end of road.

FROM BELLEVUE: Hwy #405 • exit south on Hwy #167 • exit to Hwy #18 to either Auburn or Auburn-Black Diamond exit as described above.

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SUMMER PICNIC



Bubba and Me: Part One

It was a cold and rainy night ... well now, wait a minute, I'd better start from the beginning in case some of you haven't been paying attention, although I find that unlikely. But in case you haven't heard, I'll hasten to inform you that the former Northwest Airlines pilots, now called "Delta North" pilots and the Delta Airlines guys, "Delta South" pilots, accomplished, with the help of an arbitration board, a combined seniority list prior to the official merging of operations.

You might think stories of the Northwest/Delta merger and integration process would be filled with rumor, humorous anecdotes and sordid stories of corporate inefficiency and blunder, but alas, and to use modern lingua franca, "This is so not Redbook." I'm only able to report to you how seamlessly and easily it seems to be going.

Even though most of you, as now retired NWA Redbook veterans, might have experienced the BRAC strike or endured the ignominy of missing bathroom doors, witnessed in real time the real life but barely believable stories of the Polhamus brothers, flown the Stratocruiser or somehow managed to survive a crossing of the Pacific in the old -320 with nothing but incredible aviator skills and a good old Doppler, most, with few exceptions have not experienced the kind of current events out of which truly significant history is being made right before our very eyes. And I'm not referring to Bernie, Hugo Chavez or the conspiracy plots deep from within the bowels of Olbermann and Limbaugh either. Although those stories too are barely believable, that's a discussion for another day.

As far as the similar travails of former Southern, Hughes Airwest and North Central pilots go, I can't

even begin to comment; I wasn't in their cockpits nor was I privileged to have been lectured and informed by that group of aviation history mentors. Pacific, Bonanza and West Coast Airlines? I won't even go there, but I can still remember sitting in the back seat of the red tailed "three holer" and "whale" as a new guy listening intently probably more than twice, nodding, asking questions and undoubtedly nodding off myself a few times as well, as I learned about who invented the strobe light, astronots (spelling as intended), mutual aid and advancing lines of ... oh never mind, you guys probably remember the stories better than I could ever retell them anyway—you participated in that history just as we are making the events of today into the next chapter in a book of never ending fascination.

The juxtaposition has now come full circle as I relate and report this subject to you from a decidedly different vantage point than anything the mainstream knows or probably cares about.

As the periodic press has focused on emphasizing, for a very general public, only the most basic of merger details, there are still a plethora of people who either aren't aware of it or, to be generous, never thought about the idea of airline consolidation or the effect on the traveling public. As I shake my head and mutter sotto voce, I try not to use the word "duh."

Regionally, as in Minnesota, Michigan or Atlanta, it's possible the awareness is greater than out here on the West Coast but trying to explain it with Cliff Notes is harder than explaining a doorknob to a pig. As airline proletariat, we too are being fed only the most carefully measured dose of the basic operational changes which are going to

occur and be adopted by the new airline. And we are being fed the changes in very small increments. More on some of that in later editions, but make no mistake—we are, at the end of this currently unexplored and sometimes nebulous process, going to be Delta Airline pilots. Period.

The continuing story of what will undoubtedly turn out to be the biggest merger in airline history is interesting to observe and document from the front lines. Current administration largess and seeming disregard for contract law aside, it might be possible for the appropriate governing bodies to accept and allow a merger of similar proportion, but after examining the possible combinations, I'm not going to hold my breath waiting. Fuel prices and laggard economies will have to coincide to initiate further consolidation on this side of the pond, although, as I write this today, June 1, 2009, we might be headed that way sooner than we think.

The operational and pragmatic realities in the joining of two certainly geographically different if not culturally disparate groups of employees to form the "New Delta," the largest airline in the world, has already spawned the mill of humor. And this merger, the differences and more sophisticated requirements of the age aside, undoubtedly reminds some of our previous "new brothers" of the similarities to the Southern/North Central amalgamation of 1979. Though that merger, unlike the present, involved an airline, Southern, which was in grave danger due to route obsolescence, rising fuel costs and two fatal accidents, today's merger has already identified some of the same sociological challenges as we progress through the process. It is without wonder how important the intimate knowledge our leader has of both organizations and the effect it will have on the final public product.

More than just reading about history this time, we are making it. And the pilots, in particular, are probably the most intricate part of it, or at least we will assign that importance to ourselves, as usual. After all, that's what the old guys taught us new guys to do, even though we're the old new guys now, and I suppose we're teaching the same thing to the new, new guys, although they're mostly older now too.

I'm proud to carry on the tradition and in the end, when the night is indeed cold and rainy, all the other options are expended and nothing else is available, it still boils down to the stick and rudder. In the sense of providing the required safety and reliability in our product, maybe we are the most important.

"... we are the pilots of Northwest Airlines. We know how to do it and we have been doing it right for as long as I have been here."

So, getting back to the story, it was a cold and rainy night—no this time it really wasn't—it actually was a really nice day in Narita but since that's how most of the best seller aviation stories are framed, I figured Anyway, with the typical Japanese precision we are all so used to, the bus delivered us to the upper deck of the Narita International terminal, opposite the Starbucks and escalator hidden behind the vast glass facade, right on schedule. It seemed as if we were almost in a hurry to get to the jet even though it wasn't going to get us home any quicker. We already knew the last leg home would undoubtedly experience those curious "tailwinds" which seemed to somehow propel our Boeing at .86 or .87 for some reason, so why walk so fast?

As we unloaded from the bus and gathered our bags I noticed the small unmarked van arriving behind us. It was obviously full of pilots but with huge hats that reminded me of the Nazi general in "The Great Escape." The hats were big! And tall! I inched closer and then realized these were Delta guys! Look at that hat medallion! It's pretty big too! These were my soon to be brothers! I parked my roller bag and stood almost at attention, assuming the vanguard role of a soon to be dying breed. After all, they ARE Delta and it was rumored we were destined to become just like them, possibly even as cool as them.

As they finished the same bag drill we had done earlier and buttoned their double breasted suit coats they looked up and saw me in the completely standard, legal NWA uniform: no hat, no jacket, four bars, a computer over my right shoulder and a somewhat respectful smirk that invoked curiosity if nothing else. Almost in unison you could see, forming on their furrowed brows, the steely determination, that unmistakable mark of aviation experience that I hope to someday acquire. One of them stepped forward to question, in a simple yet authoritatively perplexed voice, "What?"

They all stared in the same manner as I answered respectfully with lips pursed upward: "I was just watching to see what I was going to look like in six months."

They got the attempt at humor and laughed together, approaching with hands outstretched in greeting. We shook and exchanged introductions; this, for a few perhaps, was their first real experience meeting one of the heretofore opposition in seniority list merger discussions. We swapped stories of equipment, destination and recent experiences with those few we wished we didn't have to call our own before readily agreeing each side had its challenged individuals determined to make this flying thing into a real task.

I had made a good impression for my NWA brothers and I know we all left with an understanding better than what some had preferred to believe. There was potential here, unlike the behavior instigated by the red-green battles of yore, and after all, we did have, for the first time in history, a combined seniority list fabricated by an arbitrator who only—(word swap here)—“irritated” about one in eight, as near as my polls indicate so far.

The concept of job security and preservation of flying position has been lost by some on our side in favor of the date based canard we promulgated with no success. A further indicator to me, although I inhabit more international cockpits than the domestic ones in which I occasionally use to commute, is that it really is a rarely discussed topic. I'm guessing by this time the list is a pretty well accepted fact of life and most of the guys have moved on.

It was a few days later, and the loads were heavy out of Dallas; there weren't any seats left in back. It was a confusing period of time for pilots who wanted to use the jumpseat on Delta, because, as a previous Northwest pilot, temporarily we are not able to reserve the jumpseat as we can with our own



airline. As of this date that remains the status of the seat most of us commuters use monthly to access our assigned base. Reciprocally, I'm sure the same is true for them when they need ours.

But, they were the only train out of town that evening and the Atlanta girlfriend, well The Delta version of CASS (Cockpit Access Security System) had just become operational again and I decided to give it a try. No problem, as the gal behind the podium handed me a slip and said I'd be riding in the cockpit if I could convince the captain to sign it. It didn't take me long to slide down the jetway to query the captain about the possibility of sharing their cockpit for the trip. As had been my experience thus far, permission was granted with a smile and a handshake; the Delta guys were friendly and hospitable.

I stowed my bags and lowered the single observer seat. I was on my way for the first trip in a few weeks and was anxious to ask these guys about how the changes were impacting them.

“Are you guys using a new checklist yet?” I inquired innocently.

“What new checklist?” came the reply.

I explained the few changes we had been given thus far in “Phase 1,” and noted the others slated to follow. Nope, the initial changes to standardize the pilot groups at the “New Delta” appear to be falling mainly on the previous Northwest pilots. As has been explained by our pilot management, it was determined that the time available to complete the goal of obtaining the “Single Operating Certificate” in 2009 eliminated the possibility of actually incorporating the procedures that really were the best between the two carriers. It was promised this whole subject would be revisited after the merger was officially complete.

My naiveté aside, we'll see, but I at least understand and will fail to critique the next guy I hear when he says, “I guess the way things are going we must have been doing it wrong for the last 25 years.”

No, we are the pilots of Northwest Airlines. We know how to do it and we have been doing it right for as long as I have been here.

This is a great time, full of challenge and an opportunity to be part of a new and powerful airline. We might have lost our name and we might have to do things a little differently, but we will always belong to the band of brothers who flew the airplanes with the big red tails. ✈

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2000

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1926



Northwest Airlines
purchases Republic 1986

Republic Airlines

Republic Airlines
merger: North Central & Southern 1979
purchases Hughes Airwest 1980



Hughes Airwest
purchased by Howard Hughes 1970



Air West
merger: Pacific, Bonanza,
West Coast 1968



Pacific Air Lines
name change 1958



West Coast Airlines
purchases Empire Airlines 1952



Northwest Orient
Northwest Airlines
rebranded 1947-1986



NORTH CENTRAL
North Central
Airlines
name change 1952



Southern
Southern
Airways
1949



Southwest
Airways
1946



West Coast
Airlines
1946



Empire Airlines
merger: Zimmerly &
Empire 1946



Pacific
Northern
Airlines
name change
1945



Wisconsin
Central Airlines
1944



Bonanza
Air Lines
1945



Zimmerly
Airlines
1944



Empire
Airlines
1944

Zimmerly Air
Transport 1938



Northwest Airlines
name change
1934

Woodley
Airways
1932

Border Airlines
merges with
Wyoming Air
Service 1931

Northwest Airways
first passenger flight
1927



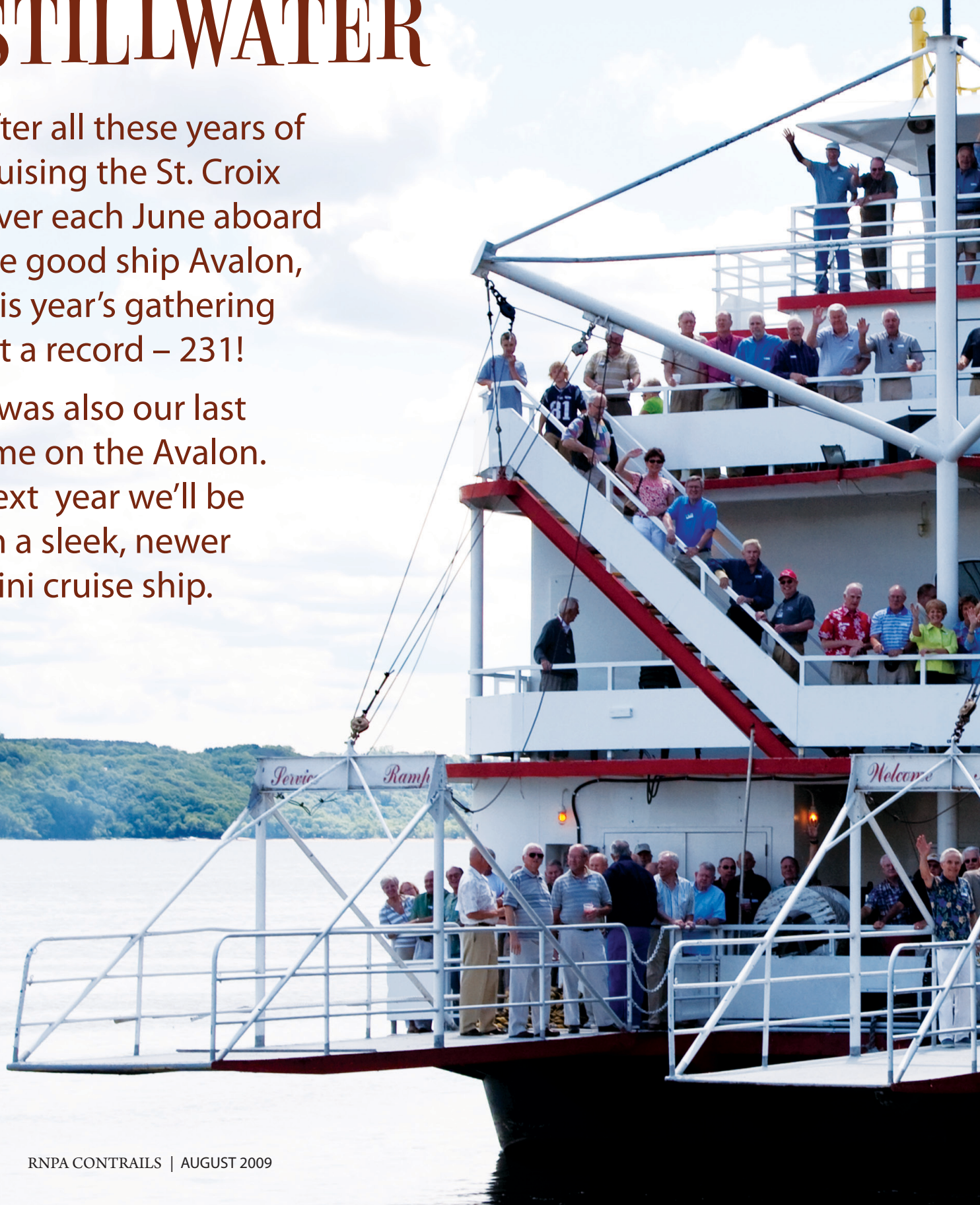
Northwest Airways
incorporated
1926

RLINE OVER THE SPAN OF EIGHTY FIVE YEARS .

STILL GOIN' TO STILLWATER

After all these years of cruising the St. Croix River each June aboard the good ship Avalon, this year's gathering set a record – 231!

It was also our last time on the Avalon. Next year we'll be on a sleek, newer mini cruise ship.





Photos: Gary Ferguson



Just a note of thanks to all that were on board the RNPA Summer Cruise on the St. Croix River.

Once again we enjoyed nice weather and shared quality time visiting with old friends and fellow crew members.

Next year we will be on board their newest boat "Majestic Star." She is a real step up and I am sure will be a pleasant surprise.

Save the date, for more great fellowship with old friends, Thursday June 10, 2010.

Thanks again,
Vic Kleinstauber & Judy Summers.



Lenice Daudt, Joan Thompson, Carol Johnson, Dee Ranheim, Jeanne Wiedner



Stevie Gilbert & Steve Towle, Arnie Calvert, Pete Vinsant, Linda Calvert, Wendy Vinsant



Joel Long, Dianne & Doug Wulff, Todd Long, Katrin Anson



Darlene Conway, Wally Piszczek, Cathy & Dale Nadon, Lee Bradshaw



Silvia Kubes, Karen Oliva, Barb Boldenow



Clancy Ahlberg, Nancy Finchham, Mary Eitrem,
Joan & Gary Thompson, Milt Eitrem



John & Diane Syverson, Jan Ahlgren,
Arlen Anderson, D. K. & Judith Miller



Jerry & Barb Stellner, Edith & Don Schrope,
Glen Houghton (hidden), Pam & Paul Nungesser



Kathleen Palmen, Lois Haglund, Judy King-Ellinson,
Lynne Hensrud, Marty Ginzi



Bob & Lee Root, Janet Post



Ed Johnson, Keith Finneseth



Lenice Daud, Lynne Way, Jackie & Jim O'Reilly, Pauline Rogers



Lois Haglund, Connie Thompson, Jan Ahlgren



Stevie Gilbert & Steve Towle, Arnie & Linda Calvert



Bill Waterbury, Keith Maxwell,
Kathy Zelie, Nancy Waterbury



Ron Kenmir, Claire & Betty Davis,
Dorothy & Red Sutter, Glenn Anderson



John Scholl, Terry & Susan Marsh, Adrienne & Mike Eesley, Lynn Adams, KP Haram (standing)



Connie Thompson, Wendy Vinsant, Stevie Gilbert, Linda Calvert, Claudia Waters



Ned Stephens, Norm & Jean Midthun, Dave Pethia, Carol Johnson, Dee Ranheim, Chet Karnowski



Milt Eitrem, Glenn Anderson, Ed Johnson



Jean Bergman, Chuck Bartlett, Barbara Collins, Ken Bergman



Holly Nelson, Niva Cavill, Verna & Keith Finneseth, Bob Cavill, Dave Nelson



Gary Pisel, Jack Cornforth, Lee & Bob Root



Jim Mancini, Hal Hockett (standing), Jim & Vickie Hancock, Sharon & Ken Kreutzmann, Steve Mahannah



Wayne French, Gary Thompson, Norm Midthun, Earl Lunde, Ray Dolny



Lynn Way, Janet Post, Penny & Bob White



Bob & Lee Root (standing), Sue & Bob Horning



Kathleen Palmen, Judy King-Ellinson, Lois Haglund



Audrey Hastings, Vickie Hancock, Shirley Groff, Bobbi Lachinski



Geroge Lund, Virgil Sagness, Judy King-Ellinson
Kathleen Palmen, Chris Sagness, Dale Hinkle



Dave Miley, Gene Frank, Mary Ann Robins,
Helen Frank, Dick Robins, Ed Johnson



Connie Thompson, Wendy Vinsant, Stevie Gilbert,
Linda Calvert, Claudia Waters



Sandra Erickson, Pete Schenck, Tom Erickson,
Mindy Schenck, Dianne McLaughlin



Dave Miley, Arnie Calvert, Mike Garrison

The Ladies of RNPA (Minus the Flight Attendants except



Edith Schrope, Dick Haglund, Don Schrope



Virgil Sagness, Dick Haglund

dants, with the
option of four who weren't
paying attention to
the briefing!)



Lee Bradshaw, Darlene Conway



Bob Royer, Lynne Confer, Judy Royer, Terry Confer



Don & Jane Chadwick

George Lund, Dave Pethia,
Gary Ferguson, Ed Johnson, Bob Horning



The ultimate group photo



Courtesy St. Croix Boat & Packet Co.



Chris Sagness, Barb & Jerry Stellner

The Flight Attendants of RNPA



Dino Oliva and friend



Dale & Cathy Nadon,
Al & Phyllis Kurtzahn (seated)



Bert & Barbara Sisler





Remembering Paul Soderlind: Part One

A Tribute to Paul Soderlind (reprint) By Bob Cavill

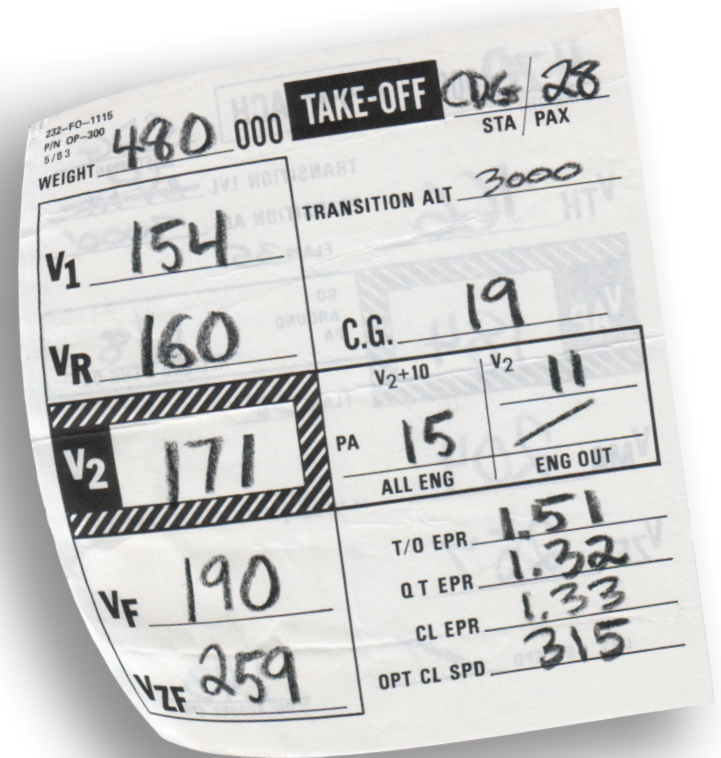
The pilots of Northwest Airlines have lost a good friend and a champion for aviation safety on December 10th, [2000]. It is difficult to conceive all that this man has done to make Northwest's procedures, training and aircraft safer. This transition began to take place when Paul was appointed Director of Flying, Technical at a time when the airline had one of the worst safety records in the industry. Please allow me to review some of the major accomplishments that Paul directed to make Northwest Airlines one of the safest airlines in the world.

SOPA (Standard Operating Procedures Amplified):

This is the "who does what, and when." It established sequence, and designates who normally accomplishes each step and furnishes brief explanations when necessary.

Flight Training Outline:

This detailed explanation covered all normal maneuvers and configurations a pilot would be expected to perform in normal and emergency operations. It was the how. Previous to SOPA and the Flight Training Outline a lot of pilots had their own ways of doing things. As a copilot I clearly recall at bidding time that copilots would check with each other how a particular captain wanted things done. Some were quite different. After the introduction of SOPA and the Flight Training Outline there was one correct way to fly the airplane and a person that would support you to the limit if you followed procedures.



The Bug System:

There is no question in my mind that Northwest pilots are the best pilots in the industry. This is partly due to Paul's simple, but ingenious system that gave us the tools to fly the aircraft at the peak performance level. It was very simple to use, you didn't have to remember any numbers, and a series of bugs were displayed on the perimeter of the airspeed indicator. The safety speeds were plainly marked for takeoff and landing—the marked bug. As part of these procedural speeds there was predetermined pitch attitudes for takeoff and go-around that would give the pilot the proper pitch and speed for peak aircraft performance. This covered all engine or engine failure cases. There was no searching, or trial and error, to produce best performance.

The other half of the best pilot statement is attributed to the education that we received from Paul. He wrote bulletins and conducted ground school classes in which aerodynamics was taught in very clear understandable pilot language.

Memory Check Lists:

Prior to Paul, emergency checklists from the aircraft manufacturers were quite long and always had memory items. As a result check rides were more of a memory check than a flight check and a real emergency was at times a near disaster with the wrong engine being shut down, or something worse. Paul changed all that:

FLY THE AIRPLANE
PILOT NOT FLYING - SILENCE THE BELL
PILOT NOT FLYING -
IDENTIFY THE EMERGENCY
SECOND OFFICER - READ THE CHECKLIST
PILOT NOT FLYING - RESPOND
DO NOT HURRY

Paul was not only an aerodynamic genius but also knew more about pilot human factors than anyone else in the industry. When he did away with the manufacturers' check lists, and adopted the simple safe approach to emergency procedures the FAA strongly objected. Paul proved to them that his method was equal or better than those used by the manufacturer and won the battle. As a result the Northwest standard slowly became the industry standard.

Flare Tones:

Paul clearly foresaw that the transition from the first generation jets to the wide bodies would be a problem for the pilot to judge the proper flare point. The pilot's eye level on the 747 on landing was 70' in the air at main wheel touchdown. As a result, on the first 747s delivered to Northwest the radio altimeter was designed to give the pilot three distinct and different tones at 100', 35' and 20'. I still think the NWA flare tones are superior to the altitude call outs on the glass cockpit aircraft. As far as I am aware I don't think any other airline had flare tones until the glass cockpit aircraft came along.

Aircraft Standardization:

Paul insisted that the aircraft we flew should be in standard configuration down to the finest detail. At times this was quite costly when aircraft came on board with different switch or instrument configuration. When an aircraft was released to the line it met Paul's standards. For many pilots who flew the Pan American Interchange on the 707, it was very clear what a great thing NWA had. Pan Am had different flight directors, different HSIs,

switches were in different locations and quite often an intermix of engines. Each flight was filled with new discoveries.

Noise Abatement:

Northwest led the industry for years with Paul's "Quiet EPR" takeoff and reduced flap/drag approaches. At noise abatement meetings around the country the airports requested that other airlines fly their aircraft like Northwest [did]. In Sydney, Australia the airport operator asked other 747 operators to adopt NWA standard landing flap, as it was at least 2db lower than anyone else's.

Airport Standards:

In the mid 60s as the 727s and 737s came on the scene airlines began jet operations into airports with marginal runways. Paul advised the mountain stations that NWA would not operate jets in those airports until they had 9,000' runways. It still amazes me that an operations person was able set these standards and the airports all provided safe runways for NWA. Most of the mountain stations had poor approach facilities and in most cases the approach required a circling approach. The instrument departures were also of little assistance regarding safe maneuvering areas after takeoff. As an example; at MSO the departure stated, "Climb VFR over the station to 1500' and then depart the MSO VOR on a northwest radial." There was no guidance on how to safely maneuver the 727 around the rocks to get it pointed to the northwest at 1500' over the VOR. Paul laid out simple, clear, tested procedures that made these operations safe and simple. In the late 1960s, many of the pilots operating the 727s had very limited experience. Paul provided the standards and these pilots flew them without an incident.

The trusting relationship that existed between the pilots and Paul was exceptional considering the normal employee/management relations in the airline industry and especially at Northwest, where relations were strained most of the time. This relationship was no accident but one that was bonded by Paul's concern for the pilots operational problems. When a pilot had an operational problem, and there were a lot of them when the jet aircraft started operations, he could not rest until he had resolved the problem. Once again the human factors expert never put blame on the pilot, but looked for the underlying cause. He listened to the flight crews and together worked out the cause and solution.

(continued)

Jet Upset:

In 1962 a Northwest 707-720B experienced an upset and crashed in the Florida Everglades. Paul reconstructed the incident with limited information from the recorders on the airplane. Another airline experienced a similar upset but were able to recover. From the information he collected he was able to explain the jet upset. He presented a six hour ground school to every Northwest pilot on how to avoid an upset when encountering turbulence. The FAA required that all airline pilots in the U.S. receive this presentation on Jet Upset.

Mountain Wave Turbulence:

In the early 1960s pilots reported turbulence encounters that were extreme, without any warning on eastbound flights about 30 miles west of GTF. The flights had been in clear smooth air with the seat belt sign off when they experienced severe turbulence. The turbulence began with an abrupt pitch up, airspeed increase, overspeed warning, more pitch changes and continued severe turbulence, a very frightening experience. Paul and Dan Sowa immediately went to work, developing the mountain wave bypass routes and procedures which solved the problem. They went beyond the mountain wave solution and developed a forecasting procedure and the TP [Turbulence Plot] Program that provided pilots with the best information on the location on all types of turbulence pilots might encounter, including; thunderstorms, low level wind shear, turbulence associated with upper fronts and mountain wave turbulence. Many other airlines in those days requested routing to follow the red tails.

Visual Aim Point on Landing:

One of our 707-720Bs landed short at Fort Lauderdale and damaged the landing gear. After discussing the incident with the crew Paul came out with a bulletin and a procedure requiring an aim point on landing 1000' down the runway on all aircraft. He explained the geometry on the landing jet which was very different from previous prop aircraft. Once again, no blame; he corrected the problem that caused the incident.

High Sink Rate Landing:

A 727 landing at SLC attempted a high sink rate landing with the power at idle and crashed short of the runway. Paul put out a bulletin on the incident explaining the dangers of high sink rate on final and explained the delayed spool-up time on jet engines.

The 40 degree flap setting was also locked out on all of our 727s. He explained that the thrust/drag ratio with 40 degree flaps was marginal and increased the noise factor on landing.

747 Departs Runway on Beginning of Takeoff Roll:

Boeing designed the body gear steering to automatically deactivate as the INS speed signal reached a certain level. Due to conditions on that day the body gear didn't deactivate and the body gear steering overcame the nose wheel and rudder forces and drove the aircraft off the runway. Paul changed Northwest's procedures to turn body gear steering off and the anti-skid braking on when lined up for takeoff. The reverse was done prior to leaving the runway after landing. Instead of pilot error, another serious problem was simply resolved.

Paul Soderlind absolutely loved his job as Director of Flight Operations-Technical, and he also had great loyalty to Mr. Nyrop. Although Mr. Nyrop was very concerned with keeping the operating costs down he usually responded positively to Paul's well-presented requests for standardization and safety. In 1972 when the pilots went on strike, Paul and other management pilots were asked to operate a skeleton schedule, which meant crossing the pilot picket line. Although he had great loyalty to Mr. Nyrop and Northwest he knew by crossing the picket line he would lose the trust and loyalty he had with the pilots. He chose not to fly. Unfortunately for Northwest and the pilots, he was not able to return to his former management position. A year later, Paul lost his medical and was forced to take medical retirement when he was 50 years old.

The medical retirement didn't end his aviation career. Many job offers came in and he continued to work as a consultant until his untimely death in December. His accomplishments have been recognized throughout the aviation industry. He received the FAA Citation and Gold Medal for "Extraordinary Service to Aviation Safety." He received the Laura Barbour Air Safety Award in 1979. Most recently he was inducted into the Minnesota Aviation Hall of Fame. I can only imagine what else Paul Soderlind would have accomplished if he had been able to work until age 60 for Northwest Airlines. The pilots of Northwest have benefited a great deal from the dedication and knowledge of this great man.

Thanks from all of us Paul.
Bob Cavill

Bob Cavill's tribute was originally published in the February, 2001 RNPA Newsletter. It was presented here again not only as a refresher for all of us to recall the important contributions that Paul made to air safety, but also with the hope that some of our new Delta family who may run across this may become aware of how much this one man affected how every domestic, and many foreign, airlines operate today.

Part two of this remembrance is a lengthy interview conducted in 2000. It includes some of Paul's personal memories that I suspect many of you have not heard before. They were new to me. – Editor

Remembering Paul Soderlind: Part Two

An Interview with Joe Godfrey

Paul A. Soderlind was born August 6, 1923, in Billings, Mont. He took his first flight lesson at age 12, earned his private certificate on his 18th birthday (which was then the CAA minimum age), and earned his Commercial and Instructor ratings three months later. In 1942 he was hired by Northwest Airlines to teach instrument flying to new pilots. In 1944 he took two years of military leave from Northwest to become an instructor and check pilot for the Naval Air Transport Squadron. When the war ended he went back to Northwest, but at age 22 was still several months too young to hold the Air Transport Rating. On his 23rd birthday he checked out and became the nation's youngest airline captain.

Many of the standards and procedures he developed as a line pilot were adopted by the airline, and in 1954 Paul was named Northwest's Director, Flight Operations, Technical. In that job he flew all the types Northwest operated from the Boeing 247D up to and including the Boeing 747. He also flew the acceptance test and delivery flights on Northwest types from the Douglas DC-6B up through the 747. In his 30,000+ hours he has flown some 350 types of airplanes, helicopters and gliders, about 25 different types of airliners, about 20 bizjet and turboprops, and some 50 different GA types, including Molt Taylor's Aerocar.

He retired from Northwest in 1973, and has given lectures at ICAO, IATA, Boeing, NBAA, ALPA, IAA, Embry-Riddle, the U.S. Air Force, and the FAA Academy. He has served as a consultant to FAA Administrators Alexander Butterfield, Langhorne Bond and David Hinson, Associate Administrator Richard Skully, and (sadly for us) turned down an offer from the Reagan administration to head the FAA. His list of bizjet consulting jobs reads like the Fortune 500, and his list of airline consulting jobs reads like the Dow Jones Transportation Index. He has flown over most of the Northern Hemisphere (and some of the Southern), from Hong Kong on the west to Paris on the east, including the Philippines, Taiwan, Japan, Alaska, Canada, Hawaii, and most of the contiguous United States. These days he's working closer to home implementing The Bug System and other procedures and systems for Corporate Air in Billings. He has won bookcases full of awards, including the 1964 ALPA Air Safety Award, the first FAA Citation and Gold Medal for Extraordinary Service to Aviation Safety, the 1979 Laura Taber Barbour Air Safety Award, the 1985 General Billy Mitchell Award, a 1994 FAA Special Recognition Award for Lifelong Commitment to Aviation Safety, and in 1997 was inducted into the Minnesota Aviation Hall of Fame. In 1999, Aviation Week and Space Technology honored Paul and his partner, Northwest's Chief Meteorologist Dan Sowa, for the Turbulence Plot program they developed in 1965.

Joe Godfrey is a composer, musician, educator, writer and pilot living in southern California. He is academic director of the Audio Production and Web



Design & Interactive Media programs at the Art Institute of California - San Diego. His music is heard in commercials, films and TV shows.

He has written articles for AOPA Pilot, IFR, Aviation Consumer and Twin & Turbine magazines, and interviewed 54 noted aviators for AVweb.com's Profiles series, of which this is one.

It was conducted in May, 2000, just months before Paul's death.



Art Daniel

Paul and Jean Soderlind enjoying the Rapelje, Montana Rodeo in 1992

How did your life in aviation begin?

I don't remember this but when I was about one year old my folks moved from Billings out to a little town called Rapelje, which was about half as big as a city block. Jumping ahead, when I was doing the acceptance and delivery test for the 747s for Northwest and I'd do a gentle buzz job over Rapelje I remember commenting that I never thought I'd fly an airplane bigger than my hometown. I don't remember this either but my mother did and she's usually right. She said that when I was about two years old I used to poke at the flies on the window and say "airplane." We lived in Rapelje for eleven years, and when I was twelve we moved to Billings and I moved to the airport. Literally. I wouldn't come home at night if I could sleep in an airplane or a hangar.

My folks got used to that and it kept me out of their hair.

I worked as a flunky. The fancy term for it now is "lineboy." I was a general pest to everybody and bugged people to wash their airplanes and get some flight instruction. I graduated slowly from washing airplanes to pushing them in and out of the hangars. I got paid \$3.50 a week and they said I was worth it. The flight service— today we'd call it an FBO—was a one-man operation and I would pester this fellow into giving me some of the flight instruction that I had earned. So it took me from May of 1939 to December of that year to get enough time to solo. I also worked as an apprentice mechanic. I'd do just about anything around the airport to get some flying time.

What airplanes were you flying?

I couldn't pick and choose. I had to take what was available. One was an E-2 Cub, which was the Taylor Cub, before the Piper Cub. C. G. Taylor

owned Taylor Aircraft and sold it to Piper. It had a 37-horsepower engine. Like the J-3 Cub, it had a little crank to move the stabilizer. On the E-2, there was no crank. It was clothesline rope that ran through two pulleys and back to the jackscrew on the stabilizer. It took two hands to move it because you had to pull on one rope and push on the other, so you had to let go of the stick.

Here's a weird story but I swear every syllable of it is true. Let me leap ahead to the early jet airliner days. There were several airplanes lost, and unfortunately Northwest was the first, to lose an airplane to something called the Jet Upset Phenomenon. In those days no one knew much about Mach number and compressibility and shock stall and mach buffet. I was deeply involved in the investigation of the Jet Upset Phenomenon because the first airplane was a Northwest 720B in the Florida Everglades. The 720B was really nothing more than a 707 with a different name. They went straight into the ground from about 20,000 feet. The airplane was found with the stabilizer trim in the extreme airplane nose-down position.

In the 707/720 series airplanes you were able to split the spoilers extending only the inboards or outboards. You used the emergency spoiler switches to do this, and you learned the rule "inboards UP" (turn the inboards OFF), then when you pulled the spoiler handle back you extended only the outboards. With the jet's wing swept back, the outboard spoilers were aft of the inboards and if you extended the outboards only it "spoiled" lift aft due to the extended spoilers and preserved lift forward since with the inboards turned OFF they did not extend thereby causing a nicely controlled nose up pitching moment. While Northwest had the first known jet upset crash it was followed almost immediately by several others in the airline industry, the military and bizjet operations. We did a great deal of flight and simulator testing both in conjunction with Boeing and many "on Northwest's own." In the process we sorted this all out and I became somewhat of a—you'll pardon the expression—"expert" on phenomenon, its cause and how to recover from same.

Jet transports have a trimmable stabilizer, the aerodynamic function being the same as in Taylor and Piper Cubs. If you trim nose down but counter any pitch change with up elevator, opposing air loads on the stabilizer jack screw jam the stabilizer so you can't move it. The classic jet upset begins with the airplane pitching up upon entering a gust

— the term "gust" is not technically correct but use of the term here usually makes the phenomena easier to understand—to what pilots who lived through the phenomenon said was "the vertical." While the pitch-ups seldom if ever really went all the way to the vertical, 30+ degrees nose-up in an airliner can look like vertical. The pilot would try to counter the pitch-up with down elevator, and when this didn't stop it the pilot would intuitively begin trimming the stabilizer AND (Airplane Nose Down).

When the "gust" reverses itself the airplane pitches violently nose down under the influence of, by then, full down elevator and full AND stabilizer. To counter the developing steep nose-down attitude and rapidly increasing speed, the pilot applies up-elevator which, with the stabilizer still full AND is not enough to get the nose-up without the greater aerodynamic force stabilizer trim provides. The pilot tries to trim ANU but finds the stabilizer jammed just like I discovered in the E-2 Taylor Cub in 1938, 68 years ago! A weird story but absolutely true, syllable by syllable! Airspeeds in the dive can go well beyond the Barber Pole, the jet's "red line" airspeed limit, and rates of descent can exceed 50,000 FPM. The stabilizer trim can be "un-jammed" only by momentary release of elevator back pressure, hard to do when diving toward Mother Earth at such speeds, but this "cure" is guaranteed assuming the stabilizer drive system is otherwise normal.

With what I had learned in investigation of the upset cases I developed a six-hour lecture for Northwest pilots. The FAA made the lecture mandatory for all U.S. carriers and it was followed by similar action with the foreign carriers. Having been the only one fortunate to learn these things at first hand, I was the one to give the foreign carriers the lecture myself; it helped that there were nowhere near as many then. And they made it convenient by assembling all together at an ICAO conference in Montreal in 1964.

I hope I am not going too deep with this but it all was a very productive and exciting interlude in my career.

Not too deep at all. If I can follow it anybody can. Sounds quite relevant to today's turbine pilots.

It is unfortunate that how and why the classic jet upset occurs, what to do when it does, stabilizer drive stall and how to "cure" it, and other related

factors we learned the hard way—“on the job” yet they are not being passed on to today’s airline and other pilots. I have done my own private, unscientific survey and have yet to find a single airline that teaches these things. It’s even more important today because of the greater number of flights, often lower level of pilot experience and the explosive rate of growth airlines are experiencing.

I am utterly convinced this sad state of affairs is due to the NIH (Not Invented Here) syndrome. I have seen it at work over and over for years. In one case, I made a presentation on The Bug System (TBS) to another carrier. They operated several fleet types and with TBS could fly them all with the same simple procedures. TBS has saved Northwest “tons of money” in training costs alone, not counting the obvious reduced costs related to the improved safety they’ve enjoyed over the 40 years they’ve used the system.

Several years ago the Vice President of another airline asked that I make a presentation on TBS to his management pilots, including his instructor and check pilot groups. I had to travel 1,000 miles to do this but that was no real problem since it was for the good of his operation. At “show time” they had to find a larger room to accommodate the standing room only audience. My “speech” went very well and was received graciously. The whole process took \$1,000 from my own pocket. To this day I have never heard a word of either acknowledgment or appreciation from that airline.

It is not the first time I’ve had such a disappointing experience.

That airline—and several others—still plod along today flying their airplanes with a different system for each type in the fleet. Somehow this evokes memories of my wonderful, now-departed mother-in-law (who did not look kindly upon drinkers) who poured the dregs of several different wine bottles into one “to save space.” One can imagine how pleasant the taste of that mixture. But with procedures, it’s much worse.

What has been said here about TBS is all the more true of Northwest’s Turbulence Plot (TP) system. It has given Northwest the best turbulence avoidance system of all U.S. carriers, a fact that has been well documented. Two of the most highly respected pilots in the industry—your own John Deakin, a JAL 747 Captain, and TWA’s retired Chief Pilot Bob Buck, known world-wide for his down-to-earth, ham and egg language on how-to-fly and related weather books, not to mention his

deliberate thunderstorm and icing penetrations as safety-advancing research—call the TP program respectively “a program that is admired worldwide” and “(giving Northwest) the most enviable safety record as to turbulence in the industry.” Painstaking, careful calculations—not wild guesswork—shows Northwest saves some \$700,000 a year, more than \$22 million in the 32 years since the system was developed. Well-documented cases demonstrate how, where and why others experienced fatal accidents while transgressing Northwest TP “Do Not Fly” areas. I am astonished other carriers cannot see the obvious competitive advantages the program gives Northwest.

One should note that I no longer have any connection with Northwest except for a fierce loyalty to my alma mater who gave me opportunities I would never have enjoyed otherwise.

I expect much of the above will be called “sour grapes” by some, even make a few enemies. But it has badly needed saying for too long and no one else has been as intimately involved in both programs; any blame can be put on me.

One last, probably unpalatable-to-some comment: The very worst thing that could be done is to expect either the NTSB to recommend the FAA make the systems mandatory, or the FAA to do it “on their own” for that would simply be a disaster! It would only make operators dig their heels in against it more deeply. If an operator cannot see the obvious benefits, safety and economy, in either program, being forced to adopt them would be a fiasco.

You may draw your own conclusions about NIH. Sigh!

Let’s return to earlier days. When did you get your private certificate?

I got my private license on my 18th birthday and got my instructor’s rating shortly after that. War was building up and for a few months I instructed in Billings in the Civilian Pilot Training Program. The army would contract with local flying services to give them their private licenses and some aerobatics and instrument training. Then I went to a flying service in Spokane, and instructed until about July of 1942. I wanted to go with an airline and Northwest was interested but I had to get my instrument rating before they would hire me. So I went to Chicago to a little airport which was long ago swallowed up by O’Hare and did that.

How big was Northwest in those days?

They were desperate for pilots because they had just gotten a pretty large contract to fly cargo and army personnel into Canada, Alaska and the Aleutians. Pilots weren't able to get their own instrument ratings fast enough so Northwest set up their own instrument school in Rochester, Minnesota. I instructed there for a few months and then signed on as a co-pilot and flew the AlCan route for a while before I went to the mainline. That was a great education because it was all ice and instruments in Canada and Alaska and you learned in a hurry.

Before the army contract Northwest had seven DC-3s. Here's an interesting sidelight: When Northwest got the first 747s those low-profile tugs that we used to move them each weighed 125,000 pounds and cost a dollar per pound. That was the cost of a DC-3 in 1940.

How reliable was the instrument flying you were doing?

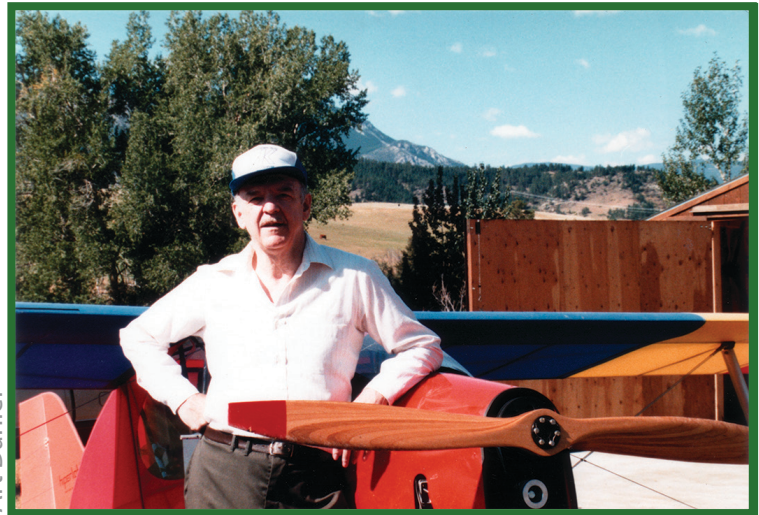
All we had then for enroute instrument guidance was the low-frequency radio range and the ADF. If we had one in an airplane now and you could go out and fly with it you would think, "Well, these guys were crazy." And we were.

How reliable were the flight instruments?

Actually they were surprisingly reliable. All we had was the turn and bank and airspeed indicator, thus the term "needle ball and airspeed" as the system was called. But it wasn't long before the artificial horizon and directional gyro came along and a handful of ILS systems were sprouting at larger airports such as Seattle, Minneapolis, Chicago, etc. These were a godsend for instrument approaches to low weather minimums. The LF range was all audio and you followed the solid tone that made up course that pointed to where you wanted to go. Each LF range had four legs two of which pointed each toward the next closest LF range. The range had four quadrants, two with an "A" signal (dit dah) and two with an "N" signal (dah dit) and where they overlapped in a solid tone defined on course. Your instrument instructor would get you lost somewhere between the four legs and you had to do an "orientation problem" to find which of the four quadrants you were in; only then could you pick the leg you wanted to travel along.

The "orientation problems" were odd and complicated. You had no idea where you were

Art Daniel



except that you were in either an "A" or an "N" quadrant. To find out which of the four it was you used one of two basic procedures: the "fade parallel" or the "fade perpendicular." You took up a heading parallel to the quadrant bisector line and of course didn't know whether you were headed toward or away from the station. You clamped the earphones down tightly and listened for a fade or increase in volume (thus the term "fade parallel"). If the signal faded out you were going away from the station and you would turn 180 degrees and listen carefully for the increase that would confirm you were now heading toward the station. When you got over the signal would fade to zero and you were over "the code of silence" and turned to whichever of the legs pointed to where you wanted to go.

How did WWII change your career path?

In July of 1944, in a fit of patriotism that was brought on by the draft board getting close, I went into the navy. The navy was short of pilots and I had a fair amount of experience in DC-3s and C-46s so they made me a squadron instructor and check pilot in Naval Air Transport Squadron (NATS) VR-3. Here's another coincidence: While in the navy at Corpus Christi I married a Minnesota girl on July 3rd, 1944, not knowing at the time that we had both gone to work for Northwest the same day two years earlier. We were married shortly before I made captain and she rode with me on my airline captain rating ride on my 23rd birthday. While checking out on one's birthday may have been a first, her ride with me on the rating flight must surely be a real first. We're still happily married 57 years later!



Induction into the Minnesota Aviation Hall of Fame, 1997

When the war ended and I went back to the airline I was still too young—probably too immature—to meet the airline captain minimum age of 23. It turned out to be a great opportunity since as the senior co-pilot I could choose the captains I would fly with. I chose those that were known as excellent instructors and again: what an education! I remember one Captain I flew with who told me I wasn't holding altitude so good on instruments. I was holding it within about ten feet and I thought I was doing okay, but he said I would have to shape up on my altitudes. I had been with him long enough that I could talk back a little bit and I said "You'd bitch if you were hung with a new nylon rope!"

After serving as a Captain on the DC-3, the DC-4, the DC-7, the Boeing Stratocruiser and the Martin 202, in 1954 I was given the position of Director of Flight Operations-Technical. A better title would have been Technical Chief Pilot, but I was in charge of writing procedures and teaching pilots how to fly big airplanes. I had a lot of authority because I just took it. I didn't ask the boss if I could take an airplane out and mess with it.

What did you do in that job?

It was my job to manage the technical (how to fly) side of the Northwest operation. I developed

standardized checklists and procedures for the various types Northwest flew, and determined what kind of instruments and how they were arranged. One of the most pleasant responsibilities was the acceptance tests and delivery of each new type Northwest acquired. The airplane was mine until I was satisfied at the factory that every gizmo operated perfectly. The delivery flight to our Minneapolis headquarters was without passengers and I had the freedom to run any tests and experiments I thought necessary. These included probing—in a cowardly manner—of mountain wave and other Clear Air Turbulence [CAT] as well as thunderstorms. There was no other way to gain a full, a truly full, understanding of the weather phenomena an airline pilot faces day in and day out. The experience allowed me to write practical "how-to-fly" procedures with the background to do so while gaining the confidence of the line pilots.

I instructed in every airplane that Northwest had. As the acceptance pilot, I didn't have a type rating. You'd get that by flying the airplane first, then you'd give type ratings to the other pilots. I did the initial instruction on each of the new airplanes that Northwest bought from the DC-6 up through the 747.

How did the Turbulence Plot system get started?

Dan Sowa, Northwest's Chief Meteorologist, and I recognized the government weather services were badly behind the times, especially concerning timely dissemination of severe weather information on thunderstorms, for example. We convinced Donald Nyrop [then president of Northwest] to let us obtain direct connection to both the civil and military ground weather radars. In this way we could bypass the typical one-hour-plus delay in getting the information to our pilots. There is much more to the story but in a nutshell the Turbulence Plot system that we developed allowed Northwest to get severe weather data into the cockpit of any Northwest flight anywhere in the world in as little as eight minutes from when a storm was aborning on the ground weather radars. The system was put into use in 1968 and since that time Northwest has had the best turbulence avoidance record of any operator. With a "picture" of the storm or CAT area in their hands Northwest flights were able to detour severe weather in the immediate area of where other operators suffered fatal accidents.

Do the plots plot more than active thunderstorm cells?

While thunderstorms are number one, the T.P. system covers mountain wave and other Clear Air Turbulence, low-level wind shear, microburst areas, icing areas and on the rare occasions it is required, areas of ozone and volcanic ash concentrations. Ozone is a hazard to passengers and crew and volcanic ash is a serious hazard to the engines and airframe.

When did you retire from Northwest?

In 1973 the doctors diagnosed a mild case of atrial fibrillation which has proven nothing more than an occasional annoyance. Mild annoyance in this case stopping my airline career of 32 years! I wasn't quite 50 years old but because of the terrific education of my Northwest position, both as line pilot and Director of Flight Operations, Technical, I have a relatively good reputation in the industry. Not knowing what in Heaven's name I was going to do at such a tender age, I went to the small Montana ranch—200 acres, by Montana standards just a very small lot—we had bought circa 1972 to brood about my future. Strangely enough I began to get calls. The first call offered me the job of Flight Operations VP for National airlines, now defunct. I passed that up as I would be a miserable failure in any kind of administrative position. But the calls have kept coming at more or less regular intervals.

Perhaps the weirdest assignment was serving at the request of General Public Utilities in investigation of the Three Mile Island nuclear accident. I have also served as an expert witness for Boeing's law firm and several others, again wonderful educational opportunities. During the Reagan administration I was asked to be the FAA Administrator but, thankfully, my better judgment got the edge over my ego and I turned it down. No place for a practical, technically-oriented, no-red-tape kind of guy.

One morning when I was still in bed I got a call from Langhorne Bond, then the FAA Administrator. When I answered the phone and heard who was calling, I not only stood up but stood up at attention! He had just grounded the DC-10s and asked that I meet him at Douglas in Long Beach at 1000 the next morning to work as his adviser in the investigation. On hearing that I had a 75-mile drive just to get to Billings and couldn't get an airline flight in time to meet his 1000 goal in LAB he said "Yes you can; I have a Sabreliner on

the way to pick you up!" Wow! My own personal executive jet!

During certification of the MD-80 (originally called the DC-9-80) ALPA raised a fuss about FAA's intent to certify the airplane with a two-man crew. Bond called again: Would I conduct an independent flight test program in the yet-uncertified MD-80 and give him my opinion on the two-man vs. three-man crew matter. I agreed on the basis I could run a thorough flight evaluation with simulated engine failures, instrument system failures, operation in congested areas, a full workout. He gave his complete blessing to that and I spent a valuable education two weeks of flying a brand-new MD-80! And get paid for it! When it was all over I gave him my opinion the a two-man crew was entirely adequate. The MD-80 was much more highly automated than prior DC-9s and had better flight characteristics, it was much easier to fly.

Who are you tailoring The Bug System for?

Some of my present and recent-past clients are General Mills Flight Department, Cargill FD, Owens Illinois FD, H. S. Zachary Company FD, Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing (3M), Qantas Airlines of Australia, several FAA Administrators, and Southwest Airlines.

Perhaps most of the calls have been from executive airplane turboprop and jet operators to tailor The Bug System to their fleets, T. B. S. being a simple system that optimizes performance, essentially eliminates the need for memory, and is virtually identical for the Cessna 152 and the 747. Learn it on one type and what has been learned is directly transferable to other types, no matter how large or complex.

Any chance of getting some of your wisdom in a book, or maybe some AVweb articles?

Of course. I like to write and given the wonderful and unique opportunities to learn I've had, I truly want to pass on some of the practical stuff I've learned. I want to write a book but seem to have too little time. I recently wrote an article on "The Deadly Spiral" that explains the cause and simple one-step "cure" of the often fatal spiral dive. Too few pilots understand an airplane's spiral mode and virtually all conventional—and most unconventional—airplanes are spirally unstable.

There are dozens, maybe hundreds, of myths about how to fly and/or why an airplane does what it does and these need to be exploded. My

good friend John Deakin is probably the greatest exploder of such myths, at least up to now. Just kidding John.

To mention a few such myths (Deakin calls them OWTs, Old Wives Tales): Airplanes do not stall at a single angle of attack; you can't see where you're going in a "maximum gradient" climb; the conventional procedure on how to recover from the deadly spiral has steps that are detrimental and some dead wrong; in the GA [General Aviation] airplane partial flaps should be used for all—or most—takeoffs; the everyday landing will be shorter with full rather than approach flaps. And a shocker

to most pilots:
absent an inertially driven attitude system or its equivalent you have never had accurate attitude indications and will continue on that sorry path. And on and in ad infinitum. I want to explode them all.



What should the average pilot know about wind shear?

Everything, of course! But I'll try and pack some practical advice in the smallest nutshell I can devise.

In an INS-equipped airplane—like the 747s I flew across the Pacific for years—you have a continuous and instantaneous readout of wind direction and speed. If these values are correlated with time and IAS (or Mach number) you can literally see the aerodynamic effect of half a knot of shear on the airplane. Shear is nothing more than a change in either wind direction or speed and you can never get away from it. Not to scare anyone with the last remark but it is literally true; no matter how stable or strong the wind is it is constantly changing in speed or direction or both which should probably be called "minor shear," not the kind that can take an airplane out of the sky. If half a knot changes things on an 800,000 pound 747, will it affect the smaller airplane? In spades! Shear that causes the mischief is properly called "low level shear" and it has brought down many airplanes, large and small, but rather than calling them "shear accidents" they are more properly "thunderstorm/

microburst" accidents. It's the microburst that's the really bad guy here.

The worst possible exposure is trying to penetrate the heavy rain outflow of a thunderstorm below 1,000 feet AGL on either approach or takeoff. Dry micro bursts on the other hand are usually less dangerous; so far as is known no one has yet been killed in one. Two key rules should keep you out of shear/micro-burst trouble: Never penetrate the outflow of a thunderstorm at less than 1,000' AGL either on takeoff or landing. In a thunderstorm environment never base your go/no go decision on a report from the airplane ahead that he "Had a smooth ride." If the guy ahead reports an airspeed fluctuation, expect yours to be at least three times as bad. If you're in such a hairy situation the worst mistake in the world is to think the answer is to "just to get it on the ground and you'll be O.K." If on the ground in a potential microburst condition, set the brakes and wait it out.

I am in debt to pilot and good friend Captain Dave Akeman for synthesizing his extensive pilot experience and knowledge gained from exhaustive study of these phenomena into the above superb rules, and for much else I have learned from him about the phenomena. There's no doubt he is the most knowledgeable pilot in captivity. The propeller airplane is considerably less susceptible to difficulties produce by shear and/or microbursts, but that is rather academic as a practical matter. The demon can snatch propeller airplanes out of the sky pretty easily. If you want to delve more deeply into the subject look for a copy of the University of Chicago's T. Theodore (TED) Fugita's book "The Downburst," the one man who has literally dissected the shear/microburst factors in hundreds of related accidents.

Are you still flying?

Yes and no. Having lost my medical I cannot legally fly alone except in an ultralight or glider and have done considerable flying in both. Whenever I get the urge to fly—and that is often—my great boss and good friend Bob McIver, VP of Flight Operations for a hundred-airplane fleet flying for FedEx and UPS, etc.—who I have worked with as a consultant now for fourteen years—will offer me the chance to fly in any airplane in the fleet of fourteen different types. The best part? He won't take his share of any of our flights together since, "He likes to watch me fly!" ✈



THE END OF AN ERA: THE NWA SKI AND SNOWBOARD CLUB

By: Charlie Welsh,
Rick Bogotko,
Tony Polgar and
Jane Lauf Barr

As of Nov. 1, 2008 the NWA Ski and Snowboard Club merged with the Delta Club according to the by-laws of NAASF (North American Airline Ski Federation). As one club, Delta and NWA won the NAASF Cup in Crested Butte, CO on April 2, 2009, beating out AA by only 4 points. Although we do have racing in the club, this club is about good comradeship with people who have the same interest—skiing and riding.

Pilot Tom Clements started the NWA Ski “Team” in 1964. It was just a Seattle organization at that time. He held tryouts every January. They would practice locally; then 20 of them would go to the Internationals in Alyeska, Alaska—which pilot Roy Newton organized. NWA won them with Roy’s overwhelming help.

In 1967 Roy took over from Tom and expanded the events to a competition in Austria each January—16 racers from NWA would attend.

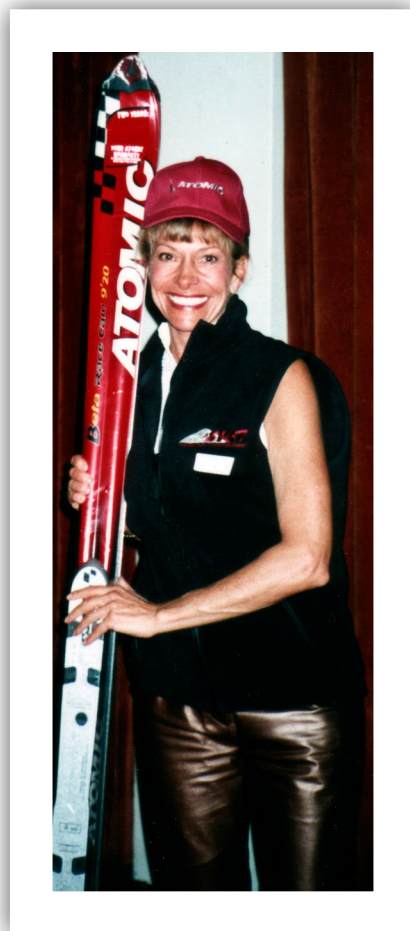
Roy complained that he could get NO sponsorship from NWA. Well nothing ever changed. Through the years our teams presented our trophies to our NWA base in MSP but not a word or any praise was given or acknowledged. It was even difficult to get a picture or article about the club printed in “Passages” like other clubs; even when a couple of years ago without a full “A” team the “B” team pulled out a 2nd place for the NAASF Cup.

Roy got a lot of help from SEA pilot Chuck Wright and F/A’s Judy Glassroud and Sue “Turtle” Hanft. For awhile our skiers tailed off of the Delta and Braniff clubs. Delta had a race/ski clinic that had been up and running for a number of years and there were also a number of Interline ski events in major ski resorts—thus the beginning of NAASF which also raised money to support young skiers and still does to this day. Charlie Welsh skied with Delta because they were very hospitable.

There was a lull for awhile, then a link trainer instructor named Mike Schlax ran the club from ’78 to ’79. Then in 1979 pilot Tony Polgar at the urging of Fred Sparks, restarted the NWA Club, modeling it after the Braniff club. At that time there were about 20 to 30 regulars. Deb Swanke, a ground ops supervisor, took charge of the race team. Other than Deb, Tony ran things single handedly.

Tony felt that as a nonprofit organization, they should spend all their left-over dues money at the end of the year on their members. So, they would have strawberries and champagne at the Sun Valley Inn hot tub. In those days there was an organized “grab ass” in that hot tub. It was not only condoned but actually appeared on the schedule of events. There were wet T-shirt contests in the “Boiler Room” in Sun Valley and one of our F/A friends from AK, Chris McKown, said her mother worked there at that time. And “skin to win” became the rule at the costume parties.

In 1984 Gar Benson took over for a year and passed the baton to Lee Guinn, a NW mechanic. Lee was computer savvy



Jane Barr winning skis at Sun Valley, March, 2001



and organized the club and recruited “base reps” to advertise and increase the club membership. He put out the first newsletter and like Tony, Lee did most of the work himself. After a year as our president he left NWA in 1986 to work for a commuter out of Telluride. He skied with the club when our group visited Telluride in '87 and '91.

Lee left a vacuum which Rick Bogotko filled later in '86. Like Lee, Rick was also computer savvy and continued with base reps; put out a regular newsletter and got the word out about the ski weeks a year in advance. Charlie Wesh was the SEA rep and later there were reps in JFK, BOS, MEM, DTW, HNL and ANC.

Rick was an excellent organizer and could delegate well. Rick was the one who got me to join the club; 20 years later I'm retired and still with the club.

Pilot Pam Mitchell took charge of the learn to ski clinic and Sally Martin was her go-for, getting door prizes, consisting of equipment, for the members. Sally also became our NAASF rep.

In 1989 F/A Bobbi Foger took over and Charlie Wesh and his wife NanSea ran the club. By '94 and

'95 we had 176 members and for the first time the NWA race team placed in all 3 race categories. Soon we had 440 members.

We owe these fore-mentioned



persons a great deal of gratitude for keeping the club running when you couldn't find one or two persons for this thankless job.

NAASF was now building in strength as well. In 1991 NAASF skiers at Sun Valley numbered 1000 people and Clint Eastwood attended our parties for years, even when he was Mayor of Carmel, CA.

Bobbi Foger hand typed all the newsletters, they then went to a printing shop, this was our biggest expense. Since I was married to Mark Hannah, who was in the copying business, I asked if we could use some of the copy machines instead. We saved money and Mark, who loved to eat got a great lunch on the club.

In 1999 Bobbi introduced a F/A name Heidi to pilot Dean Foss and she took over as president, Bobbi stayed on as VP and Charlie as Sec/ Tres. and membership, with NanSea always willing to fill in to help our club.

F/A Sabrina Newton took over the Newsletter and membership; pilot Mark Duncan became treasurer and F/A Deb Main stepped into the president slot and Web Master was pilot Are Johnson until 2002. Mind you Sabrina was in DTW, Deb was in LAX, Mark was in DTW and Are—he was around somewhere else. We had branched out-- that is for sure.

During this time our clinic, which had numbered in the hundreds, now moved from Breckenridge to Copper Mt. and Res. Agent Holly Tront and F/A Sandy Wooten coordinated the week. When Holly began to Coordinate the Int'l Week F/A Lynn Bilderback filled in to help Sandy. When they moved on Janine McIntyre and I took over the clinic for 1999 and 2001. I have continued since.

When Deb decided to step down there still weren't two candidates who wanted this thankless job. So a group of regulars asked, (OK, Pressured) F/As Heather Patterson and Jeri Koleno Hunt into the president position.

There were only a few members who were coming regularly to the ski weeks and it seemed that the club had run into problems along with all the pay cuts and the airline industry troubles. No one wanted the responsibility but all of us wanted the fun to continue, so I suggested to Heather and Jeri that we form a board of all those members who consistently came to the ski weeks. The board consisted of Heather as Pres., Jeri as VP, pilot Anne Simpson, who was very computer savvy too, took over as Treasurer and Membership; pilot Jeanne Henry, Sec.; Jane Barr, Clinic and Snowboard Capt; pilot Steve



Chuck Hinz, retired pilot, playing drums at Big Sky entertaining all the airlines in our hotel bar



Bacsikin. We decided we needed some by-laws and Jeri's (now) husband, Mitch Hunt gave us UA's by-laws to fashion our own. We then brought in a new member and racer to the club, pilot Kurt Syer, to aide in their development.

During this time pilot Bill Wilson married a wonderful lady named Theresa, who was willing to become and develop even more of a web site for us and today as computers have changed so have web systems, and Sarah Abbett has taken us and NAASF into the next century with all new technology. nwas-kiclub.com and naasf.com will tell you anything you want to know—so please visit us.

Our first elected officials: President: Vicki Benson, Heather, VP; Sec. Lesli Tomasini; Tres. Anne Simpson.

Over all these years thanks and appreciation goes to those mentioned but also to our base reps from F/A Junko Hashimoto in Japan to Gerben Hettinga, KLM, in AMS. BOS-Joe Pagano; DTW- Jane Barr, Holly Tront, Marc VanGestal; SFO- Amy Good and Sally Martin; LAX-Deb Main; MSP-Bill Boynton, Dave Hurly, Janine McIntyre; ORD-Dale Ende; MEM-Jerry Overholser and Sueanne Patterson; JFK-Lou Rudy and Muriel Devine; HNL-Bill Stafford and Tom Stanton; ANC-Mark Montgomery; SEA-Bobbie Foger and Kirstin Tanning.

Our team captains, newsletters International coordinators and other coordinators from team jackets and just helpers: Tim Ulfig, Lisa Nydahl, Burton

Powers, Gerri Wickland, Steve Lakos, Lisa Willette, Kathy Patterson, Don Rizz, LD Dendky, Mike Weber, Ron Blue and Demian Brooks.

To all our racers past and present; to all our dedicated officers who kept us afloat, and our fun loving members—thank you!

To all of you who would love to join our new Delta club please go to our web site now and sign on and Sarah will welcome you in. Like Charlie, you will see they are very hospitable. DL pilot Scott Aldrich is the new Pres.; Sarah Abbett is VP; Anne Simpson remains Tres. and membership; Sec.: Vicki Benson; Directors (from DL): Linda Sherry, Chuck Wagner, and Rob Mastic; from NW: Heather Patterson.

We would dearly love to see our retirees come back. UA has a number of retirees that come regularly to the ski weeks so if you want to meet some more people with your same interests and abilities let me know. If anyone is interested in the Copper Clinic arriving on Dec. 7th and leaving the 12th, 2009 please contact Jane Barr: mejane@tampabay.rr.com or 727-368-0708.

It has been a great 45 years of friends and ski/riding and, instead of saying goodbye, let the omen of winning the NAASF Cup remind us of how well we have blended with Delta and expanded our family of good sportsmen.

Jane Barr



John Dittberner 1934 ~ 2009

John Quentin Dittberner, age 75, of Mendota Heights, Minnesota, and a retired Northwest Airlines captain, “flew west” peacefully for a final check on Thursday, May 28, 2009 surrounded by his family and the compassionate care of Colleen Woodley. John was diagnosed with myelofibrosis in May 2005, the only time in his life that he was sick. He died after a long and courageous battle with the disease, refusing to give up. John was very weak at the end but his loving wife Mary Jane said that his incredible wit remained alive and well. A lot of times, when ask what he wanted or needed, the reply was “Jamieson Whiskey.” Mary Jane and the family are grateful for the care given by the United Hospital’s Infusion Center from Ann O’Boyle, Brenda, Kamie, Amie, and Linda.

John grew up in the Frogtown neighborhood in St. Paul, went to St. Vincent’s Grade School and graduated from Cretin High School. He served in the US Navy in Hawaii after graduation from high school, and after getting out of the Navy in 1959 went to airplane

mechanics school in Oklahoma. When he finished airplane mechanics school, John called Northwest about being a flight engineer. They said he would have to work approximately 6 1/2 years as a mechanic first, and that they were not hiring mechanics. Three and a half weeks later NWA called John and asked if he wanted to come for an interview and take tests to be a mechanic.

He started working as a mechanic after Thanksgiving on the 11pm-7am shift (changing oil filters on the Stratocruiser). Openings became available for flight engineers and John bid for it (more pay). Bernie Foster (a buddy at NWA) had been a flight engineer and liked it, and he told John how good it was to fly. The rules did not allow mechanics to bid for a flight engineer position until their probationary period as a mechanic was up, but because senior mechanics didn’t bid the job John got the bid before his 6 months of probation as a mechanic ended.

From 1960 to 1963, whenever he wasn’t laid off, John was a flight engineer on the DC-6 and DC-7.



When he was recalled after a long layoff in 1964 John went to training and checked out as a flight engineer on the Lockheed Electra. The training instructor was Gene Schmitt and he told the flight engineers in the class that if they wanted to stay at NWA as flight engineers, they would have to become pilots to comply with an agreement between the company and ALPA. Half of the class walked out and went back to flight engineer jobs at nonscheduled airlines.

John had no idea where he could get the money to be a pilot, but he didn't think it was so difficult that he couldn't do it. John, Ray Henry, Wayne Camp and Bill Brandt were all living in Cottage Grove, so they got together and talked to the Northwest Airlines Credit Union. The credit union agreed to loan them the money to obtain the necessary licenses to be hired as pilots at Northwest. Aero Precision at Fleming Field, St. Paul agreed to give them a special rate on instruction and airplane rental if they paid \$500 in advance. John took lessons on his days off and in less than a year paid \$3,800 for 210 hours of flight training and had his com-

mercial and instrument rating.

In 1965 John checked out as copilot on Lockheed Electra and in the next 3 1/2 years flew as copilot on the Electra, Boeing 707 and Boeing 727. Promotion was rapid as the airline was growing fast and adding new airplanes, and in 1969 John checked out as captain on the B-727 and the B707. John checked out as Captain on the DC 10 in the early 1980's and flew many years on the "Ten" and enjoyed the airplane. His youngest son was living with the family at the time and John deferred checking out on the Boeing 747 because he did not want to have to fly long Asia trips. Prior to retirement John checked out on the Boeing 747 in 1989 and finished his career on that airplane. When he retired at age 60, his record was perfect. No harm came to any passenger on a plane he piloted. He was held in great affection and respect by those who served with him at Northwest Airlines. In his retirement, he read widely, and enjoyed the cottage on the Amnicon River in northern Wisconsin; he followed the news closely and was passionate in his opposition to the War in Iraq.

This is but a small portion of our remembrances of John, which are much too lengthy to publish here. If you'd like to read more about his life, you will find several more pages and more photos here: <http://issuu.com/contrails/docs/dittberner>



Ed Knutson 1921 ~ 2009

Edwin W. Knutson, Age 88, of Bloomington, Minnesota, and a retired Northwest Airlines second officer, "flew west" for a final check on Easter Monday, April 13, 2009. He had suffered from Alzheimer's in the final years of his life. Ed was a WWII Veteran and a Northwest Airlines mechanic; DC-6, DC-7 and Lockheed Electra flight engineer; and a second officer on the Boeing 707 and 747 aircraft. Ed was preceded in death by his wife of 62 years, Barbara; 2 brothers; a sister and a great-granddaughter. He is survived by his children, Peggy Gross, Kathleen Knutson, Ronald (Nancy) Knutson and Diane (Robb) Swenson; 10 grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren.

From the Guest Book

Warren Avenson: Men like Ed were the reasons being an NWA flight crew member was the best job imaginable.

Ray Dolny: Ed was a good friend whom I worked with on many occasions. He was a dedicated employee. My condolences to his family.

Vic Britt: I worked with Ed when he checked out on the Boeing 747 in May 1970, and later gave him several second officer checks on the aircraft. Ed was always prepared and did an outstanding job on his check rides. Pilots who flew with Ed on the line appreciated his easy manner and professional approach to his job. Ed Knutson was a good guy and a good employee, dedicated and loyal to Northwest Airlines.



Arthur Frank “Art” Antilla (W 7 F J), age 91, of Puyallap, Washington, and a retired Northwest Airlines captain, “flew west” for a final check on Thursday, May 7, 2009. Art was born in Whiting, Indiana on January 15, 1918 to Helmi Elizabeth and Alex Antilla. His father Alex immigrated from Finland first, and his mother came in 1917 with older brother Arvo on one of the last boats of immigrants to arrive before the USA entered World War I. Art, Miriam, Gus, Olga, Herman, Albert and Lillian joined the family in a home built by their father in Whiting where all of the kids learned to speak Finnish as well as English. Their home was only three blocks from Lake Michigan, and the children spent many hours during the summer swimming, and in winter ice skating on the frozen waters. All of the children were baptized and confirmed at St. John’s Lutheran Church in Whiting.

Art’s father was a craftsman who taught his sons building skills, and they helped their father build an apartment and store next to their home for rental. At a young age Art was fascinated with radios, and he took his father’s radio apart so often that his mother told his father, “Art need’s his own room.” At age seven he built his first radio and became a “ham” radio operator, able to communicate all over the world. After he helped his father build a family sauna, Art was given his own room to pursue his radio talents.

After graduating from Hammond Technical School, he attended RCA Institute School in Chicago where he continued his radio studies. When he showed an interest in aviation his father helped him get a loan for a Taylorcraft airplane. When he wasn’t in school or flying he sailed the Great Lakes as a radio operator on the ore boats.

One summer he was employed on the yacht “Mizpah” owned by the president of the Zenith Radio Corporation. They sailed to the Caribbean, which was quite an experience for a young boy from a small town in Indiana.

Art joined Northwest Airlines as a radio operator at Midway Airport in Chicago in 1939. In addition to his radio operator duties, Art checked the passengers in and loaded their baggage. He flew his airplane to work, and Northwest allowed him to keep it in their hanger. Soon after World War II started he was urged to fly to Minneapolis and apply for a pilot’s position and he was promptly hired.

During the war Northwest Airlines had a contract with the government to fly war materials, and Art flew supplies to the troops stationed in Alaska and the Aleutian Islands. Art married Marie Herokovich in November 1941, and their children Art and Maria were born in Minneapolis. After the war Art transferred to Seattle and purchased a farm in Puyallup, Washington, where he flew to Japan and the Orient. Art and Marie were divorced in 1969.

His son Art worked for United Air Lines, and introduced his father to Evie Hansen who worked with him at United. Art and Evie were married June 18, 1970 and they had fun flying their Cessna 150 on short trips to California. Art retired from Northwest Airlines in 1978 at age 60, and the next day he and Evie began building a new home on a bluff overlooking the Orting Valley.

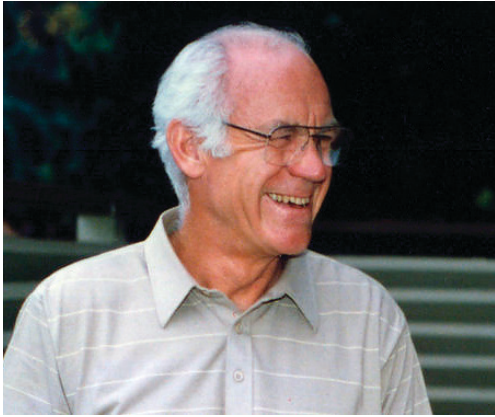
Soon after their new home was completed, Art got a call from the sea and went back to work on

the SeaLand Freighters as a radio operator. He was a life member of the Society of Wireless Pioneers, an organization dedicated to the men who “went down to sea in ships” as Wireless Telegraphers, and all those who earned their living “pounding brass” as wireless or radio operators since the day of Marconi. Art continued in his new/old career until 1994 when he was 76 years old, and had to have heart surgery.

He was a good man who lived out his desires in the air and on the sea, and he ran a tight ship in the air, at sea, and at home. Art is missed by his wife Evie, son Art, Daughter Maria, grandson’s Mark and Andy, and great-grandchildren Allison and Alex.



Art Antilla
1918 ~ 2009



Chet Gordon
1925 ~ 2009

Chester “Chet” Gordon, age 84, and a retired Northwest Airlines captain “flew west” peacefully for a final check on Monday, March 9, 2009. Born in Corvallis, Oregon Chet attended Roosevelt High School where he met his wife, Charlotte. Chet enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1943 when he was 18 years old. He piloted the B-24 “Liberator” bomber as a squadron Lieutenant, and flew combat missions in the Asian-Pacific Theatre. Post war, Chet’s 34 year career as a Northwest Airline pilot brought him great pride and joy. As captain, he flew the 747 to Hawaii and the Orient.

Chet and Charlotte raised their family on Clyde Hill and Meydenbauer Bay before fulfilling their lifelong dream of building a winter retirement home in Wailea, Maui while enjoying the summers at their Birch Bay beach home. Golf was his game and Chet was an outstanding golfer his entire life, winning many amateur Northwest titles, and later club championships at Sand Point and Overlake Country Clubs.

In retirement, he won three championships at the Wailea Golf Club. We’ll never forget and always envy his amazing smooth, easy swing!

Chet is survived by his wife Charlotte of 60 years, sons Craig (Jeanne) Seattle, Jim (Debi) Bellevue, John (Terri) Redmond, and daughter Joan (Bruce) Myers, Bellevue and grandchildren Erin (Josh) McGowan, Megan, Scott; Doug; Mindy; Jill, Erica and Kevin. Rhett predeceased Chet in 2000. Always a loving husband, father, grandfather and gracious gentleman, we’ll remember his contagious smile, humor and kind, generous spirit. A private memorial will be held in his honor.

Audrey Lucille Perrin, Age 85 of Palm Harbor, Florida, and the wife of retired Northwest Airlines captain Frank Perrin, died March 3, 2009 after a long illness. Audrey’s parents, Arthur George Johnson and Meda DeMersseman Johnson raised their family of six children in Litchfield, Minnesota. Audrey “Greenhouse” Johnson fondly remembered arranging and delivering flowers for the family’s florist business, and proudly assisted with the family’s large vegetable garden.

She stayed in touch with her cherished friends from school, and loved to reminisce about her high school days including cheerleading, tap dancing, and her thrill at being crowned homecoming queen. After her marriage to Frank Perrin she raised three children, learned to co-pilot small aircraft and large boats, traveled the world, and was a beloved wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and a friend to many.

Audrey is survived by her husband, three children, seven grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, and siblings Art, Dwight and Emlyn. Her life was celebrated in a ceremony held in Palm Harbor, Florida on March 28, 2009.



Audrey Perrin
1924 ~ 2009



Bob Brennan
1921 ~ 2009

Robert John “Bob” Brennan, age 87, a beloved father and grandfather, of Portland, Oregon, formerly of Minnesota, and a retired Northwest Airlines captain “flew west” for a final check on Sunday, March 22, 2009. Bob was born in a farmhouse in Port Byron, Illinois, on October 5, 1921 to Leo Percy Brennan and Antoinette Josephine Bachman.

Bob grew up in Iowa and Illinois, graduated from high school in 1938 and served proudly and with honor in the U.S. Navy from 1943-1945. After the war he remembered flying from Minneapolis to Chicago and back on a DC-3, a Martin 202, and a DC-4 all in one day! When he checked out on the Boeing Stratocruiser, Bob realized that in 8 years time he had gone from living on a farm to flying the world’s largest commercial airplane. He had a distinguished and enjoyable career with Northwest Airlines where he was a pilot from 1941-1981. During his 39 year career with Northwest, from 1942-1981, Bob flew the DC-3, DC-4, DC-6, DC-7, Martin 202, Boeing Stratocruiser, Lockheed Electra, Boeing 707-720 and -320, and Boeing 747. Bob cherished many long-lasting friendships throughout his career with Northwest. After his retirement from

Northwest, he flew DC 3’s in Africa for several years.

Bob enjoyed traveling, flying and bird and wildlife watching at his farm in Hinckley, MN, which he called ‘Heavenly Hinckley’. A little farmhouse on eighty acres with a dilapidated dairy barn and a machine shed near Hinckley, Minnesota. But Bob had a vision and, over time, the little farmhouse was remodeled, repaired, added on, and painted, until he got it the way he wanted it. His daughters, Patricia Franko, Kathleen Anderson and Kelly McRoberts, and sons, Robert and Thomas survive him as well as seven grandchildren, special friend Patricia G. Scott and many other dear friends and family members. Bob was preceded in death by his wife Lee Marie and daughter, Jeanne.

From the Guest Book

Thomond O’Brien: Prior to “flying west” Bob flew east first to pass through old Ireland, a privilege granted to Irish exiles by the Creator after He allowed the Angles, Saxons and Jutes to invade Ireland’s back yard, which they now call England.

David James: A pilot who was always admired both for his professional skill and for the way he treated his crew. You knew it would be a good month if you could hold Bob’s schedule, A real gentleman, I am sorry for your loss.

Warren Avenson: Surely admired the flying you did for groups after retiring from NWA. Serving in the Navy with VR-11 and being based in HNL with you brought us NWA pilots pride and pleasure.

Fred Raiche: Many times I was glad to be Bob’s copilot flying mostly around the Orient. Years later, the memories still remain, all good memories. Always a professional, and now very much missed by those who were lucky to have called Bob a friend. I am one of those “lucky ones!”

Vern Clobes: Bob was one of those special people I had the privilege to fly with as a first officer. His passing is a sad moment for all who knew him. My deepest sympathy goes to his family.

Montie Leffel: I was saddened to learn of Bob’s passing. I was based in MSP for seven years with Northwest Airlines as a flight service attendant and had many trips with Bob before I transferred to Seattle as a purser. He was always one of my favorite pilots and a joy to fly with. I send my deepest sympathy to the family.

You may read more about Bob’s life and see more photos online here:

<http://issuu.com/contrails/docs/brennan>



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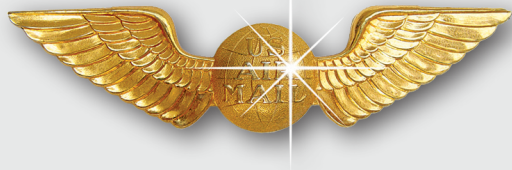
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IF RETIRED, WAS IT "NORMAL" (Age 60/65 for pilots)? YES ___ NO ___
IF NOT, INDICATE TYPE OF RETIREMENT: MEDICAL ___ EARLY ___ RESIGNED ___
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