



CONTRAILS

ISSUE NO. 193

FEBRUARY 2015



Steve Morris

RETIRED NORTHWEST AIRLINES PILOTS' ASSOCIATION

RNPA CONTRAILS



EDITOR / PUBLISHER

Gary Ferguson
5812 NE Hassalo St
Portland OR 97213
323.351.9231
contrailseditor@mac.com

OBITUARY EDITOR

Bill Day
wlday@comcast.net

CONTRIBUTING COLUMNISTS

Bob Root
James Baldwin
John Doherty

REPORTERS

Each Member!

The RNPA newsletter 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 \$45 annually for Regular Members (NWA pilots, active or retired) and \$35 for Affiliate Members.

ADDRESS & PHONE CHANGES

Dino Oliva
3701 Bayou Louise Ln
Sarasota FL 34242
doliva59@gmail.com



CONTENTS

- 29 DEVELOPMENT OF CRM
- 34 MSP CHRISTMAS PARTY
- 44 THE LIBERATION OF
GROWING OLD
- 46 SEA CHRISTMAS PARTY
- 53 NORTH PUGET SOUND
CHRISTMAS PARTY
- 56 THE FINAL TOUCHDOWN

- 4 OFFICERS' REPORTS
- 6 LETTERS
- 18 THE ROOT CELLAR
- 22 A STABILIZED APPROACH
- 26 THE WAY IT WAS
- 57 FLOWN WEST
- 63 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

February Reminders



Planning on the Summer Cruise on the St. Croix?
Registration form on page 33.



Warm, dry weather! Catalina Island!
All of the many Long Beach attractions!
Find the flyer on page 41.

IT'S
LONG
BEACH
IN 2015

Send a letter to the Editor so he'll stop whining about it.

contrailseditor@mac.com



The SW Florida Spring Luncheons have been the
place to be in March for more than two decades.
Page 52 has the registration form
for the 2015 edition.

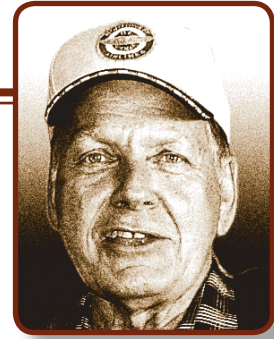
Job Opening: Do you like to write? Interested in
writing a column for Contrails every 90 days?
The editor is listening.
(Crummy pay, but it doubles every year!)

Send email changes to rnpanews@bhi.com

HINT: Hang onto the 2014 Membership Directory!



President's Report: Gary PISEL



Greetings,

Here's hoping you all had a very MERRY CHRISTMAS and can look forward to a rewarding and HAPPY NEW YEAR.

As we enter 2015 we here in Arizona are freezing, the Polar Express dipped way too far to the South. Even snow flakes in Phoenix—unheard of.

Plans are set for the LONG BEACH Reunion, SIGN UP EARLY as space is limited. A great trip to Catalina (26 miles across the sea) is our Tour Day Itinerary. As you can read in the article there is much to do in Long Beach. The room rate is very reasonable for the class and location of the Hilton Hotel. Plan to extend your visit on both ends to take advantage of all venues.

We are holding our own on membership. Several have joined, offsetting those that have flown west or otherwise dropped off the list.

Many ideas are being considered for future reunions and area functions. We are open to any and all suggestions. We will be discussing options at our June Board meeting.

REMEMBER TO REGISTER FOR LONG BEACH.



BE IN
LONG
BEACH
IN 2015



Treasurer's Report: Dino OLIVA

The beginning of each year brings dues times. Dues notices were mailed out in late December. So far the response has been very good. The majority of our members are very prompt with their payments—about 50% in the first ten days and about 91% within 30 days.

I receive many short words of thanks for my efforts. I just received one from a member that was disturbed by the negative tone of the letter regarding payment of dues, and penalties for late payments. I thought about the comments and then reviewed the letter, and yes the comments could be taken as inflammatory. I apologize to anyone that was offended by them.

Each year since I have been treasurer, about 91% of our members pay their dues within 30 days of the notice. The remaining 9%, for whatever reason, do not. Possibly the lure of one month's interest of 1/4 of 1 percent or just forgetfulness or some other reason is the problem.

In the past we allowed two months for payment and then sent out dues reminders with a \$5 penalty to cover the cost of printing and mailing. The majority of delinquent members then responded quickly. There is no reason that it should take two months for dues payments, so we reduced the payment deadline to one month and increased the late payment penalty. Those of you that pay your dues on time need not read beyond the amount that is due in the first few lines, as the rest of the letter does not apply to you. Do us both a favor and pay your dues on time so that we can eliminate the late penalty payment.

Contrary to public belief, I do have a life to live beyond my RNPA duties.



BLUE SKIES & LIGHT WINDS FOR A FRIEND'S FLIGHT WEST

It's no secret that we're losing our friends much too often these days. The incessant tick of the clock is a constant reminder of our own mortality, no matter how much we wish it otherwise. But I wasn't ready to lose Bob Root. Even though his heart was "augmented," I thought he had been doing quite well.

Herein find one last *Root Cellar* column just to remind us how much he will be missed. His ability to show us the humorous side of things was an important ingredient in whatever little success *Contrails* has enjoyed.

Rest well, Bob, and thank you.

IN THIS ISSUE

- Mark Neuville tells us how Captain Lou Driggers saved the airline. I find it interesting to learn one of the back stories of the many changes we all witnessed during the course of our careers.
- I ran across an article in *The New York Times* that caused me to pay attention: "The Liberation of Growing Old." If you should happen to be less than, say 55 years old, you will probably dismiss it as irrelevant. The rest of you may find it interesting. Find it on page 44.
- Skip Foster, a frequent contributor to *Contrails*, sent along a nice little piece by Ed Leonard, a 1960 graduate of the Air Force Academy, describing his hopes and expectations for his final touchdown.
- It's worth noting that Ed Yeilding, one of the tiny group of SR-71 pilots, is a subject of Jim Baldwin's *A Stabilized Approach*. Ed was a Northwest pilot and is currently a RNPA member.

DISCONTENT AND THE "NINE PERCENTERS"

I am referring to Dino's report on the opposite page concerning a dissatisfied member. I bring it up because I am partially responsible for the "tone" of the Dues Notice letter and it was me that suggested the shortened time frame and the increase in penalties.

I did that in an effort to lessen Dino's really difficult task of managing the whole thing—it is simply a huge job. To have someone accuse him of "whining" gets my attention. (See p. 16)

Because such criticism is quite rare it's proper that we ask whether it's justified and, importantly, what could cause such criticism. Moreover, how might this relate to the "nine percent?"

Apparently that percentage has been a constant over several years and remains so, regardless of how any dues notice may be worded. So maybe something else is going on here. Illness? Family conflicts? Pain? Awareness of losing our faculties, or any of the other myriad difficulties of just plain living at our ages?

I do not know the letter writer. Initially I was all set to come up with some clever smart ass response to his letter that this position affords me. A little time with my less confrontational muse caused me to rethink it. He has every right to express his opinion. But were other irritants possibly at work there?

For example: For more than three months I suffered with very painful sciatica in one leg. I was even more cranky than normal the whole time. That same muse would not have had a chance of influencing me then.

Years ago when I was telling a wise old retired Eastern captain friend our difficulties agreeing on whether to accept an offer to end one of our strikes, he said, "Hell, you can't get 3 pilots to agree on when to raise the gear. How you gonna get 1500 of 'em to agree on anything?"

Whatchabeenupto?

PHX PICNIC

Falcon Field **Start 10:30**
Eat 12:00

March 3rd
Bring: Dish to pass,
Own meat to cook, *No dessert.*
Gary Pisel 623.582.4701



JIM PALMER



Hi RNPA,

The story about the Boeing Dash-80 in Contrails was so great, it prompted me to write this thing to tell of my connection to the Dash-80.

All of us hired in 1950 were subject to a number of layoffs over the years. My second layoff was in March of 1951 after being assigned to the Seattle base in January, 1951. When the airline grounded the Martin 202 fleet I was out of a job.

Thankfully my education qualified me for an engineering job at the Boeing Company. They put me in a group at Boeing called "Flight Test Instrumentation."

For eight months I did a few things for the future flight testing of the XB-52. It looked a little different than the B-52 that has served the Airforce for so long. The XB-52 cockpit was in tandem under a canopy like the older Airforce B-47. I was recalled to the airline, which was my first ambition.

After getting married in February, 1953 to Beverly Brody we lived in an apartment on Mercer Island. In December of 1953 I was laid off again because of a shortage of aviation fuel. Boeing was kind enough to take me back to the "Flight Test Instrumentation Group." This time I was designated as a Liaison Engineer between Flight Test and the Instrumentation Group. I went to Dash-80 ground school with the flight test crew plus a bunch of us engineers. Three months later the airline recalled me and I chose to go back to flying. Boeing said they would not hire me again.

In July of 1954 I learned about the Dash-80 getting ready to make its first takeoff from the Renton Airport. I took Bev on a bumpy ride to the south end of Mercer Island, where we could see the airplane takeoff. So July 15 was important and Bev was expecting our first child. That day Bev went into labor due to the bumpy ride, I guess. So my daughter Joanne was born the next day on July 16, 1954. That's my connection to the Dash-80.

I'm not too active these days at age 92. Arthritis took me off the golf course across the street a couple of years ago, but I still drive around Kent and do all the shopping for the household. I've been going to the RNPA picnic and Christmas party every year, but do not do other out of town traveling any more.

Jim Palmer

JOHN ROBERTSON



After spending last winter in Mesquite, NV, we liked it so much—plenty of sun, golf, nearby to several natural scenic areas, and just an hours drive to Vegas—we bought a house and will make it fulltime in '15. And I think I forgot to mention state taxes, or lack thereof.

Last fall took us to Spain's Catalonia area where we traveled north into the Pyrenees and Andorra. Next was a 16-day Atlantic crossing from Barcelona to New Orleans. Guess you could say I still have the travel bug, but what a treat to control when and where.

I look forward to every issue.

Thanks.

John Robertson

DAN STACK



Hi Gary & All,

As usual, another super edition of CONTRAILS! The 707/720 and Boeing history was terrific—nice to see the 720 flight line—the Renton Rocket really had a lot of giddy-up.

The party photos obviously say "A good time was had by all." The articles by Giff and Jim were great, but the crowning glory is Bob Root's last go-round.

Laughed so hard I cried.

R I P Bob...

Dan Stack

JIM SIMPSON



Hi Gary,

I could have written the letter that David [Rovang] wrote to you in Contrails with regards to not "fitting in." That was my wife's and my experience when we attended a PHX picnic at Falcon Field 4 or 5 years ago. We even got chastised by one of the wives for bringing a dessert.

There is much more in common within your smaller pilot group due to what you all had to endure over the years, i. e. strikes and Nyrop. With the massive hiring in the 80's and having a different crew on each trip vs flying together all month, fewer lasting relationships were built.

We really enjoy Contrails and as long as it continues we will support RNPA.

Best Regards,
Jim Simpson
NWA '85-'08



A FIGHTER PILOT IN BUCHENWALD



For most people in Ferndale Washington, a small town in the fungus corner of the United States near the Canadian border, Joe Moser for forty years was a quiet and pleasant furnace repair and installation man. But before that he had quite a different adventure.

I had the pleasure to meet Joe at one of our Quiet Birdmen meetings over a year ago when he told us his story, assisted by a friend, of his incredible World War II experience. As a high schooler in Ferndale Joe fell in love with the P-38 and soon after that his dream came true when he joined the Army Air Corps and after pilot training was assigned to the P-38.

The war was raging in Europe and Joe was on his 44th mission over occupied France when he was shot down behind the German lines and captured. It was just after D-day. He was sent in a jammed cattle railway car first to a Paris prison and then to Buchenwald which was not a POW camp, but a concentration and extermination camp. Four days before his scheduled extermi-

nation he and some other U.S. and allied pilots were “rescued” by the Luftwaffe and transferred to a POW camp.

As the allies and Russians advanced from the West and East they were constantly relocated to new POW camps. At one point they were forced to march for three days in subzero temperatures to the next camp. Throughout the POW experience all the inmates were fed so little that many starved to death and those who survived were literally “skin and bones.” The camp was liberated by the GIs just before the war was officially over and Joe spent a few weeks in Europe before he returned to Ferndale via troop ship to New York, and train to Seattle.

A few weeks after his return to Ferndale he was invited to tell his story to the Ferndale Lion’s Club. By this time after starving in captivity he had gained sixty pounds in one month and was a little porky. After his presentation he was walking down the

street behind some guys from his audience and one asked another what he thought of the talk and he said, “I don’t believe a damn word he said.” Joe overheard this. He was crushed and didn’t tell his story again for the next thirty-seven years until some POW friends and family convinced him otherwise.

With the help of writer Gerald Baron, Joe wrote a book of his experiences entitled appropriately “A FIGHTER PILOT IN BUCHENWALD”. It is a quick and great read and is available from Amazon as well as the publisher Edens Veil Media in Bellingham Washington.

Joe started attending some of our QB meetings at the BVS Hangar in Anacortes (74S) Washington and I just learned he has applied for membership. It will be an honor to have such a hero in our midst. Joe is ninety-two years old.

Bill Barrott





Hello Gary,

Thank you for another fine issue. I look forward to the next Contrails issue. Thanks especially to Bob Bogash for his article on the 707. That's great and new information which I could not have known when I flew the 707. And thanks for the RNPA Survivor's Information Packet.

While digging up facts for the packet, I recalled a very strange experience which is not survivor's information; but because it was so very strange, I thought I'd share it with Contrails. Possibly no one else has experienced what I went through. It didn't make sense then; and it doesn't make sense now.

I'd been designated as an anti-sub pilot after completing advanced training in the S2F which was lovingly called the Stooof. I did not like flying slow, twin-prop anti-sub Stooof. I wanted to fly jets or the AD.

In December, 1955, just before I was due to win my wings, the Navy offered one set of orders to one individual to be assigned to an unknown base, and to fly an unknown type of aircraft. I grabbed at those orders so I could fly something other than the S2F.

My orders sent me to the Naval Air Ordnance Test Station (NAOTS) which was co-located with NAS Chincoteague, Virginia—now known as NASA Wallops Island. I checked out in the AD and was in hog heaven; but I was a fish out of water. The boss wanted a fleet trained pilot and that was not me. Toward the end of 1956 I was told to accompany a few officers to fly to NAS Anacostia near Washington, D.C.; and they took me to the Pentagon where the Detail Officer said I would receive new orders.

Back at NAOTS, the orders

came through. I was assigned to VA-145, an AD squadron based at Miramar, replacing a pilot who had been killed while flying the idiot loop. Everyone but me was fully qualified to go on cruise in early 1957. All I did—right up to the time when we went aboard the Hornet—was fly day FCLPs and day-qualify aboard the Hornet. I never qualified at night.

Here comes the funny part. Do you know why the Navy created the Replacement Air Group, or RAG?

My logbook shows that when my squadron was about to go to sea, I ferried a plane to North Island. Probably I was driven back to Miramar. My logbook shows that I did not fly for the next six days. In the BOQ, a phone call told me to man my plane and fly aboard the Hornet. At the plane, a senior officer told me I was to fly alone. I asked for the location of the ship; and I recall him saying: "Head west for forty miles. You can't miss it."

My next flight was from off the carrier to a base on Oahu, Hawaii. I don't recall when I took my gear aboard ship. I was never informed about why I didn't fly for six days, or why I was a one-plane fly-aboard. The obvious reason is that I was not qualified; but the C.O. could not replace me in the short time he had.

Every carrier and air group and squadron and pilot heading for a Westpac cruise must first pass an Operational Readiness Inspection upon arrival at Pearl Harbor. When the time came to fly it, I was told to disappear within the ship and not come up for air for a specific amount of time. Probably this happened on the night when my squadron flew a night mission to Kahoolawe and back. (spelling?) I was not qualified to be part of the ORI. Everyone passed it and we began the six-month cruise.

Now you know why the Navy created the Replacement Air Group;

or RAG. It was because other pilots and officers had a hand in creating the RAG. I would have loved to be fully qualified and do my part in that ORI.

Paul Ludwig



This can be filed under priceless fringe benefits of our profession.

In the early 1980s I was captain on a 727 evening flight from LGA to MKE. Nearing departure time, the lead flight attendant came forward and expressed her frustration with a passenger who was resisting her demands that his music instrument be bag checked below. I asked the name of the passenger. The Lead checked the SAM message and then informed me that the passenger was one I. Stern—known to most as the violinist Isaac Stern. Having struggled with the violin since my youth, the F/A might as well have reported Orville and Wilbur Wright are giving her problems with their toolboxes.

Somehow I assisted in resolving the music instrument problem and we pushed on schedule for a RW31 departure. Just short of the runway tower told us to, "Pull it over into the run-up box." apparently Cleveland ARTCC antenna facility was hit by a tornado. We would have to be rerouted up over Canada clear of Cleveland's airspace. We were told to anticipate a two hour delay. Eastern Airlines controlled our gates at LGA and had no open gates, predictably we were stuck in the run-up box. I told the flight attendants to serve the passengers dinner on the ground. We went to work on a new flight plan and acquiring additional fuel.

Before serving dinner, Isaac Stern made a comfort trip to the forward biffy. Coming out of the



biffy, he stuck his head into the cockpit and thanked me for resolving the music instrument problem. If I was carrying a Stradivarius I would not let anyone check it into the cargo hold either. We invited him to join us in the cockpit.

In time the F/A would serve Maestro Stern his first class meal while seated in our crummy jump seat. He enjoyed this bit of entrapment to converse with others far from his profession, I suspect the moment offered him a bit of refreshing diversity. For most of the next two hours the four of us talked. Jerry Madison was the copilot, unfortunately I cannot recall the name of the second officer. Stern wanted to talk about anything and everything but music. He particularly wanted to talk about the Vietnam War, fragging within our forces, discipline in the military, and Jerry and the S/O both had served in Vietnam. Stern talked at length about the Israeli military and his role as the emissary between Begin and Sadat that led to the Dayton Accord. We also learned of his relationship with his close friend Henry Kissinger.

For two hours the four of us

engaged in a captivating conversation. Once we received our new ATC clearance Stern returned to his assigned seat and slept all the way to MKE. The S/O knew little about Stern before this encounter, but noted Stern's obvious strong persona. A month later I was back at LGA and walking up to the terminal to purchase a New York Times. Coming the other direction was Isaac Stern and a unnamed famous conductor. Stern broke into a big grin and crossed the aisle to warmly greet me by name. He then introduced me to the famous conductor who was as cold as Stern was warm. This says something about real people. Isaac also thoughtfully asked about the two other pilots he met on our eventful flight.

To this day the chance encounter with Isaac Stern is one of my fondest airline line flying memories.

Bill Day

ALLEN BENZIG



As requested—some info on what I've been up to...

I spend a good deal of time volunteering with the Commemorative Air Force.

Checked out as a B-29 (FIFI) co-pilot, but most of the summer was dedicated to touring as pilot of the B-24 (Diamond Lil) at tour stops and airshows as far as Toronto, Canada and through much of the Midwest.

It was a treat to spend a week showing Diamond Lil at the Oshkosh AirVenture and flying in the Airshow. Now working on shows for 2015.

Al Benzig



CORRECTION: I discovered that this photo was inadvertently omitted from the Sacramento Reunion banquet evening photos. (l-r) Charlie & NanSea Welsh, Bruce Armstrong and Gail Olson, Rowdy Yates and a woman named Pam from the bar overlooking what we were up to and who thought she should fill in the space in front of Rowdy.

Getting photos of everyone at any of our gatherings is always a challenge, but I do try to get everyone when I take "formal" shots.

But... I've never yet managed to get everyone present. – Ed.



**Candace Ann Kane-Badger
1947 ~ 2014**

Candace “Candy” Kane-Badger, age 67, NWA flight attendant and wife of NWA pilot John Badger passed away from pancreatic cancer on November 20, 2014. She shared the processes of her struggle with pancreatic cancer with her NWA peers, seeking to encourage others waging similar battles.

Candy was originally from St. Paul, MN. She worked for Northwest Orient Airlines for 37 years and was on the Board of Directors



of the Northwest Federal Credit Union for nine years. She loved flying, spending time with her daughter and grandchildren, and traveling throughout the USA with John in their RV. With her camera and com-

puter, she was always ready for a picture and a blog story. Candy was a beautiful, strong, confident, and loving woman. She lived a wonderful life full of adventure, was able to see the world through the air, and to see the beautiful USA by land.

She is survived by her loving husband John Badger, mother Phyllis Ann Kane, daughter Angela Sieber; two stepsons John and Keeth, five grandchildren and five siblings.

Candy had a large hand print on the RNPA group; she was an associate member before becoming a spousal member and a warm welcoming participant at annual conventions. She is much loved and will be missed by many. A memorial service is being planned for the spring of 2015. *(- Bill Day)*

**JEFF
BOCK**



A North Idaho greeting to all,

Read the November issue article, “The 707 is 60”, with great interest. I spent 2 years building a Kitfox SuperSport (7) with one serious question in mind. What would be a good “N” number?

Picking through my options on the FAA website I settled on N707US. My airplane is a model (7) so incorporated that, I flew the 707 so that was a good add and lastly the “US” which was on our fleet’s “N” numbers with rich history from the Airmail days. Just when I came up with the idea to memorialize the 707 and the US designation, and was out flying it around the back-country, I see the great article in Contrails. Only questionable part is that the tail number was from a B-727 listed as destroyed. Hope it was only a worn out craft that was melted down for beer cans.

Not into gravel bars as yet but



do shun the asphalt runways and really enjoy the back-country flying.

I somehow imagined retirement as a time to have way too much time on my hands and looking for things to do. However, as with all of you, there isn’t enough time in a day. Hardly a day goes by that I don’t

think of the great years I had with NWA and all the superb pilots, flight attendants, and support personnel that I had the pleasure of working with. That means YOU.

I kept thinking it’s time to quit taking on new challenges but after working as an EMT for the last 3 years I decided to take the plunge and become an Advanced EMT. Not fun but very rewarding.

Am working on a way to minimize

all the obligations and get back to seeing the group some more.

If flying, or driving in the Idaho Panhandle stop by in Clark Fork or Idaho airstrip ID-32. By the way, we have great fly fishing in the backyard.

Jeff Bock

RIP



“Wil” Siemering
1933 ~ 2014

Wilbert Louis Siemering, age 81, a retired Northwest Airlines Flight Operations Manager and RNPA member, “Flew West” on August 10, 2014. He succumbed to a stroke suffered in February.

Wil was born to Louis and Anna Siemering in Sac County, Iowa and was raised on a farm, one of three children. During high school he maintained a high level of interest in sports, particularly a non-sanctioned sport—stock car racing. Wil was a very good stock car driver. This sports interest was wrought with problems, because... he was underage and this was definitely not an activity sanctioned by his parents. For a while Wil raced under the alias of Bill Buckman until a newspaper reporter included a photo of Mr. Buckman (alias Wil Siemering) with the article. During retirement this passion continued, but as a big fan of NASCAR racing. Despite these interesting diversions, Wil, the race car driver and farm kid, would graduate from Lytton High School in 1950.



After high school Wil enlisted in the U.S. Army. The Korean War was ongoing then, but he was sent instead to Ft. Lee, VA where he met his future wife Marion Myers. The couple married in 1955 and the marriage flourished for 59 years. Wil left the Army and briefly returned to Iowa before attending Airline School in Kansas City. This training was his entrée to employment with Northwest Airlines.

Wil’s first NWA assignment was as an agent and baggage handler on the ramp at Midway Airport at Chicago. From there he transferred to MSP as a Flight Operations Crew Controller. In time Wil became the Manager of Crew Schedul-

ing. During the First Gulf War he deployed to Frankfurt, Germany and from there managed the crew scheduling requirements for the NWA CRAF military airlift to the Persian Gulf region. Wil spent his last several years at NWA as a crew scheduler —duties he enjoyed. He completed 39 years of NWA employment.

He loved the outdoors. He had a passion for hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, and, in his retirement, his motor home. Little known by most, he also owned a gun shop, named Wil’s Custom Gun Shop. From which he made custom stocks and rifles for many NWA pilots. He was a skilled tinkerer and machinist, known for fabricating parts.

Wil and Marion had one child, a son Robert, who today lives with his family in Massachusetts. Bob recalls the family traveling extensively as non-rev travelers. The family lived for years in Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota, but in 1980 they purchased a home in Richmond, VA. Thereafter, Wil resided during the week in a condominium in the Twin Cities and commuted home to Virginia on weekends until his retirement in 1993.

Wil Siemering is survived by his wife Marion; son Robert; and four grandchildren and his two sisters.

(– Bill Day)

JIM DRIVER



Happy New Year Gary!

As one very old Left Seater once said: If you wake up in the morning and don’t smell flowers or hear organ music you are good to go.

Life is good here in Northfield. Family is healthy and we get to visit with Grand Kids and play cars with the Great Grand Kids.

All in All NWA was very good to me, as I was to them.

Keep up the good work!
Jim Driver

KEITH MAXWELL



Dino ,

Dues check is on the way.
Kathy and I are doing fine and in good health. Spend summers in

Minnesota golf, fishing, cabin up north, etc. The rest of the year in Ft. Myers area Florida. Same stuff; golf, fishing, boating, fun in the sun. Lots of grandkids, fourteen between the two of us, also keeps us pretty busy.

My youngest Son Cameron after 14 years with the commuters, finally got a class date with Delta. Please keep up the good work with RNPA, greatly appreciated.

Contrails is great also.
Keith Maxwell

CLINT VIEBROCK



Dear Gary,

In Telluride the snows came early this year and have continued. For those of our friends still living in Minnesota, that probably doesn't sound like good news. Here, however, snow falling on the (mostly) vertical surfaces, is life's blood. And, it has to be said, without the snow in Colorado our friends in Southern California, Las Vegas and Phoenix would be drinking only imported beer and would be bathing even less frequently. Before we send that water on, we get to slide on it at high rates of speed, an activity I still very much enjoy.

In the spirit of community service, I also still teach skiing at Telluride Adaptive Sports Program. Among the folks with disabilities we help are groups of Wounded Warriors, both in the Winter and in our Summer programs. Starting season 16 in this interesting endeavor.

My wife Susan (with minimal assistance from me) has been publishing a great online magazine for over six years, Telluride Inside...and Out (tellurideinside.com) and that helps keep me out of trouble.

That and old age...

Still doing some music and the occasional role in local theatre, and when I can be "blasted" out of here, we enjoy travel. We didn't go abroad in 2014, but will probably spend some time in Argentina and Chile in 2015. This past Fall, the Sacramento gathering was the third stop on a clockwise circuit of the US by car.

We first visited family in Los Angeles and SFO. After SAC, we spent a night in Bandon, OR with friends from Telluride, then had several days with my daughter Kimm and family in Bellevue, WA. From there it was a quick visit with my family in Waterville, WA, one

night with Art and Bonnie Daniel in Fishtail, MT, then a beautiful Fall color extravaganza across the country with stops to see my younger daughter, Kjerstin and family in Pittsburgh, family and friends in Western Massachusetts and the Hudson Valley, then NYC and Washington, DC and a dash across the central US home, after 6 weeks on the road, and still talking to each other.

You'd think I would have got that moving out of my system after the Marine Corps and 33 years with NWA, but I still enjoy seeing other places.

Hope to see a lot of friends in Long Beach in September, 2015.

Clint Viebrock

RON VANDERVORT



A hello and thanks also to those members that manage to make the RNPA events. You guys make it special..! I miss you folks that haven't managed to make it to those events that I have attended... you guys are special also and we sure would like to see you. More and more as I move within the retirement communities in these senior years, I appreciate our Air Line cadre. You folks were and are awesome..!

We are still "snow birding" between Silverdale, Washington and Goodyear, Arizona. Our little white RV-6 airplane remains in WA for the winter as we now migrate with a small 20 ft. motorhome. Thus each migration offers an opportunity to travel intimately a different area of our beautiful country. We won't then get caught by the weather (as we would with the airplane)... and wear out a welcome visiting friends. Some good friends exercise the airplane in my absence.

In April and May of this past year we did three weeks in Ita-

ly. We rented a car and did 2000 kilometers through the hill towns then Florence, Cinque Terra, Anzio, Pompeii, Sorrento, Capri and Amalfi following Rick Steve's guidebook. Enchanting..! The key to the whole trip was having a computer along to manage reservations "on the wing" so to speak for we did not want to adhere to a tight schedule.

Got to lower and fold the flag at Anzio American Cemetery to end that day... a touching experience!

To end the trip we caught Air France to Paris and train to visit the Normandy Beaches... another item that was on the bucket list and easily accomplished with help from the computer. Transatlantic was done on Delta passes: PHX-JFK-FCO, Air France to CDG then CDG-JFK-PHX.

Whilst in Washington I volunteer at the Lemay Family Auto collection in Tacoma and in Arizona I volunteer at the Pima Air and Space Museum in Tucson... wonderful access to some great machinery.

My wife Carol and I have been diligent these past two years and made both the Lexington and Sacramento reunions. It had been a while since I had attended and I had forgotten how great it is to renew those old friendships and share our stories and times together from the past.

As we plan 2015 the RNPA Long Beach reunion is one of the first calendar items to get plugged in. We are looking forward to seeing you there.

Thanks Gary P/Gary F, and all the RNPA Officers for your great contributions to this group,

Ron Vandervort

IT'S
LONG
BEACH
IN 2015



Hi Gary,

I always enjoy reading Contrails when it comes! I was really sad to hear of Bob Root's passing, his articles were always a joy to read, what a loss.

I retired in 2008, just prior to the merger. I just couldn't see wearing a double-breasted jacket and being taught the wrong way to fly an airplane.

Being retired has given me plenty of time to work on my two Stinson AT-19s. One of them is Serial Number 4—the oldest AT-19 flying, while the other I bought as a restoration project.

I started restoring the second airplane in 1996 and with that "silly" work stuff getting in the way it took me a while to get it finally completed. I bought the airplane as a literal basket-case, totally disassembled and with a run-out engine. I flew it in May for the first time since 1953, it only has 131 total hours on the airframe since "new."

The Stinsons were originally built in Detroit (at the Romulus Army Air Field) for the British Royal Navy as an observer training airplane focusing on photographic, navigation, and radio training. I wanted to restore the

airplane as original as possible so much of the time was spent researching and finding the correct UK equipment. Fortunately I was able to find all of the original UK radios, camera, compasses, headsets, microphones, and even the proper Air Ministry wire connectors and plugs. It was fascinating doing the research on the airplane and the Fleet Air Arm pilots that flew them during the war.

Once the airplanes were accepted by the Air Corp, the first 50 were flown from Detroit to Texas, down thru Central America on to Trinidad while the others were flown to Newark. There they were crated and shipped to England, India and Australia. My first airplane spent the war in Trinidad with 752 Squadron while the other one went to Australia and was assigned to MONAB (Mobile Naval Air Base) IV in New South Wales.

I hope all is well with you. It's been awhile since we last flew some of those Gatwick trips together. I sure miss the DC-10! I was bumped off it my last year and had to fly the A330—what a disappointment that was!

Randy Phillips

BOB BOGASH



Hi Gary,

Received your Contrails magazines and thank you for that.

Lemme just say, my wife read it and said—what a great, professional magazine! To which I can say, Amen. You do a great job.

And—as they say—that's not all. I learned something new in the magazine that had somehow flown right under my radar—that's the renaming of Arlington Airport to

honor Wes Schierman.

Wes was a friend and one of a small (but growing) band of brothers here in the Seattle area that have built and flown the Vans RV-12. Here's Wes arriving at Bremerton in August 2013—just shortly before he got sick—for our little RV-12 get-together.

Story of my airplane, if you haven't seen it, here: rbogash.com/RV-12/My_RV-12.html

Bob Bogash



Readers will no doubt recall that Bob is the author of "The 707 is 60!" in the November, '14 issue. – Ed.

BILL WICKMAN



Hi Dino,

Here's an outline of what we've been doing since I retired at age sixty in November of 2007.

The "plan" had been to sail around the world keeping our home on the north coast of California, spending six to eight months a year on the boat. Seasonal weather patterns would govern the schedule. Although the word "plan" has a sinister double connotation in the sailing community, the "plan" has held up pretty well, so far.

In seven years we've crossed the Pacific cruising French Polynesia, Rarotonga and the Cook Islands, Niue, Tonga and the north island of New Zealand. We spent months in Fiji and Vanuatu, cruised the east coast of Australia and over top to Darwin.

We enjoyed an entire season just scratching the surface of Indonesia, an archipelago of almost infinite variety. We spent two years in SE Asia leaving the boat in Thailand and Singapore.

We had "planned" to cross the Indian Ocean to the Red Sea and up into the Med. But after a cruising couple we knew were killed by pirates in the Gulf of Aden and after exploring many alternatives, like a lot of other folks in the cruising community, we put the boat on the deck of a freighter and shipped it to Marmaris, Turkey. Since then we've spent two years in the Eastern Mediterranean cruising Turkey and Greece.

This year we'll return in April and move across the Med to Gibraltar and exit to Madeira and the Canaries in September. After Christmas we'll do the Atlantic crossing to the Southern Caribbean and spend a few more years coming across the Caribbean, through the canal,

up the coast of Central America, Mexico and then home. The good lord willing and the creek don't rise, that's the "plan."

For almost all of this sailing my sweet wife, also a retired pilot, and I have been doing it ourselves. We had a couple friends as additional crew on the thirty three hundred mile passage from Humboldt Bay to Vatu Hiva in the Marquesas. Janet didn't want to do the passage from New Zealand back up to Fiji so I had three old friends who are also NWA pilots as crew. Danny Strehlow, Bill Norton and Booth Devitt were great and with a little luck they'll do the Atlantic crossing with me.

Janet has decided that passage distances greater than one thousand miles are for me and the boys. We've had friends and family on board in some lovely places. We've had great diving and some wonderful fishing. The old definition of cruising, "boat repair in exotic places" has proven to be true for us as it has for everybody else. We have no horror stories to tell. After twenty two thousand miles on the boat this trip, we haven't been severely frightened, so far.

People ask about our holiday and we laugh. It's certainly not a holiday, it's a way of life that sometimes involves a lot of work and some drudgery.

People ask, "What does it cost?"

I don't know, but I do know that "BOAT" stands for "break out another thousand." Sometimes it hurts.

People ask, "What are the highlights, what's the best thing about cruising?"

It's an impossible question although I can always come up with some examples. The truth is that the best thing about this way of life is our fellow cruisers. The camaraderie amongst the cruising community is wonderful thing. The intensity of shared experience leads to friendships that can develop in a few days

and last a lifetime. Kind of like in the airline community, you can't overstate the importance of your friends.

We've kept up a blog since our initial departure. If anybody's interested there are posts and photos from the trip as we went along. All posts can be found from the archive on the right of the home page or you can just scroll down from post to post. Photos can be viewed in larger format by just clicking on the photo. The blog is at:

airstreamvoyages.blogspot.com

Love to all,
Bill & Janet Wickman

LLOYD MELVIE



Dino and RNPA leaders,

Thank you for your continuing leadership to keep this organization going!

Another year gone and with thanks to God for health and friends and all the blessings life brings.

Not much has changed in our lives this year except getting older, but we have had some good adventures and continue to find ways to keep busy in retirement.

We both help with the local food shelf. I conduct worship services at two care facilities; Sharon works part time as a special needs school nurse; serves with our local food co-op and with children at our church; I led one adult Sunday School class and have a couple of coffee gatherings each week, one at the local airport with pilots so get an opportunity to listen to some "good" flying stories.

We did some camping with our grandkids, checked off a bucket list item with a trip to Nova Scotia and another fishing trip with family to Lake of the Woods, plus skiing in Colorado and a wedding in New York.

Happy New Year!
Lloyd Melvie

DALE EVANS



Gary,

Just a little background on the evolution of this photo.

It was on a flight from Portland to Spokane back in Oct of 1977. The flight attendant came up to the cockpit with a note from a passenger that [is shown] below the picture.

We have all been asked the question many times about feeling the responsibility of the passengers on our flights. My response has always been the same as in the daily devotional message that was sent to me that day, basically if I get there safe, they will also.

That note from Mrs. Melton meant a lot to me and when I was a captain on the 747 in 1980 I had the painting made with her letter in mind.

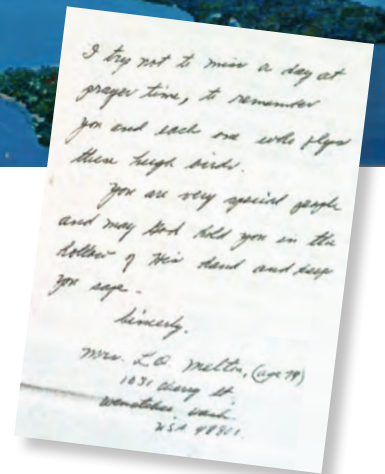
After landing in Spokane that fall day I asked the flight attendant to point out Mrs Melton to me, but she had already deplaned and I never got to meet her.

Seven years later I came across the letter in my family bible and decided to write her.

I received a letter back from her daughter telling me how much she enjoyed my letter and that she had shared it with the Missionary Fel-



*If I take the wings of the morning
and there shall the hand hold me,
and the right hand shall hold me.
Psalm 139:9-10*



lowship of which her mother was a devoted member. Sadly her mother had passed away a month before the letter arrived.

Every time I look at the picture I think about all of our fellow pilots who have Flown West and say a little prayer for them.

Respectfully,
Dale Evans

*"I try not to miss a day at prayer time, to remember you and each one who flies these huge birds. You are very special people and may God hold you in the hollow of his hand and keep you safe.
Sincerely, Mrs. L. O. Melton, (age 79)
Wenatchee, Wash.
2/24/88"*

LOREN DESHON



Happy 2015 to everyone,

Just wanted to say thanks to everyone who keeps RNPA going. Always look forward to Contrails.

Kathie and I still I've in Sammamish, Washington— 35+ years. Where has the time gone? We spend a good deal of time in Friday Harbor in the San Juan Islands in the summer. We try to make one or two trips a year to somewhere new and

Panama was the latest venture. Going to Japan next fall. Still working, gonna retire someday. Still enjoying golf, but other more active sports have been left behind.

Cheers,
Loren DeShon



FOUND

NWA gold ring:
"US Airmail" in center,
number 30 on the
bottom.

A "10" stamped
inside.

Contact Mike,
frys747@gmx.com

TERRY SATURDAY



Dear Dino,

My DOH was January 1981, medically retired from NWA in 1990 as a B727 Captain, and I appreciate the Contrails articles and updates from everyone. This is my first up date in 24 years!

My dear wife, Brenda, is a Licensed Marriage Family Therapist with her own practice in Atlanta. We have two beautiful daughters; Liza (26) lives in Nashville working in the music industry and Tessa (23) lives in Atlanta preparing for a doctorate degree in Physical Therapy. I have been with the Air Line Pilot Association (ALPA) since 1997, as a Senior Labor Relations Counsel in the Atlanta office representing the ASA pilots in the ASA-XJT merger, and represent the Air Transport International pilots too. I love my work representing ALPA pilots, defending their careers and advancing their profession. I can attest... it is/was the best job in the world. I enjoy spending most of our vacations with family in Little Cayman and travel quite a bit on S3Bs all over the world and we are grateful for such benefits.

In the November 2014 RNPA Contrails I enjoyed seeing my first classmate's photograph in Contrails and also have learned that one of my classmates from the January 1981 NWA class is retiring... in January 2015. So here we come one-by-one into RNPA. I am very excited and pleased to hear about everyone's gratifying careers at Northwest Airlines, and of all the good-fun RNPA events that the members are enjoying. Everyone deserves and should be proud and grateful for all those fine years.

Wishing you all the best in the New Year, and hope our paths cross in the near future.

Terry D. Saturday

STAN LINDSKOG



Dear Dino:

Again, Thank You for all of the time and energy you have dedicated to your old work-mates. It is doubtful the connections that remain would be as strong as they are without your efforts.

As [was] reported earlier, Bronwen Lindskog, my wife of 53 years, whom I met on the first day of pre-reg week in college, passed away on June 1st this year. Many of us are faced with this issue, and I would like to try to explain, if I can, SOME of the issues my fellow pilots MAY face when, and if, the same thing happens to them.

You can expect several initial things, but each of you will be hit differently! Bronwen had Parkinson's Disease and slowly waned out of existence. We had roughly 4 years to train me to become an independent as a solo individual. By the time she flew west I was capable in all areas of housework and sustenance and survivability. Many of us have, or will not have, that gift. For those of you who are dependent for all daily house-related activities, it MIGHT be a good time to bone up on how to do those things on your own. It is a terribly lonely and ghost-filled life for a while, and if you are not ready for solo life, it can be an horrific looking future.

I have been, properly I am coming to find, cautioned to leave your life as it is for a year or more, depending on you. Too many horror stories have come my way about fellows (I am writing this primarily to, and about, the males of our community) who got precipitous after their loss—with not too pleasant results in far too many cases. NOTHING has to change abruptly. When you figure out who you are as a solo guy you can make much better decisions about how

your future will play out.

There is MUCH more that can be said. If anyone is at all interested I can provide more.

Regards, and Happy New Year!
Stan Lindskog

PS Keep busy at what you have always enjoyed, inertia is NOT your friend!

RON REP



Hi Dino,

We're still in Coon Rapids, Minnesota for six months and Northern Wisconsin from May-Oct. Fishing is good.

A little problem with glaucoma and macular, but drops and injections are holding it in check. Otherwise we're fine. Hope all is well with you.

Here's my check for RNPA 2015 dues. I'm "Doing it now."

Happy 2015 to all.
Ron Rep

REDACTED



Following was addressed to Dino:

I AM DISCONTINUING MEMBERSHIP JAN. 1, 2016.

I HAVE PAID LIKE "CLOCKWORK" FOR A LONG TIME. BUT EVERY YEAR I GET "WHINING" FROM YOU. I BELIEVE MOST OF US DO NOT DESERVE IT.

SOOO. I WANT TO BE A MEMBER ALL THRU 2015. PAID IN FULL (AS USUAL).

BUT I DO NOT WANT TO RECEIVE ANOTHER "SCATHING" DINO CHRISTMAS CHEER AGAIN.

BIG THANKS TO ALL YOU DO! BUT DO NOT SEND ME ANOTHER LETTER LIKE THIS.

**STEVE
WHITE**



Gentlemen,

Wanda and I are still here on beautiful Whidbey Island (Clinton) since our “paid move” in ‘71. No home in the south, nor a motor-home. (A few motorcycles though.) Heading to Santiago, Chile on 12/31 for a motorcycle ride there.

No. 1 son (and his wife) are both captains at SWA. Quite content as are we with the passes—two kids.

No. [2] son is principal in Sitka, Alaska—three kids. Went on my first deer hunt with him on Thanksgiving (got one). He disposes of the liver. I eat it.

I see the North Puget sound guys 3-4 times a year at lunch in La Connor, and we had a nice Christmas party there.

Praise the Lord for good health.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve White

**WOODY
FOUNTAIN**



Dino,

I followed your instructions and am writing this note ten minutes after opening the envelope. Jean and I just returned from her Mom’s in Virginia and I’m going through the mail. We breezed through ATL on the way to GSO last Sunday and missed one connecting flight. And that was on retired passes! With a ‘69 date of hire, 95% of the time we’re the first retirees listed.

I’m enclosing this note to let you know that if you and committee ever decide on additional \$\$\$ to continue the mailing of the “newsletter,” let me know. It is one of the few mailings that I read cover to cover.

Woody Fountain

**GARY
THOMPSON**



Hi Dino,

Just a note from the “Cold Country” to thank you, Gary Pisel, Gary Ferguson and any and all that keep RNPA intact. The longer I am away the more I appreciate Contrails. My hope is it will continue.

My very best to you, my friend. Hope to see you in Long Beach.

Gary Thompson

**LOU
SHUMWAY**



Dino,

Once again I say Thank You for your good work for RNPA.

We do face a dilemma as the membership grows older. A dilemma I do not have an answer for, as I grow older. (I’ve been retired for 16 years already.)

Best to you and thanks again.

Lou Shumway

**JO
JOHNSON**



Dear Dino,

Thanks so much for seeing that I get the Contrails. I noticed that Donna Catlin had died. (I know most of the people who have “Flown West.”)

I found a picture of RNPA in Tucson, 1994: Ray Whitcomb, Neal Potts, Ed Speltz, Herb, Bill Atkins, Jim Beurgdel and Art Steadman. Bill hired them all in 1949

Son Scott is now 56 years old (unbelievable) and been with NWA/Delta for 30 years. His son Erik is now a co-pilot for Delta.

Have a good winter down south. I do see Marilyn and Howard Leland now and then and J. D. Leland stops by a lot.

Jo Johnson

HOW I BECAME A PILOT



When I was young I decided to go to Medical School.

At the entrance exam we were asked to rearrange the letters PNEIS and form the name of an important human body part which is most useful when erect.

Those who said SPINE are doctors today.

The rest of us are retired pilots sending jokes by email...

Submitted by Ron Murdock

**JANINE
ROSS**



Happy New Year!

Another great year of RNPA gatherings! We have made the June Stillwater Cruise an annual “must” event! Thank you to all of you folks who make these memorable events such a success.

Cap is in his 42nd year still flying. I am enjoying my retirement.

Health and prosperity to all in 2015.

See you at the Cruise.

Janine Ross & Cap Olson

**JOIN US
IN LONG
BEACH
IN 2015**

Contributing Columnist Bob Root



Captain Robert Murray Root, 75, a retired Northwest Airlines captain and Contrails columnist, “Flew West” on October 20, 2014. Bob succumbed to Legionella pneumonia at the Mayo Clinic hospital with his family at his side.

Bob Root was born, January 6, 1939 in Denver, CO. His parents moved to Thermopolis, Wyoming when he was eleven. Bob immediately skipped the fifth grade and acquired skills in hunting and fishing. The family’s next move was to Rapid City. Arriving in South Dakota in the middle of his sophomore year, Bob rode the bench in basketball, but excelled at American Legion Baseball. Somewhere between Thermopolis and Rapid City, Bob fell in love with golf. This was to be a lifetime passion.



Art Daniel recalls Bob sharing a cockpit story about participating in an American Legion baseball playoff tournament in Billings. The bad news was that Dave McNally was pitching for the Billings adversaries. Some of you may recall Dave McNally went from high school to the Baltimore Orioles. In Bobs words, “The ball was coming right at me... I got out of the way... and it curved and crossed the plate.” Dave is still the only pitcher to hit a bases loaded home run in a World Series game. Bob had met a truly worthy baseball adversary.

Bob graduated from high school in Rapid City and then matriculated to the University of Colorado, where he majored in journalism. This course of study served him throughout his life and fed his passion for writing. When Bob enrolled in the University of Colorado he also enrolled in Navy ROTC.

After graduation from the University of Colorado in 1960, Bob entered USN flight training. It was determined that Bob was best suited for a multi-engine aircraft. The determining factor is best described in his own words, “...I only made eight carrier landings as a student before it was determined that my eyes were more suited for flying patrol aircraft.” Thereafter flight training was done in the S2F, B-26, and SNB culminating in earning his Naval Aviator wings. After Training Command, Bob was assigned to JU-9, a utility squadron at North Island, San Diego where he flew the JD (B-26). His next (split) assignment was to an Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) unit at Barbers Point where he qualified in both the Lockheed P-2 & P-3 ASW aircraft. Thereafter, most of his USN military flying would be logged in the Lockheed P-3. Multiple deployments (TDYs) followed, including extended time at NAS Adak, Alaska, where Bob spent countless hours flying in and near the Alaskan Aleutian Chain, the Bering Sea, and dubious points to the west. Other deployments and assignments include DaNang AB, Vietnam and Key West, Florida. Bob did his duty well and separated from the active Navy in 1968 with the rank of full Lieutenant.

Bob’s airline pilot career began at NWA on May 06, 1968 in the catacombs of the General Office. The next 30 years he served as a line pilot, instructor pilot, and check airman in a variety of jet aircraft. His airline career includes time in all three seats and considerable time in the Boeing 707 and 727, and Captain and F/O time in the DC-10, and Boeing 747/200 & 747/400.

The Root Cellar



Flying with Bob Root often turned a series of bland, boring, routine trips into a delightful event. He abounded in such creative humor such as the following. Bob carried a series of white cardboard signs in his flight bag. When the cockpit was nosed up right next to the terminal he kept his eyes scanned for gawkers. If he saw children staring across to the cockpit windows he would extract a sign from his flight bag that said, "Hi Kids." Once, when he noticed a couple gaping out the windows, he held up another sign that read, "Come along with us." The husband pointed at himself. Bob reached in his bag and pulled out yet another sign, "No, not you—her." They both broke up in laughter. He knew when and how far to push the envelope.

In August of 1986 Bob proposed to Verlee, his second wife, while working a flight from LGA to MSP. This was a one of a kind proposal in that it was made over the aircraft PA. Bob and Verlee were married on February 14, 1987

Bob was based for a while at Boston flying captain on the DC-10. It was on a DC-10 Paris trip that he contracted a virus that attacked his heart muscles. The much loved career ended with no prior notice after a self-initiated visit to the MSP airport clinic. In time a cardiologist at Mayo Clinic pulled his physical. Thus ended his flying career.

Not a man to swill in his sorrow, Bob fell back on his early skills in writing. Many were regaled with Bob's epic annual Christmas letter, his revelations and ponders in Surprise from Surprise. This regular Root Cellar column here in our own Contrails magazine bore witness to his wit, insight, and often self-deprecating humor. His writings were usually self-effacing, delightfully describing his dealings with life's episodes that we all encounter, but cannot put so well in words. His flying stories would excite memory recalls about equipment, procedures, and

people that we have all long forgotten.

I discovered that Bob Root was a competent pianist in an empty banquet room at a layover hotel. Playing the piano was a lifelong passion. He learned to play on his dad's Steinway and in time entertained extensively at college fraternity parties, Officer Club events, and all other manner of social gatherings. Scott Joplin's The Entertainer, Rachmaninoff's Prelude in C Sharp Minor, and the ever in demand Happy Birthday were staples of Bob's repertoire to be shared with any who gathered.

Bob's third passion was golf. He spent 60 years whacking at the little white ball, playing wherever opportunity presented; on R&R in Vietnam, the desert courses of California, and sharing golf adventures with his best friend of more than 50 years—Pete Petersen. One of his golfing highlights shared with his son Rob was the Tournament Players Course (TPC) at Sawgrass where "he knocked it stiff on the island green." An amazing thirty years after being discharged from the Navy, Bob and his eldest son were riding in a cart on a golf course in Jacksonville, Florida, when... "much to my wondering eyes should appear, in a passing golf cart, W. Dewey Wade, my final commanding officer in the Navy."

Lifetime health issues caught up with Bob as they will us all. When his heart began to fail, Bob opted for L-VAD surgery at Abbott Hospital in the Twin Cities. He remained productive to the end in his own way. Bob continued a lifetime tradition of amusing and entertaining us with his pen, writings that were sure to impart some subtle wisdom while bringing a smile to our lips.

Bob is survived by his wife, Verlee and their four-legged "kids" Mulligan and Ace. He is also survived by his sister Kathy Feininger; his children from a previous marriage, Rob, Karen, Beth, and Tim, plus ten grandchildren.

(– Bill Day)

Editor's note: It has been more than eight years since I asked Bob if he would be willing to write a regular column for Contrails, not really knowing what to expect. But I did know he could write, and write well. I was never disappointed. He could find humor in the everyday mundane that we usually recognize but find hard to express. I have a distinct memory confirming that we really were not young any more: When I suggested this title for the column he told me that none of his kids knew what a root cellar was, which of course made it my first choice.

Bob's "Dick Cheney device," as he called his LVAD heart pump was the subject of some recent columns, and of interest, I'm sure, to many of us. But I know he struggled with it even while making it sound humorous. It was just his way.

Rest in Peace, my friend.

The following story of his was not originally intended for Contrails, but Bill Day suggested that we publish just one more. I wholeheartedly agreed. He added this explanation for those not privy to the way the military operates.

Author's note: 1) I was 27 years old when I spent time on Adak. 2) I had previously completed a brief period as a participant in the Vietnam war. 3) The rank of lieutenant in the Navy is the equivalent of captain in the Army, Air Force or Marine Corps, three ranks junior to a colonel. 4) Regardless of rank, the commander of a military aircraft or vessel has complete authority and responsibility for what takes place aboard that aircraft or vessel.

“CODE FIVE ON BOARD”



My commanding officer took one look at the new arrivals, turned to me, pointed and said, “Go!” I knew what he meant.

Then he continued, “While you’re there, stay for the rest of the week and have a good time.”

Our nine-month deployment to Adak was approximately half completed by the time this day arrived. My crew had the “alert” that day, meaning we were wearing our flight gear and our P-3 Orion was preflighted and ready to launch on quick notice. What prompted the skipper’s decision was the unexpected arrival of a polished Air Force Super Constellation with its number three engine feathered and inoperative. He had watched as an assortment of high-ranking Air Force officers deplaned. In a brief discussion with the pilot, an Air Force colonel, he had learned that the man in the civilian suit, who had deplaned with the brass, was an undersecretary of the Air Force. Included in the group was a major general, several full colonels and a number of lieutenant colonels, a rank equaling that of his own.

In addition to his responsibilities as Commanding Officer of Patrol Squadron Six, the skipper was the senior officer on the island and therefore also in command of the entire place. The idea of all this Air Force brass on his island was, apparently, quite distasteful. And so he had said, “Go!”

Where to go was Japan. The group of travelers was headed for important meetings of some kind at Tachikawa Air Base near Tokyo. We discovered a bit later that all were associated with the Judge Advocate General’s Department of the Air Force. I was to have a plane load of lawyers.

Forty-five minutes after being told to go, Crew 11 was airborne enroute to Japan. Our squadron possessed one “VIP” seat, the equivalent of an airline first-class seat, which we could and did mount within the cabin. During takeoff, the undersecretary and the general occupied our VIP seat. The remainder of the group found spots elsewhere. Our Orion was not an airliner.

It was a Navy patrol aircraft loaded with electronic surveillance equipment and other gear usable to combat and sink submarines. While mechanically sound and well-maintained, it was not pretty from the outside, having been operated for several months at low altitude over a salty and windblown Bering Sea. During takeoff, several of the least senior Air Force officers were sitting on a dirty deck.

I had chosen to file a flight plan to the Naval Air Station at Atsugi, rather than Tachikawa. My reason was that, in a book called an Enroute Supplement, which offered pilots information about nearly every airport in the world, I had learned that the air base at Tachikawa did not have a piece of external equipment needed to start our engines. I had received permission from the group to head for Atsugi, a rather short ground ride from their destination, with the intention of re-routing in flight to Tachikawa if our fuel situation would allow us to land there, drop off our passengers, and continue to Atsugi without shutting down all engines. I would need to keep one engine running while at Tachikawa and use it to start the other three.

The P-3 is powered by turbo-prop engines, meaning jet engines which turn propellers. For this reason, a P-3 could fly higher and much faster than a Super Constellation, which was powered by four reciprocating engines. It therefore developed that, even with the unexpected stop on Adak, our group would arrive in Japan at or before the time they had previously planned. The trip would take about eight hours.

For the first few of those hours, we flew through the typical cloudy and stormy weather we had come to associate with flying over and near the Bering Sea. Then we broke out into clear skies. For several hours, the view out the cockpit windows contained nothing other than blue sky and the endless expanse of ocean.

It was during this time that the general, bored with whatever was occupying his time in the VIP seat, decided to visit the cockpit. We had departed in such a rush

that he and I had no contact until this point. As he stood in the back of the cockpit, all he could see outside, and well below, was blue water! When his eyes found us, all he could see were the two silver bars on my baseball cap, one silver bar on my copilot's similar hat and some sort of crowlike emblem on the hat of my flight engineer.

I regret that a total and complete description of the man's reaction to the view is beyond my writing skills. To say that he "blanched" would be inadequate. Comparing his ashen face to fresh snow or Ivory soap bubbles wouldn't begin to convey the complete terror it displayed. After a few moments to regain his composure, he nearly gasped,

"Son, are you route qualified?"

I had difficulty keeping a straight face. My military training to this point had convinced me that it probably wasn't prudent for a Navy lieutenant to laugh at an Air Force general, even if the lieutenant was in command of the aircraft.

"Well, Sir," I replied, "We are Navy. We don't really have routes out here, but we fly over the ocean all the time. If it makes you feel any better, I have been over here once before."

The general was, apparently, unimpressed. He went back in the cabin, located a lieutenant colonel lawyer who had been a navigator when he was a second lieutenant, and ordered him to sit beside my navigator for the remainder of the trip. Of course, the man knew nothing of the modern navigation equipment in use.

Shortly after the visit by the general, a turbine inlet temperature gauge on one of our engines failed. The gauge is a required item for an engine start, but without it the engine could be operated until shutdown at the end of a mission. It was at this point that our radio operator presented me with a message. The message read:

"The Fifth Air Force requests you terminate at Tachikawa vice Atsugi."

In military talk, "The Fifth Air Force" means the general in command of the Fifth Air Force. To me, this meant the message came from the head man in the Air Force in Japan and perhaps in the entire Orient. A fuel check convinced us that a brief stop in Tachikawa to deplane our "cargo" would leave plenty of fuel for the very short hop to Atsugi. I therefore agreed to land first at Tachikawa, however, because of the problem with the gauge, we would now be leaving two engines running while on the ground.

Government VIP's are given a numerical designation which is determined by the importance of the individual's position in government. Thus, the familiar term "Air Force One," associated with the president's plane, is actually derived from his numerical designation of "one." Lesser officials have higher numbers. An undersecretary

is a five. Pilots use these numbers to gain priority with air traffic controllers. Thus, with every radio transmission in the Tokyo vicinity, my copilot included the words "code five on board." Apparently, it worked. We were routed onto Tachikawa's runway with no delay. The day was overcast, but otherwise the weather was good.

My experience had taught me that Air Force bases send a pickup truck with a "Follow Me" sign on the back to meet all arriving aircraft not assigned to that base. Tachikawa proved no exception. Besides the driver, the truck contained a passenger, the Duty Officer. On this day he was a full colonel. I diligently followed the truck to where I was to park, only to discover that the arrival of this group had apparently rated a formal ceremony. There were bleachers filled with Air Force personnel and dependents. There was a platform, with microphones and speakers. There was a band! I sensed trouble ahead.

"Lawson," I said to my flight engineer, "As soon as we stop, you get that ladder down and hustle these people off as quickly as possible."

The truck stopped us right in front of the waiting audience. Out jumped the colonel, pointing at me and making a chopping motion across his throat, the universal sign to shut down engines. I shut down the two on the side where the ladder would extend and sent Lawson on his way. The colonel was not satisfied. He pointed again, signaling "chop." I shook my head. He chopped. I shook. His face got red. The band played on, but the noise of my two engines must surely have muted the music. The colonel's face got redder and he ran under the wing toward our ladder.

Shortly, he was in the cockpit.

"Lieutenant, shut down those engines right this minute," he screamed.

"I'm sorry, Sir, I am unable to do that," I replied.

"Lieutenant, I'm ordering you to shut down those engines!"

At this point, Lawson returned.

"Sir, they're all off."

"Colonel, I'm ordering you off my aircraft, right now!"

He went, and we went, —fast!

When cleared for takeoff, I couldn't resist. Our fuel was now quite low, meaning our weight was also low. I treated the audience to an air show, pulling the nose up some forty-five degrees on takeoff and acting like a fighter pilot.

Oh, and about one month later, our squadron received a very nice letter of thanks from the undersecretary of the Air Force who had not moved or spoken during the entire trip.

Bob Root, January, 2006



A STABILIZED approach



Contributing Columnist **James Baldwin**



Life at Mach 3: Part Three

An airplane is born, records likely never to be broken are set and, like those who flew it, retired with respect and admiration.

... it all finally culminated on December 22, 1964, with Bob Gilliland, Dutch 51, sitting in the cockpit of the long, slender, alien looking flat black SR-71A Blackbird. It would be its maiden flight. He and his boss—head of the Lockheed Skunk Works, Kelly Johnson—had discussed the flight test protocol in detail and he now reviewed it silently. It was agreed that in the event of difficulty, there would be no belly landing if the gear malfunctioned. If even more serious problems were encountered they also decided there would be no dead stick heroics—ejection was the method to be used for escape.

This was hardly the first time Gilliland had operated Ship 950. Less than a week before the engines had been started and a full engine test run accomplished. Just three days later a full test right up to liftoff was conducted. Suited up with the engines started, all pre-flight checks necessary for flight were conducted by both ground personnel and by Gilliland himself. Every switch, indicator, light, and gauge was carefully inspected for function. Control surfaces, trim actuators, nose gear steering and brakes were tested as he taxied to the

runway. Once in position, Dutch 51 ran the engines to full military power, checked the engine indications and released the brakes. As the aircraft accelerated briskly, he carefully advanced the throttles to “min burner” and felt the asymmetric pulse as the afterburners each lit. At 120 knots he retarded the throttles to idle and deployed the drag chute. Clear of the runway and taxiing back to the ramp the test run had proven successful and the team knew they were ready for the real demonstration the following day.

When the blue suits arrived there was no way they could know there were still 379 open items the engineers were still working to solve and correct. It didn't matter to Bob as he entered the cockpit and prepared for flight. Secure in his personal survival suit and helmet worn many times before, he paused for a few minutes as glimpses of his long flying history flashed through his mind. He was well aware of the challenge in front of him: he was a test pilot and today was the day he was going to push the throttles to the stops. He had rehearsed what he was about to do and knew it in painstaking detail. In one

sense, he'd already been there and done it many times. All that was left to do now was start it up and see if the countless engineering compromises made by the group at the Skunkworks were really the right ones. As far as he was concerned, if his boss said it would fly, there wasn't much doubt.

Bob Gilliland taxied to Runway 25 at Air Force Plant #42, Palmdale, California with the canopy lowered and latched. He was alone. There was no RSO (Reconnaissance Systems Officer) in the back seat to back him up or read checklists. The functions normally monitored or performed by an RSO were temporarily installed in a control panel in the front cockpit. Even though he was confident ship number 950 would fly, elsewhere on the ramp the tension was palpable. It was important that it work the way they had planned. Kelly Johnson already knew the decision-making U.S. Air Force Generals in the crowd were there for more than simply witnessing the event. Johnson had pulled Gilliland aside a little earlier that morning to confirm the briefing they had days before. It was important that the flight be made to impress the guys in the blue suits. Supersonic flight was Johnson's unspoken desire and for first flights of new airplanes, somewhat unusual. Or maybe, for an airplane where everything else was unusual, supersonic would be nothing more than usual. Everyone in the program had gotten used to having to invent nearly everything they needed in the development and construction of the Blackbird. The resulting product would function in a hostile region in which no other known air breathing machine was able to operate.

Dutch 51 pushed the throttles forward and past the detents. The afterburners lit as soon as the triethylborane fluid (TEB) used to ignite the low volatility JP-7 fuel, was injected. Specifically designed to counter the high airframe temperatures generated by the Mach 3 plus speeds, the fuel could not be ignited by conventional means. Each SR-71 would carry enough of the volatile fluid, which ignites in a green flame immediately after being exposed to air, for 20 ignition events. It was also used during initial engine start.

The airplane accelerated quickly with three Lockheed F-104 chase planes following. James Eastham, an experienced Lockheed test pilot who would later become the second pilot to fly the Blackbird, was close in trail. After reducing power to minimum afterburner, Gilliland climbed to altitude, initially leveling at 20,000 feet and Mach 0.9 for a check of the pitot static system readings using the F-104 as a reference. Things looked good with Eastham tucked in tight on the SR-71's right wing. As with any test flight, there were important characteristics to be determined, with flight control effectiveness and

stability at the top of the list. With a planned flight time of only an hour, no time was wasted but further flight testing of the stability control system, checks of fuel flow versus airspeed and thrust were accomplished before climbing to 30,000 feet. Once the temperature controls were checked along with some other aircraft systems, Bob had passed Mojave and made a turn up the Owens Valley to remain inside the Edwards Special Operations Area. Southbound again after a turn, it was over the Eastern flank of the Sierra mountain range where the thrust levers were first advanced to "min burner" and after a quick check of engine parameters, to maximum thrust. The lightweight Blackbird accelerated quickly to Mach 1.2 before Gilliland saw the "canopy unsafe" light illuminate. A quick check of the secure canopy latches confirmed to him it was a micro switch problem—later determined to be caused by a low pressure area above the canopy. Gilliland, in the best test pilot tradition, was confident of his assessment and continued to climb and accelerate to Mach 1.5 at 50,000 feet before pulling the throttles back. As he descended and approached Palmdale, Test Ops via radio advised him that Johnson would like a subsonic low pass. The Blackbird, accompanied by the three F-104s, flashed by the flight line as a finale to a successful first flight. Salesmanship was all part of the game. Dutch 51 pulled up and chandelled to the downwind as the gear came down. As there had been some question as to whether the gear would function reliably, it was a big relief for him to see three green lights. As he turned to the final approach course Bob slowed to 185 knots and landed without event, deployed the drag chute and lowered the nose. As per standard procedure, he cut the chute loose at 50 knots and turned off the active runway.

The Blackbird taxied to the ramp to the congratulations of Kelly Johnson and the assembled potential customers. A short debriefing for the collected engineers and technicians followed. The first flight of the Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird was successful, effective with those who needed to be convinced and one more example of the capabilities of Johnson and his team in Burbank. The first flight may have been over, but Bob Gilliland would continue to test fly and develop all of the Blackbirds ever built.

That same day, two thousand miles away and unaware of what had just happened and the role it would play in his later life, a younger man was in his own uncharted territory as he navigated his way through the requirements for the title of "Eagle Scout." He was fourteen years old and already knew airplanes were going to play some role in his future life. R. Edward Yeilding, Coffee High School sophomore, still had a couple of years to

go before he would graduate. From his home in Florence, Alabama his eyes had already focused on what the United States Air Force might be able to offer him. At that point it looked like the astronaut corps might be a good fit.

He would have time to figure that out later, but he also knew there was infrastructure to build first and after high school, was already planning on a further education, maybe even at Auburn University in his own state.

Ed decided his goal on entering Auburn was a degree in Electrical Engineering. Once he had graduated from Coffee High, enrolling in a co-op program enabled him to mix school and work and still matriculate in 1972. There's no way he could have imagined how valuable that engineering background would prove to be later.

As I toured through Florence, Alabama with Ed on an afternoon in August this past year, it became apparent why he still lived there after an Air Force life in distant states and countries all over the world. It was obvious to me as we viewed the Phantom II installed in the park in his honor and as I watched as he acknowledged random greetings, or as we walked the Florence Walk of Honor where his own plaque resides. It occurred to me the city council of Florence probably ought to change the name of their city. I figured it should be Yeilding, Alabama, or maybe Edsville. It was a real pleasure to accompany Ed Yeilding, F-4 Phantom fighter pilot, SR-71 pilot and record holder and Northwest Airlines pilot that day and share a few hours with a true patriot who "walks the walk" and omits the talk. I was with a real life record holder and it was obvious the reason he was



J. T. Vida (l) and Ed Yeilding in front of ship 972 on delivery day to the Smithsonian.

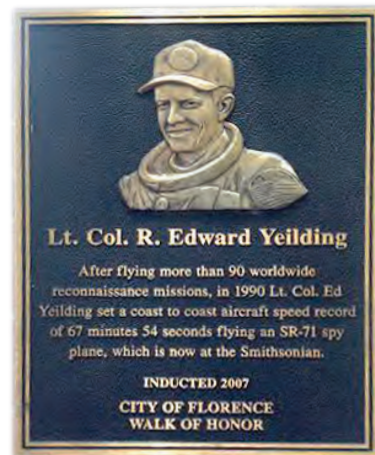
the leader of the crew who set that record is because he was determined to be the one they knew could do it without question.

It's not often that outright records are set that remain unbroken for long. Some are impossible

to break if it was the "first" of most anything. No one else but Neil Armstrong will ever be the first to set foot on the moon. And those, in these modern times, who want to break other records having to do with planes, trains or automobiles, will usually have to contend with the basic physical laws of the universe. Most of those laws are incontrovertible and, as our physical abilities expand through understanding and technology, are being or have been reached. Mother Nature is efficient that way—we can't break her laws and if we try, the resulting consequence is usually immediate and severe. The SR-71 challenged those laws of the universe during every flight and the flight of March 6, 1990 was no exception. They were right up against that invisible wall of laws yet somehow managed to function without crossing over. The entire SR-71 program was necessarily designed to live and function "just this side of reckless."

The commander of the Palmdale unit, Colonel Don Emmons, called Ed one morning to talk about what a few members of Congress and other influential individuals had decided: there would be a record setting coast to coast flight with the SR-71 despite the objection of the Air Force due to concerns with publicity. Ed and J.T. Vida, the highest time SR-71 RSO, were going to be the crew selected to deliver Ship 972 to the Smithsonian at Dulles International in Washington. Several city to city speed records as well as a best time coast to coast were going to be pursued. The planning included route finalization, tanker support, fuel checkpoint planning and coordination with all of the agencies involved. The records would have to be sanctioned by the National Aeronautic Association and the FAA would be involved to identify the location checkpoints.

The nation-spanning flight plan was going to be very tight on fuel. The plan called for air refueling over the Pacific after departing from Beale AFB, crossing back over the west coast near Los Angeles while accelerating to the flight manual speed limit of Mach 3.3. A short refueling from the special KC-135Q tanker after crossing the east coast near Salisbury, Maryland would



be done before a low approach and landing at Dulles. They were both honored to be able to deliver the unique airplane so vital to America's intelligence capability.

Lt. Colonels Ed Yeilding and J.T. Vida suited up on March 6, 1990 for a 0430 departure from Palmdale, the same airport where the airplane began its life over 25 years earlier. A crowd gathered to watch the final departure of the airplane they had been developing and working on for its entire life. As the afterburner glow disappeared into the early morning darkness the flight proceeded subsonic to San Francisco at 26,000 feet and out over the Pacific.

The rendezvous with two tankers to upload fuel immediately presented problems. Repeated hook-ups with each tanker still resulted in only 74,000 pounds on the gauges. Ed knew they were indicating less than what they would need for the trip but based on his experience already had suspicions that they really might have the fuel required. The SR showed it was missing 6,000 pounds in tank 6. The tanker indicated it was 5,000 pounds heavier than planned as well. Ed figured the reason for each discrepancy and after a short discussion, Ed and J.T. decided to attempt the original mission. They knew an abort to Palmdale might result in nervous decision making generals cancelling a second attempt at the record flight. He lit the afterburners and headed for the west coast, crossing near Ventura at Mach 2.5 and still accelerating.

The spectacular view of the planets and the coastline did not deter him from contemplating their fuel issue. He knew the trim indication was appropriate for fuel trapped in tank 6. His extensive system knowledge knew if he cycled the tank 5 pumps, it would send a signal to open the tank 6 valves. He admitted it took somewhere around 25 attempts before he finally saw the fuel draining into tank 6B where the pumps were located. Ed's understanding of electrically powered solenoids solved their fuel issue and they were finally able to enjoy the record setting flight. If he had the time he might have paused for even a moment to realize his engineer-

ing background gained from an education years before was surely just one of the elements that enabled them to continue on and complete the record flight.

As Ed and J.T. raced across and looked down on the country they had served to protect, they were reflective on the role the airplane had been able to play in supplying much needed information during the cold war. The two fervent patriots were enjoying their last flight in an airplane they had spent most of their career with. Ship 972 would be delivered to the Smithsonian Institution at Dulles International by two of the most experienced and skillful of those who flew it. As they crossed the eastern coastline near Washington, D.C., Ed banked the bird in a tight turn to the left as he slowed below Mach descending through 40,000 feet. The planned hookup to another tanker would give them the fuel required for the aerial demonstration at Dulles. After a small fuel uptake and customary thank you for great service, the SR was turned towards the airport to make an overhead pass at 800 feet. Ed pitched out and descended for the low pass at 200 feet perpendicular to the crowd, and once abeam he lit the afterburners. Pulling up into a climbing right 270 degree turn to the downwind leg he rocked his wings as a final tribute to the bird they loved. The landing ended with deployment of the well known big orange drag chute, jettisoned before they taxied to a welcoming attended even by Johnson's successor in leading the famed Skunkworks — Ben Rich. Dignitaries, the press and two of the other record holding SR-71 pilots were in the assembled crowd for this momentous post-flight event, in itself a cherished record for America.

The SR-71, Ship 972 had been delivered to its final resting location where as Ed said, "We hope it will be on display for a thousand years." The reason America and the SR-71 will still be around for display in the coming years is because of aviators like R. Edward Yeilding and the late J.T. Vida.

God bless those who protect our freedom, and God bless America. ✈



Ship 972 in place at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum/Stephen F. Udvar-Hazy Center



WAY



it



CONTRIBUTING COLUMNIST JOHN DOHERTY

ORALS

(No, not that kind.)



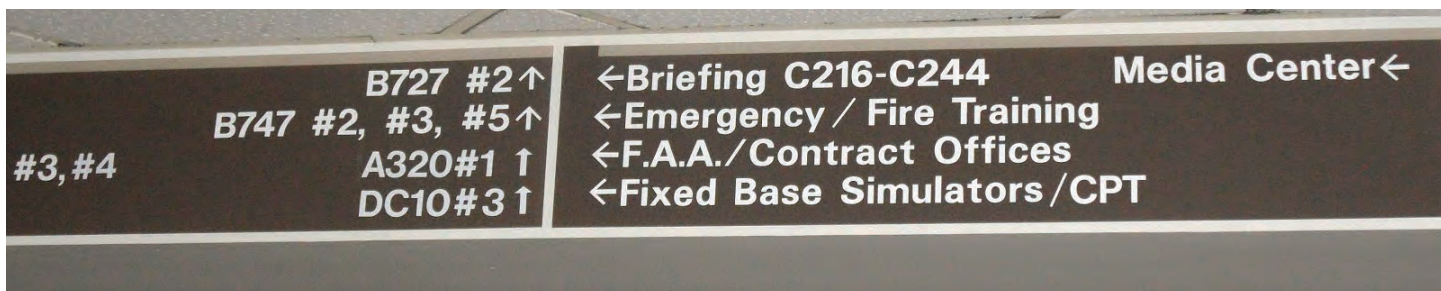
Which aviation activity would you rather not do?:

- Fly a Charlie Charlie approach into Kai Tak on a monsoon night
- Fly a month of red-eye turns
- Fly a night River Approach with braking reported poor
- Take an oral exam

If you are like most pilots you would pick the oral as your most despised activity. With good reason. Sitting across the table from an examiner who knows a passel of inconsequential details about the airplane you are checking out on—who, if he or she chooses, can bust you, and you having no resort of appeal to higher authority. Bang! Over! And nothing left but a pink slip to put on your refrigerator, and then do it all over.

Ah! But not so fast! Pilots like their flying jobs, and we figured out how to avoid the rocks and shoals that could lead to the end of our flying days (with the one exception of us growing old). Think for instance of pilots' ability to find Medical Examiners who understood that the idea of the flight physical was to PASS!

Not surprisingly then, we historically developed tactics to ensure oral exam success. Herewith a compendium of some of those time honored tactics:



Know your examiner:

What's the first thing you wanted to know when you learned you were going to get an oral? Who's giving it, right? The moment that factoid was known the research could begin. What are this guy's pet questions? What are his favorite activities? (Explaining why this is important in a bit). Is he a hard ass or a Santa Klaus?

My personal favorite recollection of me putting "know your examiner" to use evolved by happenstance. I was studying for my 747-400 oral in a briefing room at NATCO when I realized that the droning questions I could hear coming from the room next door were being delivered by the very same examiner who was going to be questioning me!

I dropped my studies, grabbed pen and pad and wrote down every question the examiner asked from then on out. Including his cutesy question: "What is that flat thing on the tail of the airplane just under the APU exhaust?" Who knows what that thing really was for, but his cutesy answer was "It's the magenta line eraser." Needless to say, I aced my oral (and cut my study time in half) by knowing all the questions in advance, and the look on the examiner's face when I correctly answered, "That's the magenta line eraser," was precious. (And if that particular examiner should happen to read these lines, I'll consider myself busted.)

A subset of "know your examiner" was knowing what I'm calling the examiner's "cutesy" questions. Those questions had one of two purposes—either as a joke to ease tension a bit (as in the case above), or alternatively to show the lowly examinee how much more the examiner knew. Three examples I collected over the years:

How many times a minute does the rotating beacon flash?

At what altitude does the FMC assume the tropopause to be?

What side of the center line are the center line lights on?

As testament to the power of "know your examiner," I remember specifically the names of examiners who asked me these questions.

Stall—Ask your own questions:

A typical examiner somewhere early on in the formalities would ask a version of "are you ready to begin?" This was the cue to ask questions of your own, carefully gleaned from your studies. You found a seeming contradiction, an inconsistency, an ambiguity in one of the manuals—you asked the probably unanswerable question and pressed the point. Some goals here: demonstrate that "you guys aren't so smart,"

imply "how do you expect someone to be ready for an oral when the manuals are so messed up?" And most important, time for the oral is limited by the examiner's desire to do other things, so the more questions you ask, the fewer the examiner will have time to ask and the less your exposure to failure.

Stall—broach the examiner's favorite subject:

This is a subset of "know your examiner," and the goal as in the above is to reduce the amount of time the examiner has to ask questions. If your research was complete, you'd know going in at least one of the examiner's passions. Let's say it's bikes. Most examiners will follow the dictum to put the examinee "at ease." (As though that was possible.) Something like, "What's new?"

The adept examinee will be well prepared with facts related to the examiner's passion—so in this case the response would be something like, "Going great, but I'm getting ready to take my family on a cross-country bike tour and having trouble figuring out what frames I want to buy." Was that a glint in the examiner's eye? Bingo! You've instantly accomplished two things: 1) you have opened the door to an extended conversation on a subject the examiner is passionate about, (using up time) and 2) you've favorably disposed yourself to the examiner. In the examiner's mind, bikes are good, the people that like bikes are good, this person likes bikes, so must be good too. And gee—you wouldn't want to bust a good person would you?

Never show weakness:

The phrase "drill down" is part of the examiner's lexicon. If a question was answered tentatively or one's body language showed uncertainty, that would be the examiner's opportunity to "drill down," to exploit the squirming examinee's potential area of weakness by asking ever more detailed questions on the subject, and possibly eventually delivering the coup de grace of an *unsat*—much as a matador would despatch a dazed and wounded bull with the final sword thrust. A situation to be avoided, and the key was to show certainty despite one's own uncertainty. Unsure or flat out didn't know the answer? Answer as though you did know—with unequivocal certainty. First of all you might be right and your feigned certainty could avoid the drill down; secondly, you'd cause internal confusion for the examiner. A confidently delivered wrong answer could call into question the examiner's own confidence in his/her belief regarding the correct answer. And ideally, faced with uncertainty the examiner would choose to drop the subject and move on. The worst case scenario was that the examiner would tell you you were



When the examiner asked a question—any question —about the Equipment Cooling system, you initially stumbled, looked at the ceiling, stood up and peered intently at the Equipment Cooling panel on the provided poster, offered a tentative (and incorrect) answer, quickly changed your mind, cleared your throat. You were hooking the examiner in to believing that you know almost nothing about this system—much as a fisherman would dangle and bob bait in the effort to hook a skittish fish.

You knew the examiner was hooked when he/she started to “drill down.” You went with it briefly to ensure the hook; dissembled, stalled – then in faux amazement propounded along the lines of, “Oh yeah, now I remember!” And proceeded to describe the system and its operation in eye-watering detail. And for

your own matador thrust you had an obscure question regarding the system stored away. At the end of your declamation you faked a moment of confusion regarding some obscure point. Then with victory at hand, turned to the examiner and asked him/her the question which you were near certain he/she didn’t know the answer to.

Checkmate! Bid and made! Game over! The examiner would not want to experience further confusions, the tables had been turned, the assured outcome was “satisfactory,” the end of the oral came quickly, and you and the examiner could get about doing more important things with the rest of the day.

Sadly, such skills we developed over the decades are no longer of use. For one thing, we’re retired and no longer participate in such foolish rituals. For another, orals have gone away for most airline pilots—replaced by computerized exams that are non-idiosyncratic, to the point, and never cutesy. Orals, like so much in our lives as old-timers, are pretty much gone forever. ✈

Answers:

84 times a minute

35,600 feet

The side closest to the passenger terminal

wrong, you expressed appropriate amazement at how you could have misunderstood such a thing, and once again, hopefully the examiner would choose to move on assuming it was just a momentary glitch in your understanding.

(One examiner famously would respond to an offered answer from time to time with, “Are you sure?” To those who had done their research on this examiner, this was the cue that the he had asked a question that he wasn’t sure of the answer himself; so the correct response to the question was a confident “yes,” whether or not one was confident of the correctness of the answer or not.)

Show weakness:

This was an advanced tactic and was only to be used with meticulous preparation. Let’s say your chosen area for this tactic was Equipment Cooling. You studied and knew every permutation and combination of possible configurations – knew how to manage the system in both normal and abnormal situations; were able to diagram a molecule of cooling air going through the system in all these cases.

Northwest Airlines B747-200 Flight Crew Training Manual - Obsolete
\$44.00
Buy It Now

Relive it all for only \$44 from eBay!

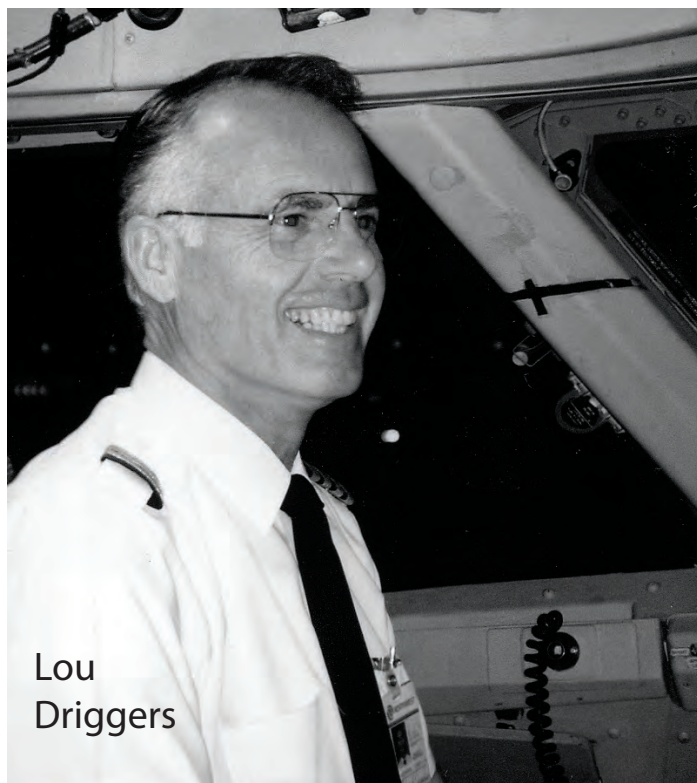
Development of Cockpit Resource Management at Northwest Airlines, or;

How Captain Lou Driggers Saved the Airline

CRM

By Mark Neville

When I became the Union Vice Chairman of the Seattle base in 1988, I had been an employee for nine years. The next ten years would be tumultuous in the extreme. Starting with the Republic Airlines merger followed by a near Flight Attendant strike, then the leveraged privatization, more possible mergers, a pair of major accidents accompanied by more company fiscal issues, and many other challenges that were more than any employee group should have had to endure. During this time the unheralded efforts of many employees ensured the survival of the airline. But it was Captain Lou Driggers as the local Seattle Safety Committee Chairman, and an early advocate of Cockpit Resource Management (CRM), who sent a letter to me requesting that we start an initiative to bring Cockpit Resource Management to Northwest Airlines. Little did we know at the time that his initiative would ultimately save the airline.



Lou Driggers

Probably as the person who would “least disrupt the schedule,” I was asked by someone in the Union office to attend a pilot convention being held at the Dallas Fort Worth Airport. The meeting was conjured up by no less than the likes of Herb Kelleher, CEO of Southwest Airlines, in partnership with the Allied Pilots Association of American Airlines. The meeting was a combination of presentations related to flying safety and pilot representation, followed by a rousing hospitality suite. Herb, true to his reputation, showed up at 6 p.m. with a bag cart loaded with a couple cases of Wild Turkey bourbon and cigarettes. He then proceeded to drink and smoke with whoever was willing to try to match him drink for drink. He loved talking flying.

During the evening there was also a noticeable effort made by other participants to convince me of the need to create an alternative to the Air Line Pilots Association, (ALPA). I’m not sure that there was an understanding that ALPA was an umbrella organization with established bylaws and processes. Those of us representing ALPA were firm about this. There was however the stirrings of something far more important from the safety information discussed.

There were many side conversations going on that evening as well. It was here that I met Dr. Jerome Berlin. Dr. Berlin was a former pilot in the Israeli Air Force, and an aviation psychologist in the new field of aviation human factors. Earlier, He had made a well-received presentation on the nature of the typical pilot, his common behaviors and quirks. This subject acted as a lead-in to more in depth discussions of cockpit culture. This kind of approach to piloting issues was just starting to become popular on the speaker circuit.

I approached Dr. Berlin about creating a Cockpit Resource Management (CRM) program at Northwest Airlines. I said that I doubted that Northwest Airlines would embrace any union suggestion especially if it would cost money. Knowing the difficulty of getting NWA to go along with any union suggestion, I had already been toying with the idea of creating a CRM program as a voluntary ALPA program. This was as a result of Captain Lou Driggers’ instigation.

So I, perhaps naively, but sincerely raised the idea of creating a voluntary CRM program for the pilots at NWA. Jerry thought about it and was immediately intrigued with the idea. While discussing the limitations of a voluntary program, I asked him if he would be willing to volunteer some time helping us set up a program and put it in place. Dr. Berlin, to his credit, thought about it a little more, and almost immediately responded positively. I think he was genuinely excited about the prospect of starting something that might benefit so many employees, if he had harbored reservations he hid it well

With Dr. Berlin's assurances I left the meetings in Dallas with a degree of confidence we could start to set up a pilot directed Cockpit Resource Management (CRM) program. (These programs are now referred to as Human Factors.) The next challenge was to figure out how we were going to budget to pay for it. I knew I could cover the initial costs with our own donations and a little help from the "Flower Fund." I would cover Dr. Berlin's travel and expenses for the initial time he would spend in Minneapolis.

It was now left to us to create a way to more fully cover the costs of a professional ongoing CRM program. I was committed to seeing that Dr. Berlin would receive some compensation for volunteering his help.

"CRM evolved over time into an embedded concept that we now take for granted; it is in all our procedures. Captain Driggers started this process that eventually led to a fundamentally new approach to operations."

Upon return to Minneapolis I decided we would need someone to give the CRM project focus and elevated importance. To that end I contacted Captain Gene Frampton, who was a past ALPA Master Executive Council (MEC) Chairman still active doing committee work, and asked if he would Chair the newly formed Cockpit Resource Management Committee. It was the good fortune of the Union and, by extension the pilots it represented, that he said "Yes."

We set it up as an offshoot of the Safety Committee and started to recruit new members. I think that being an offshoot of the Safety Committee, gave the work we were doing a degree of banality that allowed us the

relative freedom to explore our ideas without having CRM getting unfairly caught up in union political power intrigues and the destructive struggles that would have ensued. To his credit, the Union MEC Chairman, Captain Pete Dodge, allowed us to continue our work in spite of not being sure where the program was headed, and rightly questioning the progress.

The committee under Captain Frampton's leadership (who later became Vice President of Flight Operations), started to recruit interested members. As it turned out there was a lot of interest in doing the work of the committee. I think it brought out the best in people. The Committee set out expanding the research already done by Lou Driggers. We started by documenting the various ideas and approaches being taken to enhance pilot performance at other airlines.

It must be remembered that we were inventing much of what would constitute CRM from fragments of what others, particularly United Airlines, had discovered. United had started CRM as a result of their DC-8 crash in Portland. This was a result of fuel starvation brought on by the crew failing to communicate its fuel state and the Captain's single minded focus on a minor landing gear problem. Our goal was similar; Better flight deck performance and a sheer overwhelming belief that CRM would be instrumental in producing a better work environment for the future.

At some point early in 1989, our discussions came to the attention of the relatively new Vice President of Flight Operations, Captain Stu Henning. He became aware of our plan for a union operated voluntary CRM program. There followed a suggested joint meeting in Seattle.

I recall there were about 8 of us from the Safety, and CRM committees including Captains Lou Driggers, Gene Frampton, Jack Hamlin, Dr. Jerome Berlin and myself. The meeting was held late in the evening and we started by describing the CRM program we had in mind and how we planned to focus it on the needs of pilots. At some point Captain Henning declared we should have a joint Union/Company CRM program. I remember expressing resistance to this idea; stating it was our program, and we wouldn't let it be corrupted by the company. I relented given the advice of cooler and more experienced leadership in the meeting; namely Dr. Berlin and Jack Hamlin.

At the end of the evening, Dr. Berlin was visibly exhausted; it was in the early morning for him, being on east coast time. He, more than anyone, had absorbed our emotions, passion, and gave us a more well defined, and organized future where our joint efforts could lead us in a more constructive manner.

This was the true beginning of CRM at Northwest

Airlines. From this point on, Dr. Berlin was employed by Northwest as a CRM consultant, and Captain Frampton worked with the training department in Minneapolis to bring onboard a whole new cadre of dedicated CRM instructors from the line pilots and training groups. The common thread between them was a commitment to improving Northwest Airlines through improving the lives of its employees. They were notably and ably led by Captain John Doherty. As a group they jumped into their work with an infectious enthusiasm that over time changed the nature of the training department. The training department, in effect, became a service organization that focused on the needs of its students. It developed industry leading approaches to harmonizing training with flying, and flying with procedures that reduced error making while simplifying flying and reducing stress.

It is here that I must digress and recall a bit about the past history at Northwest Airlines. Donald Nyrop became its President, CEO, and Chairman of the Board of Directors in 1954, where he remained until 1976. He continued on the Board of Directors until 1984. When he took control of the company it was reeling economically from an overly complex operating model and a lack of fiscal restraint. Nyrop became known for his frugality.

He spent as little as possible on everything except the aircraft. The fiscal restraint that Nyrop instilled developed into an overall awareness of spending which at its extreme had us worried about wasting the staples we used on our handmade, hand written flight plans. The modern day Michael O'Leary of Ryan Air, a noted tight-fisted stingy micro-manager CEO, had nothing on Donald Nyrop. The extreme and at times crass measures that Nyrop took to save money were both important and limiting at the same time. The poisonous environment that developed left the company in a fiscally sound position but also in an uncompetitive and inflexible one.

The company had a grim, dour attitude and cheapness to its appearance that didn't befit the operational qualities of the airline. Everything was painted gray as if to emphasize our lack of color, spirit and style. The rumor was that it was surplus battleship paint that was purchased at cut rates. Nice airplanes, shabbily dressed; it was as if the airline was a street vagrant with a large bank account. We would regularly delay flights to load cargo because the cargo was reputed to be worth more revenue than the passengers. This resulted in giving Northwest Airlines perennially one of the worst on time records in the industry.

Fixing this problem became one of Captain Jack Hamlin's great achievements when he became a Chief Pilot in 1992 and is a story for another chapter.

The airline industry was under government regulation during most of Donald Nyrop's tenure. Most airlines competed on providing the maximum amount of service for the fixed revenue they were regulated to. Nyrop turned this assumption upside down, and provided the least amount of service for the maximum amount of revenue.

While the airline prospered financially, it lagged in service and resulted in poor passenger preference ratings (which it was never truly ever able to overcome). This placed the airline in a uniquely uncompetitive position for the coming storm of deregulation. This deregulation was just another form of regulation, albeit without overt government intervention. Safety was still regulated, and infrastructure was not changed to accommodate unbridled competition. The effect was to fence employees into caged hen houses with "SAFE" written on the outside, while the Wall Street wolves were released inside.

The stress that had gone along with the fiscal restraint was as if poison had been poured into the company well. Be it Union or Company, the employees could never overcome it. The lack of investment in computer automation, communications (IT), and ground equipment of all sizes and shapes that were part of fiscal restraint pre-deregulation, became limitations the company had to shoulder after deregulation.

After the leveraged buyout, our new managers and ALPA economists frequently commented in agreement, that Northwest was always prepared with fiscal restraint for every economic downturn but never prepared to compete to take advantage of the upturns. This had a history that dated back to the Nyrop years.

Another part of Donald Nyrop's fiscal restraint was to limit employee wages as much as possible. All through the '70s there were intractable strikes that over time compounded employee ill will. By the late '80s the company was a circular firing squad of unhappy employees.

Part of CRM was meant to improve attitudes within the cockpit and our relations with other employee groups outside it. We wanted to look to the possibility of a new future. By defining our past and the directions it had taken us on, we could start to redress our attitudes and redefine our future.

While the CRM Committee did its work, the corporate environment had become turbulent and so disaster riven, that its stresses were boiling over into the daily lives of the employees. Besides the effects of the 1979 Airline Deregulation Act, the Union was dealing with an intractable merger that doubled the airline's size overnight, a hostile corporate takeover, and an open contract. Any one of these things would be considered a challenging hurdle, but all three at once made it near impossible.

In hindsight; the Northwest Union and its equal with the merged carrier Republic Airlines, learned to deal with the merger better than company management. The union processes involved long, sometimes interminable meetings where a full consensus of voting members was the only allowable outcome. Over time we learned how to deal with the challenges confronting us. I'm not sure we appreciated how far behind everyone else at the company was, including the pilots we represented and our management.

The pilot management style of old Northwest was akin to many military organizations; top down and allowing for very little bottom up. It relied on edicts such as zero tolerance, strict procedures compliance, and no drinking on any layover. To start training you had to be ready, flying proficiency wise, to complete the training, or it was a career ending move. Other carriers had a more "Train to Proficiency" philosophy. Suffice it to say Republic was a long way from the premerger Northwest strictures. But the NWA edicts were false vanity and there was little adherence to any of them. It was a way for management to duck their real responsibility to actively manage Flight Operations.

Most of the pilots at the premerger Northwest were former military. Many had seen enemy action in some form either in WWII, Korea, or Vietnam. There were some who had returned from the stress of combat who used alcohol the way they had learned in the military. What we now call Post Traumatic Stress Disorder was probably the cause of many of the drinking problems that evolved over time. By declaring zero tolerance, and falsely maintaining this standard, the company positioned itself for near disaster. The coming events would define the late '80s and early '90s. The premerger Northwest management that prevailed after the merger, was in no way prepared for, or evolved to handle, the major changes and challenges that had been thrust upon it.

The first major incident was the crash of an MD-82 taking off from Detroit, August 1987. The crew had neglected extending the flaps for takeoff. Northwest had recently imposed our "better" procedures on the Republic pilots but with little or no training. The hole in our procedures when overlaid with Republic flying culture was quickly and disastrously discovered. The checklist where the Republic pilots confirmed the flaps were extended; the "Before Takeoff" checklist, had had it removed and moved to the "Taxi" checklist as it had been at Northwest. The imposed Northwest checklist had the flaps on the "Taxi" and "Before Taxi" checklist. The combination of a disabled "Flap Warning Horn," and neglecting the Taxi checklists had set in motion a disaster which killed 156 people when the aircraft crashed shortly after takeoff.

The second incident was the flight from Fargo to

Minneapolis, March 1990, with a three man crew that all tested alcohol positive on arrival in Minneapolis. I believe due to the way it played out in the media, this was worse for the company than the MD-82 accident. It is ironic that we had finally negotiated and begun a rational alcohol policy that had been long researched by the Air Line Pilots Association, the medical community, and employed by other more modern carriers. But the seeds of both these events were begun with ineffectual archaic management systems.

The third incident was a runway incursion accident occurred in December 1990, where two NWA aircraft collided on a foggy runway, again in Detroit. This accident involved two Northwest Airlines aircraft, a B-727 and a DC-9. The DC-9 had become disoriented in foggy weather and had inadvertently entered the active runway that a B-727 was taking off from. The resulting collision killed 8 people in the DC-9 when the B-727 swerved to avoid a collision, the 727's wing cut through the cabin of the DC-9. At the conclusion of the investigation, the FAA indicated that had Northwest Airlines not started a CRM program they would have shut the airline down. (We never received any "Thank You" notes from investors whose investments we saved with our foresight.)

We had lost the ability to manage the company. The days of relying on everyone knowing each other and their problems were long gone. The company had almost overnight become too large. Management could no longer fire a pilot, fair or not, and then rely on the act itself to educate the pilots. If you didn't know the individuals, it would just instill fear and resentment in the remaining pilots. The airline was just too large to manage in this fashion any longer.

By the time of the third incident, Northwest Airlines was under new management and the previous challenges had already started a more "bottom up" style with greater union involvement. Dr. Berlin formalized the Human Factors program, and professional surveying and data collection would become the tools of the future. And even though one of the Senior Northwest Managers at the time was trying to eliminate CRM, the FAA findings in the Detroit runway incursion accident insured its retention.

CRM evolved over time into an embedded concept that we now take for granted; it is in all our procedures. Captain Driggers started this process that eventually led to a fundamentally new approach to operations. If not for the steady commitment of Captain Driggers, Dr. Berlin and employees like them, Northwest Airlines might never have survived to become part of Delta.

Lou Driggers had saved the airline. ✈

NAME(S)



Checks payable to "MSP RNPA Cruise" and mail to:
RNPA Summer Cruise
PO Box 240564
St. Paul MN 55124-0564

\$30 per person

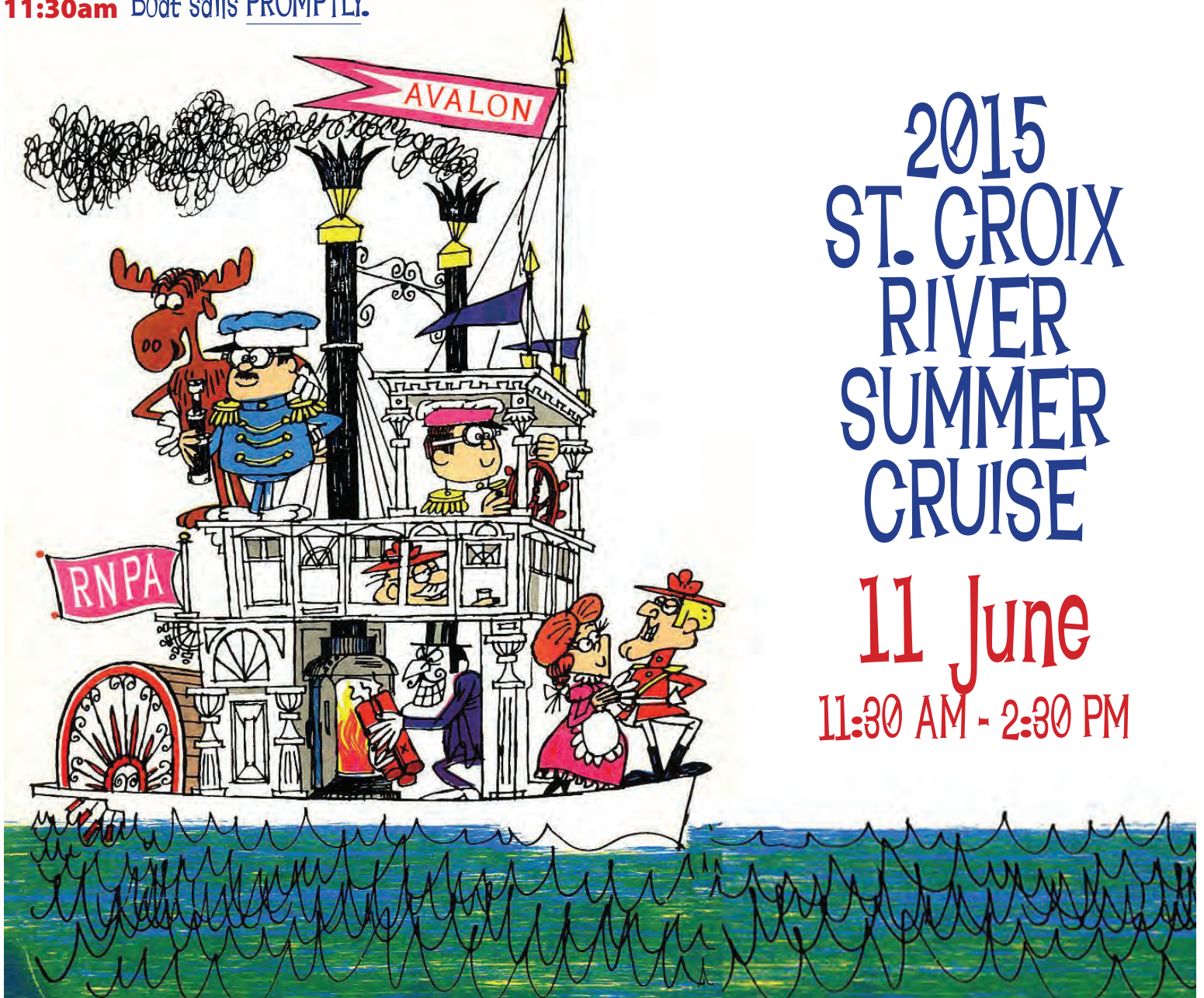
First Timer?

Reservation  DEADLINE  is June 5th.

Price includes a delicious lunch and a 3 hour boat ride on the beautiful St. Croix River. Cash bar on board.

11:00am Congregate at dockside just south of downtown Stillwater.

11:30am Boat sails PROMPTLY.



2015 ST. CROIX RIVER SUMMER CRUISE

11 June
11:30 AM - 2:30 PM

MSP CHRISTMAS PARTY



Peggy Paradeau

Photography:
Ray Alexander



Doug & Sherry Wenborg



Jim & Dianne Kary



Ken & Sharon Kreutzmann



Paul Sippert



Sharon Kreutzmann, Kittie Alexander



Joan Jenc, Allen Whitney



Tom Dummer



Sheila & Bob Wangerin



Sharon & Lloyd Melvie



Janet & Greg Gillies



Maureen & Bob Burns



Dottie & Earle Scott



Marion & Dean Mittelstaedt



Ken Finney



Lois & Dick Haglund



Diane McLaughlin, Donna Mattson



Gary & Joan Baldwin



K. P. & Nancy Haram



Tim & Marilyn Olson



Tom & Judy Schellinger



Bob & Cindy Mokus



Connie Blad & Sam McGlone



Bob & Barb Vega



Helen & Gene Frank



Joe Sutilla



Dave Wooden



Susan Koska, Hal Hockett



Ellen & Ned Stephens



Cleo & John Thomas



Jerry & Jean Pritchett



Charles Moore & Connie Thompson



Gay & Dick Glover, Leona Mortenson



Ajoyce & Dan Farkas



Sue & Tom Ebner



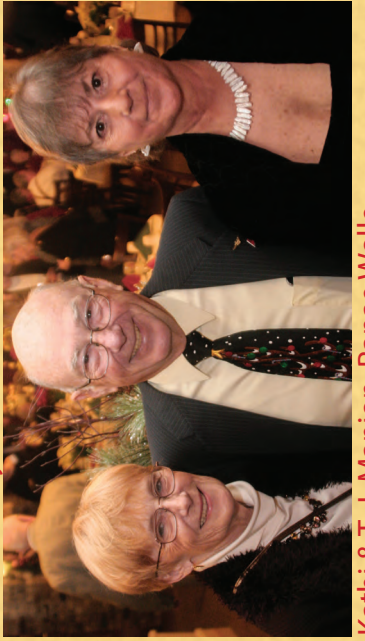
Marilyn & Carl Simmons



Gene & Diane Tviet



Pete & Mindy Schenck



Kathi & T. J. Manion, Ranae Wolle



Penny & Pastor Bob White



Jerry & Linda Wortman



Pete Johnson & Claudia Waters



Vicki & Jim Hancock



Kathleen Palmen



Lynn Anderson



Ken Kreutzmann, Pete Brown



Ron Kenmir



Jane & Don Chadwick



Stan Heaston



Mary Linda & Tom White



Lee Bradshaw



Sara & Nick Modders



Dale Hagfors



Jim & Nancy Bestul



Dick & Cookie Bihler



Kathie & David Griffiths



Roy Williamson



Julie & Les McNamee, Debbie Jensen



Lois Abbott, Howie & Midge Glenna



Rod & Dee Hald



Dale & Diane Ebben



Joi & Lowell Kegley



Rosie & Roger Grotbo



Kathy Zielie & Keith Maxwell



Art & Beverly Bein



Joan & Jim Swanson



Micky & Mike Garrison



Rolan Anderson



Carol & Pete Hegseth



Gary & Joan Thompson



Sherry & Steve Carr



Peggy Paradeau, Chris Nee, Christine Johnson



Long Beach

September 24-26, 2015



Join us in the great city of Long Beach, California

- Served by 3 airports: LAX, LGB and SNA
- Walking distance to many attractions
- Shoreline village with its shops and restaurants
- Aquarium of the Pacific
- Battleship IOWA
- Free transportation to the Queen Mary
- And MORE!



\$124
rate

Discount
parking
\$9 daily

Long Beach Hilton
562-983-3400
or
1-800-445-8667
Be sure to mention
RNPA

NAME _____

NAME _____

We are FIRST-TIMERS!

Check payable to **RNPA** and mail to: **Terry Confer**

Reservation DEADLINE
July 1st, 2015

9670 E Little Further Way
Gold Canyon AZ 85118



First day, Thursday, Sept. 24th
Board meeting, Registration and
President's Reception early evening

*Investigate Long Beach at your
leisure after registering*



Tour day, Friday, Sept. 25th
Catalina Express to Catalina Island
(limited to 160 seats)
with a Trolley Tour of the island

Twenty six miles across the sea, Santa Catalina is a-waiting for me

Lots to do in Catalina...

Under water sea life viewing, zip-lining, shopping and eating

Don't
forget
you
know
what!



Last day, Saturday, Sept. 26

General Meeting,
Ladies' coffee, and
The Banquet
in the evening

*Some free
time Saturday*



IT'S LONG BEACH IN 2015

RNPA has chosen Long Beach California for the host city of the 2015 Reunion. The International Hilton Hotel, located on Ocean Blvd has been chosen as our headquarters. The Hilton is a 15 story hotel walking distance to restaurants, cafes, the Shoreline Village, the Catalina Express terminal, The Aquarium of the Pacific and several other attractions. After undergoing a major renovation in the last couple years, they are anxiously awaiting the Retired Northwest Pilots.

Getting to Long Beach is simple. If you drive the hotel is at the end of the 710 freeway. If you FLY you have the option of three major airports. LAX to the North (Hilton has special rate with "Super Shuttle" of \$19.00), LGB just up the hill (\$15.00 taxi) and SNA (Orange County) (Super Shuttle \$35.00pp). Delta serves LAX and SNA.

Long Beach is the fifth largest city in California. It is a beach community that has undergone millions of dollars of upgrades. The Aquarium of the Pacific offers reduced entry fees to conventioners after 4 pm. The Aqua Link and Aqua Bus offer water taxi service to various points on the harbor for as little as \$1.00. Free bus service is available from the hotel to Belmont Shore area and to the Queen Mary. Next to the Queen Mary is the original hangar for the Spruce Goose, now a Carnival Cruise Line Terminal. Within an 8 block area there are more than 100 restaurants.

Just to the west is San Pedro and home of the Battleship IOWA, open for tours daily.

The Catalina Express Terminal is walking distance from the hotel. Our tour day will be an Express ride over to Catalina in the morning, a trolley tour of the Island and the ride back to Long Beach in the evening. Much free time will be available to tour the Casino (not gambling) and underwater adventures. The ZIP LINE is extremely popular with reservations required. There are many restaurants and cafes with various menus for your eating pleasure.

This Reunion is limited to 160 attendees, **SO SIGN UP EARLY!** This is truly a Pilot's Special at \$190/pp.

SUPPORT THE PAUL SODERLIND SCHOLARSHIP FUND

These 14 karat gold wings, mounted along with the Northwest medallion will be auctioned off at the Long Beach RNPA Reunion. These wings have been donated by a loyal RNPA member for the support and benefit of the Paul Soderlind Memorial Scholarship fund.

If you are interested but NOT attending the convention you can bid by sending a sealed bid to me: Gary Pisel



From *The New York Times*, January 3, 2015:

The Liberation of Growing Old

By ANNE KARPFF

LONDON — WHY do we have such punitive attitudes toward old people? Granted, the ancients did hideous things to elders who were unable to work but still needed food and care, but in more recent times, that had changed: In 18th-century New England, it was common for people to make themselves seem older by adding years to their real age, rather than subtracting them.

Once upon a time, “senile” just meant old, without being pejorative. Even “geriatric” was originally a value-free term, rather than part of the lexicon of contempt toward old people.

Yet today, the language used to describe the changing age composition of the population is little short of apocalyptic. We’re told that the “graying of America” is an “agequake” or a “demographic time bomb.”

Older people are likely to be seen as a burden and a drain on resources, rather than a resource in themselves. Their only contribution, it seems, is to make worse the “dependency ratio,” a term that enshrines dubious assumptions about who will be financially dependent on whom.

In 2050, Americans age 65 and over are predicted to almost double in number to 83.7 million, one-fifth of the population. An aging population does pose real challenges, but increasing numbers of people of working age (as traditionally defined) are unemployed today, while growing numbers continue to work beyond pensionable age.

In reality, age can no longer be neatly correlated with economic activity. In particular, old people are themselves significant providers of care, notably the child care provided by grandparents.



To be sure, some older public figures attain “national treasure” status, as cuddly, unthreatening George Burns-type figures. And while “ageist” language demeans and caregivers’ pay remains poor, we no longer cast old people out into the wilds. Instead, innovative services and goods are developing that seek to capitalize on the “silver dollar.”

But the social bias is real, too. When a large sample of Facebook groups created by 20- to 29-year-olds was examined by a team based at the Yale School of Public Health, three-quarters of the groups were found to denigrate old people. More than a third advocated banning old people from public activities like shopping.

Such “gerontophobia” is harmful because we internalize it. Ageism has been described as prejudice against one’s future self. It tells us that age is our defining characteristic and that, as midnight strikes on a milestone birthday, we will become nothing but old — emptied of our passions, abilities and experience, infused instead with frailty and decline.

In their study comparing the memory of young and old Chinese and Americans, Ellen Langer, a social psychologist, and Becca Levy, an epidemiologist, found that the older Chinese people, who, it was hypothesized, were exposed to less ageism than their American counterparts, performed memory tests more like their younger compatriots. Among the Americans, on the other hand, there were significant memory differences between the old and young. The beliefs that we imbibe about our waning powers may turn out to be self-fulfilling. In effect, our culture teaches us how to be old.

The historians Thomas R. Cole and David Hackett Fischer have documented how, at the start of the 19th century, the idea of aging as part of the human condition, with its inevitable limits, increasingly gave way to a conception of old age as a biomedical problem to which there might be a scientific solution. What was lost was a sense of the life span, with each stage having value and meaning.

Perhaps this is why, as a 2006 study found, we mispredict the happiness we expect to feel across the course of our lives and assume that we’ll get more unhappy as we age. In fact, the research shows that the opposite is true. For my part, at 64, I haven’t attained serenity (another stereotype of older people), but I am more able to savor life — and if offered the chance to return to my 14-year-old self, I’d run screaming the other way.

A student of mine, nudging 60, recently called age “the great liberator.” Part of what she meant was that old people simply care less about what others think, but also, I think, that our sense of what’s important grows with age. We experience life more intensely than before, whatever our physical limitations, because we know it won’t last forever.

“The beliefs that we imbibe about our waning powers may turn out to be self-fulfilling. In effect, our culture teaches us how to be old.”



Ed Kashi/VII Photo

How to enable the growing numbers of old people to live comfortable, meaningful lives is a fundamental issue of equality, with benefits for all. If we make the world better for old people, we make it better for everyone, from stroller-pushers to wheelchair-users.

Maggie Kuhn, the founder of the elder advocacy organization the Gray Panthers, argued that instead of making a fetish of independence, we should value the idea of interdependence between generations. Thus age-friendly cities, like Portland, Ore., rethink urban spaces to make them more accessible and encourage the integration of old people into communal life. And programs like Cleveland’s intergenerational charter schools, which provide lifelong education alongside grades K-8, break down the age apartheid now so common. Instead of seeing each other as generic categories, old and young people can discover each other as individuals.

Age resistance is a futile kind of life resistance: We can’t live outside time, we begin to age the moment we’re born. But the emerging age-acceptance movement neither decries nor denies the aging process. It recognizes that one can remain vital and present, engaged and curious, indeed continue to grow, until one’s dying breath. Then we need only echo the wish of the British psychoanalyst D. W. Winnicott: “May I be alive when I die.”

* * *

Anne Karpf is a British-based journalist and sociologist, and the author of “How to Age.”

SEA CHRISTMAS PARTY



Hosted by Kathee (95%) & Rex (5%) Nelick
Dec. 11th, Emerald Downs Racetrack, Auburn Washington



Kathee Nelick, Linda & Don McKay, Holly & Dave Nelson, Rex Nelick,
Dick & Marge Haddon



Jon & Karen Pennington, Bill & Joan Fields, Ardie Madsen, Heather Olm



Janice Hendrick, Betty & Bill Huff, Kathy & Wayne Stark, Evy & Mel Suggett



Nancie & Gary Russ, Larry & Mavis Stears, Fred Pack, Dave Hall



Suzanne Thompson, Marcy Gauer, Corky Olson, Curt Caesar, Skip & Kathy Eglet



**Darl & Mary McAllister, Andrea & Dave Schneebeck, Walt & Jan Mills,
Sterling & Nadine Bentsen**



**Joanne & Denny Swanson, Joen & Howie Parks, Linda & Dave Rolczynski,
Bud & Carolyn Cheney**



Jim & Pat Harrington, Donna Pauly & Art Chetlain, Alayne & Jack Hudspeth, Ron Hudspeth



Ivars Skuja, Irene Kochendorfer, Lowell & Dorothy Schroeder, Gerri & B. J. Molé, Sandy Schmidt, Bev Skuja



Joanne Aitken & Chuck Carlson, Dave McLeod & Pat Rieman, Sheri Ball, Montie Leffle, Gayla Bredahl. MC Myron Bredahl at the podium



NanSea & Charlie Welsh, Bev & Jim Palmer

There was a twelfth table but the photographer (your editor) made a mess of the photo. No big loss though, it was just "the boys' table:" Keith Deaver, John Upthegrove, Gus Diem, Bill Nolan, Bill Stocker, Marv Peterson and myself. – Editor

Seating limited to 160

Includes:
entree,
salad,
vegetable,
potato,
desert
&
coffee
or
tea

2015 SW Florida Spring Luncheon

March 10th

Marina Jack's, Sarasota

\$27 / person
includes gratuity

Cash Bar
10:30-12:30

Lunch
at
12:30



Meal choices: 1. Grouper Oscar | 2. London Broil | 3. Island Chicken CHOICE

Name _____

Name _____

We are FIRST-TIMERS!

REGISTRATION DEADLINE March 1st

Checks payable to "Dino Oliva" and mailed to him at:

3701 Bayou Louise Ln
Sarasota FL 34242

I see the date is now Mar. 10!

941.349.4960 or 941.356.1963

N Puget Sound Christmas

Photos:
Bill Day





Lynn Day

Sterling Beutson



Doug & Ann Millar

Ron & Lynn Heitritter



Skip & Kathy Eglet



Steve Gutzmer

Ron Murdock

Demetri Vasiliades

Wanda White

Penny Gutzmer

Steve White

The Final Touchdown

In my younger life I experienced only one forced landing. It was not difficult. The dead-stick glide began at three thousand feet. There were several suitable fields from which to choose. Things worked out nicely, and although I totaled my Skyraider I came to rest in a Thai rice paddy. Yet I know that I have one more forced landing lurking and waiting for me out there. I believe that at this stage of my life, I am ready for it. Perhaps there will be warning, maybe not.

Will there be time for me to plan a good approach to this final touchdown? Will it be a hasty no power, no options, straight ahead, steep descent to a walloping hard touchdown? Or will it be a soft afternoon peaceful glide?

Whatever, for this final glide, I ask only for an open cockpit, so I can, however briefly, savor for the last time the feelings of flight, as the wings under me exquisitely frame and record the slowly changing, tilting scenes as I maneuver and silently bank and glide onto what I have long known will be my very final approach.

Please, no helmet, so old ears can best sense vital changes in speed, relayed through the lovely sounds of whistling interplane struts and wires, and so cheeks and bared head can best read changing airflows swirling behind the cockpit's tiny windshield.

Below, in a forest of trees lies a grassy field long ago set aside for flyers of old. It looks small, tiny. With lightly crossed aileron and rudder I'll slip her a few inches over the fence. I'll level her off, then hold her off with wheels skimming the grass tips. The lift of the wings, the sounds of flight, rapidly diminish. With stick full back, lift fades, a slight tremor, then she and I are bumping and rolling across the beautifully sodded field. The propeller stills.

I'll roll to a stop; no seat belt to loosen. I raise my visor and slowly climb out. Suddenly there is applause, then bear hugs and slaps on the back.

"Hey, you old goat, you really slicked that one on!" I am with old friends.

Ed Leonard
USAF '60



The author was a 1960 graduate of the AFA. He was shot down in an A-1E over Laos while on a rescue mission for "Streetcar 304" on 31 May 1968. He evaded capture for two days, but was then captured and held in various POW locations in Laos and Viet Nam from 1968-1973. He retired as a Lt. Col. in 1980, got a law degree in Texas and worked as an attorney in Astoria WA. He was the mayor of Ilwaco WA 1993-2001. He passed away on 11 Nov. 2014, about a year after he wrote "Final Touchdown." As the Marines would say, "He was packin' the gear."
Submitted by Skip Foster



LLOYD CIZEK 1933 ~ 2014

Captain Lloyd H. Cizek, age 81, a retired Northwest Airlines captain, “Flew West” on August 6, 2014 after a battle with a blood anemia disorder. He was born January 19, 1933 in St Paul, Minnesota. Lloyd was a late in life child, and the only child of his Czechoslovakian father and Polish mother. His parents did not have an easy life. Lloyd’s father was a laborer for American Hoist and Derrick Company in St. Paul. His parents never owned their own home or an automobile.

Lloyd Cizek worked his way through Cretin High School in St. Paul. He worked nights and holidays at a variety of jobs, from pin setting at a bowling alley to working on railroad trains. During his high school tenure, Lloyd was heavily involved in the student newspaper, and yearbook. His typing skills landed him a job in the billing department at a trucking company. He later moved up to a position as a delivery driver.

After graduating from Cretin High School Class of 1950, he entered the College of St. Thomas where he studied Business and minored in Philosophy. Lloyd also opted for Air Force ROTC. Upon college graduation he was commissioned in the Air Force Reserve. Lloyd’s active duty training assignment was to pilot training at Hondo AFB where he flew the AT-6 and then onto advanced training in the BT-25 at Mathis AFB in San Angelo, TX.

Completing USAF flight training, Lloyd was assigned to an Air Force KC-97 tanker squadron, a precursor

to later Stratocruiser flying at NWA. While on active duty with the Air Force, Lloyd Cizek married Josephine (Jo) Hottinger, whom he had met earlier on a blind date at a dance in St. Paul.

In the late 1950s, the post-Korean War drawdown was cutting deep into the Air Force ranks. The reduction enabled Lloyd to acquire an ‘early out release’ from active duty. He returned to Minnesota to be hired by his hometown airline. Lloyd began his NWA employment on March 22, 1958, being assigned an original seniority number—#458.

During his 30+ years of service at NWA, Lloyd flew the DC-3, DC-4, DC-6, DC-7, Boeing Stratocruiser, Lockheed Electra, Boeing 720/320, Boeing 727, DC-10, and Boeing 747/200. In 1972, when the 747s came on line, NWA sold many 720Bs to Olympic Airways. As part of the sales package, NWA provided captain and second officer instructors to Olympic Airways for line transition training. Lloyd was one of those captain instructors living there on loan from NWA for 9 months flying intra Europe. His whole family lived there for a number of months in Athens in a rented Villa.

Lloyd was a soft spoken captain, gentle of hand with the airplane, and a great teacher—instructing for NWA in several airplanes. I personally benefited from his instruction and cut my copilot teeth flying with Lloyd. Unfortunately for his colleagues and passengers, Lloyd Cizek retired from NWA flying early, at age 58, due to a medical issue with atrial fibrillation.

Recall that Lloyd grew up working hard to pay his way through high school and college. Along the way he acquired considerable skill as a master mechanic gaining an A&P license and an AI certification, something he put to work bringing historic cars and aircraft back to life.

Many of his airline peers were aware of his work on a world class Beech Staggerwing. That restoration project was described in a Smithsonian Air and Space Magazine article. You can find the article using this link. It’s still for sale: www.airspacemag.com/history-of-flight/restoration-beech-staggerwing-57503914/

Lloyd also enjoyed barbershop singing, cooking, fishing, and reading. He was a member of the 1968 St. Paul Winter Carnival Vulcan Crew and a long-time Quiet Birdmen member. His family remembers him for his great faith, love of his family, quick wit, love of dogs, organizational ability, and keen memory. Lloyd passed away at home with his family after only four hours of hospice care.

He is survived by his wife Josephine (Jo); his six children: John, Bill, Jeanette, Jim [DAL (NWA) SEA 767/757], Patty, and David; plus nineteen grandchildren.

(– Bill Day)



Captain Edward R. Adamek, Jr., age 94, a retired Northwest Airlines captain “Flew West” on November 10, 2014 after a long struggle with Parkinson’s disease. He was born August 23, 1920 and grew up in urban St. Paul, Minnesota. After graduation from Central High School in 1938 he went to work as a machinist apprentice at Chicago Northwestern Railroad.

In 1942 Ed enlisted in the U.S. Navy aspiring to be an aircraft machinist mate, but at induction wandered into the wrong line for training assignments. Somehow he ended up in the line for pilot applicants. “I answered yes to everything they asked and otherwise just kept my mouth shut. I swallowed real hard when I found out I’d gotten into flight training... as a kid I’d never even been out to the airport.” The rest is history.

Upon completion of USN flight training Ed opted to serve in the USMC. His first assignment was as an instrument instructor at MCAS El Toro. He eventually flew the PBY Amphibian and the C-46 & C-47. At the end of the war he was stationed at Tsingtao, China where he relocated Chinese families who had been interned by the Japanese. On Sept. 4, 1946 Ed was released from active duty.

In 1947 Ed married his childhood friend Eleanore Boratko. The two grew up a mile apart and attended the same grade school and high school, even their parents and grandparents knew each other well. Both are of Czechoslovakian ethnicity. Eleanore and Ed were always a team, as evidenced by their 66 years of marriage and parenting.

In 1947 Ed and Eleanore purchased and began operating the Leech Lake Lodge near Walker, Minnesota. In 1950 Ed acquired a job at NWA as a Flight Service Attendant (FSA) to supplement their income. Some of his FSA trips were on the Stratocruiser, an airplane he would later command. In 1950 when Ed began his cockpit career with NWA they sold the Leech Lake Lodge. Ed was a USMC reservist and was recalled to active duty in 1951-52 during the Korean War. Stationed at Marine Corps Air Station El Toro, he spent much time deployed transporting supplies to Korea and the Philippines. Their son Don



**“ED” ADAMEK, JR.
1920 ~ 2014**

was born in Southern California during this time.

After his Korean War recall, Ed returned to NWA while remaining active with the Marine Reserve in NAS Twin Cities. He flew the F9F and then the C-119s until retiring a full Colonel.

Ed flew most of the NWA post-war propeller transports; specifically the DC-3, 4, 6, 7C, Lockheed Electra, and the Boeing Stratocruiser. Upon entry into the jet age, Ed flew the Boeing 707 series, the 727, the DC-10 and the Boeing 747. On August 23, 1980 he flew his last line trip as captain, which was also the inaugural NWA flight from London to MSP. His wife Eleanore was aboard. Ed agreed that getting into the wrong line back in 1942 didn’t turn out badly at all.

Ed’s airline contemporaries held him in high regard, as witnessed by his friend Ray Dolny: “Always knew you would have a good trip if you flew with Ed. Good pilot, always a gentleman and fun to work with.”

Beginning in the mid-1950s Ed developed an interest in gardening which thrived until 1977 when they started downsizing residences. They grew almost everything at their Oakdale home. In 1968 Ed and Eleanore purchased the Leech Lake Lodge for the 2nd time. They ran this resort as a season summer business until 1971. Ed also enjoyed fishing and hunting expeditions with his NWA buddies. The couple remained regular church and choir members. Ed was widowed in May of 2013 with the passing of Eleanore and is survived by his son Donald.

(- Bill Day)

Captain William A. Barnard, age 93, a retired Northwest Airlines captain, “Flew West” on November 08, 2013. Born August 10, 1920 in University City, Missouri. Early in life Bill became fascinated with aviation. At age 15 he wrote a paper laying out his plans for becoming an airline pilot. The same year took his first flying lesson in an OX-5 powered Travelaire. Bill graduated from John Burrough School in 1938, a private, non-sectarian preparatory school in Ladue, Missouri, a suburb of St. Louis.

While attending Washington University at St. Louis, Bill discovered he qualified for the Civilian Pilot Training (CPT) program. Once the CPT funded training was completed, Bill dropped out of college to pursue higher ratings. He earned his CAA commercial license with an instrument rating on January 28, 1942. At the time it was common for both civilian and military pilots to possess commercial licenses without instrument ratings. WWII made time critical for Bill; he had to find an airline job before his Draft Board took control of his life.

A few weeks later Bill’s NWA pilot friend Bob Johnson sent a telegram saying, “Come to Minneapolis, Northwest Airlines is hiring.” NWA had just received a contract for military air transport in Canada and Alaska and they needed pilots. Bill hightailed it to MSP, and despite his low total time, was hired because he had an instrument rating. (His friend Bob Johnson was killed in the first NWA Martin 202 crash).

Bill’s NWA career began on February 27, 1942. He initially flew a mix of commercial and military contract trips as a DC-3 copilot. His captain upgrade came in May, 1944. Like many other WWII era NWA pilots, Bill flew challenging primitive routes deep into the Canadian and Alaskan wilderness with minimal, or non-existent, navigation aids.

On January 19, 1946 Bill earned his DC-4 rating and soon began flying cargo to Alaska to establish a NWA base of operations across the Pacific. In the 1950s, after brief tenure on the Martin 202 (“almost a good airplane”), he checked out as captain on the Boeing 377 (Stratocruiser). Bill’s logs also note extensive time in the DC-6 and DC-7.

With the arrival of the DC-8, the jet age arrived at NWA and Bill was one of the first to qualify. He was flying a DC-8 military charter from Kadena AFB to Tokyo (fuel stop), to Anchorage, when the 1964 Good Friday earthquake occurred. With ANC closed, Bill re-filed a non-stop flight plan becoming the first DC-8 non-stop flight from Tokyo to Seattle. The DC-8 didn’t work out well for NWA and was replaced by the Boeing 707 series, another type rating on his long list.

During one of the 1970s strikes, NWA management sent letters to the senior pilots encouraging them to



“BILL” BARNARD
1920 ~ 2013

cross the picket line. Bill wrote a responding letter in which he declined and stated that he was not willing to sink so low as to betray his fellow pilots. This letter was published in an ALPA newsletter.

Ken Barroll was present at one well-attended union meeting when, “I suddenly noticed everybody standing up starting from the back of the room! It was the pilot that had refused to cross the line [Bill Barnard] had arrived—and the whole group showing him their appreciation and admiration—this was one of the MOST SPECIAL experiences in my over 30 years with the airline...” Bill Barnard was a man of strong character.

Bill was proud to be permitted to fly the 747/100 inaugural flight from Seattle to Tokyo with Skip Eglet as F/O and Irv Lott as the 2/O. Another memorable flight involved the birth of a baby born aboard. The parents named the baby after Bill.

Bill’s long and distinctive airline career ended August 08, 1980. Not one to stand idly by, Bill delved into his interest in sailboats. He built a number of training craft to be sailed on Angle Lake near SEATAC. Bill also wrote and published a primer for those interested in genealogy.

Preceded in death by his wife Frances Marian (Berggren), Bill is survived by his children Terry Ann, Marcee, William (Skip), and Rand, plus 5 grandchildren. One grandson is a USAF B-1 bomber pilot. (– Bill Day)



**“TOM” CHRISTIAN
1940 ~ 2014**

Captain Thomas Colby Christian, a retired Northwest Airlines captain, died November 5, 2014, following a nine year battle with Multiple Myeloma.

A native of Portland, Oregon, an Eagle Scout, Tom attended Wilson High where he played basketball,

and later attended Oregon State receiving a degree in Forestry in 1963. He met his wife, Susan Odmark at OSU and they married in late 1963 while Tom was in Navy Flight Training. Tom and Susan have two children, Matt and Dana, living in Seattle, WA.



After receiving the Navy wings in 1964, Tom was assigned to Patrol Squadron 42 at NAS Whidbey Island, Washington, flying the P2V Neptune. While there, Tom made two deployments to the Far East and Vietnam. He joined Northwest in 1968 and retired as a 747 Captain in 2000.

Jim Fletcher: Tom was a fun loving guy who always had a smile on his face, loved to get together with his buds. He definitely loved his family and kept us up to date with the goings on of his Grand's.

Steve Gutzmer: While a Captain for Emirates, I had my buddy Tom and the lovely Sue as passengers when we made a medical emergency stop in Kazakhstan. I appointed Tom my deputy and we borrowed big Cusack fur hats as symbols of authority, a memorable sight. A silent toast to Tom by all is called.

Roger Haberen: While golfing with Tom, he hit a ball OB towards some homes. Later I called Tom, told him the course pro had learned of some house damage and determined Tom was responsible. “He’s looking for you, Tom”. I let Tom, ever the Eagle Scout, sweat it out before I let him off the hook. It is a tribute to Tom’s sense of humor and loyalty that we remained dear friends.

Bob Trimble: Twenty seven years ago my neighbor Tom and I began boating together with our families. In the following years we shared the beauty of the Pacific Northwest waters in both calm and very challenging stormy seas. Tom was certainly far more than a fair weather friend in every meaning of the phrase.

A story has it that when taking his induction physical for Navy Flight Training, Tom “ducked” just a bit to so as not exceed the height limit. At 6 ‘5” and a wonderfully engaging manner, Tom was hard to miss.

But missed, he is.

(- Phil Pattie)

Kenneth E. Moen, age 85, a retired Northwest Airlines pilot ‘Flew West’ on Thursday, July 31, 2014 after succumbing to lung cancer. Ken was born July 16, 1929 on the family farm near Carpenter, Iowa to Carl and Sylvia Moen. He was baptized and confirmed at Deer Creek Lutheran Church in rural Northwood, Iowa. Ken graduated from St. Ansgar High School at 16 years old.



**“KEN” MOEN
1929 ~ 2014**

After graduation, Ken enlisted in the Army Air Corps and was trained as an aircraft engine specialist. He also served as an instructor with Air Corps Mobile Training Units (MTU), which traveled to many bases to train Army mechanics and pilots on various aircraft systems. After three years of military service the now Staff Sargent Kenneth Moen was discharged and awarded the WW II Victory medal.

Fresh out of the Army, Ken operated and co-owned a truck repair and gas station. In 1951 Ken married Genevieve Bakken, an Iowa girl from Hanlontown, about 30 miles southwest of the Moen family farm. As man and wife they moved to Greely, Colorado, but their time in Colorado was short lived for, as with many of us, Ken was smitten with the flying bug. He and Genevieve migrated back to Minnesota where he worked three jobs to finance and complete his private pilot’s license. Flying became a compelling passion. Along the way



Ken and Genevieve purchased a farm near Belle Plaine and pursued their second life-long passion – farming.

Northwest Airlines hired Ken as a mechanic trainee in October, 1955. In time he earned his A&P certification, crew chief qualification, and eventually rose to the rank of shop inspector. Aircraft maintenance was Ken's entry into the cockpit through the Flight Engineer ranks. With the phase out of Flight Engineers at NWA, Ken swiftly acquired the necessary FAA rating to upgrade to copilot. He completed his 30 year career with NWA as a

Boeing 747 copilot on July 15, 1989. During his tenure in the cockpit, Ken flew the DC-3, -4, -6, -7, -10, Lockheed Electra, Boeing 720/320 and Boeing 747. His pilot nickname 'greaser' spoke to his consistently smooth landings.

"The little boy from a small Iowa farm dreamed of flying airplanes.....he did it and loved it."

Ken is survived by his wife Genevieve; son David Moen; daughter Sherry Pekarna; and four grandchildren, and one great-grandson.

(- Bill Day)



Captain Robert J. Tschida, age 92, "Flew West" peacefully at home at Gull Lake, Minnesota on August 11, 2014. Bob was born in St. Paul, Minnesota and

graduated from De LaSalle High School in Minneapolis. After high school he attended the College of St. Thomas for a year before enlisting in the Army Air Corps in 1943 as an Aviation Cadet. Bob completed Air Corps flight training in 1944 and married Agnes Petschen of St. Paul, Minnesota; together they began a lifetime of military, airline, and family life.

Bob began his employment with NWA on Feb. 06, 1948. In his 33 years with NWA Bob flew the DC-3, 4, 6, & 7, the B-377 (Stratocruiser), the Lockheed L-188 (Electra), the B-707 series, the B-727, DC-10 and finally the B-747. NWA pilot Dave Good said, "Bob Tschida was a laid back, trusting, and exceptionally smooth and competent pilot. Capt. David James said of Bob, "A pleasure to fly with, a patient mentor, great teacher and always great to be a part of Bob's crew."

As an Air Force reservist, Bob was recalled during the Korean War to fly the B-50 as a nuclear weapons bomber pilot. He returned to Minnesota and served with the Minnesota Air National Guard flying the F-51, C-97 and C-130, including missions into combat zones.

At Bob's Air Guard retirement, he was a full Colonel and a squadron commander in the 133rd Military Airlift Wing. General Pat Boab (also a NWA captain) described Bob Tschida as, "A great guy, an excellent pilot, who trained me in the C-97".

Bob and Agnes raised seven children. The couple were drawn to Gull lake, MN where they built a family summer home that later became their retirement home where Bob taught his kids to fish and



participate in water sports. He was a serious hunter with his sons and duck hunted with his brother-in-law. Bob enjoyed golf and never taking a lesson, but bought every device to improve his game.

After his NWA retirement, Bob flew the old straight pipe B-707 for a Midwest travel club. NWA pilots B.C.

White, Larry Monson, John Vivian, and David Good, along with Bob's son George, all flew with Bob on the 707 during NWA strikes.

After his wife Agnes passed away in 1988 Bob elected to spend winters in Clearwater, Florida and summers on Gull Lake with the family. Bob met Dorothy LePean in the mid-1990s and they married in 1998. Bob attended RNPA events, remained a dedicated family man and a practicing Catholic until his health started to fail.



**"BOB" TSCHIDA
1922 ~ 2014**

Bob Tschida is survived by his wife Dorothy and seven children, Robert Tschida Jr., Ronald Tschida, Susan Paulson, Carolyn Whitney, Elizabeth Watson, Cecile Schell, and George Tschida; eighteen grandchildren and eighteen great-grandchildren.

(- Dan Farkas)



“BOB” KEHS 1935 ~ 2014

Captain Robert D. “Bob” Kehs, age 78, a retired Northwest Airlines Captain of Rosarito, Mexico; formerly of Eden Prairie, Minnesota, “Flew West” for a final check peacefully on July 9, 2014. Bob was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on November 21, 1935 and grew up in Buffalo, New York. He attended college prior to serving in the U. S. Marine Corps where he qualified as a Naval Aviator and flew the Douglas AD ‘Skyraider’ or ‘SPAD’ in the Fleet Marine Force. Upon release from active duty Bob was hired by Northwest Orient Airlines in April 1959 in a class that included Harry Franklin, Lefty Engelking, Roger Bruggemeyer, Bert Crooks, Bob Matta, Dave Halsor, Paul Hamilton, and Stan Baumwald.

Bob joined the Marine Reserve Squadron at NAS Minneapolis in 1959. At that time VMA-234 had just transitioned from the F9F-5 ‘Panther’ to the AD-5, a side-by-side two-seater version of the ‘Skyraider.’ VMA-234 had a stellar group of Marines in it’s cadre, and Bob’s Squadron mates included Lou Driggers, Louie Farrell, Dick Irgens, Rick Miller, Lefty Engleking, Harry Bedrosian, Dino Oliva, Roger Bruggemeyer and Wally Walbaum. Roger recalled taking a cross country with Bob in an AD-5. He said: “I took a slight detour when we were over Wisconsin to make a pass over my in-laws’ farm. When we got to the farm, I rolled over into a 45-degree dive from about 10,000 feet and popped the boards. As the world started getting bigger, Bob leaned over and stuck his face in front of mine and said very seriously: “Remember it mushes.”

Bob retired at age 60 in July, 1995, and during his thirty-six year career at Northwest Airlines he flew the Lockheed Electra, Boeing 707 and the Douglass DC-10. In addition to flying the line, Bob served the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) as a labor negotiator during years of inordinate labor/management conflict at Northwest Airlines. Bob’s skills spilled over to other airline pilot groups, where he shared his expertise in collective bargaining. For his dedication to ALPA, the United Air Lines MEC recommended Bob Kehs, a retired Northwest Airlines pilot, to be the first recipient of the David Behncke Lifetime Achievement Award. The Behncke award recognizes ALPA members who make extraordinary contributions to the Association, its members and to trade unionism. Nominations for the Behncke award

must be made to the National ALPA Executive Council by a U.S. Airline’s MEC that does not employ the nominee. The National ALPA Executive Council approved the nomination unanimously, and the first ever Dave Behnke Lifetime Achievement award was presented to Captain Robert Kehs of Northwest Airlines on October 16, 2000 for his “experience and expertise in collective bargaining, and his tenacious manner during strike preparations which provided invaluable help to numerous pilot groups who have, as a result, achieved stronger, more enforceable contracts.”

During the final night’s dinner at the 1999 RNPA gathering in San Diego the pilots present had an opportunity to partially repay Bob Kehs for his selfless contributions on behalf of all Northwest Airlines Pilots. The standing ovation Bob received lasted several minutes. He was humble and did not seek recognition, but it appeared to please Bob that his efforts were appreciated.

Bill Iams received the following from Bob’s wife Sylvia Dombrosky after his death. “Though Bob was not a great correspondent, your address was the one he kept in his address book. And so, you are the one to whom he wanted to say good-bye when he passed. He died as he lived his life on his own terms without causing too much of a fuss. He didn’t wish a grand funeral with a lot of empty talk, rather he asked that you raise a glass of your favorite beverage in a toast to him and wish him a swift journey. He was exceptionally proud of the work he did with ALPA during his career, and cherished the award he received.”

Bob was survived by Eileen Sylvia Dombrosky, his loving wife; Children Kevin Kehs, Kathy Straham, and Matthew Kehs; and four grandchildren. Bob’s ashes were spread over the Pacific at a celebration of life in Baja, Mexico.

(– Vic Britt)



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) \$45
Pilots: Retired NWA, post-merger retired Delta, or Active Delta

AFFILIATE (AF) \$35
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:
"RNPA"
AND MAIL TO:
Retired NWA Pilots' Assn.
Dino Oliva
3701 Bayou Louise Lane
Sarasota FL 34242-1105

NOTES

U. S. POSTAL SERVICE: We are unable to change mailing addresses seasonally. Instead, Contrails and all other mail is sent First Class to your permanent mailing address, which provides for forwarding, unlike our previous mailing system. If desired, please arrange forwarding through the U. S. Postal Service.

***EMAIL NOTE:** To protect email addresses they have been removed from the RNPA website (www.rnpa.org). To request a member's email address or to **change your own** please contact Phil Hallin at:
RNPAnews@bhi.com

RNPA TREASURER:
DINO OLIVA
3701 BAYOU LOUISE LANE
SARASOTA FL 34242



FIRST CLASS

Presorted
First Class
US Postage
PAID
Claremont, CA
Permit #77



© Ted Curphey

“Birds in the Water” July 4th, 2014 on the Clark Fork River northwest of Missoula, Montana.
(Submitted by Ken Kelm)