

RNIPA

CONTRAILS

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Kevin Garrison

Joe Kimm has a Ford Trimotor tale to tell – p. 14

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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13 MSP Christmas Party

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Future Reunions

Rapid City:
Sept. 24-26, 2010

Omaha:
Sept. 25-27, 2011

Atlanta:
2012

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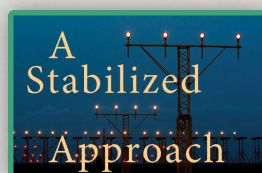
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President's Report: Gary PISEL



Greetings to All,

To those of you that did not attend the Reunion in ABQ, you missed one heck of a party. The Hotel Albuquerque, located in Old Town, provided the ideal setting for our gathering. The trip to Acoma was interesting and educational. Plan to attend our next Reunion in Rapid City, it too will be great.

After the Reunion several were able to check off another square on the Bucket List. The Balloon Fiesta on Saturday was totally awesome. There were 550 balloons lifting off at sunrise in only 90 minutes. The winds were favorable that day and they were able to stay at the field in a box pattern. Truly a remarkable site.

As of Feb 1, 2010 it will all be Delta. Be sure to get your new Delta employee number. This will be needed for all communications with Delta and especially passes. You have received a Delta Pass Rider booklet. Read it over, keep it handy. We are working to get all the proper numbers for the Benefits Dept at Delta. A representative from Delta Care, Elaine Miller, was at our Reunion and explained the benefits and value of the program. Go to dlnet.delta.com and read more about it.

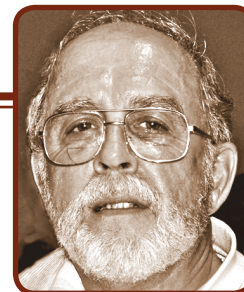
In closing I would like to ask each of you to do me and RNPA a favor. If you know a pilot or flight attendant that is not a member, encourage them to join. Or better yet give them a year's membership, I am sure they will renew. If you are planning to attend the reunion in Rapid City, get a fellow member to attend also.



Treasurer's Report: Dino OLIVA

Karen and I just returned from a three month trip around the states and Canada. Had the opportunity to visit with several of our retired pilot friends as well as attend the SEA summer picnic and the ABQ convention. Had a great time at both of those events. My apologies to any one that needed my attention on RNPA problems during my extended absence.

It's that time of year again when we send out the annual dues notices. They will be mailed in late December. **Please do not send in any dues until you receive your notice.** Some of you may have a credit from overpayment previously and a few of you may have additional dues owed due to having paid the incorrect amount when applying for membership. Please pay only the amount shown on your dues statement. Doing so will eliminate problems in the future, and make my life a lot simpler.



FEATURE ARTICLE

When our friend Suzy Armstrong's obituary was published last February I learned that she had been the lead flight attendant on a flight you may have heard of back in 1991 which landed at Narita with an engine on fire. It piqued my interest to learn more about what I had heard about that incident.

As I had heard the story after multiple retellings, Steve Bowen and crew had managed to get a 747-400 back to NRT with an engine fire, complicated by the fact that the engine No. 1 and 2 fire detector sensors had been reversed somehow—not far from the center of a typhoon!

I have known Steve for a long time, so I asked him if he would mind writing an article explaining what really happened. I assumed that the story I had heard probably wasn't very accurate. It wasn't. It was *far worse* than just a couple of cross-wired sensors. This turned out to be a much bigger story than I could have imagined.

Even though he had notes and documents of the event, Steve confided to me that he had a difficult time re-living it to get it into the form you will find inside. You will understand how those memories are burned into his brain and not easily forgotten.

He does wish to emphasize, however, that this is *his* story as *he* remembers it, and that other crew members will undoubtedly have slightly different memories. And it should be noted that the entire crew, not just the cockpit, performed in a most professional manner with the information they had. They must have—the entire crew, all 21 of them, received the Daedalian Award for 1991.

As you read Steve's story try to imagine dealing with that emergency as a two-pilot crew!

FLOWN WEST OBITUARIES

Because of the need to keep the page count restricted for budget reasons we have found it necessary to limit each obituary to a single page as a general policy. There are times, and this is one of them, when there is much more you may wish to know, and there is more that Vic Britt would like to tell you, about some of your friends who have flown west.

In those cases you will see a link in bold text on that page that looks like this: **issuu.com/contrails/docs/xxxx** where the Xs indicate the individual's last name. It's a clever, easy to use web site that reads like a magazine. Have a look if you'd like to read more about one of your friends. Don't have a computer? I'll bet your grandkids do.

And—the August Contrails is still available at **issuu.com/contrails/docs/contrails171** if you'd like to show friends or family what our magazine looks like. It is there primarily as a recruiting tool.

DELTA CARES

I invite your attention to the information on page 13. You may not be ready to accept the fact that Delta cares about you, but it's true. All the benefits of this very special program are just as available to you as they are to the active employees. Of course you can also contribute to this worthwhile endeavor if you wish.

Elaine Miller (photo top of page 43) gave an impressive presentation to the entire group in ABQ. This lovely lady is the President, CEO and head chef of a program that I think it safe to say will soon become a target for the charitable efforts of RNPA. We were all impressed.

It is well worth the effort to check out the wealth of information about all of this here:

DeltaNet is available at <http://dlnet.delta.com/>

Whatchabeenupto?

SHORT NOTES



JANICE SNYDER

Mr. Ferguson,

My husband, Don Snyder, was a pilot for 30 years. I thought my sons would like this for Christmas. [She ordered four of the "Logos Flown West" images. -Ed.]

They are all pilots—FedEx, NWA (Delta) and Mesaba. Of course my daughter will get one too.

Thank you for doing this.

Sincerely,

Janice Snyder

JEFF HILL

Dear Captain Ferguson,

Just got my August issue and was totally blown away by the 100% color layouts! I am the editor of *TARPA TOPICS*, the retired TWA pilot's magazine. I think we could take a lesson or two from RNPA—we publish three issues per year (80-100pp) have it bound and send it via 'book rate' mail which takes anywhere from a week to a month (no kidding) and our cost is around \$8/copy. Color is VERY expensive and must be a number of pages divisible by four and begin on a RH page. Our dues are \$50/yr. and \$40 for a subscription only. As I said, we could take a lesson or two from RNPA.

You are doing a wonderful job with *Contrails*, I am sure you are very proud of it, and rightly so.

Jeff Hill, Sr.,

TWA, Retired

BOB JOHNSON

Dear Gary,

Greg Harrick's "Delta Airlines and Egyptian Pharaoh, Thutmose III" is the best piece of writing I've seen in a long, long time. On a subject very dear to many of us. Great issue.

Re the South China Sea ditching—"Reflections" editor Anne Kerr has been in touch with stewardess Yuriko Fuchigami's family, with an assist from former Minn. Atty. Gen., U. S. Senator, Vice President and U. S. Ambassador to Japan Walter Mondale. We'll have something on it but it'll be a little while. The tragedy of it is that she died very shortly before she would have known we were trying to contact her, that we remember, after a nearly 50-year void.

Hope every one of your subscribers reads the Paul Soderlind stories, and all the people at Delta, too.

Best wishes,

Bob Johnson

NWA History Centre



Gary,

...Thanks for all your good work! "Contrails" is a jewel.

John McAlpin

...A personal "Thank You" for all your efforts in making the "Contrails" the fine publication we all enjoy. Personally, I find that it deserves to be re-read from time to time.

Cheers,

Gordon Crowe

...Thanks for all of your efforts on behalf of RNPA & Contrails—one super job.

Thanks,

Ken Warras

...Thanks for such a great job.

Regards,

Bob Chandler

JO JOHNSON

Dear Gary,

Thanks so much for the photo op. I don't always read the RNPA magazine but since the "merger" I have been. Our son Scott is a pilot (25 years) and grandson with Mesaba (pilot 2 years) and a daughter an agent (11 years). So we are big fans of NWA. It is a sad day. (I was a stew for 2 years.)

When I read that you live in Pasadena it brought back memories of watching the Rose Parade at a friends house! A beautiful area, although I haven't been there since moving to Minnesota.

Can't believe that Herb retired in 1981.

Best of luck to you,

Jo Johnson

JAY SAKAS

Gary,

Just want to add a follow on to Gregg Herrick's article in Contrails.

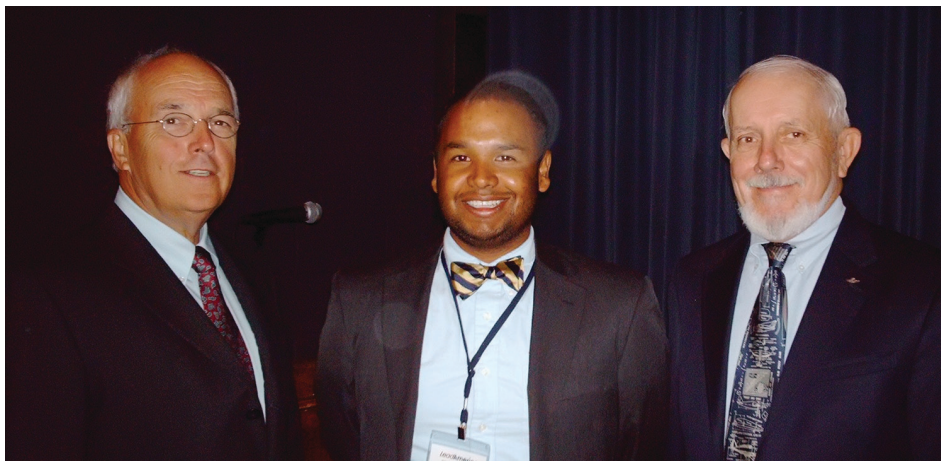
In the summer of 1998 I received my 30 year service pin from Northwest. It was this ugly round gold pin (looked like a ball marker) with a green piece of glass, which I referred to as an "O'Doal" broken bottle chip. At that time, the strike of '98 had just started and I was so fed up by this insult to our traditional pin, that I sent the "ball marker" back with a letter to Dasburg.

Of course I did not expect a reply. But to my surprise, I did get a response. It came a day after the strike ended with phone call from Dwayne Tucker who was VP of Human Resources. He explained that Mr. Dasburg had turned the letter over to him and to take care of the problem. For the next hour I explained to Dwayne the significance of the colors and wing and diamonds on the service pin and on the significance of tradition and continuity. In the end he said that he could understand the insult I and other pilots, as well as other employees, could experience. Mr. Tucker ended the conversation by saying he would do what could be done to bring back the original service pin.

Within months of that conversation he was fired by Mr. Slattery and I heard nothing more about the service pin.

It was fall of 1999, when on a flight to Tokyo, I happen to spot the NWA catalogue and in it were the original service pins and other jewelry, which we as employees could purchase. Needless to say, I was amazed that Wayne Tucker had kept his word. Maybe that is why he

DAYLE YATES



Retired Air Force Colonel Joe Syslo (shown at right) along with retired Northwest Airlines Captain Dayle Yates (at left) were the keynote speakers for 175 conferees at the LeadAmerica conference for aviation at North Georgia College in Dahlonega, GA. Master of Ceremonies Garibaldi Quiroz pictured with Yates and Syslo is the Program Director for LeadAmerica, a national premier youth leadership organization, whose mission is to inspire and empower the next generation to achieve their full potential and instill a sense of purpose, integrity and personal responsibility. With a rich history dating back over 20 years, LeadAmerica is committed to educating and empowering young leaders.

got fired.

Well, a month later, I am in Narita and Gene Peterson, Reed Erickson and others have us pilots into one of their "touchy feely" meetings extolling how well NWA is financially doing. Being one who has a habit of voicing my opinion, I asked Gene if NWA was doing so well, why it couldn't give me my service pin, but, I had to buy one from the catalogue. His comment was "So you're the one..." Whereby Reed Erickson approached me later and gave me the news that I would get one shortly.

A month passed and no pin, so I call Reed up and asked if I was still going to receive a pin. He advised that he would check into it. Called me back and said the pin was being made and it should get there in a couple of weeks. Next day a FedEx package arrived with the 30 year

pin in it. As part of my retirement, my wife made the pin into a ring which I cherish to this day.

I have heard that the company wanted to charge a person for purchasing the original service pin if they had already gotten the "ball marker pin." I was never charged for the pin. Many years later, I had a chance to speak with John Dasburg, and mentioned the incident. I did not realize that I had stirred up a hornet's nest with my letter. But in the end it was worth it.

Tradition, pride, and loyalty are what brings people together, working for a common purpose. I hope that Mr. Anderson, having experienced the Northwest Airline tradition, will allow it to flourish at Delta. Probably not!

Thanks for a great publication.
Blue side up,
Jay Sakas

Editor:

Once again really enjoyed Contrails, many thanks to ye all.

Not much to report here. This time of year keeping all my weeds cut to the same height is practically a full time non-paying job, but from FL 390 they look just like grass. The latest news is that our President is going to Cairo and I hope no one takes him to the Sweet Melodies night club.

Many of you remember how good it felt to get away on leave occasionally, and it sure was good to get to Cairo and sleep in a bed with sheets. Our squadron was based in the desert; we slept in tents on ground sheets on the sand with a kit bag for a pillow. We belonged to RAF Coastal Command flying Vickers Wellingtons, attacking Rommel's supply ships in the Mediterranean. We all admired Rommel, so much so that the Brit High Command, some said Churchill himself, issued an order that the worship of an enemy commander must cease forthwith, or words to that effect. He was a terrific general, and prisoners taken by his forces received the same rations and medical attention as his boys. Montgomery's desert rats were singing Lilly Marlene, the English version of a German army song, and some even threw cigarettes over the wire to German prisoners. No names please.

My country was neutral. Germany had attempted to send aid to the Irish freedom fighters during the 1916 rebellion, and a ship stood off Banna Strand on Ireland's west coast with rifles and ammo, but those detailed to meet her had taken a wrong turn and drove off the key in Killorglin at night and drowned during a violent storm. Sir Roger Casement, an Irishman knighted by the English king had landed, was captured and hanged. The German Captain scuttled his ship rather than have it be captured by the Brit navy, and the rebellion took place only in Dublin.

So here I was, fighting on the wrong side as my father told me when he found out in 1944 that I was wearing the hated king's uniform. What the hell, I didn't speak German and wars don't come along that often, or so I thought when I volunteered for the RAF in January 1941; I was only sixteen and the hole in my head hadn't closed up yet.

So OK, back to WWII. On the second night in Cairo we stumbled across a joint called the Sweet Melodies. You went up a steep narrow staircase to a huge crowded room where a band played in an alcove about eight feet

above the floor protected by chicken wire, a necessity we were told as the music critics wrote their opinions with bottles and chairs. (I failed to mention it was a high-class joint.) We had no sooner settled at a table with our drinks when a comely bint sat in Pete's lap. Pete was the navigator, he came from a very genteel family, it was rumored that his father was a Parson. Suddenly he leaped up with a strangled cry and the bint and the table went flying with the bottles and glasses. The bint, apparently an expert with buttons (His Majesty's Birdmen had not yet been checked out on zippers) had liberated his manhood as they say in polite society and though airborne she still kept a death grip on poor Pete's Peter. One glance revealed that Pete was either a Pagan or a Christian as he still had all the accouterments he had been born with.

Maybe I should explain that in those long gone days it was rare for Europeans to get bobbed, especially in Ireland where there are no camels, sand is confined to the seaside and believe me there's no shortage of water, besides which St. Patrick drove the snakes out so why clutter the shamrock with snake-like objects? Why the strangled cry from Pete? Who knows! She didn't have him by the throat!

Well, Pete sent the bold hussy on her way, closed the stable doors, and we settled down for a pleasant evening. Suddenly the band sputtered to a discordant halt. Half a dozen Aussies were playing tug of war with the local musicians, tossing two of them through the chicken wire, gaining control of the instruments and treating us to an Aussie medley: *Waltzing Matilda*, *The Road to Gunderguy* (rude version), and *The Tattooed Lady*:

*We paid five francs to see, A great big French lady
Tattooed from head to knee, She was a sight to see.
Right across her back, Was a great big Union Jack
And clear across her hips, Was a line of battleships
And on the flip-flap of her kidney, Was a bird's-eye
view of Sydney
Around the corner, The jolly horner, Was a dear old
pal of mine.*

Overcome by thirst, the Aussies finally left the instruments to their bruised and battered owners and it was time for the floor show. The inevitable belly dancer showed up, and she had lots of bellies to shake; next an even larger Egyptian lady appeared wearing a Union Jack from neck to knee while the band played *Rule*

Britannia. She flipped some buttons and the Stars and Stripes appeared to Anchors Aweigh. Next came the French Tricolor and the Marselliaise. The Free French had put up a hell of a fight at Bir Hakeim (see below) holding the southern end of the line preventing the encirclement of the British forces as they retreated after the fall of Tobruk, sort of a repeat of Dunkirk in 1940. Next the Red Flag appeared with the Hammer and Sickle, but before the band played a note all hell broke loose. There was a large contingent of free Poles in the crowd, they all sprang up and threw chairs at the Red Flag, and the flag and the large lady vanished under a pile of lumber and the fights started. The Nazis had been defeated at Stalingrad and the British army, if not Red, was a bit Pink.

Now fights broke out all over the joint, people who had shared a table were fighting each other. Brits, Free Poles, Free French, Free you name it, Aussies, Kiwis, Indians, and the fiercest of all, Gurkas. These guys would crawl into enemy lines at night and cut throats with their kukris. (No John. It's a knife.) Chair legs, bottles knives, anything handy became a weapon. Most of these guys were on leave from the front lines while my crowd did our fighting sitting on our asses in a cockpit, we were definitely outclassed in this sort of war, so I dropped to my hands and knees and followed by my gang headed for the only exit at the far end of the room using a chair leg to sweep the broken glass away. We passed a Brit Tommy with a broken bottle sticking out of his left eye. The poor blighter would never again see Blighty and six feet of Egyptian sand would be forever England, as another poet wrote.

We finally reached the door where the bouncer was doing his stuff. He was a giant Nubian in gold tights, naked from the waist up with a gold band around his right bicep; think Shaq O'Neal and you've got him. He was picking up allied troops without regard to nationality, one in each giant hand, banging their heads together and tossing them down the stairs. He looked down at me still on my hands and knees, and recognizing a coward when he saw one, with a huge grin waved us on. I don't speak Nubian but I'm sure I lip-read "chicken-shits." We slid down over bodies covering the stairs and with our tails between our legs slunk away into the night.

Next day's headlines read: "Nine dead, scores wounded in riot at the Sweet Melodies."

It was good to get back to the pup tent with the cozy sand bed and the peace and quiet of the cockpit and watch the incoming tracers curve gracefully away from the windshield.

In early 1944 we sailed for Blighty where we transferred to Transport Command, checked out on C-47's (Dakota's we called them) and started training for D Day, towing gliders, dropping paratroopers and supplies and tasting a wee drop of anything that would relieve the cold and damp of the English weather which, after the heat of the desert crept right into your bone (No John. Not that bone) marrow.

Thomond O'Brien

PS: Bint: Egyptian for daughter or girl. Saheeda bint = Hello Girlie. (I heard the older boys say it.)

Battle of Bir Hakeim: Maybe because it is pronounced Beer and beer has a special sound in the desert it stuck in my mind. Mind you, it had a special sound most everywhere else until Uncle Don put an end to my joie de vivre. Incidentally, had he still been here the sale would have gone the other way and we gentlemen of leisure would not have to listen to the working class bitch about having to wear double-breasted suits. Anyway, Google up "Battle of Bir Hakeim." Under "Notable Personalities" check Susan Travers, the daughter of a British admiral, the only woman member of the French Foreign Legion and winner of the Croix de Guerre. She was quite a dame.

PPS: Demaris insists I use my full name. "Your name is not Tom. It's Thomond."

"Yes Ma'am, Yes Ma'am, three bags full."

I prefer Tom, then I don't have to spend half a day explaining how it's spelled, what it means etc. Or as one Limey put it with a sneer: "What the f..k kind of a name is Turmoon?" before I scattered some of his teeth over England's green and pleasant land, as yet another poet put it. He was insulting my father who had named me and for once the long arm of the law was absent.

Speaking of long arm, there was also a short arm which was inspected by the medical officer on joining HM service. I don't know if the expression is used here, but there it is called a short arm inspection. We were all lined up stark naked while the Doc moved down the line raising our ding-dongs with his swagger stick. The story goes that on one such occasion the Doc came to a fellow who was doubly at attention. He tapped the offending article with his stick and said "Do you feel that?" The fellow replied, "No sah." Doc hit it a little harder and asked, "Feel that?" Same answer. The doc stepped back and with a full arm swing whacked the hell out of it. "Well now," says he, "I'll wager you felt that one." "No sah. Belongs to the bloke be'ind me."

On that sad note I'll end this unhappy tale.

Thomond O'Brien

Remembering Frank Taylor

I just returned yesterday from his services in the very small farming community of Holy Cross, Iowa. I hadn't been to that part of the country before and was immediately taken by it as I glimpsed the America I grew up in during my childhood in Kansas. I spent several hours driving around that beautiful rural area and breathing it in. It was a magnificent landscape, flat land interspersed with beautiful rolling hills, curvaceous I would even say, and a consistently rich emerald green color of corn and other crops. Even the meadows were that same emerald green color. And it was so very clean. I saw no litter and, in fact, began to look for some. There was none to be seen and the entire area was pristine. I marveled at the near surgical precision of the planted crops, the clean lines, precise spacing between rows and how they effortlessly followed the contours of the land. And it was this way no

matter where I went or how many miles I traveled. I thought to myself, "This is a beautiful place to be for a final resting site."

This part of Iowa consisted of myriad small farming communities, one after another and only a few miles apart, with old European names such as New Vienna, Luxemburg (their spelling), Peosta, and Graf. It was clear that many were old German settlements, heavily Catholic, and it was indeed a Norman Rockwell setting.

Frank had talked to me many times about his family's enclave of farms but now it became very real as I slowly took it all in. Irish through and through, his family had begun farming there in 1849 and the Taylor farms were collectively known as "Heritage Farms." About ten miles away was the movie site where "Field Of Dreams" had been filmed with its baseball diamond surrounded by the lush green fields

of Iowa corn. I drove over and saw it, feeling very much like Kevin Costner should appear at some point.

I had expected a fairly small turnout for the visitation and funeral services, due entirely to the size of Holy Cross, Iowa. I could not have been more surprised as people steadily came from 2 PM until 9 PM for the visitation on Friday evening. I was gratified that Rich Farmer, his wife Kathy, and Vic Allen, with his wife Sharon, both came in from long distances for the services... and was disappointed that more of Frank's NWA friends were not there.

The following day the large Catholic church was filled to capacity for his funeral. People came from all the surrounding areas, people who'd known all twelve of the Taylor children and most certainly remembered a favorite son who'd gone on to become a Naval Aviator and airline captain. They remembered him for other things as well. They

spoke of his love and compassion for others even as a young child, the many good things he'd done for others in his youth, and his natural capacity for compassion for others. I had never known that at one time Frank was considering the priesthood until, as one of his brothers laughingly told me, "He discovered girls and decided the celibate life was not for him!"

Frank's widow,



Mary, had asked if I would speak at the funeral service and I said I would. At the podium I paused as I looked at the large group of friends who'd come to say their farewell to a favorite son, and I talked of having met Frank in 1961, when he was a brand new Naval cadet and I was a new Marine Cadet. I had known Frank Taylor for 48 years. I stayed in the Marine Corps an extra tour so Frank had arrived at NWA several years before me.

I made a non-specific reference to the cataclysmic incident that took place in March of 1990 that so destroyed me and left me broken and devastated, mentally and emotionally shredded, financially wiped out, materially stripped, and completely destroyed. Many of my NWA pilot counterparts and even some of the flight attendants hearkened to Barbara and me (indeed, two were sitting in the crowd before me), offering aid, keeping us alive, and steadfastly encouraging us. But Frank Taylor was the very first to do that. A few days into the experience I received a thick envelope from Frank and Mary Taylor. I opened it and wrapped in a single piece of paper was \$2,000 in cash. A week or two later I received another similar envelope. In it this time, again wrapped in a single piece of paper, was \$5,000 in cash.

My heart was touched in its deepest places and it was not possible to keep the tears from my eyes. This disaster had come suddenly, I'd never imagined such a thing, and our income had been shut off overnight. I had costs for a mortgage, an auto, a treatment center for my alcoholism, my legal costs were staggering, we needed food and groceries, utility bills had to be paid, and we were drowning in financial difficulties. Frank's generosity would not take care of those things but it gave

us a brief momentary reprieve and an opportunity to take a deep breath as we looked at the days ahead. It was an amazing gesture on his part.

After I told the story of what Frank and Mary had done, his brothers and sisters later told me that he'd never mentioned it and they'd never known about it. And that is the essence of humility, it was what Frank was about—doing things for others and never advertising them. I knew of many things he did for others. He would go visit the elderly in nursing homes, he took care of some elderly nuns in a convent (I believe it was a convent), he wrote to people who were down and out, and he made several very long road trips to go visit friends who were struggling. It was just part of who he was. And he did it all with no fanfare or desire for recognition.

I was speaking in Orlando a couple of months ago and I drove down instead of using commercial transportation. I wanted to see Frank and I knew he was sleeping most of the day with only limited opportunities to visit. At this point, Frank had declined any further treatments and was utilizing Hospice. I needed a car to be able to take advantage of those brief moments of opportunity because it was important to me that I spend time with him when I could. I was told that the visits were usually very short, on the order of 30 minutes or so, but I wanted to see him even if for just a few minutes. I was surprised when our first visit went slightly over two hours. We talked and we laughed a lot. His mind was quick and clear, his eyes were bright and alert, and he had that ever present smile I'd seen for so many years.

He said to me, "I have nothing to complain about. I've had a great life. I have a wonderful wife, good kids, and great family... I just have

nothing to complain about." I said to him, "I hope I could have your attitude if I was where you are." He genuinely seemed completely at peace. Never once during any of our conversation, that day or the next, did he utter one single complaint about anything. Frank was unable to stand up or sit down unassisted, yet he was happy and cheerful, and even grateful, he told me.

As I stood at the podium in the church, I said, "Frank showed us how to live... and he showed us how to die."

I will miss my dear friend. I am honored to have been his friend.

Blue skies,
Lyle Prouse

RON BOCKHOLD

Hello Gentlemen,

I have been reading your magazine for about a year and it has really got me excited about retiring at the end of the year. I have been flying on the B747-200 for 25 years now in all 3 positions. I have been trying to collect some fun facts about all the crews that have worked on it over the years.

My project right now is to try to figure out which pilots spent the most years and accumulated the most flight hours on it during their careers at NWA. I was able to look at the flight times of all the pilots currently flying it. The average pilot who has been on it for 25 years or more has total time in type around 11,000-13,000 hours.

Would any of you have any idea which of the retirees spent at least that number of years and logged that time or more? Any help you can provide will be much appreciated.

Best regards,
Capt. Ron Bockhold

MARY JANE DITTBERNER

Hi Everyone,

I would like to thank so many of you for your support, cards, kind words at the convention and the money you contributed in John's memory which I gave for the Paul Soderlind Scholarship in John's name.

I also would like to say a thank you from John's children, brothers and sisters and my family that were able to meet some of you at the visitation/funeral and for the wonderful article that Gary Ferguson and Vic Britt put together in Contrails. They were all so happy to learn so much more about John's career at NWA.

John's sister and her husband were at their granddaughter's high school choir concert when the news reached them about John. The choir was singing the lyrics from Wicked: "Because I knew you, I have been changed for good."

It was an appropriate farewell and tribute to John. John loved all the RNPA get-togethers, all of you and thank you all so much!

Best regards,
Mary Jane Dittberner



Feb 23, Tuesday
Falcon Field, Mesa
1000 -1400
Bring your own meat to
cook, drinks to drink
and a dish to pass.
Gary Pisel 623-582-4701

STEVE BOWEN

Dear Gary,

Thanks again for challenging me with the task of writing the story of our NRT emergency landing and fire back in 1991. It forced me to get out my dusty old files, go over everything again, and get some issues straight in my mind. There were lots of stories floating around about what happened on flight 18 of 9/19/91, and most of them were far from accurate, as you well know. Hopefully, my story, which appears in this issue, will set the record straight for the most part.

There was also a lot of Monday morning quarterbacking going on amongst those who were not there and thought they could have handled things better or done something differently. This troubled me considerably for a long time. For example, there was a suggestion out there that we didn't really have to evacuate and subject our passengers to possible injury in the process. Someone maintained that a fire could burn out on a wing pylon for as long as 15 minutes without impacting anyone or anything inside the cabin of a 747-400! Were they suggesting that we have the people "remain seated" while the fire was put out and air stairs were brought up to the plane?

Our flight attendants had an answer to that suggestion, as my wife, Ellen (who flew with most of them during her years as a NYC-based F/A), heard directly from them. As they all said, without exception, it was a "no doubt, get out" situation. If we hadn't ordered the evacuation, they would have done it themselves, no matter what PA announcements came from the cockpit. And if they hadn't done anything, the passengers would have done it on their own! There was no way an evacuation could have been halted... by anyone!

Finally, to the crew of flight 18, I hope my account has done justice to what actually happened on 9/19/91 in NRT and to all your exceptional efforts to handle the situation we faced that night. I realize we all had slightly different perspectives on what went down during our ordeal. This was my best recollection of what happened. I invite you and anyone else out there to respond with any reaction you may have.

Thanks again,
Steve Bowen
mspjetlag@gmail.com

DELTA PEOPLE CARE



“When it comes to helping our own through times of disaster or personal hardship, concern and generosity are both the legacy and future of all Delta people.”

The Employee & Retiree Care Fund, Inc. provides financial assistance to employees, retirees and their survivors facing a sudden and expected financial crisis or disaster. The Delta Scholarship Fund, Inc. provides academic scholarships to Delta employees and their dependents. With seed money provided by Delta’s former CEO Jerry Grinstein, these 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations are funded by Delta people to benefit Delta people.



When Hurricane Ike plowed into Galveston, Texas, in September, Dionne “Dee-Dee” Merritt had no idea that the storm would change her life in Ohio.

But Ike moved through the country and ripped the roof off of her Cincinnati apartment building, ruining much of what she owned. It was a month before Merritt was able to go back into her home and retrieve any of her belongings. In addition to receiving a Care Fund grant, Red Cross disaster volunteers and a team of Delta employees showed up to help.

With Delta’s Red Cross Partnership, employees, retirees and those eligible to use their flight benefits are encouraged to partner with their local Red Cross chapter to become disaster volunteers in their community and support Delta’s disaster relief efforts. Contact retiree Jon Maynard at jjmaynard@usa.net for details or visit the Red Cross Partnership portal site on DeltaNet to learn how to get involved.



Over 900 Delta people have been helped by the Care Fund since October 2007 when facing a personal crisis or natural disaster.

The Scholarship Fund has awarded 87 scholarships since 2008 for Delta employees & their dependents. An additional 66 scholarships will be available in 2010 with 28 Delta scholars eligible to renew their award.

Scholarship Recipients



- \$5,000 Jerry Grinstein Leadership Award
- \$1,500 Delta Spirit Award
- \$1,000 Award For Excellence Scholarship

“This scholarship is a window of opportunity allowing me to fully realize my dreams and transform them into reality. Thank you so much for your kindness and generosity.”

Aaron Bullock, Jerry Grinstein Leadership Award Recipient

“The Delta Scholarship Program is a clear indication that the Delta family is alive and well. It is the Delta family, the hearts behind the operation, that truly make this an incredible airline. “

Scholarship Recipient

Changing lives together

Your participation is the reason the Care Fund & Scholarship Funds will continue to be available to help Delta people around the world.

Please help us grow the funds by making a check donation, holding fundraisers throughout the year to benefit the funds and collecting electronic devices to support the recycling program (complete details are at www.cellularrecycler.com/delta/).

Additional donation and recycling options, IRS tax deduction information and a Champion Toolkit to learn how to get involved are available on DeltaNet under the Employee Info, Delta People Care Funds, Care Fund and Scholarship Fund portals.

DeltaNet is available at <http://dlnet.delta.com/>

Tax deductible donations can be mailed to the Care Fund or Scholarship Fund at Delta Air Lines, Dept. 950, P.O. Box 20706, Atlanta, GA 30320-6001.

LOOKING BACK



MISSING ENGINE

By Joe Kimm

we often flew quite high on eastbound flights to take advantage of the NW winds. Upon reaching altitude he turned the aircraft over to me to fly and settled back to enjoy the day.

An aside from all this—often when grounded while awaiting better flying weather, pilots would sit around and discuss various problems they might anticipate, anxious to exchange opinions about things they might encounter. One of these subjects was, “what would happen if one of the engines fell off of the Ford Tri-motor.” Opinions on this were varied, and opposing. Some would argue that the loss of weight of an outboard engine would unbalance the plane making it impossible to fly; others took a contrary view—that it would make no difference. It was agreed, however, that we just didn’t know, nor did we care to ever find out.

Back to the 12th. I was supremely happy—I always enjoyed my opportunities to fly the airplane. Having no autopilot on the airplane the captains were happy to have someone to spell them off so co-pilots had plenty of time to hone their skills.

For the first 45 minutes everything was operating smoothly; the passengers settled down, just the drone of the engines to disturb the quiet. Suddenly, when over Wabash, MN the aircraft experienced a severe jolt. Mal looked at me, asked, “What did you do?” I said “Nothing, but what was that?” Mal looked out his side window, turned back sharply reaching for the switch on #1 to cut it, while at the same time retarding the throttle

April 12, 1932 was to be a memorable day in my life, albeit unexpected. Mal Freeburg and I were scheduled to fly the Chicago trip on this day. A lovely Spring day, cloudless skies, warm air a harbinger of the Summer to come. It was a joy just to contemplate a flight on such a day.

Our flight departed on time, with eight passengers aboard. Mal made the takeoff, climbing up to 5000 feet—in good weather

and closing the mixture control. Seeing my questioning look he merely said, pointing over his left shoulder, “Take a look out there!” Unfastening my seatbelt I stood up looking out Mal’s window, getting the shock of my life. THERE WAS NO ENGINE! Looking further, and down, I noted that the engine was lying comfortably in the V of the landing gear and vertical strut. Well the engine was still with us but all the arguments we’d had previously about “would it” or “won’t it” came to mind. Further inspection revealed that a part of one propeller blade had separated and was missing; also, the remaining blade, turning as the engine rotated out of its mounts, had cut a big slice off the front of the tire on the left main wheel.

Mal and I talked about what we should do—land with the engine where it was, or try to drop it off. After much thought Mal decided that it was too hazardous to land with the engine still with us and decided to drop it off. Not wanting to hit anyone on the ground he flew out over the Mississippi. Lining up with the river he dropped the nose of the plane far enough to allow the engine to roll off. Neither of us realized that the engine would be thrown forward at the airplane’s speed so, unexpectedly, the engine landed on a point of land 200 feet from a farmer building a chicken coop. Mal then descended, deciding to put the plane down at the emergency field at Wabash. Superbly handling the stricken craft, he maneuvered to a landing holding the left wing high with aileron control, touching down softly on the right gear. As the plane slowed down, the left wing gradually dropped, the left gear dug in, the tail came up alarmingly, the fuselage veered to the left. We came to a halt, the tail back down to normal position, all were safe. The cheering passengers were a comfort indeed! As Mal had radioed the company of our predicament prior to landing, another aircraft was soon on its way to replace this one. While at the airport, a call came from an excited farmer wanting to know if anybody had lost an engine. With this info, maintenance was able to recover the damaged engine. Thoughtfully, they provided me with an ashtray made from one of the pistons from the damaged engine cut through the wrist-pin holes, which is one of my prized possessions. With the arrival of the replacement aircraft we loaded up our passengers and continued on to Chicago, arriving only an hour late.

Mal became a hero for his skill in handling the stricken aircraft, bringing all down safely. In 1933, [President Roosevelt presented him with the first Civilian Air Mail Medal of Honor]. From my viewpoint a well deserved reward.



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March 2nd, 2010

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Briefing 1100 · Lunch 1230 · Debriefing until 1500
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Turn Right into Marina Jack's.
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I've marked the calender for March 2nd at 1100 hours.

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MENU CHOICE:

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❶ ___ ❷ ___ ❸ ___

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Contributing Columnist **Bob Root**

Chasing Clichés, Baserunners and Pulitzers

Some readers may have noticed when I occasionally lobby for recognition by suggesting a Pulitzer Prize for trivia. Like, pretty much every column. Some readers may wonder why I seek such a prize. I can tell you that I seek such a prize because I never won the Joe Foss Trophy for Superior Airmanship when I flew airplanes for 34 or so years. ALPA failed to recognize my talents with one of its awards and, although I made many, I was not blessed with the Charles Lindbergh Atlantic Crossing Award. For those, and a few other reasons, I seek a Pulitzer in these pages.

In order to reach such a lofty goal, a writer must give it his best shot by avoiding clichés at all costs. He must be very careful to remember that a preposition is not something to end a sentence with. He must punctuate by crossing all his eyes and dotting all his tees. He must do research as though his life depended upon it. Of course, it would be helpful if the writer had an original idea once in awhile.

Drat! I have now lost two of these original ideas. One, documented herein a few issues back, when some guy beat me to publishing a sequence of questions called *Ask The Pilot*. The other, more recent, when a freelance journalist named William Ecnabarger presented an article in *The Smithsonian* which is the most clever collection of clichés I have yet encountered. My editor sent it to me. Hopefully, he obtained permission to reproduce it here because it is nearly as good as what you are about to read.

Having lost clichés, I had to come up with—baseball. Specifically, baseball played by millionaires in stadia around the country and watched by thousands. Yesterday, for example, (please note the exhausting research) 390,404 people bought tickets to Major League Baseball games played in North America except that the number is really over 400,000 because it does not include one game played in San Diego which was classified by

my trusty newspaper as “late.” (My research is therefore validated as the missing game becomes proof of the pudding, the straw that broke the camel’s back and so on.)

You may wonder about the transition from clichés and prepositions to baseball. Don’t bother. If it made sense, it would not appear here. I played baseball as a kid, a child, a teenager and, briefly as a young man. So, probably, did you or your spouse or someone you know or maybe even someone you do not know. When my own kids were young, I coached baseball—for at least five years. I know baseball. Writers should write about what they know. (Notice the lack of preposition at the end there.) So this will be about baseball.

Major league baseball players are paid millions of dollars to play 162 games (that count) per year. That is, unless you consider the Minnesota Twins and Chicago White Sox who last year played 163 because 162 weren’t enough to decide which team was best. When my kids were young, I was the Coach. I was the boss, the guy in charge of the team.

When one gets to the major leagues, the guy in charge of the team is the manager, and the team has several coaches, one of whom stands near first base when his team is at bat and is known as the first-base coach. Unless you are somewhat knowledgeable of baseball, you may, at this point, be wondering why first base needs to be coached. It DOESN’T!

It is the job of the first base coach to instruct each millionaire who comes by on what to do next. Remember—you are reading words produced by an individual who does exhausting research. I can tell you that the reason these guys need to be told what to do next is that of the 1,042 major league players and managers in 2009, only 26 of them have college degrees—information that comes to you via the *Wall Street Journal*, *Sports Illustrated* and *The Root Cellar*. It may also





be true that these guys need instructions while at first base because second base does not have a coach and they are on their own until reaching third base, where they will encounter another coach.

I spend most of every summer watching the Minnesota Twins play baseball. On the ground near first base in all ballparks one can find a three-sided “box” specifically for occupation by the first-base coach. Yeah, I know. Those of you who understand baseball are thinking—“He never stands in it.” You should not be thinking that because it is a preposition at the end of a sentence. But, you are right. Apparently, a first-base coach does not have to stand in the box.

For several years now, a man by the name of Jerry White has been the first-base coach for the Twins. During a recent game, I concentrated on Mr. White as he performed his job. At one point during the game, each team had 11 runs before the game was won. For you uninitiated, what that means is a whole bunch of millionaires came by Jerry White and stopped for awhile at first base. While each player was at first, Jerry White had something to say to him BETWEEN EACH PITCH! Let’s see, 162 games per season, lots of pitches, lots of guys on first.

White: (pointing) “That’s second base over there. Go there when you can.”

Player: “O.K.”

Pitch.

Umpire: “Ball.”

White: “You may have to slide.”

Player: “O.K.”

Pitch.

Umpire: “STEERIKE!”

White: “You remember how to slide from spring training?”

Player: “Yeah.”

Pitch.

Umpire: “Ball.”

White: “You ask your doctor about Cialis yet?”

Player: “Huh?”

Pitch.

Umpire: “Foul ball!”

White: “How about Levitra, you ask about Levitra?”

Player: “What’s that?”

White: “Flomax? You ask about Flomax?”

Pitch—smack, ground ball toward shortstop.

White: “Run now, oh, and don’t forget to slide.”

This is great fun, but my editor won’t like it. (Whoops, there’s that preposition again!) Takes up too much space.

During the game, some batter fouled off 14 pitches. Don’t reckon we have space for all that dialog at first base. Rats—have to close another barn door after the Pulitzer got out. Just have to keep giving it my best shot until the old brain cells come up with a workable solution. You know, keep the blue side up and realize that some days are better than others and any column you can walk away from is a good column and the best one is probably the next one, ...or not. ✈



All Points Bulletin

Armed and Dangerous: Bubba's on the loose, but who is he?

Swimmingly. In the last column, “*Bubba and Me, Part 1*,” I observed it was going “swimmingly” without using the word specifically. I wasn’t even certain it was a word until I looked it up, but sure enough, the word means: “without difficulty, effortlessly, progressing smoothly.” I assigned that gut feeling to the whole merger, pragmatically understanding there would be hiccups and difficulties.

Then I had an “eye of the beholder” moment. Actually, it was the first officer who looked over at me mouth agape, astonished. He thrust the summer 2009 edition of the Delta publication “*Up Front*” towards me. I needed to be coaxed no further to read the article he had folded back. I did it reflexively—after all, I needed him for at least another five hours and change. I figured it was good CRM.

That column was by the Director of Flight Standards at Delta.

Note to my editor: it is “prohibited” to read non-operational material—even the Delta Flight Ops magazine, “Up Front”—during flight deck duty. However, like Hollywood, certain significant women and politicians, I am allowed latitude and creative editorial largess in relating my story.

We all vent once in awhile, sometimes for good reason and this, hopefully, is one of those times for me. In this case it is my trusted supervisors who will have to bear the brunt of my observations. They will hopefully answer my query for their “take” on the meaning of the column by one of their new peers after they too read the article. Following the “Delta North” chain-of-command I sent my letter to Steve Smith, Fleet Director 747; O.C. Miller, West Regional Director; and Greg Baden, Managing Director-Flying Operations.

8/20/2009

Dear Steve, O.C. and Greg,

After reading Captain Chris Frederick’s article in the Summer, 2009, Delta magazine, “*Up Front*,” entitled “*How-Goes-It?*,” “*An Update of the Integration, Post Phase II*,” I double checked just to be certain, and sure enough, we are well past April 1st, 2009. I concluded an April Fools prank is unlikely. My first officer’s facial expression, after he read it and had thrust it towards me, mirrored my astonishment.

How easy it would be to simply trash the magazine and head for the Sports Bar. No, we immediately discussed, as concerned pilots engaged in an historic merger full of challenge and change, how inappropriate it would be to simply “cockpit criticize” the misstatements made, ignore them, “file” the publication in the nearest receptacle or allow the intellectual treason of cynicism to obviate an opportunity for constructive reply. Still, I suspect Captain Frederick, like many of the current—former Northwest—flight operations managers, is probably a hard working, sedulous and well meaning pilot manager. He deserves feedback even if it is from the other side of the “cultural divide” he so aptly describes in several different examples. How that is accomplished, if it is deemed propitious, I will leave to you. I’ll get right to it.

On page 11, last column, he writes:

“...There are cultural differences in the way we operate our flight decks that transcend simple procedure or policy. On the north side there was a

very well established flow, script, and expectation surrounding how a flight deck was to run, who was to do what and when, and what the expectation was. The standardization was very high and the expectation of each crewmember was predictable.

On the south side we had adopted what could be described as a more flexible, team oriented approach to accomplishing some tasks, with responsibility for completion of specifics less definitive and more focused on the team than the individual, yet the level of standardization was still very high.”

Excuse me gentlemen, is this guy serious? Is there something we need to change if:

“...the expectation of each crewmember was predictable?”

(Unfortunately, his sentence is of questionable construction and meaning. It would have been more accurate to say “the behavioral response of a fellow crewmember was predictable,” not his expectation. I don’t even try to guess what my fellow pilot’s expectation is [training from two marriages] but I surely do not have to guess at what his behavior will be for a given flight regime, checklist, radio call, etc.)

We are trained to be specific. And we are trained to a specific, readily available scenario that stresses the “team” be interactive with constant feedback through verbal confirmation. We have and follow flow patterns and we confirm it with each other in a challenge and response check list. We know who pushes what button. It works now just as it has since I came here 27 years ago. Some of us might not have worn our hats, but it wasn’t equally macho, or allowed, to disregard SOPA. We all know and believe if we follow SOPA, to the best of our ability, the hearing in front of the chief pilot will go OK.

More important than the non-factual basis of several of his statements, this paragraph denigrates unnecessarily. It divides unnecessarily. I could certainly discuss how a positive, constructive team-building leader can describe the events of this merger later but right now I’ll deal with the inaccurate paragraph quoted above.

It is unproven and specious to state that the Delta procedures were “...what could be described as a more flexible, team oriented approach...” This is nonsense. And what’s with “...could be described...?” More drivel. I *could* describe things one way and someone else *could* describe things another way. Talk about spin. How about calling a spade a spade and either celebrate that we are going to be a highly standardized airline operating with a well understood behavioral response resulting from a well written protocol or admit that we are going to be less standardized? You can’t have it both ways and just using the sublime “could be described” excuse doesn’t lead to a well defined SOPA specification, relaxed or not.

How about the “team” concept? I don’t need to go to the dictionary to know that a team is individual performances, grouped together and working to a universal plan. At Northwest we are a team. The LOE portion of our yearly Continuing Qualification defines the jeopardy portion of our training—as a team—after qualifying as individuals for system and maneuver validation. The Lakers are surely a team but everyone knows who Kobe is, what his special skills and abilities are and the role he plays. He is an individual on a team. Please ask Captain Frederick to show you the data for his statement. If it is his personal opinion I summarily reject it. If it is a focus group opinion, who did the poll, Jay Leno with one of his “on the street interviews?” To equate the levels of standardization with the description “very high” in both examples is fatuous. You can’t have a “very high” level of standardization if accomplishing certain tasks is nebulous “with responsibility for completion of specifics less definitive.”

It gets worse, but first, a humorous aside. He writes further on page 13:

“There are some philosophical questions coming up as well, mostly from north pilots who are struggling to understand the cultural differences.”

Do you guys read this stuff? “Struggling?” Most of the guys I run into or fly with are more concerned about male pattern baldness than they are with the “cultural differences.” Considering each of your reg-

ular interactions with north pilots, maybe you are more familiar with this anxiety and angst we north pilots are experiencing than I. Gee, that's funny; I haven't heard one comment about anything like this in the cockpit or the Sports Bar. The only post traumatic stress disorder I have seen is the requirement that we have to look across the cockpit at the other guy's altimeter and state "Crosschecked" instead of each pilot stating things in a verbal, shared response that I expect and trust him to relay accurately.

Come on guys, if this degradation of the proven, interactive, team approach we have developed over the nearly three decades I have been here is not recognized and eliminated at this critical point we will end up battling it for a long time. This isn't a matter of NIH (not invented here) Syndrome on my part for sure, but it is a matter of wanting to do things in the cockpit that make sense. Sorry, checking and cross checking an altimeter umpteen times doesn't and is in fact distractive. I can't wait until someone flies with a Delta crew who relates the story behind their altimeter setting paranoia.

On page 12 he writes:

"North pilots tend to do things exactly the way they are written in the book and take the crew duties chart literally. That is their culture. South pilots have an established expectation that tends to make allowances for a team approach to completing checklists. Again, culture."

Here we go again. I don't "tend" to do anything. I either do it the way I was taught, following an almost foolproof SOPA, or I screw it up. Most of the time my "teammate" catches it and we proceed. I'm terribly sorry, but there's more.

"The way it is written in the books, however, had north pilots interpreting the procedure literally."

Now come on, if it is written, isn't it, by definition,

literal? Is it undesirable to "do things exactly the way they are written in the book..."? If there are multiple ways to do things with this new "team approach," why is it not written that way in "the book?" No, actually, in reading the Delta FOM there is a plethora of definitions and behaviors that are spelled out exactly! This is no different than the way the old NWA FOM was written and certainly no less specific. Details upon request. Rhetorically, were the Northwest SOPA procedures really subject to a lot of interpretation? Of course not, and the questions we had as line pilots were very uniformly answered by instructors who attended standardization meetings all the time. I believe that was the idea: a standard behavior expectation of each pilot we flew with because we knew exactly how he would act given most any fight regime challenge or situation.

Moreover, upon review of and having initially experienced the phase 3 procedures, there are numerous examples of promoting a reduced level of feedback and confirmation between pilots for tasks being accomplished. One glaring example is where the first officer simply lowers the flaps for takeoff without a specific command from the captain. How does that include both crewmembers in this critical operation? I might get used to the surprise I experienced on August 1st after brake release when I first looked over and found the flap handle was already at 20 degrees. Maybe, as the PILOT IN COMMAND WHO SIGNED THE RELEASE, I wasn't ready for the frickin' flaps!

When the captain at NWA asks for "flaps 10," the first officer, in stating "Flaps 10" is verifying his concurrence that it is a reasonable command. The "team" has lowered the flaps, not an individual operating unilaterally. Nothing less than one more check and balance.

So now let me guess where this is going—the poor first officers will have to learn local specific procedures for each captain they fly with. "Bob likes this and John likes that and Joe likes me to do it after the flaps come up." This is not standardization.

I flew at a commuter once where we had to know who wanted what. There were only 12 "Captain Who's" and in that bunch there was still standard-

ization with only a couple of oddballs who did things differently. Next time remind me to tell you the story about the captain with the golf glove. Well, that was a commuter, this is the big leagues. Let's act like it.

Another question I have is: when were the first officers trained to start an engine? Do they wait for an EGT rollback? How do I know they really are monitoring the time limits? Again, rhetorically, does the lack of N1 and oil pressure callouts really encourage him to make sure they occur? Does it allow me to aurally verify these limitations have been met while I'm distracted visually? Who is going to do the rug dance when "our team" torches one?

OK, OK. I hear some of you. "Geez, this guy is really wrapped around the axle with his apparent inability to learn and comport." No, when I see us, as an entire airline, hurriedly adopting procedures inferior to those we have honed over decades with some of the best in the business, it would be wrong not to at least query our direction. But when a Delta pilot manager has the temerity to spin a bunch of words into a justification, it begs the question: who, really, or what, really, is defining our path and where is it going to take us? And I do mean REALLY. Is it possible that this stems from the desire for an expeditious SOC as a governing timeline creator? Could we be so dumb at the corporate decision making level to succumb to that promise? This might sound conspiratorial but really, where does the ensconced Fed fit into this? Is he an open minded, out of the box thinker looking at this merger of operating protocols as an opportunity to improve the entire operation? Or is he another of the "just because" group?

Finally, if I might be allowed a metaphorical comparison:

The ship Titanic had a record to break in its passage across the Atlantic. It had to accomplish this on its maiden voyage. Alas, it had neither the captain on the bridge during that now well known incredibly dangerous portion of their journey nor was the ship equipped with enough binoculars for the crew to use to spot all of the real dangers present. Perhaps this can be equated to our situation today. We are

like the Titanic in pursuing an SOC within a given time period yet, based on the history of "occurrences" during and shortly after mergers, we also are in an incredibly dangerous period. But in our case we have the binoculars—line pilots and managers who witness training and checking events. We have other binocular like tools available as well—sophisticated aircraft reporting tools available to provide actual line performance data. Even if a specific danger had been identified early enough, it is problematic, given the inertia of the large vessel Titanic, if it would have been able to turn in time to miss the clear danger ahead. Like that big ship, our corporate inertia is large, difficult to manage and to possibly turn in a different direction. Is it nearly impossible to reverse course if an earlier estimation is found wrong? Regardless of the eventual outcome, to ignore the data and observations available to us is every bit as tragic as the end result we all know occurred on that dreadful evening in 1912. Surely, if there are other indications more salient than personal feeling and opinion, of course we should be courageous enough to heed the warnings and change course.

This is intended as a constructive complaint. After an initial "look-see" at the pilot reaction to our "phase of flight" plan for our integration, please label this as my "red flag" notice. I have done my best to convey my thoughts and fears and will do my best to mitigate the challenges I daily face personally. If you can take the time to stand back and assign value to what is really important please help those in positions of corporate leadership to revisit the options available to us. I am not suggesting everything is faulty or that there will necessarily be ill consequences if we continue, but I am asking us to revisit our decisions and the reason they were made. I think the "Emergency Checklist" reminds us well: "DO NOT HURRY."

We are now the biggest airline in the world. I think there is no doubt we all want us to be the most successful and the best airline, operationally, in the world. Let's slow down and do the "rethinking" that has already been mentioned before we simply continue in a time governed direction that might be questionable to begin with.

Captain James Baldwin, DTW 747-400



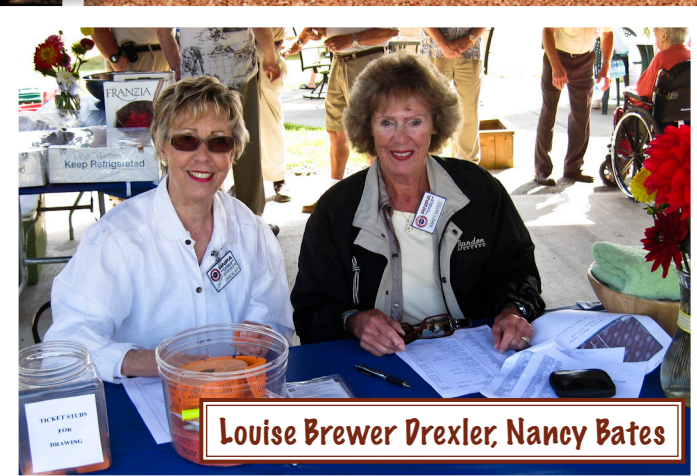
Good weather,
Good food,
Good friends!



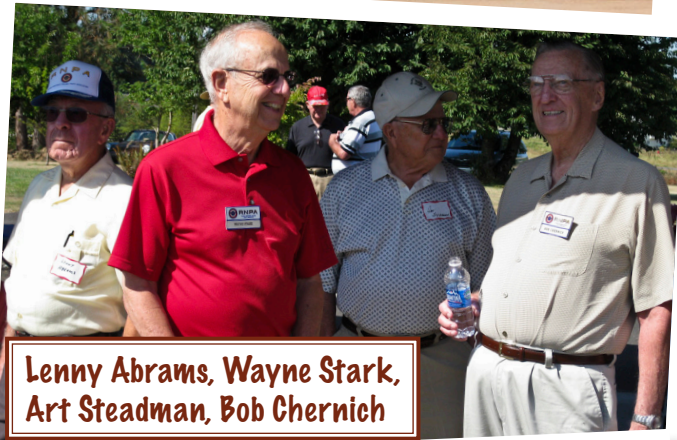
Warren & Dotty Avenson



Francine Elliott, Kelly Cohn



Louise Brewer Drexler, Nancy Bates



**Lenny Abrams, Wayne Stark,
Art Steadman, Bob Chernich**



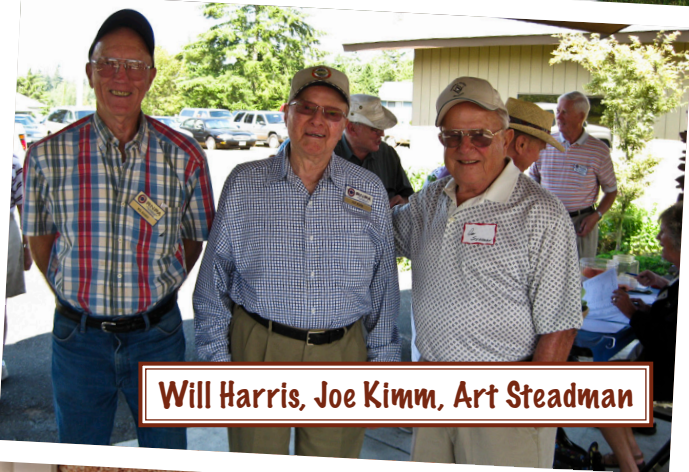
**Francine Elliott, Kathy Eglet,
Lydia Dawson, Kathee Nelick**



Walt & Jan Mills, Nadine & Sterling Bentsen



Bob Drexler, Skip Eglet, Clair Peffer



Will Harris, Joe Kimm, Art Steadman



JoAnn & Denny Swanson



Art Chetlain & Donna Pauly Chetlain



Photos: Doug Peterson



Lynn & Ron Heitritter



**Pat Hayward,
Eileen Waller**



Jay Sakas, Connie & Jeff Fine



Time to eat!



Curt & Sandy Bryan



Jack Kemp, Lydia Dawson, Marv Peterson



Joyce & Marty Foy



Bill Hendrick, Charlie Sivertson, Mel Suggett



**Alta Christ,
Joe Kimm**



Dave & Holly Nelson



Dick & Marge Haddon



Checking in



**Kelly Cohn, Dick Haddon,
Pam Beckman**



Bill & Joyce Barrott



Rae Leffel



Bill Hendrick, Grego Lasek



Rex Nelick, Doug Jones, Jim Gault



Jim & Bev Palmer



Chuck Nelson, Gary Dickinson



Will Sorum, Rex & Kathee Nelick





Lorraine DeVoll, ????
Montie Leffel



Irene Kochendorfer,
Darl McAllister



Dave & Linda Rolczynski



Lee & Norm DeShon



Ruthie & Danny Dumas



Dino & Karen Oliva



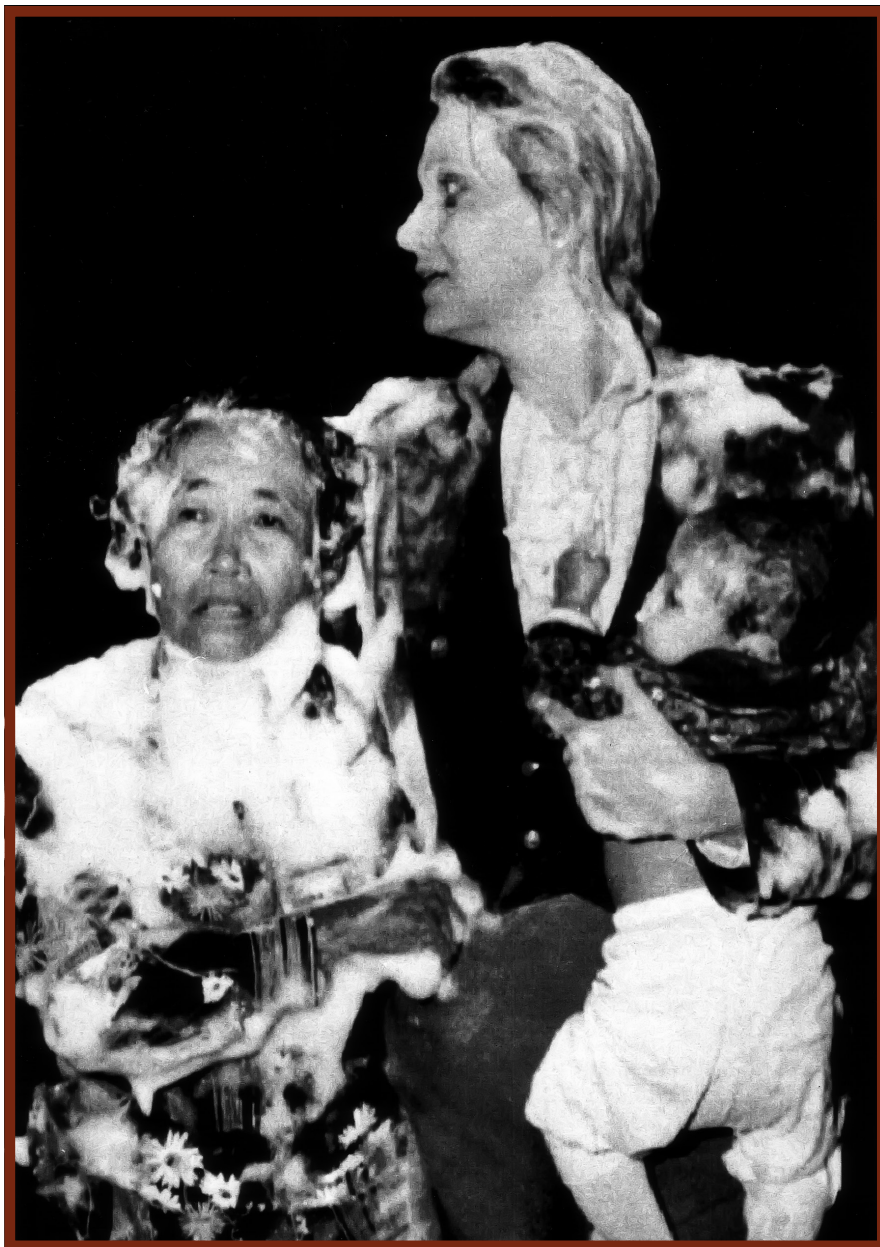
Chuck Carlson & Joanne Aitken



A STORM OF FAILURES IN THE TEETH OF A TYPHOON

Many of you will remember this AP photo of Flight Attendant Carol Grant and two passengers covered in fire-fighting foam. It appeared in newspapers around the world after the emergency described here. But do you know the real story of what happened? I had heard one word-of-mouth version at the time which turned out to be not even close.

– Editor



By Captain Steve Bowen

New Tokyo International Airport
Narita, Japan, September 19, 1991

The following is my personal account of Northwest Airlines Flight 18, a 747-400 (ship 6303) departing from Tokyo NRT non-stop to New York JFK on this date. I was the senior captain and acting pilot in command that night. Scheduled departure time was 0905Z (1805 JST), and the planned en route flight time was 11:41. Typhoon 18 (Luke) was passing about 50 NM south of NRT, and we were experiencing strong, gusty winds and moderate to heavy rain at the time of our departure. There was enough standing water on the runway that we elected

to use the runway contamination chart to correct our maximum allowable gross weight for take-off. According to ACARS, our actual gross weight at start of take-off was to be just over 821,000 lbs., which was legal for take-off on runway 34 with ½ inch of standing water.

The passenger total that night was 289 plus 5 infants, and we were a crew of 21 (4 pilots and 17 cabin crew) for a grand total of 315 souls on board. We started our take-off roll at 0904Z and flew the standard runway 34 departure route over CVC to OTR 11 to KAGIS and PABBA, etc., with some deviations around heavy rain cells observed on radar in the CVC area. Some light to moderate turbulence was experienced as we passed through this area.

Approaching KAGIS, about 90 NM east of NRT, we seemed to be breaking out on top around FL 240, so we were able to relax a bit, thinking that we were just about out of the woods and in the clear. But just then we got our first of many EICAS caution messages which indicated a bleed or nacelle overheat on the No. 1 engine. I believe this first message was “OVHT ENG 1 NAC”, but before we could even react or get the book out, it was followed by many more confusing and seemingly unrelated messages in rapid succession. These included, but were not limited to:

“BLEED DUCT LEAK L”,
“ELEC GEN OFF 1”,
“FLAPS PRIMARY”,
“CABIN ALT AUTO”,
“ENG 1 FUEL VLV”,
“STARTER CUTOUT 1”, and more.

Also, we had an amber “REV” indication on the No. 1 engine indicating a possible reverser unlocked in-flight. This was actually the second abnormal indication I observed, before the flood of EICAS messages followed, and it immediately brought to mind the Lauda Air crash in Thailand earlier that year, which was found to have been caused by an inadvertent in-flight reversal!

I was flying the airplane and continued to do so throughout the emergency. Dave Hall was in the right seat and handled all ATC communications, emergency checklists, etc. Marv Ritchie, our augmented captain, sat behind me and did most of the PA’s and communications with the cabin crew, as well as helping with all phases of the emergency. Rick Mladic, the augmented co-pilot, occupied the right-hand jumpseat. He handled company radio calls, helped Dave go through the numerous emergency procedures, and assisted each of us in many aspects of the emergency. It was generally a coordinated effort that kept all four of us very busy throughout the entire incident, from the initial onset of problems (at about 0921Z) through landing at 1931 JST (1031Z), passenger evacuation, and the rather chaotic aftermath!

We reached a maximum altitude of about FL 260, where I leveled off, then began to descend as we started losing cabin pressure, had a possible in-flight reversal of the No. 1 engine, and also had an indication that several leading edge flap groups had partially extended! We did not, however, notice any unusual yaw or vibration to verify these indications. I did have the No. 1 engine pulled back to idle thrust for some time due to the many abnormal indications on that engine. We had taken this precaution despite the fact that the engine seemed to be operating normally.

As we leveled off and started down, the stick shaker activated several times as the high speed and low speed red lines on the PFD came together and merged into *one solid red line!* It stayed like this for much of the flight. I just tried to maintain what I thought was a reasonable airspeed for the conditions—around 260 to 270 KTS—considering our weight, altitude, possible flaps partially extended, etc. At this point, we all donned our oxygen masks.

With the cabin altitude climbing rather rapidly now, I began increasing our rate of descent, but the auto-throttles were fighting me and kept advancing as I tried to retard thrust to idle. At the same time, the autopilot kept trying to pitch up as I tried to descend. So I disconnected both and continued hand-flying the descent with full speed brakes. All this time Dave was trying to control the loss of cabin pressure by both auto and manual methods, but nothing seemed to be working. And the cabin temperature was getting very hot as well. We couldn’t control that either. The door 2R flight attendant control also seemed to be ineffective.

I should say at this point that *none* of us had any idea what we were dealing with here. None of the abnormal indications seemed to be related. Nothing was pointing to one definite cause of the malfunctions we were seeing. It seemed that some indications were likely false alarms, but others were definitely quite real! It should also be said that at no time during the entire emergency, either in-flight or on the ground, did we *ever* have a fire warning of any kind—engine or otherwise. We knew we had serious problems, but we never knew that a *fire* was causing all the havoc. And only on the ground during landing rollout did the fire become visible. In the air the fire was wholly contained within the structure of the wing leading edge and No. 2 pylon and was never visible to passengers or crew until we were on the ground. By the time we came to a stop, the flames lit up the night sky!

Fear of the unknown is an insidious thing. I tried my best, throughout our entire airborne ordeal, to suppress the awful fear that the airplane could come apart at any moment and it would be all over for us. I suspect the other crew members had similar thoughts. I don’t know. We didn’t talk about it.

We declared an emergency with Tokyo ATC and got clearance to descend to 10,000 ft. We asked for vectors to an area where we could dump fuel, then return to NRT for an emergency landing with equipment standing by. As we descended, we caught the cabin at about 13,000 ft. After that, we had some manual control of cabin pressure, but it was exceedingly erratic and unreliable.

We were well into the emergency descent before any of us had a chance to think about calling downstairs to inform the cabin crew what was happening. Before we could do so, Suzy Armstrong, our lead flight attendant came up to see what was going on. She entered the cockpit and saw all four of us with oxygen on in the midst of an obvious emergency. Nobody even saw her, and she didn't wait around to be noticed. She just turned around, went back downstairs, and started preparing the cabin for an emergency landing. A bit later, Marv was able to call down and brief Suzy on what was happening. She was way ahead of us. She had already told the other flight attendants that we had some sort of emergency situation and that they should begin preparing for a planned emergency landing. Suzy had Carol Grant, who was working the upper deck, move all her passengers downstairs as there were plenty of empty seats on the main deck. Carol also took a position on the main deck, so, in case we had to evacuate, we wouldn't have to use the upper deck exit slides, which could have been very hazardous in the windy, wet conditions that existed at the time.

The fuel dumping process took about 50 minutes and was hampered to some extent by the fact that we were only able to dump out of one side. The left wing fuel jettison system was not operational. We dumped a total of about 160,000 lbs. of kerosene—down to a level of 140,000 lbs. of fuel remaining. We had discussed the possibility of landing overweight to save time, but had rejected that idea for several reasons. We knew the runway was wet so hydroplaning was a concern, and we needed to add 20 KTS to our approach and landing speeds for our abnormal flap configuration plus another 10 KTS pad for the gusty surface wind condition. So we really needed to be down to maximum landing weight of 630,000 lbs. Otherwise we risked not being able to stop by the end of the runway.

As we dumped fuel, we went through the abnormal procedures in the book one by one for each of our many EICAS messages. We had to decide, in each case, whether we were looking at a real malfunction or merely a false alarm. For example, at one point consideration was given to shutting down the No. 1 engine as called for in the procedure for handling an engine nacelle overheat. We all agreed that the "OVHT ENG 1 NAC" message was likely a false alarm since the engine seemed to be operating normally in all other respects. So we kept the engine running at a reduced thrust level as long as everything else looked good. Shutting down an outboard engine unnecessarily would only have made control of the aircraft more difficult than it already was, not

to mention the fact that we would have lost hydraulic system No. 1 since the No. 1 ADP (pneumatic back-up pump) was inoperative!

Also during this lengthy fuel jettison process, we continued to communicate with the company on the ground and the cabin crew downstairs to make sure that all was in readiness for our emergency landing. We made it clear to all concerned that we didn't really know what to expect upon landing since we still didn't know the exact nature of our problem. So we had everyone prepare for the worst while we all hoped for the best.

Once fuel dumping was complete, we asked for vectors for a 20-mile final approach to runway 34. I kept trying the autopilot every so often to see if it would work. Eventually it did, so we completed the dumping procedure and flew the final approach on autopilot. We did not use the autothrottles, however.

The flaps were extended early to check for proper operation. Trailing edge flaps were normal, but the leading edge display was not. It showed some groups extended, some in transit, and some still retracted. We had no idea what we actually had in the way of leading edge flaps. So we had to use the increased approach speed ($V_{ref}+20$) specified by the abnormal leading edge flap procedure. Flaps were set at 25 for landing. We also added a 10 KT gust pad to our already high approach speed as the glide path and surface winds were strong, gusty, and variable in direction, with an occasional tailwind component.

No. 1 engine was still operating normally despite the bad indications, so we continued to use it for vectoring and approach. We received an early landing clearance from the tower and were assured that the emergency equipment was standing by for us. I allowed the autopilot to fly the approach down to about 400', then disconnected it for a manual landing. It was still raining and the runway was wet, so I executed a moderate "duck under" maneuver in order to utilize some of the concrete short of the displaced threshold. (The landing threshold on runway 34 is displaced over 3,000' down the runway for noise abatement purposes.)

Touchdown was normal and fairly smooth at or near the displaced threshold. Autobrakes 4 had been selected and seemed to work normally. Full reverse thrust was used on the inboard engines and about half on No. 4. No. 1 reverse was not selected due to the malfunction indications. About halfway through the landing roll I realized that we weren't decelerating adequately, so I applied maximum pedal braking down to runway turn-off speed.

About 2/3 of the way through our rollout, the tower informed us that they were observing fire coming from

an engine on our left wing. I don't recall if they said which engine, but I assumed it was No. 1 since that was our problem engine (or so we thought). Thinking that was the case, as we were clearing the runway at A-2 (500' from the end of the runway), I shut down the No. 1 engine. I recall wondering whether we'd have enough residual system 1 hydraulic pressure to complete our turn onto taxiway A. We did complete the turn and rolled a short distance to a stop on A just short of P1. Out of force of habit, I had called for "flaps up", and Dave had started them up before realizing that we had no more system 1 hydraulic pressure. He thus just left the flap handle at 20.

Immediately after we stopped and set the brakes, the tower called to inform us that we had a fire in our No. 1 engine. While we were fighting that fire (there actually was no fire at the No. 1 engine), the tower called *again* to say there was a fire on our right wing! (This was also the observation of flight attendants at door 3R and others on the right side. For this reason door 3R was not used during the evacuation. It remains a mystery just what they saw as there was no evidence of any fire on the right wing.) Then the tower called again to say that **No. 2** engine was on fire! I looked back at the left wing and was able to confirm this last report. The leading edge of the wing was engulfed in flames right at the No. 2 pylon area.

The fire trucks were on us right away. They pulled up behind our left wing after we stopped on the taxiway and began to spray foam on the fire area from behind the No. 2 engine. The tower called one more time to say that we should evacuate our passengers out the right side of the aircraft. We had come to the same conclusion ourselves, so the command was given by Capt. Marv Ritchie on the PA: "Easy Victor" three times, followed by "Evacuate the aircraft from the right side".

At this point in our ordeal, things were happening fast and furious. We were fighting the No. 2 engine fire, shutting down engines 3 and 4, and working on the passenger evacuation checklist. Then Rick and Marv, who had both gone downstairs to offer their assistance, rushed back up to the cockpit to inform us that none of the doors would open. We were still pressurized! They ran back down to help while Dave and I frantically tried to open the outflow valves manually. But we had lost all control of the pressurization before landing—both auto and manual—so we didn't know if our efforts were going to help or not. We just tried everything we could think of to relieve the excess cabin pressure. I recalled having glanced at the cabin altitude readout on final approach, and I thought it read -400 ft. This seemed reasonable to

The Daedalian Award

In early 1992, the Order of Daedalians, a society of military pilots organized in 1934 by a group of World War I aviators, selected the crew of Northwest flight 18 to receive the 1991 Civilian Airmanship Award. This award is given annually to the civilian pilot and/or crew that the FAA has determined have demonstrated ability, judgement, and/or heroism beyond normal operational requirements. It is significant to note that, where normally only the cockpit crew are cited, in the case of NW 18, the entire crew—pilots and flight attendants—were chosen to receive the award. All 21 members of the flight crew (plus Mr. Morita and VP John Kern) and their friends and families were invited to attend the Daedalians' annual convention in Sacramento, CA, that summer to accept the award and partake in the festivities.



The award is accompanied by a trophy, which is inscribed with the names of the recipients and given to the airline involved to keep for that year until it must be returned to the Order for the next year's presentation. It is interesting to note that Northwest Airlines, which tended to de-emphasize this event for whatever reasons, ended up storing the trophy in a NATCO closet for the entire year, rather than display it somewhere that it could be seen and appreciated, if not by the general public, then at least by company employees and other flight crew members.

In an attempt to document the fact that Northwest was in possession of that trophy that year, Capt. Steve Bowen took it upon himself to go to NATCO, dig the trophy out of its hiding place, and take some photos to preserve this bit of NWA history.



The pilots of NW 18: (standing l-r) F/O Rick Mladic, Capt. Marv Ritchie, F/O Dave Hall and (seated) Capt. Steve Bowen at a lunch in MSP hosted by CEO John Dasburg to honor the crew on 10/30/91

me at the time. Anyhow, the cabin should depressurize on touchdown as usual, I thought. But it didn't.

While we were busily trying to depressurize, Dave looked out his right side window and observed passengers running away from the aircraft, so we knew they had finally managed to open the doors. We completed the passenger evacuation checklist, double checked that everything was done and secure, took our flashlights, and proceeded to the cabin.

I was the last one downstairs, and when I arrived in the main cabin, it appeared that the fire was out, and all the passengers had been evacuated. This was about 2 or 3 minutes after parking, I believe. Only a few crew members remained on board. Suzy Armstrong and I checked the entire cabin to make sure everyone was off, then she and I exited through door 1R. We were the last two people off the aircraft.

I was immediately impressed, as I went down the chute, with the extreme slipperiness of the slide and the speed of my descent. Nothing was slowing me down (including the "deceleration strips" at the bottom), and I shot right by the two firemen who tried to catch me and ended up sitting in a puddle of water and foam on the taxiway. The other crew members reported experiencing the same fast ride down the slides, and I'm sure this contributed to some passenger injuries. The rain and extinguisher foam made everything slick, and the wind had been blowing foam over the top of the fuselage and onto the slides and taxiway.

Once everyone was out of the aircraft, we, the crew, attempted to account for all passengers, assemble them in one place, see to the injured, and get everyone safely back to the terminal building. Conditions were less than ideal. It was dark, windy, and still raining. There was foam everywhere from the fire trucks. Fire and rescue personnel were attempting to gather people together on A-3 near taxiway A. Passengers had scattered far and wide. Some had gone out onto the runway and beyond to the airport boundary. I assisted in this effort to group people together so we could bus them to shelter and further assistance at the terminal building. I encountered several ground agents with walkie-talkies and asked them to have buses sent over immediately to pick up passengers. But no buses came.

Medical help on the scene at that point was almost non-existent. We had asked repeatedly for ambulances and medics to be sent to assist with our injured passengers. We ended up waiting over 40 minutes before one large ambulance arrived with medical personnel. In the meantime, we, the crew, were left to deal with frantic and confused passengers, several of whom had been injured during the evacuation. (People were piling up at the bottom of the slides as they couldn't clear out fast enough before the next person slid down on top of them.) Fortunately there were no fatalities, and we later learned that of the 45 or so passengers injured in the evacuation, only 8 had sustained serious injuries (non life-threatening). The rest of the injuries were only minor in nature. Only two of our crew members were injured, and both had used the slide at door 2R. First officer Dave Hall had fractured his ankle, and flight attendant Diane Curlen was shaken up with abrasions to the leg and face. Dave did not seek medical care until he was back home in the USA, as he was able to limp around O.K. and thought he was all right. (We later found out that the bone was actually broken.) Diane saw a doctor in Japan that night and was released after minor treatment to return home the next day.

By now some 45 minutes had elapsed since the evacuation, and still no buses. I could see an entire fleet of buses sitting on the cargo ramp a few hundred yards away, but they just sat there. They refused to approach the aircraft despite all our gesturing and yelling. Were they afraid of the fire? That had long since been extinguished. Anyhow, it was too far to try to lead all the passengers across the tarmac, so in desperation I ran across to the first bus and insisted in no uncertain terms he lead the other buses over to the area where we had assembled the passengers. Somewhat reluctantly he acquiesced, so we were finally able to start transporting people to the shelter of the terminal building.

We designated one of the buses as the “ambulance bus” for those who had been injured, since no ambulance had yet arrived on the scene. As we were doing this, an actual ambulance did arrive with a few medics on board, so we proceeded to transfer the injured off the “ambulance bus” over to this vehicle, which really wasn’t adequate to handle the number of injuries we had. Nor were these “medics” very helpful in dealing with the situation. They seemed to be as dazed and confused as the rest of us, but somehow they managed to transport the more seriously injured to a local hospital for further treatment.

The rest of us—crew and passengers—many with minor injuries and covered with fire extinguishing foam, were bussed to the terminal where we were simply dropped off and led up to the departure gate area where we ended up mingling with other passengers waiting to board other flights. There was no plan to take our people, all soaking wet from the rain and foam (some still bleeding!), to a separate staging area where they could be attended to and the injured could be cared for.

It was then that our man in Narita, Mr. Shigeaki Morita, head of Tokyo Flight Dispatch, came to our rescue. He, more than anyone else, took charge of the situation. He realized that our people needed to be taken somewhere away from other passengers where they could be attended to by airport personnel. He got this process going, then began arranging for hotel accommodations for passengers and crew since we obviously weren’t going anywhere that night.

In the meantime, the media and airport police began hounding the crew for statements and interviews. This was not the time for any of this as we were soaking wet, bedraggled, and exhausted from our lengthy ordeal. Thankfully Mr. Morita interceded and made arrangements with the authorities to interview us the next morning after we’d had some time to rest. Ultimately, we were all—passengers and crew—taken to the Tokyo

How It Happened

Throughout their entire ordeal, the crew of NW18 had no idea what the actual root cause of all the seemingly unrelated problems and malfunction indications was. Later, after the initial inspection of the aircraft on the ground at NRT, they learned the details of what had gone wrong. Here’s how it went down.

In the leading edge of the left wing where the No. 2 pylon is attached, the generator feeder cable from No. 1 engine passes in close proximity to the fuel feed tube for the No. 2 engine. It is held in place by a retainer bracket. Somehow (no one knows how—a recent hard landing was one theory) this bracket had broken allowing the feeder cable to rub against the fuel line. Eventually, the insulation on the feeder cable wore away allowing arcing to occur between the cable and the fuel tube. This burned a hole in the fuel line creating a leak which was ignited by the short in the feeder cable.

So, now we have fuel under pressure being sprayed into the area inside the leading edge, ignited by the shorted cable, and acting like a blow torch melting down the rest of the cable and other components in that area. As circuits shorted out or wires were severed, the stream of EICAS messages began to show up in the cockpit and many systems were rendered inoperative, including, but not limited to, the fire detection and protection in that area. Thus, there were no cockpit indications of fire to the crew at any time.

Bay Hilton for a late supper and a good night’s sleep.

There wasn’t much sleep for me, however, as I spent several hours on the phone calling home and talking to chief pilots and other company and union officials. The plan for our crew the next day was to return to base as deadhead crew on flight 18 to JFK. Everyone agreed that it was imperative to get us all back to the U.S. as quickly as possible. There was a real danger that the crew—or at least the captain(s)—could be detained as the Japanese tend to consider the captain guilty of a crime, in the case of such an accident, until proven otherwise. We could end up in jail, and nobody wanted that!

So the next morning Marv Ritchie and I, the two captains, and Suzy Armstrong, the lead flight attendant,



The entire crew of NW 18, except for Dave Hall, at the crew debrief held at NATCO in MSP on Sept. 24, 1991

were taken back to the airport to be interviewed by the authorities. Once again, Mr. Morita was our savior. He met us when we arrived and led us through our round of interrogations, acting both as interpreter and expediter to get us through the interviews and on our plane back home before the authorities could take any action against the crew. It happened that Capt. Dean Sunde was also in Narita at that time, and he proved to be a great help in dealing with all the issues that arose in the aftermath of the incident.

First we met with the Narita Airport police, who just wanted the details of what happened for their report. Then it was off to the Japanese CAB, who were con-

cerned about possible violations of their flight rules. There were none, so they sent us over to the MOT, who, being the political arm of Japanese aviation, were concerned about the airport's public image more than anything else. The minister's first comments were that this was the worst accident in the history of the Narita Airport, as if we had intentionally smeared their public image as a safe facility. This session went on and on, despite Morita's many attempts to convince the minister that we had done nothing wrong. It was simply an accident, and, in fact, it was because of the extraordinary efforts of the

crew that things ended as well as they did! The officials didn't seem convinced.

Our time was running short as it was nearly departure time for flight 18. The rest of the crew was already onboard, and they were holding the flight for us. Mr. Morita finally convinced the MOT officials that we had to get on that flight, and they let us go. We were whisked off in a van directly over to the aircraft, which was waiting for us at a hard stand ready to start engines. Marv and Suzy and I raced up the stairs and into our waiting first class seats to the applause and cheers of the other crew members. The door slammed shut and we were on our way home. ✈

Some Reaction

The Japanese authorities, Northwest Airlines, and Boeing were the only ones involved in the Sept. 1991 investigation and repair process, all of which kept ship 6303 on the ground in NRT for an entire month. When the FAA was notified of the incident and apparent cause, they issued an AD to all world-wide operators of all models of 747 to check the security of that retainer bracket and to see that the required clearance existed between the generator feeder cable and the fuel tube. (This included the aircraft in use as Air Force One!) Reportedly, only two or three cases were found amongst the global fleet where repairs were required.

It was never made public, but apparently a Boeing engineer (who remains anonymous), after inspecting the damage and realizing the seriousness of the situation, remarked off the record that, in his opinion, if the fire had started an hour or two later, when we were well out over the North Pacific, we never would have made it back to NRT. The fire would have progressed to such an extent that ditching would have been the only option.

Flight Attendant Stories

The relative calm and order in the cockpit during the after-landing and evacuation activities stood in stark contrast to the panic, noise, and chaos in the cabin as the aircraft came to rest on the taxiway and the evacuation was initiated. Each flight attendant had a different experience and story to tell depending on where he or she was stationed in the cabin.

Virtually all of the cabin crew described a scene of total chaos and confusion downstairs as we stopped and ordered the evacuation. People were screaming and climbing over seatbacks and each other as all the left side windows lit up from the fire out on the wing. Then when the doors wouldn't open at first, the ensuing panic only increased in intensity.

One flight attendant, Carol Grant, was handed a baby by a distraught mother who apparently needed someone in authority to save her child. The woman then disappeared until Carol finally located her hours later in the terminal building. Carol described her harrowing descent down the 1L slide while holding the infant and nearly being blown off the chute by the foam being sprayed on the fire from behind the wing. Sara Dale followed her down and helped get Carol and the baby and the others who used that exit to safety.

Another flight attendant hurt her back trying to open door 1R. It finally opened when two or three strong male passengers came to her assistance. Other flight attendants described passengers screaming ob-



"This article is dedicated to Suzy Armstrong and the entire crew of Flight 18 of 9/19/91, all of whom played an important part in the successful outcome of the emergency that night."

- Steve Bowen

scenities at them to open the doors that just refused to budge.

As the remaining right side doors opened once pressure was released, the flight attendant at one door was pushed aside by several panicking Chinese passengers who were out the door before the slide had a chance to fully inflate. They became the most seriously injured of the passengers as they fell to the tarmac far below.

One flight attendant, Diane Curlen, was injured going down the slide at 2R. F/O Dave Hall broke his ankle using that same exit.

Although virtually all crew members suffered some degree of post traumatic stress from the incident, it was worse for some than for others. A few flight attendants went right back to work afterwards to just put it all behind them. Others took an extended period of time off. A few considered never coming back. One had a miscarriage upon returning home that may or may not have resulted from the trauma she suffered.

A common complaint amongst the cabin crew was the less than caring and compassionate treatment they received from the company. Although, initially, they were told to take their time recovering from the trauma they suffered and not be in any hurry to come back to work, that attitude soon changed.

Those who did take time off, soon found themselves being pressured to come back to work. And pay and insurance claims were denied to many who really needed the assistance. Counseling was offered to all who wanted it, but it turned out to be a false promise for many as the company did not follow through on the offer.

The bottom line was that the flight attendants, in general, were poorly treated by the company in the weeks and months following the event. Some never really did recover, and ended up either quitting or accepting less assistance than they should have received.

The other flight attendants: Kim Watson, Carol Grant, Kathleen Nichols, Linnea Hanson-Hanley, Linda Butler, Sara Dale, Cheryl Sebens, Heather Patterson, Diane Curlen, Patricia Whelan, Molly Koch, Patty Nelson, Roland Mayor, Hattie Whitfield-Kidd, on-board service manager Lai Lei Ng and interpreter Kyoko Hayashi.

FLYING KAMCHATKA ONE

by Peter S. Greenberg

March 19, 1995

None of the passengers boarding Korean Airlines flight 007 to Seoul, Korea, at New York's Kennedy Airport on August 31, 1983, suspected anything other than a normal flight.

The 747 would head north, stopping briefly in Alaska to refuel then continue along a predetermined North Pacific flight path until reaching Korea.

The path is known to pilots as R-20, a regular air highway that comes within 20 miles of Soviet air space along the Kamchatka Peninsula, about 450 miles from the Aleutian Islands.

But KAL 007 did more than cross the international dateline that night. In a tragic, fatal incident that continues to perplex investigators and—like the assassination of President Kennedy—launched a cottage industry of conspiracy theorists, it crossed into highly restricted Soviet airspace.

The plane was guided by three sophisticated inertial navigation systems, linked to the automatic pilot.

After being programmed by the pilots, the INS units continually cross-check each other for accuracy. An alarm is triggered by the slightest deviation.

But for reasons that remain officially unexplained, the captain of 007 misprogrammed his into Soviet air space. He was not only off-course, but his flight path paralleled that of a top-secret, U.S. Air Force RC-135 intelligence plane that was flying just at the border of Soviet air space, monitoring Russian missile testing.

On September 1, at almost the same time the RC-135 was returning to its Aleutian base—12:51 a.m. Tokyo time—its flight path was intersected by KAL 007, and Soviet radar operators apparently confused the 747 with the RC-135, which they had been tracking for hours.

Either way, someone had entered their airspace, and was headed southwest. The Soviets went on alert, but were too late to catch up with the “intruder.”

KAL 007 continued on its fateful route across the Kamchatka peninsula, then into the Sea of Okhotsk, heading on a direct course for a heavily fortified Soviet base on Sakhalin Island, 550 miles south of Kamchatka. The Russians at Sakhalin picked up flight 007 at 2:44 a.m., scrambled fighter jets, intercepted the 747 and attempted to identify it.

At 3:26 a.m., a Soviet SU-16 fighter launched two air-to-air missiles and then reported “the target is destroyed,”

In less than 90 seconds, 240 passengers and 29 crew members perished.

Now, nearly 12 years later, the passengers boarding Northwest Flight 17 between New York and Tokyo also had nothing to suspect that their flight would be anything other than routine. And if pilot Dale Nadon hadn't later announced the news, none of them would have noticed that the 747-400 was flying a different route, nearly mirroring that of KAL 007.

But flight 17 was pre-approved to fly the route.

Pre-approved? It hasn't been well-publicized, but a 1993 agreement between the United States and Russia now permits civilian airliners to fly the once forbidden northern track.

The new air highways are called Kamchatka 1 and Siberia 2.

After leaving the Alaskan coastline—and seven hours after departing JFK—we crossed the Bering Sea and neared Russian airspace, flying west toward Petropavlovsk, the largest city and most important installation on Kamchatka, where as many as 30 missile-firing submarines—half the Soviet fleet—are usually stationed. Ironically, this was the base that first picked up KAL 007 on the radar.

The new rules given to Northwest pilots are very specific. While permission may be granted by Russian air controllers before a flight departs, permission must also be received in the air before the plane actually enters Russian airspace.

And there is no margin for error.

The terrain is mountainous, and in many places, there are active volcanoes.

In an emergency, there are few, if any acceptable alternate airports. (Runways are long enough, but in bad repair. Alaska Airlines now flies to the Russian city of Magadan, but only lands there with underinflated tires to prevent airframe damage.)

Fifteen minutes before hitting Russian airspace, Captain Nadon attempted to raise Petropavlovsk on the radio. No response. Three minutes later he tried again. Still no answer. He then contacted Honolulu control and asked them to do a relay to Anchorage to seek our radio permission to overfly Russia.

Just two minutes before we would be forced to turn around and fly a longer, southerly route, Anchorage control informed Honolulu control that they had contacted the Russians on a land-line system, and permission had been granted.

Suddenly the radio crackled with the sound of the Russian controllers.

Nadon announced the location to the passengers, and those on the right side of the plane were given an impres-

sive view of a long range of active volcanoes, and a forbidding snow-covered landscape.

When KAL flew over this body of water in 1983, the Soviets got particularly angry.

But Northwest flight 17 zipped across without incident. At different waypoints along the route, Nadon and co-pilot Tom Overholt talked to a series of Russian controllers.

Skirting the south coast of Sakhalin Islands we left Russian airspace, landing in Tokyo one hour and five minutes ahead of schedule.

By flying the new route, a 747 can save about 15,000 pounds of fuel, or 2,238 gallons. At the current rate of 55 cents a gallon for jet fuel, that's a savings of \$1,231 per flight per plane. Northwest flies the route—depending upon weather and winds—about 15 percent of the time, or about 55 flights a year.

Thus, a significant cost and time saving.

The Russians charge foreign airlines 81 cents per mile for their overflight permission, so the savings really comes in length of flight and overall cost of operations.

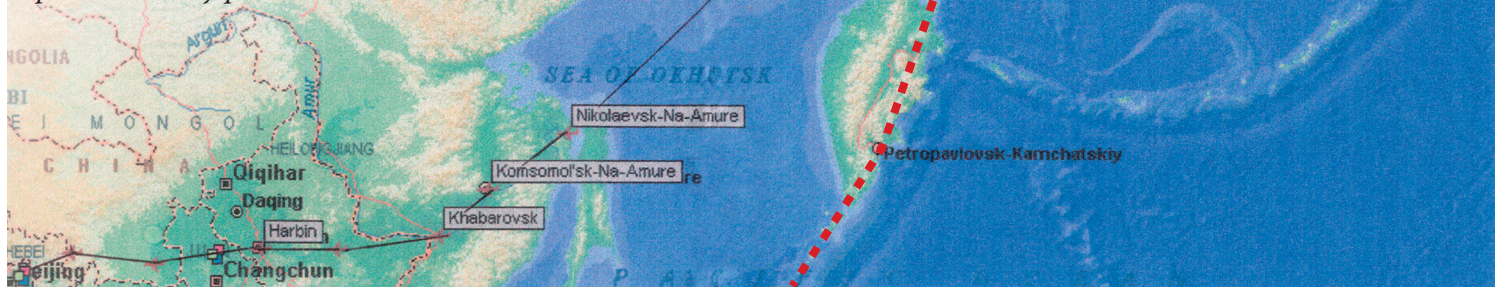
Airlines like Northwest use computer-driven criteria to determine when it makes time/money sense to fly the route. The break-even point: 24 minutes.

It breaks down to specific cargo/passenger payload costs. For every five minutes of savings, Northwest has calculated that it effectively allows an additional 600 pounds of payload (that weight in cargo, or two passengers and their checked luggage.)

As we headed south toward Japan, co-pilot Overholt had his last communication with the Russians. "Have a nice day," he radioed as a sign-off. Suddenly came an unexpected response from the Russian controller: "Northwest 17, thank you very much."

"Wow," said Overholt as he switched to the Japan air traffic frequency. "We got a thank you. Times HAVE changed."

*Submitted by Dale Nadon
Reprinted here by permission*



About Peter S. Greenberg

"After more than two decades as travel correspondent for ABC's Good Morning America and as Travel Editor for NBC's Today show, Peter Greenberg continues to be America's most recognized, honored and respected front-line travel expert.

No other journalist brings his level of expertise and extensive experience to the travel process. An Emmy Award-winning investigative reporter and producer, Greenberg is the consummate insider when it comes to reporting the travel business as news..."

His complete lengthy and impressive bio can be found at petergreenberg.com.

After all these years, the best we could come up with to depict the routes of Kamchatka One and Siberia 2 was this "passenger" map showing the route to Beijing, which had not even been implemented at the time this was written. The red hashed route shows a very rough approximation of the track to Narita. - Ed.

ABQ REUNION



Two hundred and six members and guests, *almost* all of whom are pictured on the following pages, enjoyed each others' company for the last three days of September. The reunion consisted of the traditional reception on Monday evening, including heavy Mexican hors d'oeuvres; a tour of Acoma Pueblo and the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center on Tuesday; and the general membership meeting and ladies' coffee Wednesday morning. All capped off, of course, with the banquet Wednesday evening while being entertained by a fun mariachi band.

The weather, although quite windy Monday and Wednesday, was perfect for our tour Tuesday. Thanks to that and careful planning by President Gary Pisel a great time was had by all.

Most free time was spent shopping and dining in Old Town Albuquerque.



Vic Kleinsteuber, Ursula Houghton, Judy Summers, Glenn Houghton



Gary Pisel, Jan Mills, Barbara Pisel, Walt Mills



Acoma Pueblo

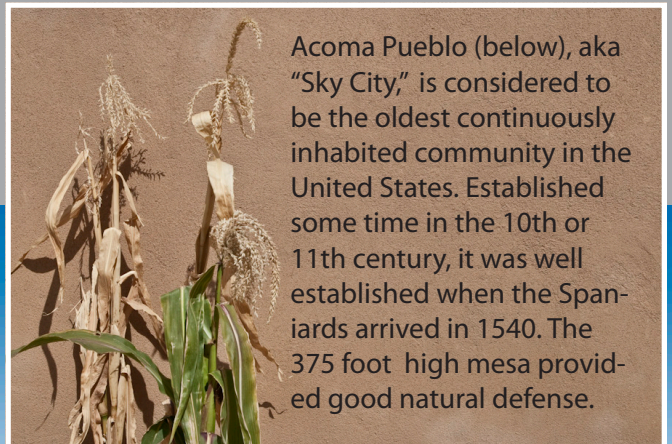


Artwork at the Cultural Center

Photos: Gary Ferguson with some help from Sheri Ball



Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, Albuquerque



Acoma Pueblo (below), aka "Sky City," is considered to be the oldest continuously inhabited community in the United States. Established some time in the 10th or 11th century, it was well established when the Spaniards arrived in 1540. The 375 foot high mesa provided good natural defense.



(All photos L - R)
 Jim & Jacquie O'Reilly,
 Larry & Lenice Daudt,
 Don & Jane Chadwick,
 Gary & Barbara Pisel



Karen Oliva, Kathy Eglet

Rich & Barb Drzal,
 Rex & Kathleen Nelick,
 Bob & Kathy Lowenthal,
 Dick & Lois Haglund



Elaine Mielke, Rita Ward

Hal Hockett (standing),
 Bruce Armstrong,
 Larry Patrick & Francine Elliot,
 Patrick & Suzanne Donlan,
 Jerry & Barbara Burton



Nancy Bates won enough wine for a party



George & Bobbi Lachinski,
Gene & Helen Frank,
James & Carolyn Stroup,
Kathy Palmen



Dee Dolny, Betty Cornforth



Elaine Mielke,
Jack & Betty Cornforth,
Ray & Dee Dolny,
Dave & Jane Sanderson



Pat Harrington won a door prize



Bill & Yvonne Kelly,
Hans & Mary Waldenstrom,
Gordon & Mary Ann Wotherspoon,
John & Vangie Peikert



Katie Pethia won a bottle of wine

(standing) Sheri Ball, Myron Bredahl,
Dona Schessler, Walt Mills,
Gayla Bredahl, Chuck Carlson
(seated) Jan Mills,
Joanne Aitken



Doug Pope, Rich Drzal

Tom & Tootz Kelley,
Wayne & Kathy Stark,
Dick & Marge Haddon,
Norm & Lee DeShon



Judy Schellinger (L) was the silent auction winner of the doll made by Jan Mills

Tom & Sue Ebner,
Art & Jane Partridge,
Ivars & Beverly Skuja,
Doug & Barbara Peterson



Chuck & Polly Rogers



Don & Edith Schrope,
Dutch & Andrea Wellman,
Elaine Miller (Delta Employee & Retiree
Care Fund, Inc.)
Larry & Maureen Hacker



Suzanne & Pat Donlan, Sterling Bentsen



Chet & Sharon White,
Gary & Brenda Dickinson,
Jack & Alayne Hudspeth,
Chuck & Sandra Sivertson



Sheri Ball happy with the picture she's taking



Bill & Judy Rataczak,
Dino & Karen Oliva,
Gary Ferguson,
Mary Jane Dittberner,
John & Marianne McAlpin



Bob Blad, Vic Britt, Ray Dolny

George Bucks & Janet Perema,
Jack & Camille Herbst,
John & Nancy Bates,
Dave McLeod & Pat Rieman



Kathy Nelick, Montie Leffel

Skip & Kathy Foster,
Gary & Joan Baldwin,
Sterling & Nadine Bentsen,
Jeff & Carol Bock



Walt Mills was the silent auction winner of a Wright Flyer model donated by the NWA History Centre

Bob & Sue Horning,
Bob & Judy Royer,
Al & Ina Sovereign,
Terry & Lynne Confer



Howie Leland, Ned Stephens



Lee Bradshaw & Darlene Conway,
Paul & Jan Sahler,
Web & Pat Bates,
Bill & Mary Ann Noland



Dick Moller won the silent auction for the rug logo made and donated by Candy Kane-Badger, who wasn't able to attend.



Wayne & Rita Ward,
Jim & Jean Freeburg,
Montie Leffel,
Prim Hamilton,
Charlie Huffaker



Ron & Bonnie Murdock,
Ned & Ellen Stephens,
Dave & Katie Pethia,
Tom & Judy Schellinger



The Hornings won free travel on NWA

Dick & Cynthia Moller,
Arlo & Susan Johnson,
Glenn & Ursula Houghton,
Dave & Angie Lundin



"Change partners and dance!"

Charlie & NanSea Welsh,
Bill & Joyce Barrott,
Dave & Holly Nelson,
Larry & Susan Owen



Kathy Nelick's table won so many door prizes we're guessing the fix was in

Doug & Shirley Parrott,
Howie & Marilyn Leland,
Bob & Jan Loveridge,
Jim Mancini,
Eileen Halverson



Cory Witters and Myron drawing door prizes



Phil & Eileen Hallin,
Arnie & Linda Calvert,
Vic Kleinsteuber & Judy Summers,
Dennis & Boki Olden



John Peikert won some wine



Jim & Pat Harrington,
Dick & Cookie Bihler,
Chuck & Polly Rogers,
Bob Blad & daughter Cory Witters



Rich Drzal claiming his prize



Left
Adrian Jenkins & Barbara Miller
Right
Dave Schneebeck,
K. C. & Martha Kohlbrand



Sheri Ball figuring out what she won



Descending the "stairs" from Sky City



Shirley Parrott, Lee DeShon



Bill Rataczak, Katie Pethia



Jeff & Carol Bock



Jean Freeburg, NanSea Welsh

Photos this page thanks to Sheri Ball



Terry & Lynne Confer, Tootz & Tom Kelley



Judy Rataczak, Tootz Kelley, Joanne Aitken



NWA CLASS OF 4/4/1959: Norm DeShon, Arnie Calvert, Dick Haddon, John Pennington, Dick Haglund, Tom Kelley (missing: Steve Towle)



Cory Witters and father Bob Blad, Sterling & Nadine Bentsen



NWA CLASS OF 12/5/1966: Web Bates, Wayne Ward, Myron Bredahl, Gary Pisel, George Lachinski



Nancy Bates, Prim Hamilton, Dona Schessler, Sheri Ball, Gayla Bredahl



George Bucks & Janet Perema, Bob & Judy Royer, Camille Herbst



Dutch Wellman, Howie & Marilyn Leland, Lynn Hall



THE FLIGHT ATTENDANTS OF RNPA



THE LADIES OF RNPA



SEATTLE CHRISTMAS PARTY

DEC. 9TH
10AM-2PM

EMERALD DOWNS RACE TRACK
AUBURN, WA

\$35 per person with reservation

\$50 per person at the door

Info: Doug Peterson 360.889.0079

db-peterson@comcast.net

NAME (S) _____

_____ people @ \$35 each = _____

Make checks payable to "Sunshine Club" and mail to:
Doug Peterson, P. O. Box 1240, Orting WA 98360
No refunds after deadline date of Dec. 6th!

Minneapolis Christmas Party Sunday, Dec. 13



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**

RSVP by Friday, Dec. 4th

Name: _____

Entrée: _____ People

Spouse/Guest: _____

Entrée: _____ @ \$39 ea. = \$ _____



Frank Taylor
1938 ~ 2009

Francis J. “Frank” Taylor: of 1801 Carillon Park Drive, Oviedo, Florida, formerly of the Holy Cross, Iowa area, and a retired captain for Northwest Airlines, flew west for a final check on July 5, 2009, surrounded by his family. He was born on May 6, 1938 in Holy Cross, Iowa, the third of twelve children of Francis and Dorothy (Rea) Taylor. Frank graduated from Loras College in 1960 and taught at DeLasalle High School in Minneapolis, Minnesota. In 1961 he enlisted in the US Navy as an Aviation Officer Candidate (AOC), the same rank as midshipman at the US Naval Academy.

Frank had said that the Navy recruiter sold him on being a Navy pilot in his junior year at college. But Frank’s son Mike got the inside story on a recent visit to Frank’s home town of Holy Cross, Iowa. Frank’s grandpa had a good friend from Holy Cross who was a Naval Aviator, Joe Konzen. Though Joe Konzen did not go to college, he was a highly decorated Navy pilot and at one time held the world altitude record in the McDonald F4H “Phantom.” When Frank was only ten years old, Joe “buzzed” his home town in an F4U Corsair and it had a lasting impact on him. April 1963 saw the completion of Frank’s Naval Air Flight Training and the awarding of those beautiful Naval Aviator “Wings of Gold.”

Frank and Mary E. Connelly were married on December 27, 1963 at St. Columbkille’s Church in Dubuque, Iowa. Frank was assigned to VS-34 flying the S2F off the USS Essex as part of Carrier Air Group 60 for the next two years. He received orders in 1965 that sent him to NAS Glynco, Georgia, where he had some legal duties, but his primary assignment was to ferry VIP’s around the southeastern United States in Glynco’s T-28. Glynco’s T-28 essentially became Frank’s personal aircraft for the next year. He flew the T-28 to the Minneapolis St. Paul airport for his initial interview, and for the Stanine Test with Northwest Airlines. Frank was at Glynco when he was released from active duty in 1966 and his next assignment was a new flying job with Northwest in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Frank flew for Northwest out of Seattle as 707 second officer and first officer until late 1973. Then he decided to take up farming again, so he brought Mary and the kids back home to Iowa and commuted to Minneapolis to fly DC-10 first officer. He later flew as B-727, DC-10 and B-747-200 captain, before retiring as a B-747-400 captain with 29 years service.

Frank Taylor loved his family, his faith, Iowa farming and his flying. He was an avid letter writer. On his long trips away from home, he wrote to those who were ill, in nursing homes, alone, or just in need of encouragement. There were no strangers in Frank’s eyes, only friends he hadn’t yet been introduced to! Frank always showed great respect for people, especially for the elderly, and he loved to visit with them. He took the neighborliness that he experienced in his youth and shared that experience with everyone he met, and especially with those who lived near him. Frank will forever be remembered for his compassion, his wisdom and his brave journey through life and death.

Frank is survived by his wife, Mary, sons Tom and Mike, twin daughters, Janeen and Kathy; and seven grandchildren. Frank is also survived by six brothers, Ray, Joe, John, Jim and Paul; five sisters, Mary, Helen, Jane, Bridget and Patricia and 28 nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Francis and Dorothy Taylor, and his father & mother-in-law, Dr. Edgar & Pearl Connelly, and sister-in-law Jean Connelly.

Seven pages of obituary and photos here:
issuu.com/contrails/docs/taylor



Lou Driggers
1932 ~ 2009

Louis A. "Lou" Driggers, age 77, passed away peacefully at home and flew west for a final check on July 10, 2009, in Gig Harbor, Washington. Lou was a loving husband, father, brother, and grandfather. Lou and the Driggers family moved to Bakersfield, California in 1939. Graduating from Bakersfield High School in 1950, he continued his education and graduated from Cal-Poly, San Luis Obispo, California. During his high school and college years he spent many summers with his brother Ned working on his Grandfather's cattle ranch near Porterville, California.

After graduation from Cal-Poly Lou joined the Marine Corps in 1954, and while going through Naval Air Basic Training received air gunnery training and carrier qualification in the SNJ. While in advanced flight training Lou flew the Lockheed T-33 and Grumman F9F-5 "Panther." After receiving his Naval Aviator wings in 1956, he flew the FJ-4 "Fury" Navy/Marine version of the F-86 "Sabre Jet" with VMA-323 at MCAS El Toro, California, and MCAS Atsugi, Japan. Lou completed his tour with the Marine Corps in 1959



and joined the pilot ranks at Northwest Airlines.

During the pilot layoff at Northwest in the early 1960's, Lou joined a host of airline pilots who signed on with the Navy and Marines and returned to active duty for several years as flight instructors. When he was released from active duty in 1965 Northwest Airlines was expanding rapidly. Lou spent most of his career at Northwest flying from Seattle to various destinations in Asia, retiring as Boeing 747 Captain after thirty-plus years with the company. Lou served for two of those years as head of the NWA Safety Committee where he worked with the Air Line Pilots Association, and the Federal Aviation Administration to improve airline safety.

Lou was a long time resident of Mercer Island, Washington where he enjoyed spending time with his family, friends, neighbors, and fellow pilots. He was an active participant and contributor to the Mercer Island School system, the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Boy Scouts, Indian Guides, and other community activities. Unless on a flight, he never missed his son's football, basketball, baseball, or soccer games, no matter the weather.

He is survived by his wife Barbara, sons Scott and Eric, grandchildren Olivia and Aidan, and his brother Ned and wife Kaarin. He was preceded in death by his first wife Joy, December 10, 1998, parents Roy L. and Lucille E. Driggers and sister Rona E. Williams.

More, with eulogies from both his sons, here:
issuu.com/contrails/docs/driggers



Floyd M. Homstad, age 85, a proud citizen of Minnesota for all of his life, and a retired Northwest Airlines captain, died comfortably and peacefully surrounded by his family, and “flew west” for a final check on July 3, 2009. Floyd was born in Minneapolis on March 5, 1924, and by the time he was a teenager was already an accomplished welder and craftsman. An early job was welding the airframes for the Waco CG-4 combat gliders being built in the Twin Cities area. When he graduated from Roosevelt High School in 1942, Floyd enlisted in the Army Air Corps Cadet Program. After receiving his wings, Floyd served as a C-46/C-47 pilot flying 224 missions in the China-Burma-India Theater across the “Hump,” which claimed countless aviators their lives during WWII. In gratitude for his service, his country awarded him the Distinguished Flying Cross, and several other medals.

While Floyd was in Burma he looked into a Waco CG-4 glider on an airfield and noticed his stamp on the fuselage steel tubing welds. The welding stamps were a necessary quality control measure. He commented to a friend accompanying him that “I built this glider.” Needless to say his friend was a bit skeptical. His most recent involvement was with the WWII-CG-4 glider restoration project where he provided invaluable assistance and advice regarding restoration, a source of great joy in his final months.

Floyd became a pilot for Northwest Orient in 1949 where he started his career as a DC-3 co-pilot, and retired in 1984 as a Boeing 747 captain. Floyd Homstad was loyal to Northwest Airlines, and proudly enjoyed his 35 year career. He was a remarkable man with a variety of interests who loved skiing, antique cars (as evidenced by the Lincoln Continental he restored), and wooden boats. His love of horses led him to become a founding member of the Twin Cities Polo Club in the early 1950's. He was an active long time member of the MSP QB Hangar, the Retired Northwest Pilots Association, and the Lincoln and Continental Owners Club.

Floyd was a remarkable individual with limitless

patience and he earned the respect of his peers and colleagues throughout the aviation community and beyond. He was a true gentleman of great integrity who always thought of family and friends before himself.

Survived by his wife of 47 years, Carol Ann, sons David and Michael, daughters Diane and Heidi, three grandchildren and three great grandchildren, will sorely miss him. The aviation community has lost a true gentleman.



Floyd Homstad
1924 ~ 2009

From the Guest Book

Heidi Whitfield: Dear Friends of Floyd, I write with a heavy heart to tell you that my father died on Friday, July 3, 2009 at around 10:41am. My mom, brother and I were with him and he died very comfortable and peacefully. The last update was encouraging, however the liver cancer was fast moving and we were surprised that he went rather quickly. It has been a roller coaster of emotions, and changes, but the last week it became clear that he was not going to be able to come home to stay. My mom and Mike brought him home last Saturday for a visit, and it seems that was all he needed to be ready for his journey. We had an amazing experience at the Little

Hospice, and the number of people who came to see my dad impressed everyone, including him. He was a remarkable man with wonderful friends, and we thank those of you who knew him for what you contributed to his life. Sorry to bring you the bad news. He had a great life and all of you that knew him were part of that in some way. Thanks again for all of the support.

Ed Johnson: I attended Floyds memorial service today and the turnout was great. A conservative estimate of at least two hundred. Lots of his contemporaries, and some of his mentors like Red Sutter were there. Norm Midthun did a nice job of orating his memories of Floyd. There was not enough seating in the chapel, so it was a sold out crowd.

Much more here:
issuu.com/contrails/docs/homstad



Don Shafer
1919 ~ 2009

Donald W. Shafer, age 90, formerly of Excelsior, Minnesota, and a retired Northwest Airlines captain, died peacefully and flew west for a final check on Saturday evening June 6, 2009, surrounded by his loving family. Loving care was provided for Don in his last few years by devoted friends Priscilla & Steve Amber-son.

Don Shafer had his first few minutes of flying time in 1933, at the very young age of fourteen. He had worked at a grocery store and saved enough money to buy the airplane ride. Now he knew what he wanted to do for his life's work. He continued to work and save his money, and got flying time whenever he had enough saved for another flight. Don was hired as a co-pilot by Northwest Airlines on June 15, 1939, when he was only 20 years old. The Northwest seniority list for 1939 named 84 pilots and Don was number 76. He was a pilot for Northwest Airlines for 48 years

Norm Midthun gave an eulogy for Don Shafer at the memorial service held at Trinity Episcopal Church, Excelsior, Minnesota, and he said: "Don Shafer was a pilot's pilot. His flying skills were readily recognized

by the 'old timers' and he flew captain on the first day Federal law allowed; He became an instructor and check pilot; He was sent to the factory when NWA purchased a new aircraft to set up ground school and flight training for line pilots; He became the chief pilot in the early 1950's when Northwest had only one chief pilot, and when the administrative duties took too much time away from flying he returned to line flying."

Norm also recalled that: "I was finally senior enough in the summer of 1954 to bid the same trip as co-pilot for a very senior captain Don Shafer. We flew the Stratocruiser from MSP-JFK with layovers at the Forest Hill Inn. Stratocruiser flights to New York in those days had someone playing an organ in the rear of the Stratocruiser cabin. Co-pilots and captains shared a room in those days, and Don was a pleasure to be with on the ground as well as in the air. Near the end of our airline careers Red Kennedy, Ralph Render and I had a flight to Europe. The lead flight attendant told us that Don and Jane Shafer were on board, and Ralph Render, one of Don's closest friends, suggested a P.A. telling passengers that the seniority #1 pilot was on the flight, and the cockpit crew would appreciate a visit from him. He came forward and told us about the trip he and Jane were on. When he returned to the cabin we made another P.A. that Captain Shafer was also #1 in every category as a wonderful human being. The flight attendants said all the passengers clapped.

At the annual June RNPA boat trip down the St. Croix river, many of the pilots on board shared stories of how important Don Shafer was in their airline flying experience. At a recent breakfast with a group of retired pilots, retired captain Dick Smith stated that Captain Don Shafer was truly a legend in his own time, and all present agreed and felt lucky that it was in their time too."

Don Shafer was devoted to his family with a keen interest in his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He was a wonderful friend and cared deeply about his community. Don was passionate about aviation and travel, and will be missed by family and friends alike.

Don was preceded in death by his wife of 62 years, Jane Weston Shafer; his parents Bertha and Benjamin Shafer, and his sister, Bernice Sanderson. Survived by daughters, Kathryn, Gretchen, and Martha, and son, Mark Shafer; four grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.



Richard Allen Thompson: age 76, of Gig Harbor, Washington, and a retired Northwest Airlines captain, died at his Gig Harbor home in the arms of his wife Dona, and flew west for a final check the morning of June 23, 2009. The sun had just peeked onto the Olympics and the water was as blue as it had ever been. A native Minnesotan, Dick was born March 13, 1933 and raised in Minneapolis. After graduation from Marshall High School in southeast Minneapolis, Dick attended the University of Minnesota for a time where he worked toward a political science major. Ultimately, he followed his childhood dream and answered the call of the Wild Blue Yonder.

Dick was on active duty in the United States Air Force for seven years, serving overseas in Tripoli, North Africa, and Ramstein, Germany. He flew the North American F-100C Super Sabre, and the Lockheed F-104A "Starfighter." Dick was known by military comrades as simply "Swede," and was a member of the elite USAF Demonstration Squadron, The Flying Tigers. For a description of Dick's adventures as a "Cold War Warrior" in the 36th Fighter Day Wing at Bitburg AB, Germany, visit the URL:

<http://sabre-pilots.org/classics/v33zulu.htm>.

Dick joined Northwest Airlines in 1959 and flew out of Minneapolis for 32 years. He and his lovely late wife, Phyllis, and four children lived in the Minneapolis area for 15 years before moving to Sarasota, Florida. Phyllis passed away in 1975. An account of Dick's adventures at Northwest Airlines would not be complete without mentioning his many good years with the RAMS, otherwise known as the Raggedy Ass Marines, sort of a Civilian version of Special Forces. The U.S. Air Force thanks you for including one of its finest in your RAMS hunting and fishing adventures, as well as harrowing poker games.

"Ole" finished his career on the 747-200 with a two year stint in Honolulu and living on Maui with, then new bride, Dona. She remembers their time in Hawaii

as "the best of all honeymoons" as well as a wonderful opportunity to travel with Dick and get to know the amazing Northwest Airlines family.

Dick was hospitalized at Intermountain Healthcare in Salt Lake City in February, 2009 while he and Dona were visiting family on a puppy acquisition trip. There he received excellent diagnostic procedures, ICU care and follow-up. During his almost five month illness he bounced back from several "close calls", and showed amazing resilience and courage throughout it all. The excellent, unwavering and dedicated care he received gave the family the gift of a "long goodbye". While in

Utah he dreamed of returning to his waterfront home in Gig Harbor, Washington, but was too sick to travel until June. He was able to "hit the road" one last time, leaving Salt Lake City on June 14, 2009, and arriving in Gig Harbor three days later—accompanied by an auto caravan of loving friends.

Once home, he spent hours savoring his favorite view of Henderson Bay and the Olympic

Mountains. On the morning of his passing, Dona noticed that the Olympics were almost translucent as the sun lit up the snowy caps. The water was as blue as it had ever been. This home vista was very special to Dick who used to say he could "think better" while looking at the mountains.

He is survived by his wife Dona; his children Judy Lobdell; Sandra Thompson; Gerry Bennett; and Keith Thompson; step children Lisa Lansing-Austin and Robert Lansing Carter; eight grandchildren; and two step grandchildren.

All stories and memories of flying, hunting and fishing with Dick are particularly meaningful. Please send to Dona at dtonraft@gmail.com. Memorial contributions may be made in honor of Dick to the United Service Organizations, Inc. (USO) at <https://www.uso.org/donate/>.

More here:
issuu.com/contrails/docs/thompson



Dick Thompson
1933 ~ 2009



Jerry Wallin
1924 ~ 2009

William S. “Jerry” Wallin, age 85, retired Northwest Captain of Denver, Colorado and formerly of Seattle, Washington, flew west on June 6, 2009. He was first exposed to airplanes by his grandfather, a Swedish cabinet maker who put his skills to work building planes for United Airlines, in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Prior to learning to fly, he served in the Navy during WWII as a Pharmacist Mate/operating room technician. He graduated from the University of Wyoming with a degree in Zoology. He learned to ski in high school, so after the war, he went to Aspen, Colorado and was one of the early “ski bums.” In order to pay for his expenses, he cleared trees for ski runs in the summer and gave ice skating and skiing lessons in the winter.

On a lark, he went to Denver and took a flying lesson. He immediately discovered his passion and a career. He learned to fly in Denver, Colorado with Clinton Aviation, while being employed as a Passenger Agent for United Airlines.

He was hired by Northwest in 1953, but was furloughed shortly after being hired. Not one to sit on the sidelines, he went to work for Reeve Aleutian Airways in Alaska. He flew the Aleutian chain and into fishing villages in Alaska’s interior, landing on runways that were marked with a single painted red line in the winter. He perfected his skills of being able to drop the mail from a DC 3 directly on the red X marked in the snow.

He resumed his career with Northwest and was based in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He transferred to Seattle, Washington so that he could fly the Orient. Flying a 747 to the Orient exposed him to what would become a lifelong love of Japan and China. After 30 years with Northwest he retired in 1983.

Jerry was a man of many talents among them were; sailing, woodworking, golf, building beautiful model airplanes and ships, photography, fly fishing, and oriental calligraphy. He loved the outdoors, especially the Rocky Mountains, antique airplanes, collecting Oriental artifacts and prints, and was a voracious reader.

Although he retired from flying as a career, he couldn’t get flying out of his blood. So he bought a Staggerwing Beechcraft, and a Stinson 108. He later restored a Stinson Reliant which had been in a crash. He often participated in antique fly-ins in the Northwest. His Stinson Reliant won Grand Champion. Jerry also used

the planes to get to Blakely Island, a private island in the San Juans, where he owned a house. He was a member of the Seattle QB Hanger during his time in Washington. In the fall of 2007 he moved to Denver to be closer to the ski slopes and for health reasons.

His family is very proud of his service to his country, as an aviator who flew over 30,000 hours, and of his many other accomplishments, but most of all, he was a true gentleman. He is survived by two daughters, 5 grandchildren, and friends who miss him very much.



“Les” Engbretson

Lester Engbretson was born October 2nd, 1914 in Stevensville, Montana and died February 6th, 2009 in Hamilton, Montana



Gloria Marie “Sam” Cyr Baertsch

passed from this life July 19, 2009. Cherished wife for 42 years of Paul L. Baertsch, and beloved mother of Aaron Cyr Baertsch, “Sam” succumbed to ALS (Lou Gehrig’s disease) at her home on Hutchinson Island, Florida. Born in Van Buren, Maine September 1, 1946, she grew up in Fort Fairfield, Maine. An accomplished artist, world traveler and voracious reader, she touched many souls during her lifetime.

“Sam” began her journey in art while living in the Minneapolis area and had one woman shows at The Art Center of Minnesota, The University of Minnesota, The Elliott Museum, Stuart FL, and The Season Four for Arts, Palm Beach FL. She was a member of the Literacy Society, Martin County Library Foundation, Planned Parenthood, and taught English as a second language for the Literacy Council.

Before cell phones and voice mail, for the 7 years Paul was on the ALPA MEC and LEC, “Sam” would answer the ALPA phone line we had in our home. She would also answer our phone and talk to the 300 pilots who were members of the Veteran Pilots Defense Fund. Paul was the chairman and we were in a court battle with the Veterans Administration. She traveled extensively with Paul and worked the social side of ALPA national politics. The wives would remember her as the long serving program director for The Pilots Wives Club. She brought many notable speakers to the program such as Muriel Humphrey, wife of the former Vice President.

“Sam” was preceded in death by her father, Roland W. Cyr, Sr., and her brother John Mark. In addition to her husband Paul and son Aaron, “Sam” is survived by her mother, her brothers and sisters, many nieces, nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews and her very large circle of friends.

More photos here: issuu.com/contrails/docs/baertsch



“Sam” Baertsch
1946 ~ 2009



Jean Soderlind
1923 ~ 2009

Jean C. Soderlind, 85, passed away Thursday, July 2, 2009, in Billings of natural causes. Jean was born on December 25, 1923, to Nels and Florence Hokanson. Jean was born in Minnesota and grew up in Minneapolis, where she lived for many years with her husband Paul. Jean and Paul met while both were working for Northwest Airlines and they were married on July 3, 1944, in Corpus Christi, Texas. Following many happy years in Minneapolis, Paul and Jean moved with their family to Nye in 1974.

Jean was totally devoted to her family and friends and anyone lucky enough to be invited for dinner was in for a culinary treat. She could always be relied upon for mouth-watering goodies, whether at a pie auction or after church treats. She was also a creative artist in her own right and was widely admired for her woven rugs and self-designed leather jackets. Her many pottery vases and dishes, that were fired in her basement kiln; later given away, created many life-long memories for her family and friends. Her art and generosity enriched not only her family, but her community as well. All will miss her creative and loving influence. Jean was preceded in death by her husband Paul on December 10, 2000. She is survived by her children Mark Soderlind, Robin (Gary) Butcher, Bill Soderlind, and her four grandchildren who were the light of her life; Jennifer and Jared Hertzler, Erica and David Soderlind.

She was an amazing lady and will be dearly missed by her family and friends.



Membership Application and Change of Address Form

NAME

SPOUSE'S NAME

PERMANENT MAILING ADDRESS

STREET

CITY

STATE **ZIP+4** **PHONE**

EMAIL*
Leave this blank if you do not wish to receive RNPA email news. (See note)

SECOND OR SEASONAL ADDRESS (for RNPA annual directory only)

STREET

CITY

STATE **ZIP+4** **PHONE**

DATE OF BIRTH (Optional for affiliate member)

DATE OF FIRST EMPLOYMENT WITH **NWA** **DELTA AS:**

AN EMPLOYEE **A PILOT**

DATE OF RETIREMENT FROM **NWA** **DELTA AS:**

AN EMPLOYEE **A PILOT**

IF CURRENTLY EMPLOYED BY DELTA INDICATE:

BASE **POSITION**

IF RETIRED, WAS IT "NORMAL" (Age 60/65 for pilots)? **YES** ___ **NO** ___

IF NOT, INDICATE TYPE OF RETIREMENT: **MEDICAL** ___ **EARLY** ___ **RESIGNED** ___

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF HOURS LOGGED

AIRLINE AIRCRAFT TYPES FLOWN AS PILOT

REMARKS: Affiliates please include information as to profession, employer, department, positions held, and other relevant info:

CHANGE: This is a change of address or status only

MEMBERSHIP TYPE

REGULAR (NR) \$35
Pilots: Retired NWA, post-merger retired Delta, or Active Delta

AFFILIATE (AF) \$25
Spouse or widow of RNPA member, pre-merger Delta retired pilots, other NWA or Delta employees, a friend, or a pilot from another airline

PAYMENT

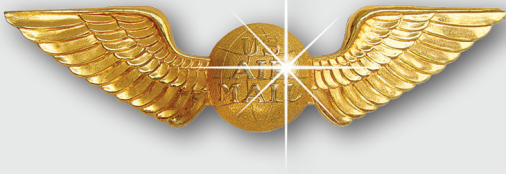
MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:
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What causes these long, strange clouds? No one is sure. A rare type of cloud known as a Morning Glory cloud can stretch 1,000 kilometers long and occur at altitudes up to two kilometers high. Although similar roll clouds have been seen at specific places across the world, the ones over Burketown, Queensland Australia occur predictably every spring. Long, horizontal, circulating tubes of air might form when flowing, moist, cooling air encounters an inversion layer, an atmospheric layer where air temperature atypically increases with height. These tubes and surrounding air could cause dangerous turbulence for airplanes when clear. Morning Glory clouds can reportedly achieve an airspeed of 60 kilometers per hour over a surface with little discernible wind. Pictured above, photographer Mick Petroff photographed some Morning Glory clouds from his airplane near the Gulf of Carpentaria, Australia.

- Contributed by Jeff Hill