

# CONTRAILS



ISSUE NO. 198

MAY 2016



RETIRED NORTHWEST AIRLINES PILOTS' ASSOCIATION

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## RNPA CONTRAILS



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*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

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## Notices to Airmen

*New Directory this Summer!  
Any address or phone changes **MUST** be in to Dino by  
May 15th. (See the little white label opposite page.)*

*Send email changes to [rnpanews@bhi.com](mailto:rnpanews@bhi.com)*

The Palm Springs get-together has become one more of the local annual events that RNPA members support. This year it was organized by Betty and Wayne Spohn, but Deneen and Tony Polgar will be heading it up in 2017. Photos from this March may be found on page 30.

I will make every effort to provide complete information ahead of time next year. In the meantime you may contact the Polgars at [polgar747@gmail.com](mailto:polgar747@gmail.com) or the Spohns at [spohnbw@comcast.net](mailto:spohnbw@comcast.net)

June 16th  
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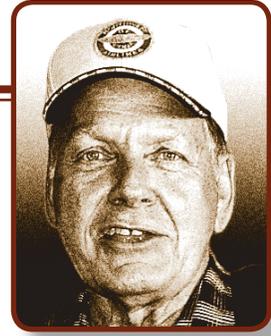
ST. CROIX RIVER  
SUMMER CRUISE

SEA SUMMER PICNIC

August 18th  
Page 21

*HINT: Hang onto the 2014 Membership Directory!  
New Directory coming this summer.*

## President's Report: Gary PISEL



### *The Future of RNPA*

Spring Greetings,

As you are all aware there are fewer and fewer retired Northwest Pilots. After several years of working for Delta, combined with the current atmosphere of not joining organizations, our membership is beginning to decrease in size. We are a non-profit association, our income is used to produce *Contrails* and what little correspondence we have. All of the work done by the Board of Directors is done by email and at the two meetings we have annually. All of the Board Members serve at their pleasure without reimbursement.

This June we will hold the next Board meeting at which time the decrease in membership and the budget will be thoroughly discussed. In the past we have opted to keep the editions of *Contrails* to 4 per year, and have only raised dues when absolutely necessary. Again we face that situation. Raising dues seems simple, however when dues are raised members drop because of the cost. Therefore it is a double edged sword.

Because of decreasing attendance at Reunions we have limited the number of attendees. By doing so we filled the ABQ reunion before the end of last year. Dearborn will also be limited, hopefully filling early. All Reunions, and other functions are self sustaining, NO RNPA FUNDS are used.

We ask for your input: Limit the editions of *Contrails*; raise the dues; or both. Contact myself or any Board Member with your thoughts.

Looking forward to seeing you on the Summer Cruise.



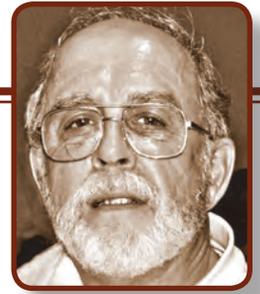
## Treasurer's Report: Dino OLIVA

Just got my orders from our editor for the treasurer's report for the May newsletter, so here goes.

We just completed our annual dues collection. Unfortunately we lost 71 members for various reasons. We did however have 12 new membership applications for a net loss of 59 members. As we have a finite number of potential new members, it becomes obvious that our membership will decrease each year. Our expenses will remain about the same or increase slightly, which leaves us with the reality that at some time in the not too distant future we will have to either increase dues, reduce expenses (cost of newsletter etc.) or consider the termination of RNPA.

In June the Board will have its semi annual meeting in MSP where the budget will be one of the major topics of discussion. We have made plans for at least the next two years including reunions.

We are open for your comments on this dilemma.



“He was an excellent pilot, and an excellent captain—not at all the same job.”

(Bill Emmer, reflecting on the death of a good friend.)

### DECISIONS, DECISIONS, DECISIONS

To continue the theme of the reports on the opposite page; as you can probably guess, the Board has chewed on this dilemma *ad infinitum* for the last two or three years without coming to any conclusions. We just seem to let it drift in the current hoping that something around the next bend will make the decision for us. So it really is necessary to gather the thoughts of the membership regarding how and when we set the parking brake on the last issue of Contrails.

Theoretically, RNPA could continue without Contrails and therefore have greatly reduced dues just to support notification of local get-togethers and possibly even reunions. But that would most likely not include those that are not electronically connected. So the basic question is whether the cost of Contrails is worth it to you now, and would it be if the dues were increased?

There is another consideration, which has been mentioned before: Without getting too detailed, if we reduce the number of issues to less than four a year, because of our non-profit status California would impose a sales tax on the cost of printing—which would be prohibitively expensive. (Don't ask me why, it's California!) But it could consist of three issues of Contrails and a Membership Directory as long as it too was named Contrails.

So I will echo Gary and Dino and ask for your input.

### ABOUT THE COVERS

The photos on the front cover are both mine, taken at Venice Beach, California on two different evenings. As I've been heard to say sometimes, we all know what airplanes look like.

But the photo on the back cover is something else!

From Wikipedia: *Henry O. Studley (1838-1925) was an organ and piano maker, carpenter, and Mason who worked for the Smith Organ Co., and later for the Poole Piano Company of Quincy, Massachusetts. Born in 1838 in Lowell, Massachusetts, Studley is best known for creating the so-called Studley Tool Chest, a wall hanging tool chest which cunningly holds some 300 tools in a space that takes*

*up about 40 by 20 inches of wall space when closed. Studley joined the Massachusetts Infantry at the start of the Civil War and was captured in Galveston, Texas in 1863. After the war he returned to Quincy and joined the Rural Masonic Lodge.*

Since 1980 it has been shown at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History off and on while on loan from a private collector.

Woodworkers like myself get all excited about craftsmanship like this. I think you will be impressed.

### A GOAL REALIZED

In addition to our stalwart contributing columnists there are five other stories from members in this issue:

- Darrel Smith has two stories about two completely different subjects.
- Jay Sakas reminds us how it was flying the freighters.
- Dux Duxbury sent one about the original Electra 10.
- Mark Neuville emphasizes the continuing need to be proficient in hand-flying basics.

Other contributions:

- Betty Spohn sent photos of their Palm Springs get-together.
- Bill Rataczak sent copies of a 1930 American Airlines letter to its co-pilots—bizarre.
- Bill Horne took some really nice color photos at the SW Florida Spring Lucheon, which I modified to sepia-toned. He doesn't know that yet. Hope he's not upset.
- Most importantly, let me not forget the great job Bill Day does as our Obituary Editor.

My goal when I inherited this job was to make Contrails **about us, for us and BY us**. With these 7 members writing a story or column and 4 others contributing, I think I have come as close to that goal as I ever will.

A big Thank You to each of you!

*Whatchabeenthinkin'aboutendingRNPA?*

# We've Got Mail



JOHN  
WOOD

**FL**

Hi Dino,

Thank you and our RNPA Board members again for all the work it takes to keep us in existence.

Nothing new with Barb and I; food's still staying down, etc.

We're both down to one committee at the club where we live. I'm also involved in a couple of committees in our community, leadership and history. We converted ourselves to an official Florida "village" last year.

I don't find much proof so far that with age comes more wisdom; another year another myth deflated.

Blue Skies!

John & Barb Wood

PATRICIA  
OLSON

**MN**

A group of us Ex-Stews enjoyed the Mpls. Christmas Party. I appreciate the work that went into it and the work that goes into putting out this first class magazine.

There was an interesting article in the Edina City Magazine about the NWA Memorial at Centennial Lakes in Edina for Don Nyrop and former NWA employees.

I sadly learned of Kevin McGregor's (author of Flight of Gold) passing on October 30th. We had become friends since I was in the book. A wonderful man.

Patricia Olson

SANDY  
MAZZU

**NC**

Thanks Dino for your time and effort with RNPA. We so appreciate it. We enjoy the magazine with news about everyone, since we no longer go to the reunions. We are truly blessed!

Both 90 and family close by and not many health issues.

Happy New Year!

Sandy and Lu Mazzu

JIM  
FLETCHER

**WA**

Hi Gary,

Just read a good book that the guys might like. As an OLD Naval Aviator, the book "Devotion," is set during the Korean War, mostly about a Corsair Squadron, as well as some of the grunts on the ground during that frozen winter from hell.

Just something to think about, and thanks for all the great work you do for us GEEZERS.

Jim Fletcher

Five cannibals were employed by the Navy as translators during one of the island campaigns during World War II.

When the Commanding Admiral of the task force welcomed the cannibals he said, "You're all part of our team now. We will compensate you well for your services, and you can eat any of the rations that the sailors are eating. So please don't indulge yourselves by eating a sailor."

The cannibals promised. Four weeks later the Admiral returned and said, "You're all working very hard, and I'm very satisfied with all of you. However, one of our chiefs has disappeared.

Do any of you know what happened to him?" The cannibals all shook their heads no.

After the Admiral left, the leader of the cannibals turned to the others and said, "Which of you idiots ate the chief?"

A hand raised hesitantly, to which the leader of the cannibals replied, "You fool! For four weeks we've been eating Ensigns, Lieutenants, Lieutenant Commanders, Commanders, and even one Captain and no one noticed anything, then YOU had to go and eat a Chief!"

(- Vic Britt)



This is a note from Dorothy Avenson, wife of Warren. On December 17, 2014 Warren had a stroke which left him mentally confused. He always knows me, all members of our family, and friends of the past, and events that happened in our lifetime.

Since 2004 we have lived in an adult retirement home which promises lifetime care. It is very pleasant, but every day Warren begs me to get him out. After I remind him of reasons he is where he is, Warren accepts the necessity for his being here. He is not unhappy, as he soon believes himself to be in a cockpit, going through all the motions of flying a large airplane.

Once as I entered his room he told me to hurry and get ready, as we were only 28 minutes out of Minneapolis. He makes flight plans, and uses them. We still get laughs when Warren twists words or phrases showing his still present sense of humor.

Nurses have become stewardesses, and he gayly pointed out an aide as his copilot.

Soon after we were married in 1946 Northwest Airlines added Japan to its routing.

We happily took a copilot bid to live in Japan for two and a half years. We loved it and stayed until crews were no longer to be based in Tokyo, ten years later. We came back to USA with four children and many wonderful experiences to remember. We loved being with Northwest Airlines—Warren for 43 years, and we loved the many friends we made.

Dorothy Avenson  
10901 176th Cir NE #108  
Redmond WA 98052  
Cell: (206) 972-6337

### Bucket List

Any of you guys have a bucket list? If you do, here's one you might like to add to it, a sailplane flight over the Austrian Alps. I'm sure that some of you have probably flown sailplanes and may even be rated. This flight, however, is unique in many ways.

First off, it is located on a small glider field in NW Austria just south of Fussen Germany. That's the town where King Ludwig's Neuschwanstein castle is and where some of the most spectacular Alps are including Zugspitze, the highest point in Bavaria.

Second, the glider is catapulted from the runway. You'll pull 3 to 4 G's, sort of like being shot off a carrier. You climb at about 30 degrees to 1000 ft. when the pilot releases the cable and heads for the nearest Mt. to catch the convections. We climbed to over 10,000 ft. That's enough to clear most of the Mts., except Zugspitze.

Third, the scenery is not matched anywhere. You'll be looking down on old castle ruins, ski resorts and beautiful valleys with small Austrian towns. Cows grazing on the alpine slopes and wild goats on the craggy mountain tops. I did this flight in May, so most of the Mt. tops were still covered with snow and gave a beautiful contrast to the green valleys and deep blue lakes.

Fourth, the pilot will do some mild aerobatics, like chandelles and lazy eights and on return to the field he stayed high until over the field where he put the plane in a tight descending spiral, almost like a spin. Approaching the runway he did a cross control approach. I didn't tell him I was a pilot but later found out that my daughter [had told him]. He may have been trying to impress me, but at any rate he was a skilled glider pilot.

You are required to wear a chute and there's no guarantee that the pilot will speak English. However, the ground attendant spoke English and he told me that the pilot understood "go back." The cost is a bargain. 80 Euros for an hours flight. That's less than 100 bucks.

Well, God willing and good health, my next item is to operate a steam engine and I found one in northern California that provides that opportunity.

Good health to you all,  
Ed Kartic.

Retired SEA 747 Captain

Dear Dino and staff,

What a wonderful job you are doing! The editions are excellent and true "Keepers." Thank you for the dedication, time and quality of your devotion to publishing "Contrails."

I also wanted to let you know that our grandchildren are enjoying each issue! Jim would love to see them done this.

Enjoy a great New Year; greet you, your staff and family.

Much love,  
Dee (Jim) Ranheim

Hi Dino,

All good here, still spending winters in Cabo for the most part. This year we're hanging out in Mt. Vernon, Washington for most of January due to some other obligations, but no complaints. We count our blessings every day.

Thanks again for your generous services to RNPA. It doesn't go unnoticed.

Happy New Year,  
Doug Rohrer

JOHN  
JONES

CO

Howdy Editor,

I received my annual dues notification and an update letter was requested.

I flew my last flight at Delta as Captain on the B-747-400 from Tel Aviv to JFK on 11/11/11. My wife, Anne was on board and it was a memorable flight, landing in the early morning darkness.

Since then we have done a lot of traveling using our passes, and scuba diving. I am a part time ski instructor at Copper Mt., CO and we spend most of the winters at our condo there. Our home is in Monument, CO just north of Colorado Springs, CO.

We have 4 daughters between the two of us but no grandkids yet. One daughter coaches diving, another works at a museum in Denver, one is working on her doctorate in flute performance at Eastman School of Music and the oldest is a USAF pilot. That makes her a 3rd generation USAF pilot in our family.

Life is pretty great, our health is fine and our bucket list keeps expanding.

Sincerely,  
John P. Jones

TOM  
WHITE

MN

Thanks to all the RNPA officers for your faithful service. Even with our dwindling numbers you guys put on good events and publications.

Every month I am thankful for the Check.

My wife and I travel mostly by car. The view is different from air travel but good.

Keep it up,  
Tom White

ROD  
UPTON

AZ

Dino,

I'm 80 and I know you're older than I. I wonder how much longer you will accept this workload? Many thanks for your effort.

My grandson, who is a captain for Jet blue, recently visited and I was somewhat amazed when he said they carry no flight bag or manuals on the airplane. They are issued an iPad and it's put in a harness where he merely touches what let-down chart he wants displayed or anything regarding the aircraft and it's displayed on the iPad.

Remember all those manuals we carried in a flight bag? Now I'm realizing my age.

Rod Upton



WAYNE  
ANDERSON

MT  
AZ

Dino,

Thanks for all the time and effort you put into RNPA. What you do is greatly appreciated.

I am living in a golf development east of Phoenix in the winter, and have a home on the shores of Flathead Lake in Montana in the summer.

Since losing my soul mate (my wife) a little over a year ago, I have had a difficult time adjusting to being alone. If anyone is ever in the northwest part of Montana, please know you are invited to come visit me. I really enjoy company.

Wayne Anderson  
Cell: 206.295.7497

STEVE  
CRAWFORD

WA

Dino:

Enclosed is my payment for RNPA dues.

Just wanted to let you know that, after 37 years (NWA date of hire May 1979), I've turned in my retirement papers. I will be officially retired from Delta/Northwest on March 31, 2016.

It's been a great ride. I've been fortunate to have flown with a lot of you guys, and I'm leaving while the airline is strong and moving in the right direction. Time to hang out with grandkids, fly my RV-4, golf, take road trips, hike, etc., etc.

Thanks for all your great work for RNPA.

Sincerely,  
Steve Crawford  
Woodinville, WA.

DAN  
STACK

NH

Hi Guys and a Happy Easter...  
What did you learn during Lent this year?

First of all, I want to commend Vic [Britt] with his wonderful reflections in the latest CONTRAILS on the whys and wherefores of a training department junky. You really pulled many rabbits out of a hat, guiding us through countless General Refreshers—simulators—lines checks and IOE's.

Why has it taken us these 50 odd years to catch up to him and extend our thanks. The Training Department of Flight Ops did us well.

Dan Stack

Hi Gary,

Judy & I are enjoying our time with the Olivas. The FL luncheon was a resounding success. Johnny Scholl received the bottle of wine (as usual) for being the oldest member in attendance.

I think Dino told me there were 106 guests present at Marina Jack's.

Enclosed is an email from Dan Neuman that many have probably seen before but may be a filler for the next CONTRAILS. (But I bet that you have printed this maintenance msg in an earlier edition of your wonderful magazine.)

My best to you, Mona & family,  
Bill [Rataczak]

In case you need a laugh:

Remember, it takes a college degree to fly a plane but only a high school diploma to fix one.

After every flight, Qantas pilots fill out a form, called a 'Gripe Sheet' which tells mechanics about problems with the aircraft.

The mechanics correct the problems; document their repairs on the form, and then pilots review the Gripe Sheets before the next flight.

Never let it be said that ground crews lack a sense of humor.

Here are some actual maintenance complaints submitted by Qantas' pilots (marked with a P) and the solutions recorded (marked with an S) by maintenance engineers.

By the way, Qantas is the only major airline that has never, ever, had an accident.

P: Left inside main tire almost needs replacement.

S: Almost replaced left inside main tire.

P: Test flight OK, except auto-land very rough.

S: Auto-land not installed on this aircraft.

P: Something loose in cockpit.

S: Something tightened in cockpit.

P: Dead bugs on windshield.

S: Live bugs on back-order.

P: Autopilot in altitude-hold mode produces a 200 feet per minute descent.

S: Cannot reproduce problem on ground.

P: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.

S: Evidence removed.

P: DME volume unbelievably loud.

S: DME volume set to more believable level.

P: Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick.

S: That's what friction locks are for.

P: IFF inoperative in OFF mode.

S: IFF always inoperative in OFF mode.

P: Suspected crack in windshield.

S: Suspect you're right.

P: Number 3 engine missing.

S: Engine found on right wing after brief search.

P: Aircraft handles funny..... (I love this one!)

S: Aircraft warned to straighten up, fly right, and be serious.

P: Target radar hums.

S: Reprogrammed target radar with lyrics.

P: Mouse in cockpit.

S: Cat installed.

And the best one for last.....

P: Noise coming from under instrument panel. Sounds like a midget pounding on something with a hammer.

S: Took hammer away from midget.

(Dan Neuman via Bill Rataczak)

*Two items:*

*First;*

*I think this probably has been seen here in the past some-time, but it's good enough to put it out there again.*

*Second;*

*As accident-free as Qantas has been for the last 65-plus years the mythology that they have never had an accident, usually stated that they have never had a fatal accident, is just that—a myth.*

*In the early years—1927 through 1951—they suffered 12 accidents with a total of 99 fatalities. Of course most early airlines had similar records.*

*Since then, though, they have established an exemplary safety record of which they are justifiably proud.*

*– Editor*

Gary,

The Contrails issues are always very professionally done, are always highly readable; and I want to thank everyone involved with its publication and distribution for their great and rewarding efforts.

The letter from Bill Emmer not only caught my eye, but it gave me a reason to write this. I had always wanted to know how a former NWA 747 made its way into the NASM in its former NWA markings and colors. I want to thank Bill Emmer, Noel Duncan and of course Mr. Richard Anderson for making it possible for NWA to donate a 747 and for preventing it from being painted in Pan Am colors and markings. Among many others, I flew that 747.

The reason I'm writing this, is because the Douglas AD-6, A-1H, Skyraider that was donated to the NASM is being considered for painting in USAF colors and markings. I'm against that. Back in 2005, when I was first made aware that someone within the NASM wanted the AD to be painted in USAF colors, I contacted many people who might agree that a Navy plane should be painted in Navy colors.

I received many replies; one from Senator McCain who was noncommittal. The curator in the NASM has said that, "At the time the plane is restored" a decision will be made regarding how it will be painted. That curator is retired from the USAF.

The Skyraider was called the AD-6 when I flew the type. I hate the name "Spad." The NASM's AD is Bureau Number 135332. Pilots who have had their names painted on planes would recognize and remember their plane's BuNo. This plane was built in 1954—a year after the Korean War ended. The

Navy flew it in the Vietnam War. I was told that VA-145 flew 135332 into combat on the first day of the war against the North in support of the South Vietnamese.

The plane was not given to the USAF until 1967. Then it was handed to the South Vietnamese AF in 1972. A South Vietnamese pilot flew it to Thailand in April, 1975. A U.S. civilian named Dave Tallichet of Yesterday's Air Force was the force behind transferring it to the NASM in 1983. Among other users, 135332 was flown by VA-145 and VA-52. Is there anyone out there who flew 135332?

The real reason why I'm writing this is because I don't have the touch Bill Emmer had; and I don't know a man similar to Noel Duncan. It certainly would be inappropriate for me to ask Mr. Anderson to ask the NASM to paint the AD in Navy colors. Therefore I'm asking someone reading this letter if he knows of a way to get the job done where I failed. I would love to see 135332 painted in Navy colors and markings.

The AD was designed and built before the end of World War Two; and it served throughout the Korean War as a Navy and Marine attack aircraft—long before it was given to the USAF.

To me, it will always be a Navy plane.

Paul Ludwig

SKIP  
FOSTER

NV

Hi Dino & Gary et al,

Just sent in my dues today. We're sorry to have missed that past few reunions, but I was involved in my High School class reunion also in September of last year.

This year I'm working on a 50th reunion for my USAF pilot training class, 66-H. We graduated from Vance AFB, Enid, OK in mid-June of



1966. I wrote an article for "Contrails" about our 40th reunion in 2006 which was held in Las Vegas. Our 50th is going to be held in Washington D.C. in late September, and it looks like we will have a good turnout.

One of the guys suggested that we list all the airplanes we flew after graduation on a scarf that we are having made to commemorate our 50th. I don't know if it would be of interest to the RNPA folks to see the list. In any case here it is: (38 class members) flew the following: UH-1,HH-3,O2-A,A-10,OV-10,OA-37,T-26,T-28,T-33,T-37,T-38,T29, T-39,F-84,F-89,F-100,F-102,F-104, F-105,F-106,F-111,F-4,NavyF-4, F-5,F-15,F-16, A-4,A-7,F9,RF-84, RF-101,RF-4,C-47,C-97,C-118, KC-97,KC-135,C-130,C141,C-17, Mig-17, Mig-21 Also: Conquest Sea Plane, Aero Commander, Beech-18,Cessna172,182,205,206,210, Martin-404,VS-11,Boeing 707,727,737,747(200&400) 757,767, F-28,A-320,DC-9,DC-10,MD-80, MD-11,and Beech Baron.

The most frequently flown aircraft were: T-33(16) F-4(17) and the F-102(9). We had one of the class go on Navy exchange, so he got to fly the F-9 and Navy F-4. If any of the old Vance IP's are interested in attending, they can contact me at: flyerskip@cs.com.

Best wishes to all for a great 2016 and we hope to be there for the reunion in 2017! Thanks for keeping us all together.

Skip & Kathy Foster

*Some time ago, across "the Pond"...*

SCHIPOL TWR Northwest 242, line up and wait, runway 24 at sierra seven. Expect short delay in position.  
NWA 242 Line up and wait, runway 24, sierra seven, Northwest 242.  
SCHIPOL TWR Northwest 242, revised departure clearance, advise when ready to copy.  
NWA 242 Go ahead.  
SCHIPOL TWR ATC clears Northwest 242 Bergi 6 Departure, Bergi, flight plan route, maintain level 40.  
NWA 242 Roger. Cleared Bergi 6, Bergi, flight plan route, maintain Level 40.  
SCHIPOL TWR Northwest 242, read back correct.  
SCHIPOL TWR Northwest 242 clear for takeoff .  
NWA 242 Northwest 242, rolling.  
NWA 242 Departure, Northwest 242 on the Bergi.  
DEPARTURE Northwest 242, radar identified, maintain level 40.  
NWA 242 Maintain level 40, Northwest 242.  
DEPARTURE Northwest 242, as you roll out of your turn, traffic eleven o'clock, 4 miles, a single-engine Cessna at level 60, same direction.  
NWA 242 Northwest 242 has traffic in sight.  
DEPARTURE Cessna xxx, traffic 5 O'clock, 2 miles, level 40, a Northwest 747. He has you in sight.  
CESSNA xxx Cessna xxx has traffic in sight.  
UNKNOWN Smile Northwest.  
DEPARTURE Northwest 242, clear of traffic, climb to and maintain FL190. Contact Amsterdam Radar, 123.7. Have a safe flight...

*Six months later, back in Minneapolis...*

**Hello?** Hi, this is Lane (747 Fleet Training Captain) calling from NATCO.

**How ya doing, Lane.** I just received a photo from Dispatch with your name on it.

**Anything incriminating?** No. Just a beautiful picture of one of our 747s on departure at Amsterdam.

**Thanks, Lane. I'll be right over!**



### NATIONAL DONUT DAY

November 10, 2015 is the 240th Marine Corps Birthday this year (2015). I must include the short note my dear friend Wes Schierman added when he sent this to me six years ago. (Wes was a prisoner in the “Hanoi Hilton” for over 7½ years.)

Happy Birthday USMC. (And hats off and donuts for all veterans, thanks to the USMC)

Jack Kastien

(a grateful and unwashed civilian)

November 10, 2009

HAPPY 234th BIRTHDAY USMC!

Just received this from a friend. I had forgotten about it until today. Orson & I were cell-mates for a few years. Never a dull moment with him around! We thought it was funny at the time. Even a small victory was better than no victory at all!

WES [Schierman]

Today is also the Marine Corps' Birthday... and National Donut Day.

As most of you know, my husband, Orson [Swindle], was a Prisoner of War in Hanoi for 6 years and 4 months. Ironically his shoot down date is Veteran's Day, November 11, 1966. So this is a big week for him.

As we all know, being a prisoner is a tough experience, but the POW's also have some funny stories to share, and the following is one of them.

In September 1969, after Orson had been a prisoner three very hard years (the early years were by far the worst), Ho Chi Minh died. Orson was at Son Tay with about 55 other men. One day in October he was called in for an interrogation, which he said was more of an “English lesson” for the interrogator as opposed to one of the beatings they received when Ho chi Minh was calling the

shots. The interrogator began by bragging about his country and its 4,000 year history and belittling the USA... saying, “Your country is very young, it doesn't even have very many heroes or holidays.” Knowing that the Marine Corps birthday was coming up on November the 10th, Orson began to spin a story...

He pretended to take umbrage, saying... “No, no, no... you are quite wrong... we have many holidays in our country, as a matter of fact, one is coming up very soon. There will be festivals and children will dress up in costumes and it's very important to us.” The interrogator became interested so Orson proceeded to tell him that it was called, “National Donut Day.”

Before you can really appreciate this you need a bit of background. Before Ho Chi Minh's death, the prisoners were practically starved to death. They were eating nothing but rice and swamp grass soup (as they call it) and sometimes pumpkin soup. Orson says they estimated that he went down to a little as 120 pounds... and now he weighs at least 225. At shoot down he was something like 175 and 6'2". So this is unbelievably thin. The men were hungry all the time. Very hungry. About twice a year they would get what they considered an incredible treat... it was nothing more than old French bread, that had become hard and moldy, but the cooks would deep fry it and roll it in sugar and the prisoners called the result “sticky buns” and to them it was mana from heaven.

So when explaining National Donut Day, Orson told his interrogator that, “Donuts are a lot like your sticky buns... they are sweet bread, and on National Donut Day everyone has one or more of them.” Not sure what the outcome might be, Orson was sent back to his cell, where he immediately started tapping through the wall to all the

other POWs saying, “Hey guys, you gotta back me up. I just invented a new holiday and if they find out I was pulling their leg, there will be hell to pay—tell all the guards that National Donut Day is on November 10—don't let me down! Pass it on!”

A few weeks went by, and to everyone's great surprise, on November 10 the prisoners at Son Tay prison—known for being one of the worst, and also for the failed rescue attempt—were served sticky buns and Orson was the hero of the day! Orson had forgotten all about this story, and I had never heard it, but in March of '03 a fellow POW, Bob Stirm, an Air Force Col was interviewed in a San Francisco paper and in it he described the origin of National Donut Day.

Hi Dino,

“Happy New Year 2016.” Thanks for the reminder of dues

All's well here in Arizona High Country, Prescott, AZ. Lots of our aviation cohorts up here. The PRC QB hangar has a great pilot group; NCA-REP-NWA-HAW-UAL-Flying tiger-FedEx-EAL-PAA-National, plus two WWII pilots, Korean War-Viet Nam—one retired Alaska Airlines pilot also flew SR-71s.

Also enjoying my other aviation stuff EAA-Warbirds of America-CAF-p-38 National Assoc.-Knights of the round Engine.

My spouse Joanne Coppage, ret NWA F/A, along with with ret UAL F/A formed a group of flight attendants. This group of over many retired F/A gather for luncheon every other month. This group has over 70 members—some still flying.

Best Regards,

John & Joanne Coppage

SUZANNE  
SKEETERS

HI

Hi Dino!

Well, you asked for an update!  
Retiring soon! Thanks for all you do  
for RNPA!

Merry Christmas 2015

Aloha! I know I repeat this every  
year but, WOW, time flies by so fast!  
Here it is, the end of 2015, and I feel  
like the year just started! I'm glad I  
take photos, because that's the only  
way I'm able to keep up with myself!  
Ha ha!

I spent a LOT of time in an  
airplane this year! I'm still flying for  
Delta Airlines, now in my 31st year  
(A330 captain), still based in Seattle,  
Washington. My working flights take  
me to Hong Kong; Beijing, China;  
Tokyo, Japan; Amsterdam, Nether-  
lands; and Paris, France. I also did a  
lot of traveling for fun!

Aloha,  
Suzanne Skeeters

*This was the opening to Suzanne's  
two page Christmas letter, most of  
which I felt was more appropriate for  
family and personal friends than the  
RNPA membership. – Ed.*

CAROL  
JOHNSON

MN

Hi Dino,

It's getting cold up here—time to  
get down to Siesta Key (few weeks).  
One of the sportcasters said last  
Saturday, "You know you're playing  
football in Minnesota when you  
have to go over to the hockey rink  
to get warm!"

No kidding.  
Carol Johnson

FAY  
KULENCAMP

MN

Hi Dino,

I'm still on the Board of direc-  
tors at our NWA History Centre  
since I retired in 2004. (36 years  
F/A.)

Still run my own business since  
1977. Will I ever retire!?

Got to most of our F/A retiree  
events. Still reside in Oakdale, Min-  
nesota.

Nothing else new—same old.  
Fay Kulencamp

PETE  
HEGSETH

MN

Dino,

Again thanks to you and all who  
keep RNPA going. Look forward  
to "Contrails," read it cover to cover.  
"Flown West" is getting too close.

We have had a mild winter  
until the last couple of days.

Highlight of the year was my  
family all got to gather for Christ-  
mas—first time all have been home  
in over 15 years—what a great time.

Looking forward to the next  
Contrails.

Pete Hegseth

PAM  
BECKMAN

WA

Thank you Dino for all your  
hard work—you and everyone in-  
volved are great.

Also thank you for the writeup  
on Stew Schroeder. He was very  
special to so many, and will not be  
forgotten by all who loved him.

Cheers,  
Pam Beckman

## Resurrection Sermon, Sunday Service with Children



A Baptist pastor was presenting a children's sermon. During the sermon, he asked the children if they knew what the resurrection was.

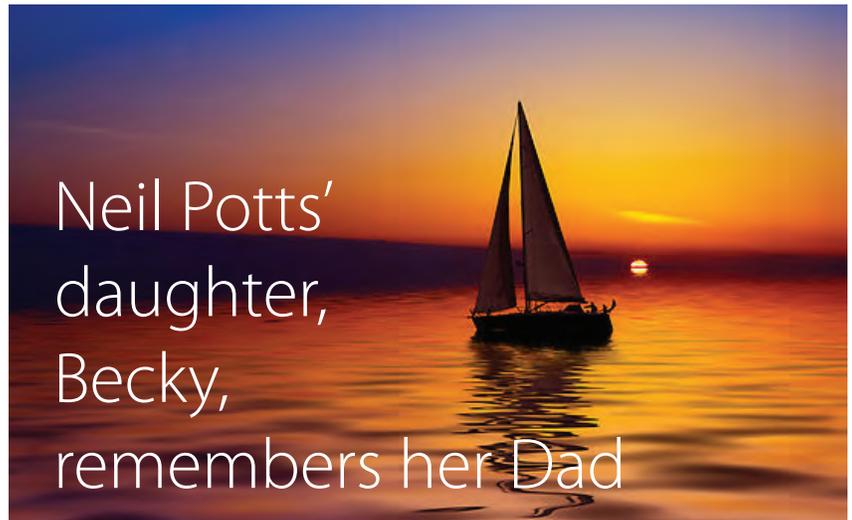
Asking questions during children's sermons is crucial. Asking children questions in front of a congregation can also be very dangerous.

After the pastor asked the children if they knew the meaning of the resurrection, a little boy raised his hand. The pastor called on him and the little boy said, "I know that if you have a resurrection that lasts more than four hours you are supposed to call the doctor."

It took over ten minutes for the congregation to settle down enough from their laughter for the worship service to continue.

(Thanks to Bill Rataczak)

*Most readers will recall that Neil's obituary appeared in the February issue. Although this remembrance is much longer than our typical obituary, I thought that since Neil was just about everybody's favorite, and since his daughter had written such a nice remembrance, that I would include it here. – Ed.*



Last Sunday was a beautiful crisp fall day in Boston, and I was raking leaves and trying to figure out what I was going to say about my Dad. There are so many memories I have of him and directions to go, but I decided to share a little about dad's early life and how it in turn shaped our family.

Dad was born in 1922 in Patoka, Illinois, a small, rural town in Southern Illinois. He had one brother, Dick and Dad's parents Homer and Eva were lovely, grounded people, and both worked full time as teachers and principals.

There weren't any girls in the house, so Dad and his brother Dick shared in all household chores. Dad said that when he was young the family would make the trek from southern Illinois to Hot Springs, South Dakota in their Model T, over 1000 miles, to visit his grandmother and grandfather. They had to stop at least 15 times on the trip to patch the tires. Imagine what an adventure a trip like that was in those days.

His town didn't have a high school, so dad boarded with a family in Vandalia and worked as a short order cook to finish school. He was a star basketball player and recalls the excitement of playing the Harlem Globetrotters when they came to town. After dad graduated, he enlisted in the Navy and, in his words, fought the Battle of Corpus Christie during WW2. He had the highest score of any student going through flight school so they made Dad a flight instructor. I'm sure some of my grandparent's teaching skills had worn off on him!

After the war, Dad took a job as a Coca Cola truck driver in Mom's hometown of Dixon, Illinois. Although this would have kept Mom in Coke for all these years,

we're eternally grateful he decided truck driving wasn't for him and joined TWA in Boston as a pilot. Laid off a year later, he took a job with Northwest in Minneapolis and thus starts the next chapter of our lives that the kids and grandkids know well.

What incredible opportunities and memories our parents gave us! How many kids went to Hawaii in 1956 when they were 5 years old? We flew overnight from LA in a Boeing Stratocruiser. I got to wear the stewardess's wings and cap and hand out Chiclets! Randy & I ran around the settees in the belly bar of the plane all night, and dad pointed out the migrating whales.

When we landed and walked down the stairs to the tarmac, we were met by a Hawaiian band and hula dancers with leis. Hawaii wouldn't even be a state for three more years. The Pearl Harbor Memorial was just a bunch of sunken ships with a small viewing platform, only 15 years after the bombing!

In 1962 we went to Japan & Hong Kong. We were the first blond children that most people had ever seen. I felt like an alien that had landed at Easter Island! Buddhist priests would stroke our hair. It was an incredibly enlightening experience, and I am so grateful that my parents felt that travel was just as important as school.

I only tell you the brief history of Dad, of going from a poor, rural background, to world traveler and Director of 747 Training for a major airline, to accentuate one of Dad's more all-encompassing qualities: There was nothing he couldn't or wouldn't do. He took everything so matter-of-factly, so practically, and I don't think it ever occurred to him that he couldn't do something... or for that matter, that his kid's couldn't.

We kids grew up in a home where there were no girl or boy jobs. Just as Dad did, Randy had to clean, cook and do dishes (he still loves that!). Carol and I learned to use a power drill and change oil in our cars. When I was 11, I decided to make my dad a “cigarette” box and I proceeded to go downstairs and make one on his Shopsmith. Not too sophisticated... but seriously, how many kids could do that now without someone calling the police? It’s a power tool... A Big One!

Dad taught us all sorts of things; how to fish, polish agates, pack CO2 cartridges to make rockets. We had the best rockets! Big, multi stage! Randy sent reptiles into space before the Russians sent Laika the Dog! He would send frogs with parachutes and return addresses into space! They would go to First, Second, Blaisdell Ave! It was a lot of fun! Right now, and a few times during my life... I’m a little afraid to fly. I remember dad trying to explain lift and propulsion to me. His graphic way of doing that was to say, even a rock can fly if you throw it hard enough! (Propulsion theory.) A very comforting thought on my flight out here!

When I started sailing he taught me to use a sextant. How many dads can do that? My Mom & Dad came out to New England one year when I was racing my sailboat in a Regatta out of Martha’s Vineyard. They helped me deliver the boat back to Marblehead. I don’t think my father had ever sailed a boat before, but he got on and I asked him if he wanted to take the tiller. He steered the boat most of the way home for the two day voyage. I was impressed by his sailing skills, and he matter-of-factly told me that the sail was like a wing: lift, wind, propulsion, and that was pretty much that. My dad could sail a boat.

In college, when I would have fancy dinner parties at Mom and Dad’s house for my friends, the guys were all fascinated that my dad could cook. His famous line:

“If you can read, you can cook,” pretty much summed up my Dad’s thought process and pretty much impressed my boyfriends.

Dad lived his life as he wanted to. After retirement, he joined Mom two days a week at Traveler’s Assistance. Even after living with emphysema and on oxygen for 25 years, he tended his gardens, maintained the house and kept the kitchen sink spotless! (inside joke) He loved his neighbors, played bridge with friends, pinochle with the kids and grandkids and cherished the greats. My number one good memory of my dad: We were on our way back from Hot Springs, South Dakota after visiting my great grandmother (what an awesome lady! Pioneer! Died at 99, spontaneous hip fracture, fixing lunch for her card club). We stopped at Wall Drug, and a few hours later on our way back to Minneapolis, I realized I had left my beloved stuffed animal “Poochie” behind. This was a really big deal for me! Poochie was my security blanket. My dad didn’t give it a second thought and turned the car around and went back to get Poochie. I left him on a shelf at Wall Drug. That one act has stuck with me through my whole life... and to this day, I still have my Poochie!

So anyway, eventually the emphysema became too much and his life started changing in the last year. Mom, the forever optimist of their relationship, would encourage him to get up, get dressed, get going... and he did that until the last few weeks. I knew that it was incredibly difficult for him to tell Mom and the family that he was worn down and had had enough. But he was brave enough to do that. And on October 5th he took off the oxygen and went into high flight.

Dad wouldn’t have wanted any big “to do” like this. So, to leave you with another of dad’s practical suggestions: Give your kids short names, because they have to write them for the rest of their lives! ✨



MARCINE  
POLLARD

CA

To: RNPA,

Thank you for another year of colorful pictures and articles. I am pleased to see names and faces of NWA Federal Credit Union members that I knew while branch manager in Seattle.

I still live in Escondido, California and remember “The good old airline days.”

Marcine Pollard  
Phone: 760.740.2486



# A STABILIZED approach



Contributing Columnist **James Baldwin**

## Closer Than We'd Like to Think

### Part Two

*(continued from Part 1)*

...the officer's back and forth hand motions continued. Heavy mist began to appear on the windshield of the police cruiser. The first hint of daylight was still over an hour away and the star shaped drops of moisture reflected the lights of the passing traffic. As I imagined the picture through the lens of the dash mounted camera that any of the public might see, there was no doubt I was watching yet another challenge in viewer interpretation. Even though I was there I couldn't tell exactly what was happening. Unless there was a definitive outcome recorded on the film, how could a viewer know what the dynamic was between the officer and the person who had been stopped? I remained "uninvolved" as previously instructed.

The "legs spread" stance of the backup officer near the right rear door indicated to me the situation wasn't yet considered under control. Officer Wilson bent his head towards the microphone mounted on his shoulder and words, silent to me, were spoken. I was appropriately tense; I had seen the apprehension of a real criminal whose intent to harm others was real. I had watched as the officers involved had used every caution in their approach and it wasn't any different this time absent the display of weapons. They were being careful.

My mind wandered for a moment to the last time I could remember being stopped. I didn't know the

entire left hand tail and brake light assembly of my very used airport car were INOP. Few of us then, or now, do "walkarounds" to prevent a stop related to safety, but that didn't stop me from having the feeling of indignation, of intrusion, of the paranoid idea of government control. At the time I resented the information the officer was providing. I was guilty of failing to maintain my airport beater yet ready to shoot the messenger. That feeling was remembered again at the sight of what was happening in front of me. I can't recall if I was given a citation to get it repaired or if I managed to talk my way out of it, but I suspected that was what was occurring in this misty, early morning hour. How wrong I would be.

Although I was sworn to confidentiality involving names and our actual city location, the county adjacent, Riverside County, had recently reported on year over year crime rates. When I later asked, Wilson and the other officers made it clear they didn't need a report to tell them what was actually happening on the streets. Auto theft was up more than 20 percent over the previous year, consistent with the national trend. The county's unincorporated areas were particularly troublesome with an average increase of over 7 percent in violent FBI rated "Part 1" crimes, also mirroring what has been seen nationally. Even though I learned

this after that evening, it then made sense as to why Wilson had always been looking at a particular screen on his in-car computer display which showed license numbers. They were numbers from stolen cars and if they had been in the area, we might have been able to retrieve one. We didn't but it wasn't because Wilson wasn't constantly looking. The dots began to connect: this wasn't as simple as driving around between coffee breaks looking for a speeder or answering a domestic violence call.

In fact, after asking, Wilson answered my question about traffic enforcement. "If we see a car breaking an obvious traffic law and the car looks like something else might be inside, it might be a good enough reason to stop them. Seven times out of ten we find something. That tells you the appearance of the car was probably pretty obvious to a trained officer," he added.

"If it's safety or if we have nothing more pressing, of course we can at least pull them over. Then a lot of the time it's up to the attitude of the driver as to what we might do."

Obviously attitude counted with these guys and, here in this Los Angeles suburb, the attitude wasn't what we all might expect elsewhere. A pretty simple gouge but I guess the bangers hadn't broken the code yet.

Continuing to watch the scene in front of me, I couldn't really figure out what was causing the delay. I hadn't decided if this was just a man versus man contest, i.e. an officer being challenged by a recalcitrant potential offender and him simply acting in response? Or was he a truly unbiased official interested in helping a citizen he had encountered in this unusual early morning hour in a car that had an obvious safety issue. Remembering Wilson's stated bias and preconception: "ten to one there's something under the seat," my opinion probably wasn't helped as he left the police cruiser, his hand, probably subconsciously, dropping to the H&K 40 caliber cocked and ready on his hip, checking the readiness of his protection.

This late into the twelve hour shift he was undoubtedly as physically tired as I felt, and I was just an observer. He was burdened with using his experience and whatever hidden psychological clues he could find along with prima facie physical evidence to form an action plan for this event. Just like all of the other situations we had encountered that evening he was responsible for formulating an appropriate response to each; I was just watching.

Wilson walked back to the officer at the rear of the car and conferred. The other officer's head at first nodded up and down in understanding but soon gave way to a disbelieving frown with a questioning furrow in

his brow. I couldn't wait to hear the story but for sure wasn't about to get out of the car to learn more. Wilson returned to the driver's window and a hand reached out with what looked like the normal required documents in a traffic stop.

He came back to the cruiser and left the door ajar as he entered the numbers into the keypad and radioed for a check of warrants.

I knew better than to interrupt but Wilson was undoubtedly aware of my questioning gaze. Answering the reply on his shoulder mounted microphone as he exited, he made his way back to the waiting car. With a nod to the other officer, Wilson stood at the rear of the car and wrote out a citation. The backup officer disappeared as the situation, I guessed, was deemed under control. Wilson handed the citation book to the driver with his pen and it was returned quickly. He ripped off the copy and handed it to the driver but didn't leave his location at the window. More conversation occurred and Wilson pointed in the direction of the passenger seat. The window was rolled down further and after only a slight delay, a pair of bright red silky looking women's panties was offered to Wilson. Holding his free hand up, he declined the offer and nodded. After leaning in to say something to the passenger, Wilson stood erect and returned to the cruiser. I couldn't help but laugh quietly as he got in and sat back down.

Wilson at first let out a big sigh and then explained, "O.K. That was different. The passenger is a male cross-dresser or a basic trans-sexual. And he was dressed so well at first I was fooled thinking it really was a woman," he said pulling out into the slow lane. The driver is apparently his party partner or something more and they were returning from quite an evening. That whole discussion with them was about identity. They came close to getting pulled out of the car—neither wanted to reveal who they really were. I had to explain it doesn't work that way," he said, pausing and shaking his head.

"As far as who it was, I know you made a written promise not to reveal any names or locations this evening, but I think I'd better check with the lieutenant just to make sure," he said.

"All I can say is: Beverly Hills, clergy and a retired government official whose name you might recognize."

"We probably both should be a little careful with that one but everything was done exactly to the book and he did get another ticket," he added almost defensively.

"You know what," I said looking at him seriously, "I don't even want to know!" Wilson looked over and nodded an approval. Maybe he figured I really was there just to see how it was really done and what they faced daily and I was OK after all. He would have been right.

It was time for the last break and he parked the police car in an odd position. Backed into a corner of a parking lot, two sides were protected with a concrete wall. We pulled out the snack from the fast food drive-thru and had a few minutes to relax. Except, really, he never really relaxed.

“I know you didn’t notice,” Wilson explained in his best Cops 101 voice,

“But we hardly ever sit in a public place and have a meal or break. I say hardly ever because most of the time we just bring our own lunch and eat it here or other spots where we can keep an eye on what’s goin’ on. Tonight we saw our buddies from County were on duty and I figured you might like to talk to a few more than just me.” I nodded understandably.

“And you can have my left over P B and J if you want something more,” he laughed.

“I’d like to hear the end of the conversation we were having about criminal job creation,” I probed.

“Oh, for most of us I think it’s pretty simple. Not all of us but maybe most of us think if there really was a connection between crime and punishment, there wouldn’t be much crime. I’m not saying we should cut heads or hands off or anything but it’s so watered down now there really isn’t much ...” he said, his voice trailing away.

“The public just doesn’t want to make those kinds of decisions. Look at drunk driving. Over a week’s time I could take you to the jailhouse and there would probably be at least one repeat offender in there. And those same guys will be back again, I guarantee it,” he exclaimed.

“But the public doesn’t want to punish in a way that will take them out of action. They need to be removed.”

“Period,” he emphasized, glaring.

“The drug guys I’m talking about will never be rehabilitated. It’s a gang thing. We don’t remove them; we just store them in prison. The TV news with the grieving families of those injured or killed fades pretty quickly. There might be a little community outrage but

after a year or two life moves on like it never happened. Except those with a family loss.”

“Drugs are the worst. We know these people have no regard for the public. We could stop it and we wouldn’t even need a wall. We don’t really want to because it would mean we would have to severely punish the true repeat offenders and then we get into the capital punishment argument and there you are.”

“Not the users,” he emphasized, getting more excited.

“The importers, the distributors, the pushers,” he added.

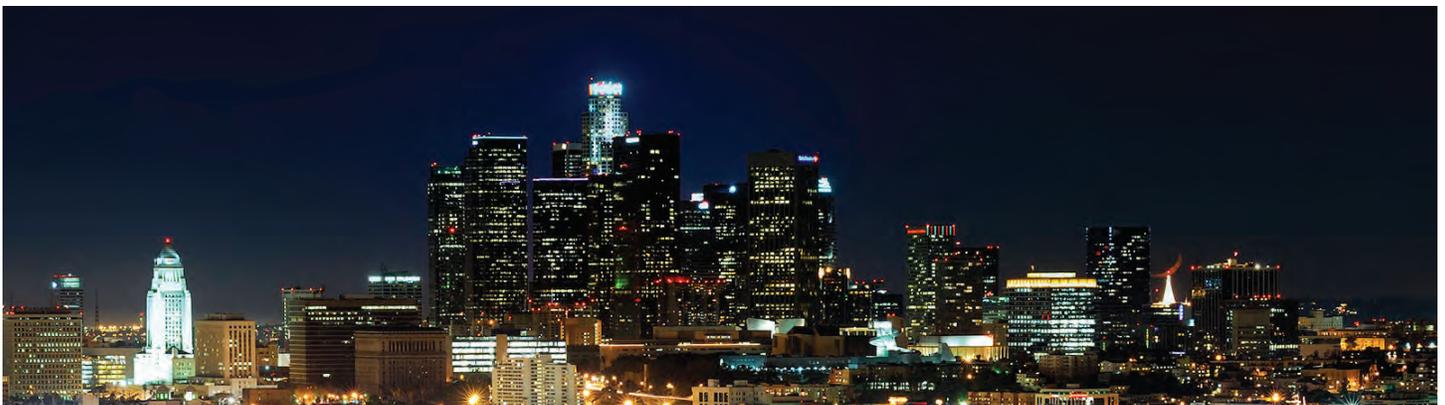
“There is no doubt they are trying to hurt us and they don’t care. But we let ‘em back out, or worse yet, others fill in where they left off because there had been no deterrent they could understand. After all, it is their profession. What do we expect them to do,” he questioned.

The morning commute and traffic duty was over as we returned to the station house and met the other officers who had been up all night. Others were in the briefing room and a lieutenant came up to ask how the evening had gone. There really wasn’t much I could say to add to what he had obviously seen many times. I thought about making a joke about public officials but thankfully wasn’t too tired to think better of it. He’d find out after he read the report anyway. This was their job, they took it seriously, and in some cases were doing it with one hand tied behind their backs. I was respectful and said so.

I left the station ready for bed and was glad I didn’t have three more nights of duty this week like Wilson, but was relaxed in knowing there were those out there trying to protect us.

I thanked Wilson, we shook hands and parted. As I started to my car, over his shoulder he said “To bad we didn’t do that bet; I guess you saw what was under the seat.”

“I think he woulda looked better in pink,” I said smiling. We both laughed and shook our heads in unison. It wasn’t a bad way to end the shift. ✨





it

WAS



## CONTRIBUTING COLUMNIST JOHN DOHERTY



“We are all passengers for the last 50 feet.”

You know the scenario. Pilot A plans and briefs the descent and approach. Then makes all the crossing restrictions and doesn't waste fuel getting down too early. The aircraft gets configured not too soon, not too late. The approach is smooth and all the “gates” are within parameters. At minimums the runway is straight ahead and the plane is on speed and glide slope, thrust stable. Then pilot A thumps it in. Passengers grab the arms of their seats and shake their heads. What's the matter with this guy? And comment to seatmates, “This guy could use some flying lessons.”

Meanwhile pilot B wanders 15 miles past the top of descent and then has to pull the boards to make the first crossing restriction. Chagrined, this pilot starts down too soon for the next crossing restriction and drills along at 10,000 feet for 10 miles. Perhaps even jokes, “Oh well, I'm not paying for the gas.” The rest of the crew is vague on the plan and have decided to watch this guy. Slow in configuring, approach issues speed restrictions a couple of times in an effort to keep planes spaced. He/she makes the “gates,” that is if everyone happened to be looking out the window at the time. And then the touchdown is silky smooth. Never mind that pilot B rolled in some nose up trim coming across the fence, carried too much thrust for too long, and landed 2000 feet long. The passengers smile and think to themselves, “What a great pilot.”

Fair or not we were measured as pilots by our land-

ings, both by people who didn't have a clue, and by the folks who rode in the cockpits with us. While really bad landings, and by that I mean ones where something gets broken or someone gets hurt, were very, very far between, we all had our share of thumpers, and we all had our share of grease jobs. There was an apt quote for those inclined to brag on their good ones, “You don't have to talk about the bad ones if you don't talk about the good ones.” Now that all of my landings are tucked away in a dusty corner in my yellowing logbook, I think I can safely talk about them, good and bad.

First some bad. Back in the day in the three pilot cockpits it wasn't unusual for a captain to give the Second Officer a landing. On one such occasion I did an approach and landing into Miami. To this day, not quite sure what went wrong, but it went wrong, way wrong, and I planted the airplane horribly. The captain, bless him, seemed more amused than angry. Flight attendants were up in the cockpit asking, “What happened?” A couple of passengers stuck their heads in the door to see if anyone was at home. The captain's only comment to me was, “You'll remember that landing for a long time.” He was right.

Not long after that I was checking out as second officer on the 707. We were on a training flight, had some extra time and fuel, so the training pilot said he was giving the Second Officer trainees each a landing. At this early point in my flying career I believed I was a pretty savvy pilot with my thousand hours of fighter time. My Second Officer trainee partner by comparison had just a few hundred hours, all of it in “little airplanes.” I wondered to myself how this inexperienced guy would do with this big rumbling 707. To my surprise he flew a nice approach and had a decent landing, one that any pilot would've been happy to take. My turn in the right seat. My fighter experience served me well when I was flying fighters, but it was just the opposite of what I needed in flying the 707. I was accustomed to flying an airplane that was so sensitive I would keep my forearm on my thigh to keep from over controlling. I had to do little more than think what I wanted the airplane to do for it to do it. The 707 was exactly the opposite. Put in

some controls and wait. Then when the airplane starts to move take the control out right away. As soon I took the airplane, I started to Dutch Roll. All my fighter instincts accomplished for me was to make the Dutch roll worse. The captain said "Here let me have it for a second." He settled the airplane down, gave it back to me. Same thing. Captain settles airplane down again and says, "All I can tell you is, don't do it." I continued down the glide slope Dutch Rolling away, stunned and embarrassed that I couldn't get the airplane to do what I wanted it to do. The only good thing about the landing was that there were no passengers on the airplane. This was back in the day before overhead bins, the pillows flew out of the hat rack, oxygen masks came down, everyone in the cockpit red-faced with embarrassment as we turned off the runway. My "savvy" hadn't been worth a damn.

On another occasion I was doing my first OE landing from the right seat of the classic. Our destination Boston was the dark and stormy night of aviation mythology. Because of the wind the runway in use was 27, a runway with no ILS. And nothing but water in the approach zone meaning a classic black hole. This being my first approach and landing in the 747, by rights I probably should have deferred to the captain given the nasty gusting cross wind, right on the limits, the big jet kicking around the sky. Unwilling to admit weakness I went for it. Big mistake. Coming across the fence thinking of pod clearances, which of the three recommended crosswind techniques to use, do I have enough gust pad, can I get stopped on the runway, etc.? Too much confusion and anxiety for me to be on my game. We hit the ground airframe shaking hard, lurched back in the air rolling dangerously close to the downwind pod, headed for the side of the runway, instrument panel shaking. Horrible in every respect.

Once again the captain was good-humored and forgiving. But not the flight attendants. In the van headed for the hotel one of them asked, "What the hell happened on that landing?" I fessed up that it was me, apologized, and endured stares of disdain from the 15 or so flight attendants. The captain in an effort to be supportive said, "Don't be too hard on him, it was his first landing." With this bit of news one of the flight attendants went into a rant and harangue about the company sending pilots out who don't know what they're doing, practicing on passengers and crew, endangering everybody's lives, etc. I remember that landing too.

And then there were landings that were okay but probably shouldn't have been. My first line landing from the left seat of the 727 comes to mind. It was at night and into 27 at San Diego. The terrain there rises rapidly from the airport to the east making an unusually steep approach necessary. And perhaps because of the steep-

ness, there is no ILS glide slope, and even on the steeper approach, the buildings and parking lots aren't far below the mains. All the way down I was a mile behind the aircraft, just hanging on, flying by rote. Not in charge of the airplane and knowing it. Somehow miraculously it all worked out. As we turned off the runway the OE captain was effusive with his praise about my approach and landing. I suspected that the praise was more an expression of his amazed relief that it had worked without hurting anyone or having to go see the chief pilot than it was actual praise.

So having talked about some of the bad ones, that gives me license to talk about some of the good ones.

Flying right seat on the classic into Narita, check pilot in the jump seat. A guy who was known as a stickler. Crosswind season, and with just one runway, we dealt with the crosswind or went to Sendai. Clear as a bell, runway in sight 10 miles out, and the old bird shaking and rattling in the turbulence. Crosswind right on the limits, crew even questioning how much of the gust would appropriately be used in calculating the crosswind component. Landing check done and dead quiet in the cockpit. I had the sense that flight attendants and passengers were holding their breaths. Looking back, I was probably going to get an okay landing, but I wasn't prepared for what I got. The flare, the rudder, the roll, the thrust, the gusting wind all conspired to give me a beautifully soft touchdown. We rolled down the centerline, wings level, all of the cross control the airplane had to give in place. Taxi speed and "I've got it" from the captain. Still silence in the cockpit until it was broken by the check pilot saying, "Well, I guess I can sign you off for crosswind." The highest and best praise I could have hoped for.

Fast-forward 10 or 15 years, left seat of the 757, another dark and stormy night this time up the river into Washington National. The entire East Coast had been enduring strong winds, and because of the reduced visibility in rain, the ILS 36 was the only choice. Every third or fourth flight was going missed, some of them deciding to go somewhere else rather than try again. Couple flights even decided it wasn't for them without starting the approach. That same dead quiet in the cockpit, the one that prevailed when we were working on the edge of the performance of the aircraft. The airplane kicking and churning down the final. This time too I got more than I could have hoped for. Not only did I get the airplane on the ground which would have been enough in itself for me, I got a soft landing out of it. As we cleared the runway, the flight attendant opened the cockpit door so I could hear the wave of applause coming from the passengers. Thankfully they couldn't see my legs shaking.

"Flaps up, after landing check." ✈

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# *A Chick in the Cockpit*



Contributing Columnist Erika Armstrong

## LOGBOOK MAGIC NUMBERS: CONNECTING HOURS WITH ABILITY

The Minnesota blizzard was a sharp contrast to the Cancun sunshine we'd just left a few hours earlier. Since I'd flown the first leg, it was my first officer's turn to fly back and land at MSP. ATIS had informed us that the weather was just barely above minimums, but braking action was still good. A few airplanes had initiated missed approaches, so we knew we had a good challenge ahead. To add to the joy, there was a gusty crosswind that was going to test all of our skills. Since it was a long flight for a Boeing 727-200, we didn't have a lot of extra fuel to play around with either.

As we were being vectored to the outer marker, I turned to my copilot and asked if he was all set for the approach. I wanted to make sure he was comfortable with the challenges ahead and that his head was in the game in case we had to go missed. He had a serious look on his face, but when I asked if he was comfortable shooting the approach, he turned to me and said, "Yeah, this is great! I've never actually shot an approach to minimums in real life..." My first reaction was disbelief and then I wanted to say, "Okay, I have the aircraft" and take over the flying, but copilots are future captains and since I'd flown with him for almost a month, I knew this copilot had great airmanship skills. Part of the captain's job is getting first officers their experience. He had a stabilized

approach going, we had full anti-ice on, he had pitch and power perfect, so we continued on the approach—I just paid a bit more attention. He shot a perfect approach and we broke out at minimums, on perfect airspeed and glideslope, and he nailed the landing. "That was perfect. Nice job!" I said. He just looked at me with a flushed face and said, "That was awesome." It was. It didn't matter that this was his first approach to minimums. He had the airmanship skills to do it a thousand hours ago, he just hadn't had the chance.

After we got to the gate, I turned to him and asked, "Okay, tell me how the heck you have a couple thousand hours, you're a first officer on a commercial airliner, and you've never flown an actual approach to minimums (they've all been simulated)." "Well, I grew up in southern California. I always flew in the southwestern part of the U.S., so I just never had to do an actual approach to minimums, especially in the snow..."

There has, and will always be, debate about a magic number of hours required for certain types of flying and ratings. At the heart of the question is; how do you correlate ability with the number of hours in the logbook? The answer is: you don't. Just because you have 1500 hours in your logbook doesn't mean you're instantly a great pilot. There are as many variables to each person's

character, ability and experience as there are people. However, the bar has to be set somewhere and the bar has been placed there for a reason.

The aviation industry learns from its experience and its tragedies. There is a certain expectation that during those hours to reach a goal, the pilot will be exposed to a variety of experiences creating a basis for airmanship skills, but there will always be something they haven't done. Sitting in a full motion simulator is not the same as the real thing. Neither is watching an autopilot do all the work, yet the hours add up the same. There are many airline pilots who fly international, for example, that don't get a lot of stick time, but it's balanced with their enormous brain data base of experience. It's about having a constant balance of experience, training and knowledge. If you're a low time pilot, then the balance is tipped towards inexperience. The more you fly, and the more experiences in your logbook, the more balanced a pilot's skillset becomes. If a pilot is hired with zero time for an airline, and spends the majority of their time in simulators, or enroute with the autopilot on, there is not an opportunity to find that balance. It doesn't mean they aren't great pilots, it's just that they don't have a variety of experiences to draw from should an unusual situation present itself.

The recent Germanwings tragedy was an anomaly, but it revealed that the copilot had been primarily a glider pilot before getting hired by Lufthansa in September 2013. Eighteen months after getting hired, he still only had 630 hours total time at the time of the crash. This triggered some debate about how he could be in that seat when pilots in the U.S. can't get a job at the majors until they have at least 1500 hours—and most have thousands more than that. Would those hours have made a difference? No. It wouldn't have mattered how many hours he had if his intention was to kill a plane full of people. However, if this particular copilot had gone through the

rigors of what U.S. pilots currently go through, he may have been filtered out of the pilot herd before he was in control of 150 lives. The cold hard fact is that with 630 hours, he would not have been at the controls of a U.S. commercial airliner, whether he deserved it or not, or if he was an excellent pilot or not. This exact set of circumstances could not have happened on a U.S. carrier.

U.S. pilots, for the most part, have to apply and interview for a variety of flying jobs before they ever think about applying to the commercial airlines. They have to be mentally tough and have a deep passion and focus to get their aviation jobs. This process also makes great pilots by learning to fly in a variety of challenging conditions, going through several interviews, and being exposed to different environments. This doesn't mean foreign pilots are any less skilled, but getting hired into an airliner without good basic airmanship skills doesn't give pilots the experience to draw upon. Most U.S. pilots start at the bottom and work their way up. Flight instructing, military, charter, corporate, air ambulance, banner towing, crop dusting, glider towing, etc. You have to really want to be a pilot to make it through this long and intense initiation. The first officer who had never flown an approach to minimums had been a charter pilot. He had earned great basic airmanship skills. It didn't matter that this was his first actual approach, his basis of experience made sure he did a great job—even though his first "real" approach was with 173 passengers onboard. His total hours didn't mean he had experienced it all, it just meant he had a good skillset to draw from. He had a balanced logbook.

I know many military pilots who have very few flight hours, but those hours are intense and backed by a ground school that makes sure these pilots are the best around. Their hours aren't the same as everyone else, but the hours still read the same on a logbook page. If you have the opportunity to start flying jets earlier in your career, you'll cover more miles, but have less hours than someone flying piston multiengine aircraft. So, who is more competent? It will always depend on the individual and the variety of experience.

There are pilots with just a few hundred hours that have more poise and competence than other pilots with thousands of hours. There are thousands of examples and variables and that's the point. While there is not necessarily a direct correlation between hours in the logbook and skill, we have to have a measurement and a minimum while keeping in mind that it's not the hours; it's the type of experience you're supposed to get during those minimum hours. It's part of an important filtering process to refine the individual to their peak pilot performance. ✈



# PETE & OLD BLUE



By Darrel Smith

Clad in full flight gear he walks across the flight deck to the FA-18 that sits quietly, bristling with weapons, waiting. In a short time this war plane and pilot will be hurled from the deck of the carrier into the sky to engage in mortal combat, possibly.

The tiny Piper Cub floats just above the grass then touches one wheel in the slight cross wind. The pilot from the back seat is careful to guard against the ever lurking “ground loop.”

She strides through the airport terminal, back straight, uniform perfect, cap low over her eyes as she approaches the departure gate and her aircraft. People notice and eyes follow.

The weathered hand of a seasoned old veteran confidently pushes the four thrust levers forward on a huge Boeing 747. The 200,000 pounds of thrust cause this 800,000 pound “whale” to slowly begin a journey that will end many hours later, most likely in some foreign country.

Pilots, yes? Super humans? Not! Some might be surprised to know that pilots cannot see through clouds or leap large buildings in a single bound. Just a few hours earlier each of the above mentioned pilots woke up, put their feet on the floor with bed hair evident in desperate need of a toothbrush. Pilots are real people!

These people at some point in their lives simply made the decision, and stuck with it, to pursue some phase of aviation as a hobby or profession. All had different backgrounds and overcame different obstacles on the road to the cockpit. With effort and determination they,

step by step, achieved their goal. There was no magic—just real people with a dream and a will to work.

Most pilots have interesting stories that could be told, but they seldom attempt to put them into print. Too often, we get glimpses of these stories while reading obituaries. Larry R. “Long Range” Gibson, an old Marine buddy, encouraged me to document some of the adventures of my life.

In keeping with his suggestion, here’s how “Pete and Old Blue” helped transform my humble, hard-working hands to those of a “seasoned old veteran” pilot.

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The farm of my early years was a place of hard work. Everyday was a study in selective neglect in that there was always more work than could be done with the available manpower. Every member of the family pitched in to do their part toward keeping the operation going.

Until the time of my youth, mules had been used as the primary source of power to till the fields in West Tennessee. A man and a team of mules could cover only so much ground. Sharecropping was a common practice to help alleviate this problem. The landowner would furnish the land while someone unrelated to the farm would do the labor. That’s how I met Pete.

Peter Macklin and his family lived about two miles from my dad’s farm. I knew nothing about their background and at six years of age the thought of asking never crossed my mind. They were just there! They owned a car and on most weekdays, would arrive early and stay

“...you may even feel like quitting. At a time like that if you don’t have the strength to carry on, don’t worry, just come on back to the farm. Old Blue will be hitched to the plow waiting for you.”

late tending to their crops. There were children about my age, therefore it was natural that we played together like family, even though they were black.

Pete was a farmer during the week, but became Reverend Macklin on the weekends as pastor of a church located near Millington, Tennessee, about five miles from his home. All accounts portrayed him as hard working and honest—he was well respected. I would agree with this description, but in my mind, he was also a very wise man. Although he was much older, I always considered him a friend.

My dad owned a pair of mules, named Top and Tobe, that could be described as outlaws. They were all things bad—nervous, difficult to harness, prone to running away and could jump any fence. No one wanted to deal with this pair, but finally Pete announced that he would like to try working with them.

He must have been an early-day horse (mule) whisperer. Within a short period of time these misfits were like puppies. I have no idea what he did or said to them, but they were completely changed. Going to and from the fields, they would follow him with no lead rope attached. A stop could be commanded by quietly saying “Whoa” and to have them start again, in the same low voice, he would say, “Come on.” If left alone, they would stand quietly until he returned. The transformation was like magic—they seemed to love him.



Economic conditions were changing for the better and the general population was enjoying a gradually improving quality of life. Most families owned automobiles and more and more farmers were buying tractors. Mules were slowly disappearing from the farms either by being sold or dying.

I lived through this transition from mules to tractors. I was too young to have worked with the mules on a regular basis. The Old Grey Mare and Old Blue, the last team on our farm, had been partners their entire working life. The few times I actually worked with draft animals they were assigned to me because of their gentle nature. The Gray Mare left the farm, details of which are unremembered, leaving Old Blue the last mule, alone but retired. She ate and hung out with the dairy cattle. We suspected that during her latter years she thought of herself as a cow.

Life moved on. I went off to college playing football to pay my way. During my sophomore year the Marine Corps convinced me to join their ranks as a prospective officer. The Marine PLC (Platoon Leaders Class) program required that I spend six weeks at Quantico, Virginia during two separate summer breaks. Upon successfully completing this training and earning a college diploma, I was designated as a Marine Second Lieutenant. My wife Glenda pinned on those gold bars.

There was a lot of activity as Glenda and I prepared to leave my boyhood farm home for flight school at Pensacola, Florida—my first assigned active duty station as a Marine.

Pete was around but remained very quiet, subdued. As departure time approached he took my arm and pulled me aside. He looked me in the eye and said, “You are going out into a big world, there will be times when things will get really tough, you may even feel like quitting. At a time like that if you don’t have the strength to carry on, don’t worry, just come on back to the farm. Old Blue will be hitched to the plow waiting for you.”

I never saw or talked to Pete again and Old Blue died about a year later. Pete’s words stayed with me! Many times things did get tough and it would have been much easier to just quit. When those occasions arose, I smiled, squared my shoulders and thought of my friend Pete, his comment about quitting and Old Blue. I always pressed on! I will always appreciate the words of wisdom and advice from my wise friend the Reverend Macklin:

Pete. ✨

October 25, 1930

TO - ALL CO-PILOTS:

Every man in an organization has a certain part to play and duty to perform. The first pilot is delegated the responsibility of flying the ship; the service crew has the responsibility of keeping the ship in safe flying condition; the traffic department has the responsibility of supplying the passengers and the operations department has the responsibility of ordering the ships in and out and making certain that everyone in the operations department performs his duty. Even with all this division of authority into the above named competent departments, there are still many SMALL CHORES which have been left undone, and for this reason and none other, there has been created in the aviation industry a demand for THE CO-PILOT.

There are now fourteen co-pilots in the Southern Division of American Airways, Inc., whose flying time ranges from 400 hours to 2500 hours.

Regardless of how much flying time a co-pilot has had, it is necessary that all co-pilots be regarded alike by their superiors, THE FIRST PILOT. Your job is to do many things which other employees do not want to do. Your immediate superior is the first pilot. His wants are your orders - he is king - you are his faithful and alert servant. You are on probation always; your working hours are from now on and your pay is small. Your advancement is uncertain and there are thousands of other first pilot aspirants striving to get your job at even less money and more work. You are not employed because of your flying ability and by your employment you are not assured ever of having a run of your own as first pilot.

The pilot with whom you now have the privilege of flying largely controls your destiny. If you handle these many details assigned you, many of which are unpleasant, and if you prove to be of value to him and to others, you may assume that you will have the privilege of remaining as co-pilot for him until some years to come, at which time you will have learned much from your associations and flying experiences with him; and you will have won for yourself recognition by the company and all, as a gentleman and as an experienced co-pilot worthy of promotion.

You were not employed to do the flying, not only because you are not considered capable but because far better pilots, the finest in the world, have been employed for that work and if you are permitted to

take the controls at any time you may consider this a special favor on the part of the first pilot. A co-pilot who does his job well, makes very little noise and listens attentively to his superiors and will in time demand and receive recognition for his services.

As co-pilot, there is something which really is worth working for and which can be attained but first IT MUST BE EARNED. As long as you do your work well and conduct yourself strictly as a co-pilot, this company will regard you really as an important department of the organization and you will find many very good friends among those with whom you are working. You are going to be asked to do many personal favors for the older pilots but always keep in mind that these same older pilots are at some time later going to be in a position to do many and greater favors for you.

If you know yourself to have an excess of pride, swallow it; if you have personal faults, overcome them; always make a neat and pleasant impression on your passengers and upon those with whom you work and live.

Trusting that you are successful in your enterprise of becoming A GOOD CO-PILOT,

Sincerely yours,

JERRY MARSHALL  
OPERATIONS MANAGER

JM:G

CC-All Pilots

By Jay Sakas

Definition: A freight dog is a pilot that has no sense of time or place; Night is day and day is night.

My first encounter with freight dog, came on a cold September evening. Crew scheduling calling to inform me that I had my very first line trip as a S/O.

“Sakas, we had a S/O call in sick and we need you to get to the airplane ASAP. You’re on 904 to JFK and 905 back. Departure is when you get there. The airplane is at Gate A4.”

With the adrenalin flowing, I made it to the blue bus in record time. As we pulled up to the drop off at A4, there sat the 727. From where I was looking it appeared that one side of the airplane was missing—a gaping hole. As I walked around the stairs and started to climb, it became apparent to me that I was staring at a 727 C3 with a cargo door wide open. It was that night that I started to identify myself as a freight dog. I did not see daylight the rest of the month.

Later on I transferred to Seattle on the B707. Go figure, but my first flight was 908 to JFK. From then on the freight dog became a normal part of my existence.

In doing research, I found that freight has always been a mainstay of Northwest. On board the very first flight of Northwest Airways, October 1, 1926 in a OX 5 Curtis Oriole, was a bag of freight. Okay, it was a mail pouch. Since then mail/freight have been instrumental in NWA survival.

Eventually, NWA developed the largest dedicated freight fleet in the industry; eight B747-200F freighters. All operating out of a pilot base in ANC. I joined that cadre of freight dogs in 1992. It was a unique experience and I will leave it at that. It became evident that those of us that were freight dogs had certain behavioral issues. These made us discernable from the rest of the pilot corp.

The qualifications to be a freight dog are as follows:

- One should not subscribe to circadian rhythm—for you night is day and day is night.
- Everything one owns is in a flight bag and suitcase.
- One has not done a daylight landing in the past six months.
- One shares a one bedroom apartment with 12 other freight dogs
- One who saves crew meals for layovers.
- One to whom other flight crews appear standoffish.
- One who can wear the same shirt for a week, and no one complains to your face.
- One whose in-flight uniform is sweats and shorts.
- One is able to switch from sweats and shorts back into the uniform before the chief pilot sees you.
- Loves the aroma of cows, pigs and ferrets.
- Manages odor control by wrapping flight bag and suitcase along with the uniform in big black plastic bags.
- One is able to sleep anywhere and in any position.
- One who feels discriminated upon when all of the commuter flights are suddenly full and jump seat becomes unavailable



Eventually, retirement hit me. So what does a freight dog do after retirement? He buys an airfreight operation and starts flying freight for UPS. The major freight airlines created feeder airlines to move freight out of their hubs into outlying areas. These freight operators flew airplanes that were “long in the tooth” and had pilots that were also “long in the tooth” or “wet behind the ears.”



My airplane was classic but aging. It looked like a reciprocated DC 10

and flew like a 727. You could cube it out before you could gross it out. Leave it to the Brits to build a great freighter, the Trislander, but not a beauty contest winner.

This world of the freight dog was so much different than the one I had just left. These pilots would fly for food or loose change. To be a freight dog in this environment, one had to learn a few things:

- Your dress code consisted of one greying white shirt and shiny pants or for the more sophisticated pilot stained sweat shirt and torn jeans.
- You wear the same shirt for a week, and again no one complains.
- Ode de cologne for the day depends on the animals on board or days without a shower.
- Every approach is a visual approach.
- All the other airlines hold to see if you get in.
- When you taxi up to an FBO they roll out the red carpet, but quickly take it back when they recognize you.
- The lady at the FBO locks up the popcorn machine because you plan on “making a meal of it.”
- Your airplane has more than eight faded logos on it.
- Your Director of Operations mysteriously changes your max. take-off weight during the holiday season.
- You mark every ramp with engine oil.
- You find all airplanes airworthy.
- Does not fear thunderstorms. Lightning will guide the way?
- Turbulence is a wakeup call.
- An emergency is when everything is working properly.
- Your hotel is either motel 6 or a chair at the FBO.

After a number of years of being a freight dog, I sold the company, threw on a shirt and tie and got into the corporate flying gig. Checked out in a beautiful single engine turboprop, the Pilatus PC 12 and free-lanced all over the world. There was one feature that made it very much in demand, a cargo door. Go figure, there I was a going back to my roots, being a freight dog. I flew medivacs, Harleys, mothers milk (that’s a story for another time), boxes, as well as people.

Today, I have one client, whose passion is rescuing dogs from animal kill shelters. Invariably when he and I are flying somewhere, there are dogs on board. Either going to a good home or coming back from a bad situation. When I fly by myself, I always have my rescued Blue Heeler flying copilot. How apropos for a freight dog, in the sunset of his flying career, to be flying dogs around.

A freight dog forever.

*Woof...woof*

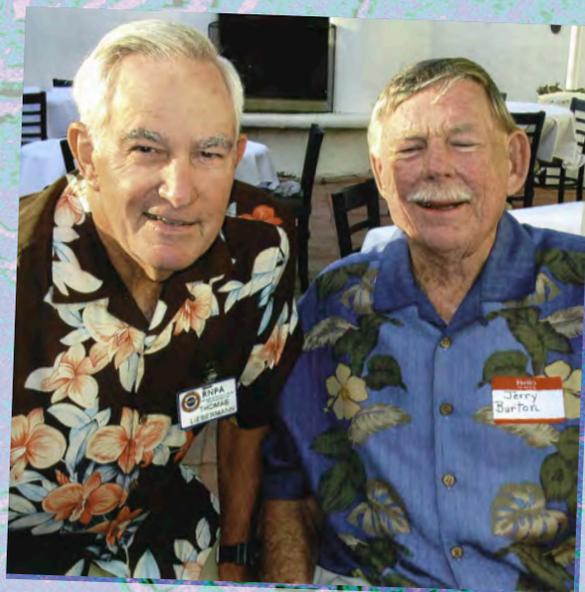


# RNPA Palm Springs Gathering March 22nd

*Eileen Halverson,  
Sandy Schmidt,  
Linda Stadig,  
Alona McFarland,  
Roxanne Davis,  
Cindy Friesen*



*Bob & Jeanne Dickson*



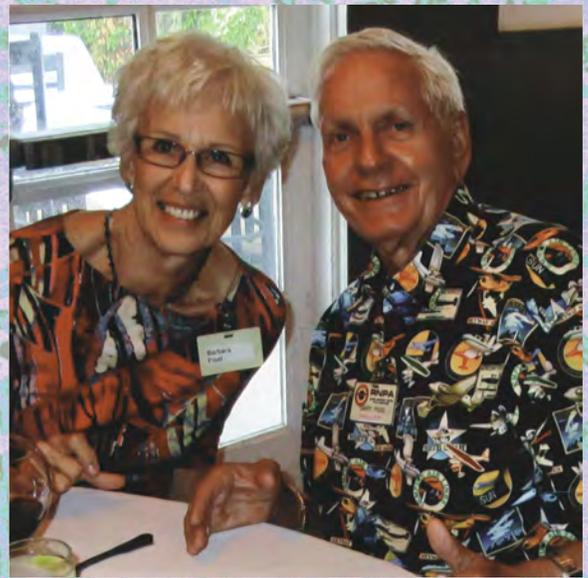
*Tom Lieberman, Jerry Burton*



Larry Lannoy,  
April & Mike Hay



Deneen Polgar,  
Sandy Schmidt



Barb & Gary  
Piscl



Bill Yates,  
Mike Young,  
Don Ellis

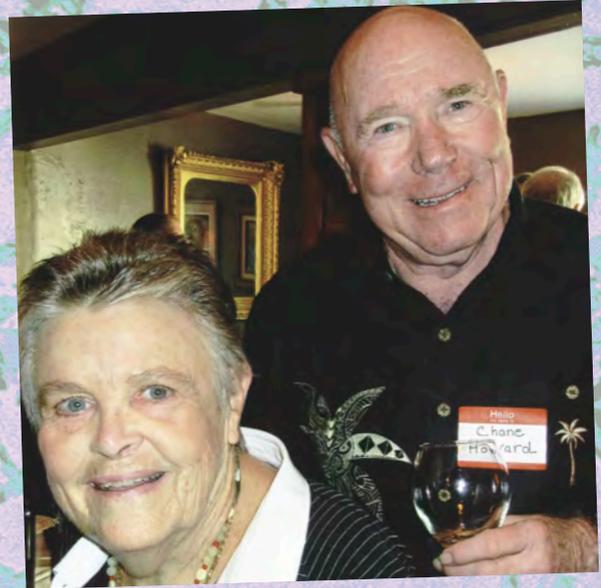
Francine Patrick,  
Betty Spohn,  
Larry Patrick



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Betty Spohn



Alona McFarland,  
Barb Yates



Judy & Chane  
Howard



Kathy & Wayne  
Stark

Wayne Stark,  
Wayne Spohn,  
Tony Polgar



*Eileen Halverson,  
Roxanne Davis,  
Diane Backovich*

*Karen & John  
Pennington*

*Deneen & Tony  
Polgar*



*Mike & Janet Minehan*

# MOUNT RAINIER, 1980

By Darrel Smith

They stood in the snow at twelve thousand five hundred feet, nose to nose, shouting angrily. Our climbing team had attempted to find a route around the right side of a huge vertical wall of ice. After struggling to a viewpoint, it was obvious that this direction was out of the question. The crumbled blue glacial ice was too steep and dangerous to even attempt.

Returning to the center of the ice wall and looking to our left, we saw a series of crevasses (large cracks in the ice) with walls of the same blue glacial ice. These crevasses were close together and so deep that I couldn't see the bottom, probably because I was afraid to go near their edges. The angry exchange was taking place between the two experienced climbers in our team of four, both having climbed Mt. Rainier three times.

One declared that we had made a good effort but we would have to come back another day to attempt the summit. He felt it was too dangerous for us to continue. The other had shouted, "Bullshit! We have worked our

butts off and we sure as Hell are not turning back!" Having no climbing experience, my friend Curt Bryan and I had no clue as to which to believe. The heated disagreement continued for some time.

This adventure began when I received a call from Curt Bryan, a classmate in our initial training class as pilots for Northwest Airlines. He had been a Navy pilot, loved the outdoors and was in great physical condition. He was part of a four-man team that planned to climb Mt Rainier. Their expedition was to begin only two days from the day that I had received his call. One of the proposed climbers had to cancel therefore I was invited to join the group as a replacement.

The Contract negotiated between Northwest Airlines and The Airline Pilots Union (ALPA) allowed a pilot a certain number of sick days each year. Some pilots used this contractual loophole several times a year to get days off with pay even though they were not sick. I desperate-



ly wanted to climb this mountain. During my thirty-year airline career I called in sick three times when I was not sick. This was one of those times.

I borrowed an ice axe and crampons (metal devices with large teeth, designed to be strapped to boots for walking on ice or snow) from a lawyer friend who had done a little mountain climbing. Not knowing what was needed, I crammed nearly all of my camping gear into a large bag. “Sick” or not, I was onboard the next available flight to Seattle.

Curt and his wife Sandy, graciously, allowed me the use of their guest bedroom. He and I covered their family room floor with our climbing gear. We spent hours trying to decide what to include as we packed our backpacks. That evening an experienced member of our group came for a visit to give us “first timers” some words of wisdom and basic training. The next day in our climb, we would be required to rope up as we started up the Inter Glacier. Knots, ropes and procedures were the topics covered in this session. We actually climbed the Bryans stone fireplace.

The next morning four climbers, one wife and all the gear were squeezed into a large station wagon for the 50-mile drive to our jumping off point. Arriving at the White River campground, we unloaded the car, strapped on our backpacks and, without ceremony, headed up the Glacier Basin Trail. This trail was not difficult, winding along the White River and through some old growth timber. After a leisurely lunch, we arrived at the foot of the Inter Glacier.

It was time for another lesson. The experienced climbers took a few minutes to teach Curt and me the technique for “self-arrest”. Should a climber fall and start to slide off the mountain, he was to turn onto his stomach, spread his legs and dig the point of his ice axe into the ice and snow. This lesson took about 15 minutes. We were now trained mountaineers! We roped up and attacked the glacier.

As we made our way up this vast field of ice and snow, eventually Mother Nature made her call to each of us. The wife, who was going only to the first camp, announced that she needed to take a pee. Only ice and snow was visible for what seemed to be miles. One of the guys sort of stammered that we would look the other way. I was surprised when she replied, “Well, you can do as you please, but if you have never seen one of these things—maybe it is time.” She then dropped her trousers and got the job done.

Our goal that first day was to make our way to Camp Schurman near Steamboat Prow (a large rock shaped like the bow of a ship). The camp located at about ten thousand feet was roughly half way up the mountain. It consisted of a Rangers’ hut, a toilet and enough relatively

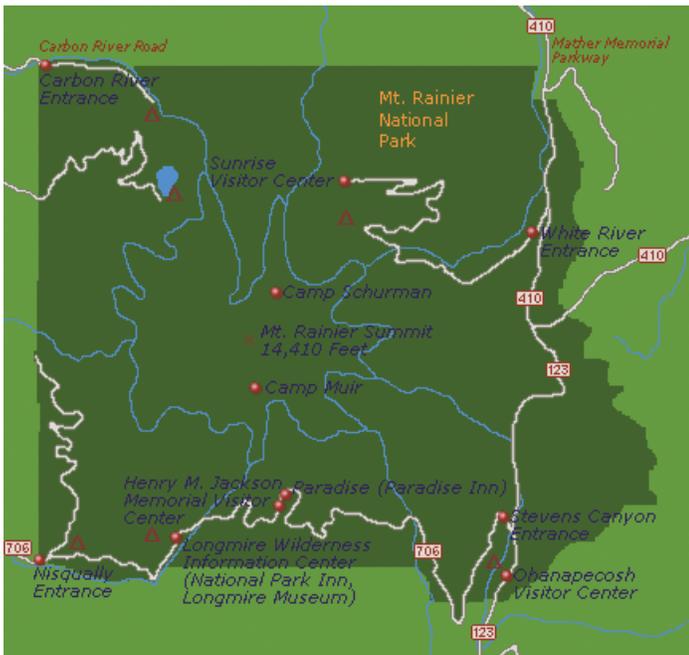
level ground for maybe 10 or 12 tents. The plan was to arrive early enough to set up the tents, prepare a meal and try to get as much sleep as possible. After we got the stove going, we mixed several totally different freeze-dried meals, creating a gourmet delight.

Since I was the last member to join the group, I was totally in the dark as to the planned sleeping arrangements. As the light gradually began to fade, the climber who had his wife along approached me and said “You will be sleeping with us tonight.” I did not know what to expect. I crawled into the tent and situated myself on the extreme side of the bed made from unzipped sleeping bags. I did not move. Soon the couple arrived—she stripped down to her bra and panties. He slipped under cover on the far side and she took the place between us. I did not sleep—what if I rolled over and threw my leg or arm across her? I stayed on my back with my arms tightly clamped across my chest. I desperately needed sleep but felt that I got very little. I didn’t want this guy to be beating on me in the middle of the night half way up a mountain.

**L**ong before daylight, we shouldered our much smaller packs and with headlamps illuminating the way, we started up this formidable mountain. As we walked out of camp several strings of lights could be seen snaking their way upward. These groups that had started climbing earlier were well ahead of us.

The initial pace was steady but slowed significantly as we ran into the first of many crevasses that we would encounter. Glaciers are massive rivers of ice that are always on the move. This movement creates huge horizontal cracks, sometimes wide and sometimes narrow but always deep. We were required to travel left and right as we made our way through this dangerous maze. At times we would walk on the lower edge of a crevasse with the gaping mouth of the next only a few feet below. A fall here would cause serious injury if not death. I was terrified!

On several occasions, we were required to use “snow bridges” (natural bridges of ice and snow of unknown strength) to cross these monster crevasses. A climber would approach the end of the bridge, sit down, dig in his feet and force his ice axe handle deep into the ice and snow. The rope was then wrapped around the handle. Once established in his best position he would yell, “On belay.” Another climber positioned himself just short of the bridge. When he gets up enough courage he yells, “climbing” and carefully walks across. The man on belay feeds out the rope as he goes. This procedure was repeated until the entire team was safely across. Our leader insisted that we “yell” so that everyone had no doubt as to what was going on. Fatigue and lack of oxygen caused



sluggish reactions both physically and mentally. We could not afford a mistake!

We struggled upward, through various snow and ice conditions. The surface ice would thaw during the day then freeze again at night. It could be like crushed ice or smooth and hard. At one location, a large area was covered with bowl-like depressions about three feet across.

The eastern sky began to show some light with not a cloud in sight. Our leaders had insisted that we start climbing very early for two reasons. We needed to reach the summit with enough daylight remaining for our trip down to camp and then out to the car. As the sun warmed the surface the ice would melt making it much more difficult to make progress. This day would prove to be sunny and very warm, short sleeves and sweating were in order.

Shortly after an unbelievably beautiful sunrise, we approached the “ice wall.” Glacier ice can sometimes pull away from the ice above creating a wall (known as a bergschrund) like the one we were facing. Our experienced climbers were still trying to come to an agreement as to our next move—were we going up or back down this mountain? They finally decided that we would attempt to go up, but cautiously.

They studied the series of crevasses to our left and decided on a route out of our spot of bother. We would carefully walk a narrow ridge between two of those menacing cracks in the ice. Our walkway was about three feet wide and slightly rounded. On either side was a vertical drop of unknown depth. Should a climber go over the edge, the man immediately behind him was instructed to jump off the opposite side. Once things stabilized, with a man off either side, a plan could be made as to

how to retrieve them. The reasoning was that with our footing and state of fatigue we would be pulled over the edge one by one. I was shaking in my boots!

Our precarious walk to safety went without a hitch. The remaining climb to the summit was a matter of putting one foot ahead of the other. As we approached the summit several teams of climbers had funneled into a single path, which was well worn and easy to walk. Approximately one hour before reaching the crater rim, one of the experienced climbers began to show symptoms of altitude sickness. He had a severe headache and was mentally confused.

There were twenty or more climbers on the crater rim as we arrived. The day remained almost perfect and the view was exceptional, Seattle was easily visible. Looking to the south Mt. Adams, Mt. Hood and the still smoking Mt. St Helens were in plain view.

**I**t would have been nice to rest or even take a nap but we needed to get to a lower altitude. Our sick buddy was not getting any better. We paused only a few minutes before starting our long descent. The ailing climber was tied in as the first man on the rope (the lead) to give him something to keep his mind occupied. This arrangement did not work. He kept attempting to lead us the wrong way. Someone else took the lead and we hurried, as best we could, down the mountain.

I am happy to report that after getting to a lower level, the sick friend made a full recovery. The descent to camp was uneventful. We did run low on water and did not take the time to melt snow.

Arriving at Camp Schurman, we organized our backpacks, stocked up on water and ate a meal. The trek down the glacier and out to the car was still a major chore. The rocky but short trail from camp up Steam Boat Prow to the Inter Glacier was our first challenge.

The glacier in places was smooth and free of obstacles. We were taught the art of glissading. Still roped up, we sat single file with our ice axes held behind with points down. We slid on our butts using the axes as brakes. The wife was on the rope just ahead of me. When she stood up after a long run the entire seat of her wool trousers was missing. Her cheeks were quite rosy.

This was one of the most physically demanding days of my life. We arrived at the parking lot and I could see the car only a hundred yards away.

I did not feel I had the strength to get there.

Many times during the remaining years of my flying career with Northwest Airlines, I observed Rainier from the air. It is truly an awesome mountain and, at times, I found it hard to believe that I had once stood on the summit. I will remember this climb as one of the greatest adventures of my life. ✨



# ST. CROIX RIVER SUMMER CRUISE

## JUNE 16TH, 2016

### 11:30AM – 2:30PM

**\$30**  
PER PERSON

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.

**Reservation DEADLINE is** 📌 June 8th 📌



NAME(S)


First Timers?

Checks payable to "MSP RNPA Cruise" and mail to:

Phil Hallin

9630 Independence Circle #206

Chanassen, MN 55317



**Lockheed Electra 10  
Pima Air Museum  
Tucson, Arizona  
by Richard Duxbury**

After visiting Pima Air Museum and having my picture taken by the Lockheed Electra 10 I was motivated to look into the background of this historic Northwest Airlines aircraft with its twin engines and twin tail.

The first flight of the Lockheed Electra 10 took place in February 1934. It was a good design and after some modifications it went into production in Burbank, California. Clarence "Kelly" Johnson, while a graduate student at the University of Michigan, did wind tunnel tests on a small model of the Electra. After graduation he joined Lockheed. Johnson later became Skunk Works boss for aircraft such as the F-104, U-2, and the SR-71: as well as the Super Connie with four big radial engines.

The father of a squadron mate and good friend from my Navy flying days took many test flights in the Lockheed Electra. Milo Burcham crashed and died while on a test flight of the P-38.

Meanwhile, in the 1930s other similar aircraft were coming on line. This included the twin Beechcraft that I flew to maintain my Navy flight proficiency while in graduate school in Washington D. C.

In 1934 the government banned single engine aircraft for passengers on night flights. This was good news for the Lockheed Electra 10 with its twin engines. Subsequently it was flown by fourteen countries and was adopted for military sales. Only one hundred-forty nine of these aircraft were produced.

Northwest Airways had a good run with the aircraft. They flew a total of five, and sometimes six of the Electra, from Holman Field in St. Paul to Midway Airport in Chicago between 1934 and 1937. The Electra had ten seats and a primitive lavatory placed in a 40 square foot space in the rear bulkhead: a chamber pot was tucked into the corner.

The Lockheed Electra was originally delivered with unusual, forward slanting cockpit windows, as can be seen in the older historic NWA picture. The thinking was it might be better for looking at instruments at night. However, the forward slant caused aerodynamic drag and was soon changed to the normal backward slant. Northwest mechanics changed the first three aircraft they owned to the newer design and all follow-on aircraft were delivered with the normal backward slant. There is another Lockheed Electra 10 with the Northwest logo in the New England Air Museum.

The Lockheed Electra Model 10 E, with somewhat newer engines and extra large gas tanks was the aircraft used on the attempt by Amelia Earhart and her navigator Fred Noonan to fly around the world.



“Kelly” Johnson at University of Michigan wind tunnel

Regards to all,  
Dux



Amelia Earhart with her Electra.

*Strictly by coincidence there are letters from Ms. Earhart to Northwest Airways' Croil Hunter on the following pages.*

*- Ed.*

AMELIA EARHART

Locust Avenue,  
Rye, New York

March 9, 1933.

Dear Croil:

I am glad Robert Gross is calling on you Monday. I think you will like to do business with him and his gang.

Concerning specifications for the twin-engined Lockheed, Paul Collins expressed himself as satisfied with details of construction, motors, gear, sound-proofing, instruments and their arrangement, as well as with all "gadgets". Thus the requirements to insist on, boil down to important ones of capacity and load distribution, speed, power plant specifications, and radio equipment.

Under the first it seems advisable to have 10 passenger seats, 2 pilot places, 4 gasoline tanks holding 40 gals. each, and a 300 pound baggage compartment. This arrangement could be used in any combination of passenger, pilots, mail and gasoline, depending on the run.

As to speed, the planes should cruise 180 MPH at 85% motor output. With flaps, the landing speed should not be more than 65 MPH, though a higher one would not be a valid cause for much concern, in my opinion. Take-off and climb are not very important in commercial flying.

Two motors are only a nuisance unless altitude with full pay load can be maintained at 4000 ft. by means of one engine alone.

In considering radio equipment I believe serious thought should be given to the necessity of two-way transmission. It is of course desirable in some instances but before you plan to sacrifice other features to make sending possible I should advise a thorough check in the light of high speed operation. It may be that reception

AMELIA EARHART

-2-

of the beam and weather reports will be found all that is essential. I shall talk with you more about this later. As with radio, please think in terms of high speed operation when you juggle the variables of load, gasoline capacity and pay load, as enumerated in the first paragraph.

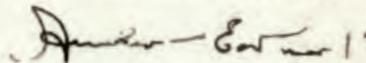
For instance, remember that with shorter runs the necessity for two pilots diminishes.

Paul Collins suggested to Lockheed officials that they were wasting space by having the cabin as wide as it is. He said it could be decreased by 6", which reduction would tend to increase speed and facilitate flying on one motor, because the power plants could be brought in closer to the cabin. Further, such reduction would not interfere with passenger comfort.

You will find that in ordering ships on paper the purchaser will probably be required to put up 20% of the final price. This amount cares for the engines, which manufacturers will not supply on credit. Ownership of the engines would be your protection should the deal fall through because specifications were not lived up to.

If the foregoing does not cover what you want, telegraph me at Rye.

Sincerely yours,



Croil Hunter, Esq.,  
Northwestern Airways,  
St. Paul, Minn.

P.S. While talking with Gross you might sound him out on the possibility of gearing the motors. Pratt & Whitney have told me gearing would add about 250 lbs. in weight. However, speed and efficiency might be increased to offset this load. I am looking into the details of this further.



# Airline Travel Gain Forces Double Tracks

Millions of Dollars Put  
Into New Equipment  
to Get Business.

Chicago, July 11 (A.P.)—The skyways of the Nation are being "double tracked."

A survey of major air lines carrying passengers to every corner of America—and one of them planning to extend across the ocean—showed tonight that commercial aviation has increased its passenger income by one-third in recent weeks.

The reason: Renewed activity in general business and loss of what aviation men call "air anxiety" by the public.

The result: A battle for the new business comparable to that of the railroads several decades ago.

## Scrap Many Planes.

In the scramble for passengers, millions of dollars have been spent for new equipment. Fleets of planes are being virtually scrapped in favor of faster ones. One line contemplates spending \$4,000,000 for new ships.

Planes carrying ten passengers at three miles a minute in sound-proof cabins have been evolved by United Air Lines. American airways has responded with ships in which passengers can sleep on comfortable berths during night trips between Chicago and the Pacific Coast.

Northwest Airways has ordered a fleet of planes capable of 215 miles an hour with a cruising speed of 180 and announced a plan to compete for business between Chicago and the Pacific Northwest.

## 100 Per Cent Gain.

As proof of increasing business, the municipal airport here announced tonight that 6,927 passengers were carried out of Chicago on regularly scheduled trips during June, an increase of 100 per cent from a year ago.

Trips between New York and Chicago have been doubled by three lines. A traveler between the two cities now has a choice of more than 200 planes daily.

The increased passenger business has little more than replaced the 25 per cent cut in Federal payments for carrying the mail.

AMELIA EARHART

Locust Avenue,  
Rye, New York.

July 16, 1933.

Dear Croil:

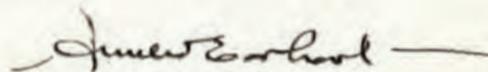
Here's a clipping from a Washington paper which may be of interest to you.

When I left for the Coast I thought you would be in New York in my absence, so asked G. P. to report to you certain matters that seemed to me of some importance. I now find that you haven't been East so shall wait and tell you about them myself when opportunity offers. Mostly they concern Washington, whence I returned yesterday after meeting Mr. Mitchell, the head of the transportation set-up.

By the way, when I was in California I went through the Lockheed plant. They are working on your order to be delivered, I should judge next spring.

I am still keen about the plan which originated this order and believe it, or something like it, is necessary to permit North-West to maintain its place in transport development.

Sincerely yours,



Croil Hunter, Esq.,  
Northwest Airways, Inc.,  
St. Paul, Minn.

# SOUTHWEST FLORIDA PICTURE ALBUM

Spring Luncheon  
2016



For the umpteenth time Dino & Karen Oliva, pictured below, hosted the Southwest Florida Spring Luncheon in early March. For what I think is the third or fourth year in a row, Bill Horne, pictured below with John Scholl, took all of these photos.

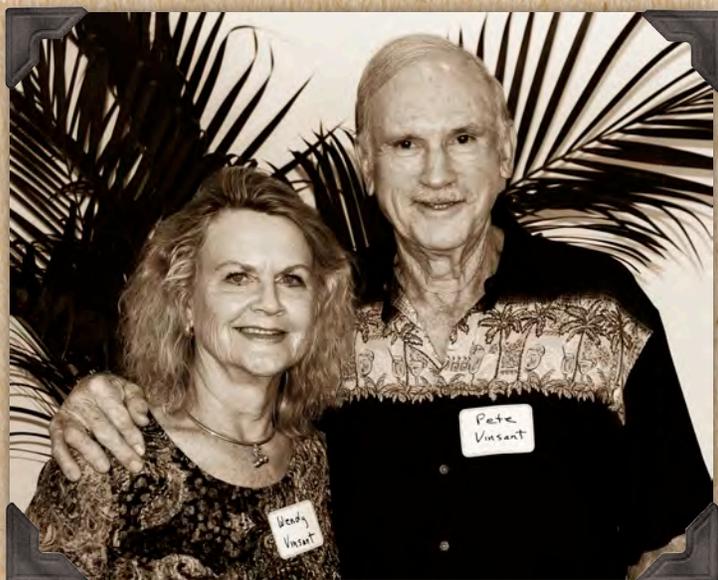
He and I agree that marina Jack's is a very difficult room to take decent photos because of the "one-sided" light from the massive windows overlooking the marina. His really nice shots were in beautiful color, but I chose to process them as sepia-toned just to do something a little different. — Ed.



Dino & Karen Oliva



Bill Horne, John Scholl



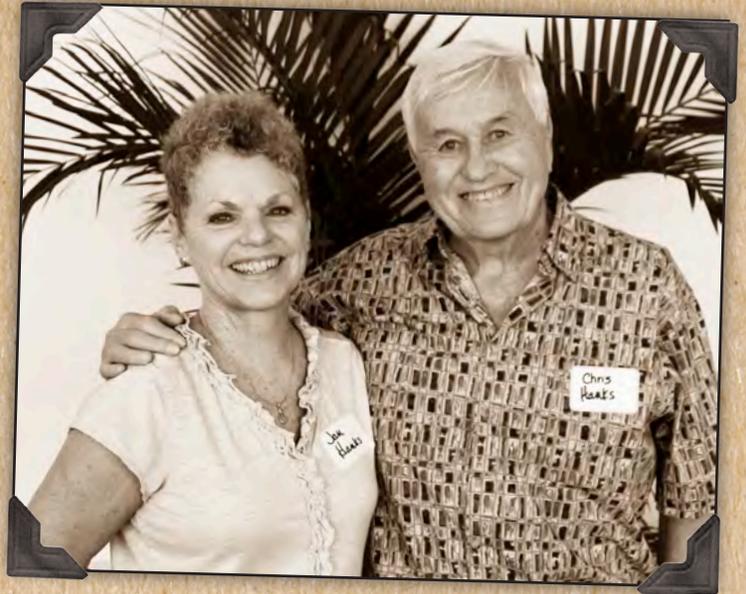
Pete & Wendy Vinsant



Gary & Courtney Webb



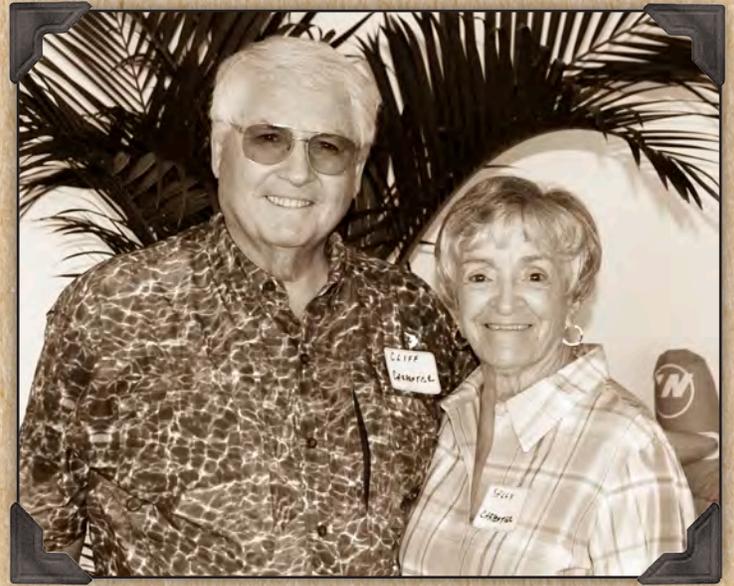
Howie & Marilyn Leland



Chris & Jan Hanks



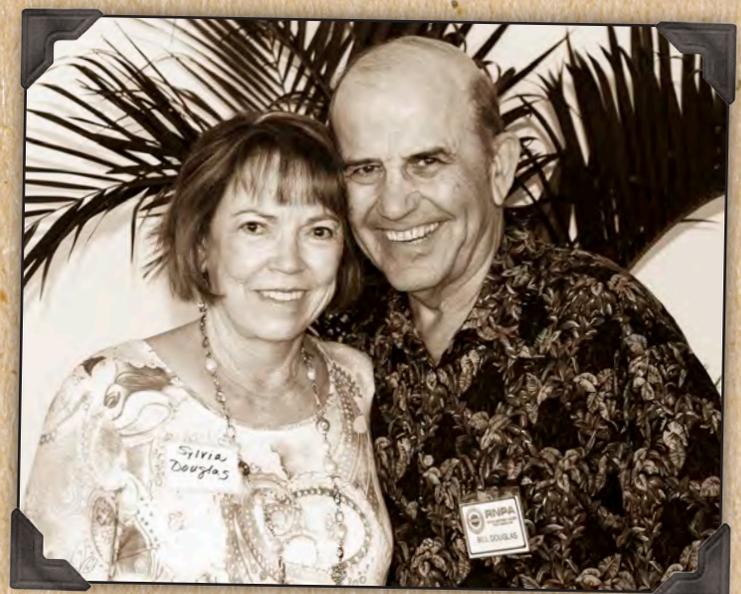
Wes & Colleen Vermillion



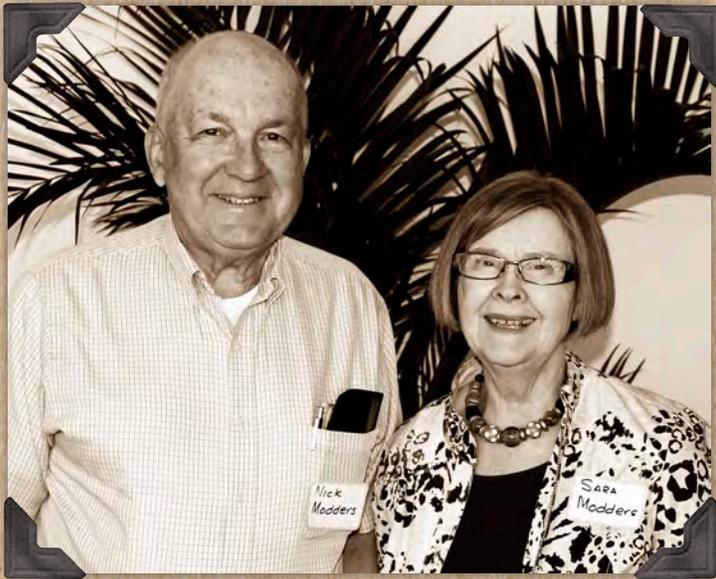
Cliff & Sally Carpenter



Ned & Ellen Stephens



Bill & Sylvia Douglas



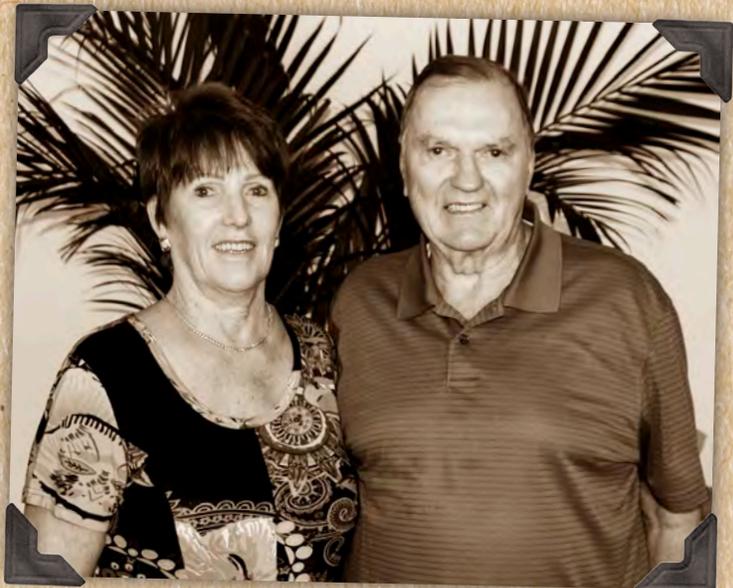
Nick & Sara modders



Tom & Berit Roberts



Vince & Valerie Catalano



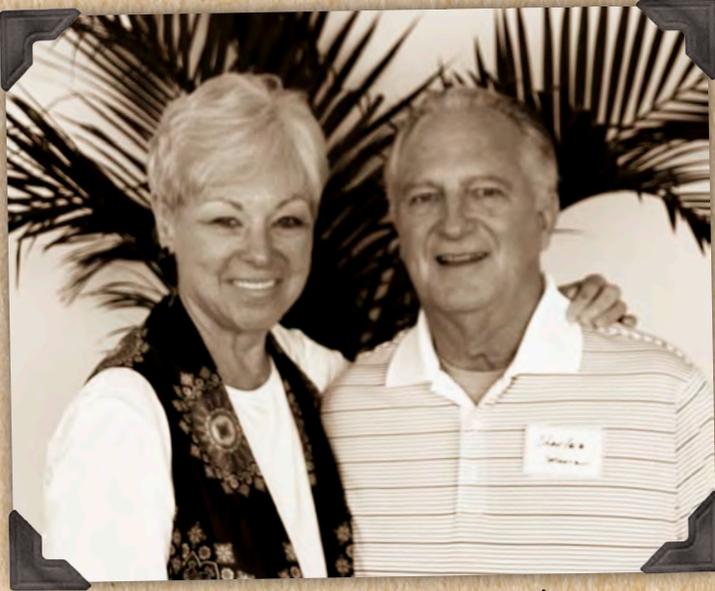
Arnie & Linda Calvert



marilyn Leland, Karen Oliva



John & Claire Lackey



Charles Moore & Connie Thompson



Dick & Lois Haglund



Steve Towle & Stevie Gilbert



Dave & Lorna Wooden



Joel & Brooke Taliaferro



Bill & Judy Rataczak



Dave & Jane Sanderson



Wayne & Rita Ward



Tim & Linda Walker



Coleen Blume, Sharon Kemnitz



Al Teasley & Marlay Barbee



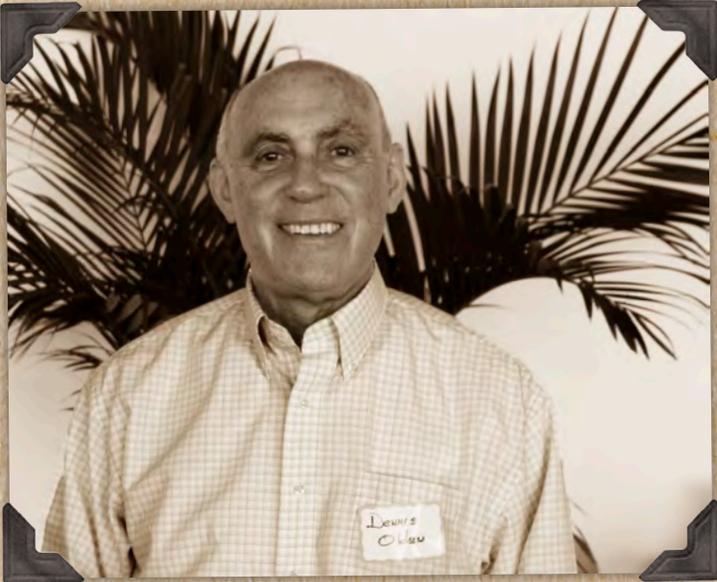
Paul & Carolyn Ringer



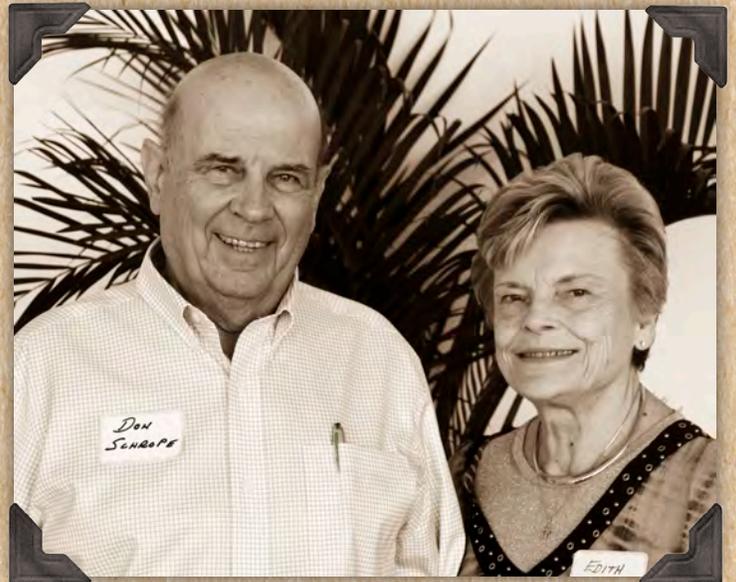
Glenn & Ursula Houghton



George & Bobbi Lachinski



Denny Olden



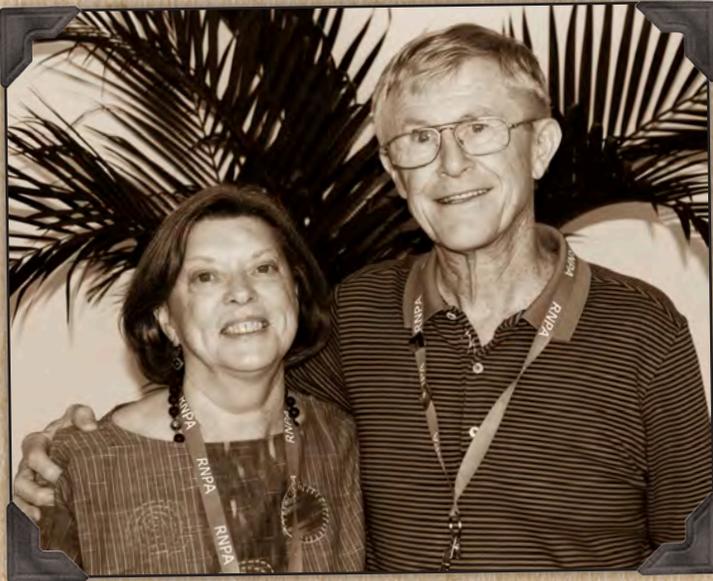
Don & Edith Schrope



Duane & Bev Chirhart



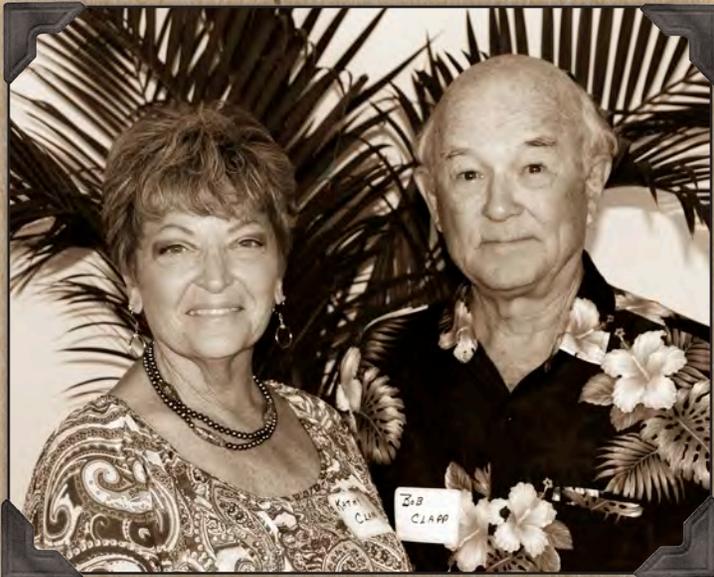
Roger & Julie Moberg



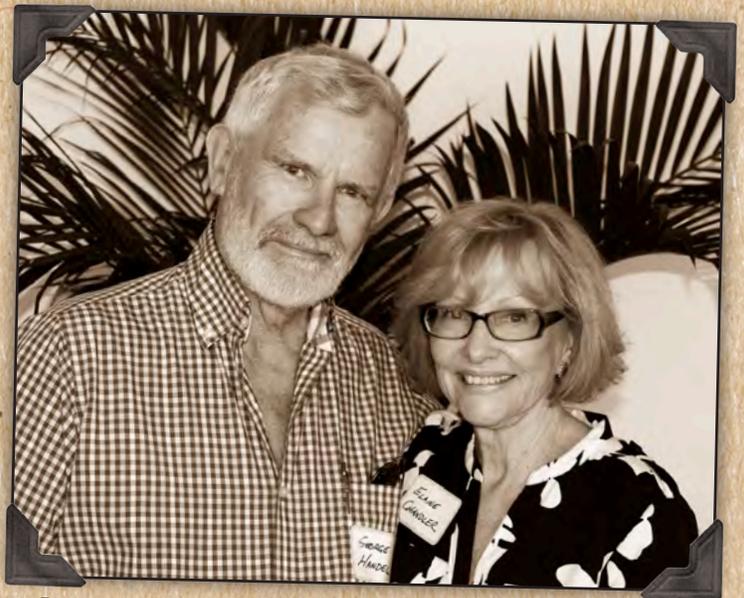
Bruce & Susan Burkhard



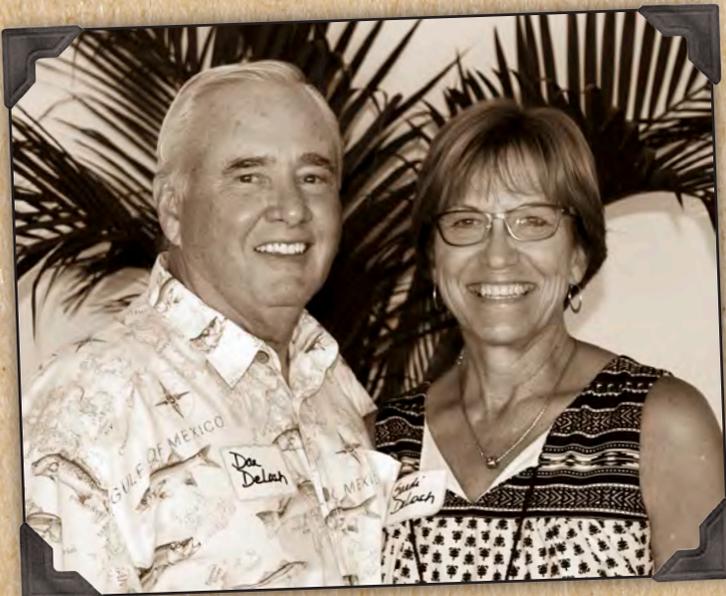
Gene & Joan Sommerfeld



Bob & Kathy Clapp



George Handel & Elaine Chandler



Dan & Sandi DeLosh



Dave Good & Jackie Wiczorek



Dino Oliva



Tim Walker, Don Aulick



Fred & Teresa Field



Gary Webb, John Scholl



Cortney Webb, John Scholl



John Scholl, Brooke Taliaferro,  
John's son - also John Scholl



Verna Finneseth, Barb Immel, Lois Haglund



Joe Fouraker



Roger Moberg



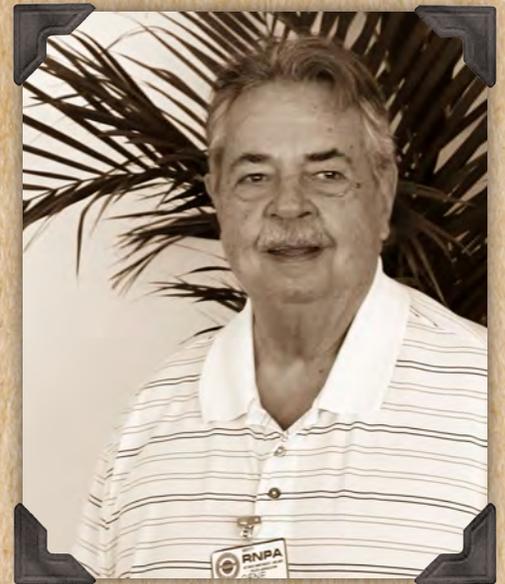
Steve Towle & Stevie Gilbert, Duane & Bev Chirhart



Joel Taliaferro, Chris Hanks, John Lackey



Ken Finney



Dave Wooden, Marilyn Leland, Karen Oliva, Phil Hallin      Gene Kragness



Phil Hallin



Nick Modders, Bill Douglas, Keith Maxwell, Dave Napier



Howie Leland, Julie Moberg, Karen Oliva



Claire Lackey

# The Sorcerer's Apprentice

*Or:*

## I Bet You Left the Pitot Tube Covers On

By Mark Neville

Recently a former Northwest colleague of mine, Bill Palmer, wrote an excellent book on the Air France A-330 crash in the Atlantic Ocean titled "Air France 447 Explained." The book is written primarily for pilots and is only about a two hundred pages. But in those pages, he clearly explains the crash and explores some additional factors that the Safety Board seems to have forgone. As short as the book is; it still takes you longer to read about the accident than the two minutes it took for it to fully transpire. His conclusion, for the most part is straight forward; pilots need to be more conversant with "hand flying." Especially when there is a partial loss of primary instruments.

The importance for the pilot to be able to seamlessly and effortlessly takeover for automation and "hand fly" cannot be overstated. This started me thinking about an incident that occurred to me in my first year of flying the C-141, a four jet engine military transport. (Those of you who have flown either the C-130 or the P-3 would readily recognize the cockpit as Lockheed, they are all similar)

In 1978 I was a new co-pilot on the military Lockheed C-141 Starlifter. It was considered a choice assignment for a new Lieutenant. Besides being a pilot, my secondary job was to work as a pilot scheduler. One foggy morning I showed up at the



office and the senior scheduler asked me if I wanted to fly? And of course I said "yes!" It had turned out an early morning arrival to McChord Air Force Base, had diverted to Sea-Tac International due to morning fog; whereupon the crew had parked the aircraft, sealed the doors, and took ground transport back to the base. (Approximately 40 miles) A pickup crew of available flight engineers and a pilot from another Squadron was assembled and of we went to pick up our wayward bird at SeaTac.

We arrived at SeaTac to find the 141 had been parked on the far side of the airport where there were no services. When I got out of the van I noticed the crew had put the pitot covers on, but as I climbed up the stairs to the aircraft the engineers asked me if I wanted to help them pump up the hydraulic accumulator.

The accumulator was a hydraulic pressure storage cylinder that preserved pressure to start the Auxiliary Power Unit (APU) located in the left wheel well in the event that there was no external power available, which was certainly the case out on the far side of SeaTac. To gain enough hydraulic pressure to start the APU required 240 pumps of the two handled manual lever which was designed to be used by two crew members standing opposite to each other pushing and pulling on the same handle in opposing

directions. It was a lot of effort and I had to catch my breath when we were done.

Mercifully the APU started on the first try, permitting the flight engineers to supply the aircraft with electricity and air pressure that would be needed to start the jet engines. (The APU itself was a jet engine, the very one used to power the T-37 pilot trainer)

Having completed my Lieutenant chores I climbed to the cockpit only to find that the inbound crew had removed all the charts and approach plates. We hadn't anticipated this and we'd brought none. Not having charts and approach plates was a little like flying blind, but I had the brilliant idea to use the last radio frequency left on the control panel to call ground and ask them for the clearance frequency and the tower. Once airborne we would request ground radar directions direct to McChord: Problem solved.

We completed the cockpit preflight, received our radar clearance, and started engines. Once underway we taxied across the field to the busy commercial side and took our position in line for takeoff. When it was our turn for takeoff, Tower asked us to expedite due to arriving traffic. Unfortunately the Aircraft Commander was used to taxing slowly, so the start of our takeoff was painfully slow but once he applied full power we were at our rotate speed almost immediately. This due to our extremely light weight. It was my job to call rotate at 116 knots (I still remember that speed after all these years) which I did, but as soon as I had, the airspeed started to act erratic, bouncing fast and slow.

I was commanded to "raise the landing gear" at which time the Aircraft Commander said, "I don't have any airspeed or altitude." I looked at my instruments and said "my altitude and airspeed are erratic." I then looked at the flight engineer occupying the jump seat between us and asked, "Did you take off the pitot tube covers?" He replied, "What pitot tube covers?"

I reached up and turned off the pitot heat so the covers would not melt into the tube blocking it. Since our instruments were unreliable, we had to find a way not to have to fly in level flight. I requested an altitude we could not make; 10,000 feet. I proposed to the captain that we just climb until we were half the distance to McChord and then I would request a lower altitude we could not reach by the time we got to McChord so we would not have to level off and fly a precise altitude. And once we were 2,500 feet or less, we could rely on our radar altimeter

rather than using pitot air pressure, used a radar signal bounced directly off the ground below.

Luckily most of the fog had cleared so that we would not have to fly a precise altitude, I then suggested we fly an Instrument approach with a glide-slope indication to the runway. This would make it easier to land because we could just follow the 3 degree glideslope and set an approximate power setting that would ensure we flew fast enough to not stall. We broke out of the clouds around 2000 feet and flew the pitch and power settings we were familiar with for this type of approach. We made an otherwise uneventful landing.

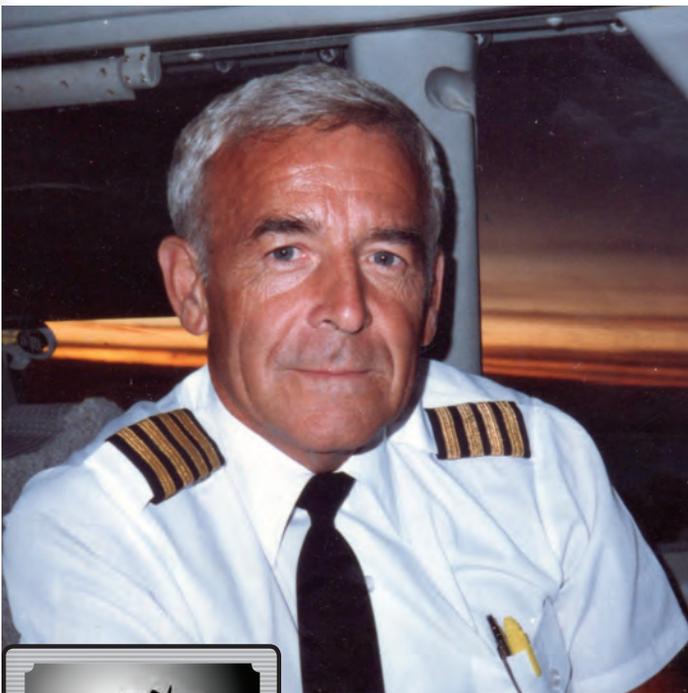
Once clear of the runway we stopped the aircraft so that the engineer could get off the airplane and remove the offending pitot covers so that no one would be the wiser. We then taxied to parking, and shut down. There were no "high fives."

After leaving the flight line I returned to the Scheduling office where there was a small gathering of pilots. The senior scheduler, who was the very best C-141 pilot and instructor I ever knew, looked up from the desk and asked how the flight went? I replied sheepishly, "Ah OK, but we had some air-speed issues." The pilot standing behind the desk immediately retorted, "So what did you do, leave the pitot-tube covers on?" At that I had to tell them "yes." Then the pilot behind the desk exclaimed incredulously, "No! You didn't?" I replied "Oh yes we did!"

Then the senior scheduler stated he'd had the same thing happen to him when he was a pilot on the C-54 out of Prestwick. He went on "that they had handled it by setting pitch and power." I said we'd done the same. At that point the pilot behind the desk said, "Geez, I'm sorry, we brought the plane in, and after sealing the aircraft we realized we'd forgotten to write it up in the aircraft log that we'd put the covers on. But we thought you would see them for sure." Well actually I did see them and I was going to mention it to the flight engineers, but when I became distracted with pumping the accumulator, I forgot. None of the planes we taxied by at SeaTac ever saw the red flags hanging off the pitot tubes.

I'm not particularly proud to write this story and like I said there were no "high fives," but there is a lesson. Hand flying and not panicking clearly helped us use all the resources we had readily available. Pitch and power carefully adjusted ensured our success.

Bill Palmer's book is an important reminder of the consequences of inadequate flight training and practice. ✈



**“VIC” MANUSSIER**  
1933 ~ 2016

**Captain Joseph Victor Manussier**, age 83, passed away suddenly on February 28, 2016. Vic was born February 14, 1933 in Washington, Iowa to Bill and Alice Manussier, an only child.

Vic grew up a town-kid in Washington, Iowa. His parents owned a nearby farm where as a child Vic accomplished chores, such as de-tasseling corn at eight years old. All his life Vic stayed close to his Iowa farming roots and in retirement he would travel to Iowa to assist a childhood buddy with Spring planting.

Throughout his life sports were Vic's main interest. He attended Central College in Pella, Iowa where he played varsity basketball, football and tennis. Basketball was his prime sport, but he also went out for football—until the basketball coach discovered his starters were risking their necks on the football field.

During these college years Vic attended Marine Corps Platoon Leaders Course (PLC) training at Quantico, VA. Upon college graduation he was commissioned into the USMC. Primary flight training at NAS Pensacola was next, followed by advanced training at Beeville, Texas. Winged on Dec. 19, 1956, Vic returned to Pensacola as a T-34 and T-28 instructor. Three days after receiving his wings he married Carol VerSteege. They set up homemaking in Pensacola where they forged lifelong friendships with fellow Naval and Marine aviators. Vic's military aviation career was an avenue for future airline employment. He was hired by NWA on January 14, 1959. During this 34 year career he flew the Douglas DC-4, 6, 7, and the DC-10; the Lockheed Electra; and the Boeing

707 (320-720), 727, and 747. Unknown to many, Vic played on the NWA Pilot Basketball team with the likes of Haven Hill, Fred Brietling, and Loren DeShon. Flying agreed with Vic, however it ended on February 14, 1993 when he confronted the age 60 mandatory retirement.

Hand eye coordination came easily for Vic, contributing to his flying, athletic, and construction trades skills. It was a high school shop class that launched Vic's interest in building. His daughter Gae still uses a clothing rack he built in that shop class. Vic later remodeled every house the family owned. The Manussier approach to life was to, "Leave things better than you found them."

Vic's daughter Gae chose to study at Auburn University (Alabama), never anticipating her father would become a HUGE Auburn sports fan. While remaining loyal to his alma mater and other Iowa teams, he loved Auburn University—to the point of choosing to reside in Auburn. His passion was for Auburn U football and basketball, but lately he became a baseball fan. Vic and Carol braved freezing temperatures to sit in the stands watching early spring games. His presence at various sporting events and participation in athletic scholarship programs have left an impact on the community he so loved. Vic and Carol had been to a game the afternoon of the day he died.

Vic was known for mentoring others toward aviation careers and helping people realize their dreams. He was also known by his family as a loving, generous man who would do anything for you. During the time Lyle Prouse was imprisoned in Atlanta, Vic stood by him as a true friend. When Lyle was released Vic was one of six pilots waiting to greet him as he walked out of prison.

Daughter Gae once aspired to be a pilot, but evolved into Information Technology with Delta Airlines. Son Joe resides in Wisconsin where he enjoyed hosting his parents to the Oshkosh airshows. Vic is survived by his wife of 59 years, Carol VerSteege Manussier; daughter Gabrielle (Gae) Green and son, Joseph Manussier III; granddaughter Madison Green. *(- Bill Day)*





**WAYNE TWITO**  
1920 ~ 2016



**Captain Wayne L. Twito**, age 96, of Bloomington, Minnesota, passed away February 16, 2016. Wayne was born on February 7, 1920 in Grano, North Dakota, the oldest of two children. His parents were both school teachers, therefore not surprising that Wayne was a master of the Palmer Method of penmanship. Wayne was a good student and pretty skilled with his Conn Soprano saxophone.

He attended part of a year at the University of North Dakota before contracting scarlet fever. After recovery he transferred to North Dakota State School of Science (NDSSS) at Wahpeton for two years of Liberal Arts education. During this time he worked for the Chamber of Commerce and announced at boxing events.

Wayne knew he eventually wanted a career in commercial aviation. Therefore he enrolled in the US Navy V-5 flight training program at NDSSS. His college era introduction to flying came with the N3N (Yellow Peril) and N2S (Steerman). Wayne left college and entered USN pilot training on August 15, 1941. Upon comple-



Bow ties at Wayne's funeral

tion he was designated a distinguished graduate and commissioned as an USMC officer. The authenticated log book entries for the military aircraft Wayne flew is exhaustive and incredibly diverse—approx. 25. They range from trainers to amphibious single and multi-engine fighters like the Hellcats and Corsairs, transports, rotor wing, the jet fighters of the 1950s & 60s and a variety of utility aircraft.

With credit for longevity of service and extensive tenure in the Pacific, Wayne was quick-released from active duty at the end of the Pacific War. On January 07, 1946 he was hired by Northwest Airlines. However, NWA did not have a pilot slot open for Wayne. He was given a seniority number and laid off. For the next two years he drove a street car while awaiting recall.

During WWII Wayne's wife Margaret was an Army WASP ferry pilot. Many of us delighted in Wayne's self-effacing account of how he was hired with far less flight time than Margaret. In the 1940s airlines were not hiring female pilots and Margaret was relegated to a job at the reservation desk at the Nicollet Hotel in Minneapolis. It was there that Wayne's eyes fell upon the lovely Margaret Ehlers, whom he wasted no time in inviting out to dinner. August 24, 1946 the couple began 62 years of fruitful marriage.

A Korean War recall interrupted Wayne's airline career. After Korea he remained a reservist and retired as a highly decorated Lt. Colonel.

Wayne had the smooth touch with airplanes. He was competent at flying to the point of being gifted. During the 1960s & 70s Wayne worked for Paul Soderlind in flight test as well as serving as an instructor pilot.

During his 44 year career at NWA Wayne flew the DC-3,4, 6, 7 the Martin 202, Lockheed Electra, Boeing 377, 707 series (320 & 720), 727, and the Boeing 747 (100-200). He mandatory retired at age 60 in February of 1980, but in 1983 Wayne returned to the cockpit as a flight engineer. His final flight was on Feb. 28, 1991—50 years of aviation.



There is an airline story that sums up the character of this fine man. Wayne was waiting for the crew bus at MSP, when some other crew members arrived. He helped load the luggage of those who had been waiting less time than himself and then discovered there was not enough room for him. Wayne calmly insisted that he would wait for the next bus. He simply put others first—an exemplary life.

Besides his love of sports, Wayne loved pampering

his Buicks. You would have been wise to purchase his used cars. Wayne and Margaret sang in their church choir. Embracing a well-balanced lifestyle, after choir practice he and his friends went out for drinks. He also loved playing golf with his church buddies.

Wayne was preceded in death by his loving wife Margaret and daughter Rinda. He is survived by sons, Dr. Randy Twito and Rev. Roger Twito, plus nine grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. *(– Bill Day)*



## “CY” PETERSON 1929 ~ 2016

**Captain Silas Carlyle Peterson Jr.**, age 86, of Northfield, Minnesota flew west February 26, 2016. Cy was born December 10, 1929 in Cleveland, Ohio to Silas and Dorothy Peterson. An excellent student, Cy graduated from Tabor Academy High School (Marion, MA) class of 1947. At the University of New Mexico, Cy excelled in both Spanish and playing the guitar while majoring in psychology. Earning a BA degree and completing Air Force ROTC in 1951, he went on active duty September 20, 1951 amidst the Korean War. Cy flew transport and troop carrier aircraft while on active duty. As a reservist he served as a transport navigator with the 133rd Airlift Wing MN ANG.

Cy acquired his FAA pilot ratings through general aviation sources and was hired by NWA on May 08, 1959 during a period of extended layoffs and unstable airline employment for many.

Soon laid off and in need of employment himself, Cy found a job with the University of Illinois transporting their personnel in V-tail Bonanzas, Beechcraft Model 18 (former C-45s) and a DC-3. While there Cy married Katharine Taylor on June 8, 1962. In time the Peterson family would lay deep roots in Northfield, Minnesota.

After a short tenure instructing at Ohio State, NWA recalled Cy after which he flew quite a inventory of aircraft: the DC-6, DC-7, Electra, Boeing 707, 727, DC-10 and Boeing 747. I recall one of my first 707/720 Second Officer trips with Cy as copilot and Joe Quinn as captain. As Cy pushed the power up for takeoff the JT-3D engines started compressor stalling, without looking backwards Cy calmly said: “Bill, turn off the fuel heat.” How did he know?

NWA pilot Wayne Anderson offer his condolences, “He was one of the really good guys. An excellent pilot who was extremely professional. Silas was fun and interesting to be around. Very intelligent, and a great conversationalist. As a young pilot he was someone I picked to be the Captain I wanted to fly with, and when I became a Captain myself, a pilot I wanted to emulate. Silas will be missed.”

Fellow pilot Phil Brown recalls, “I will always remember Cy as a consummate gentleman and I considered myself lucky if I was able to hold his schedule at NWA. Also, when I used to store a boat during the winter in his barn he was always polite and personable.” Phil’s assessment is echoed by Natt Cobb who comments, “Silas and I met at NWA. He was a consummate gentleman, and a very enjoyable acquaintance, in numerous ways.”

Cy Peterson retired from NWA in December, 1989 to the 160 family farm near Northfield. The Peterson farm adjoins land owned by NWA pilot Bob Matta. Together Cy and Katharine grew hay for horses, harvested maple syrup and managed a large vegetable garden. They also owned and flew a V-tail Beech Bonanza they hangared at the Faribault, MN Airport. Cy and Katharine also owned an interest in the Stanton Airfield east of Northfield on MN Highway 19 where Cy would occasionally flight instruct and attend to the needs of the airfield.

Cy’s health gradually failed late in life. He passed away in the Northfield Hospital Long Term Care unit. Our friend and colleague was preceded in death by his son Pete (Silas III) and his parents. He is survived by his wife of 53 years Katharine Peterson of Northfield, his daughter Natalie Hale N of Tecumseh, OK and her two children Renee Hale and Levi Kripner. *(– Bill Day)*

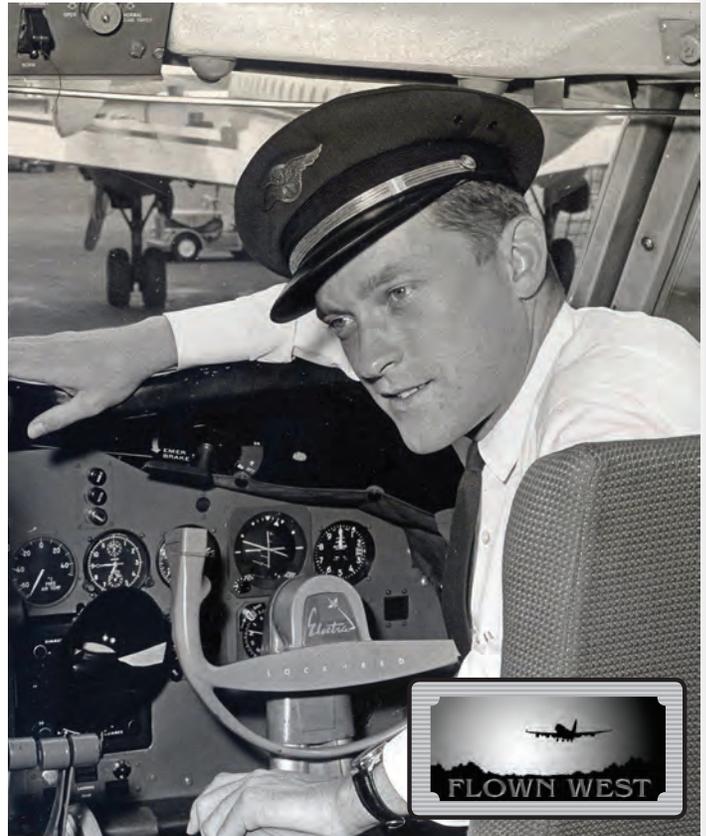
**Captain William Gaylord Carrothers Jr**, age 83 years, flew west on March 9th, 2016 in Scottsdale, AZ after a long and courageous battle with Lewy Body Dementia. My father was born on June 23, 1932 in Kansas City, MO.

After attending college for three years, he enlisted in the Navy, completed aviation training, was commissioned as an Ensign and flew a Lockheed P2V Neptune in Patrol Squadron 10 (VP10), based in NAS Brunswick, Maine and often deployed to Argentina, Newfoundland. They spent their days monitoring and photographing Russian submarine traffic coming in and out of the North Atlantic during the height of the Cold War. Upon his discharge in 1957, he joined Northwest Airlines where he remained for 34 years, flying the Lockheed Electra, the 727 Tri-motor, and captaining a DC-10 from 1973 until his retirement in 1992. In his spare time, he owned Carrothers Construction Company and built homes around the western suburbs of Minneapolis. An avid tennis player, Bible Study Fellowship leader, and maker of fine agate jewelry, Dad was also a lover of music and animals, and was a devoted family man.

He loved everything about flying, except the check rides. I remember check ride time... Ooooh. Don't go near Dad until next Tuesday. It's CHECK RIDE TIME. Revisions, revisions, revisions. He didn't know I used to sit outside his bedroom door, listening in on the proceedings. Along with the sounds of a crackling fire, I could hear him snapping open and closed his flight books, swearing occasionally as he prepared for his twice-yearly check.

Before he retired, I asked him what he'd learned after 38 years of flying airplanes. He said, "1) Nothing can get away from you faster than an airplane. 2) Two engines are better than one and three engines are better than two. 3) I was told that when I retire, they're going to take me out to the end of the runway and show me the big picture."

His death wasn't entirely unexpected but it was still a total shock when my Superman died. He was such a



## **"BILL" CARROTHERS 1932 ~ 2016**

permanent fixture in my life. He taught me how to play chess and shake hands properly. He taught me about being Scottish and loving music and living a life of honor and integrity. Integrity was always the theme. He was a loyal confidant. He was my strength, my example, my best friend, and the most honest man I've ever known. It was always an honor to introduce him to others as my father. Dad was always looking out for me. I think back to all the things he did for me and all the support and advice he provided. He always encouraged me to strive for excellence. He used to call it "going for the brass ring." I never knew exactly what that meant, but I knew what he meant.

Seeing a disease ravage his mind and body in the last couple years was really tough to watch. It's a helpless feeling that our whole family was witness to. But he lived a long, amazing life. He lived a life of honor and of worth. He loved and was loved. In the end, those are the things that really matter. And now he joins the cosmos and takes his place among the stars. He's out there somewhere, looking at the big picture.

He is survived by his loving wife of 56 years, Patricia Ann Carrothers (Gray); children Kimberley Ann Piroyan (Wallace), William Gaylord Carrothers (Margery Ann); and grandchildren Edward William and Ellie Rose Carrothers.

*(- William G. Carrothers, son of Captain Carrothers)*





**“NORM” RICE**  
1947 ~ 2016

**Captain Norman Arthur Rice**, age 69, of Bemus Point, NY and St. Pete Beach, FL, passed away in Bemus Point on February 27, 2016 with his brother Jack at his side.

Norm was born in Rochester, NY on February 15, 1947, the youngest of three sons of the late Winston C. and Anna B. Rice. The Rice family were long-time residents of Bemus Point which is within the town of Ellery on the eastern shore of beautiful Chautauqua Lake.

As a young man his interests were far ranging. In elementary school he won a spelling bee, while at Bemus Point Central High School (class of 1965) he excelled in sports; specifically basketball, football, tennis, and bowling. Norm matriculated into Colgate University to study geology. A leadership role in the Lambda Chi fraternity, serious racquet ball competitions and Air Force ROTC rounded out his already diverse life.

In the summer of 1969, after graduation from Colgate with a BS in Geology, Norm was called to active duty with the Air Force. He reported to Moody AFB, GA for USAF pilot training. Flying airplanes and Norm were a good fit. He graduated with distinction and thereafter trained as a C-130 pilot. During the Vietnam war he acquired considerable combat zone time in the C-130. After duty in Southeast Asia, Norm was sent PCS to Sau-

di Arabia as a C-130 advisor and instructor to the Saudi Air Force.

Norm’s last active assignment was to 4953rd Test Squadron at Wright Patterson AFB, the base from which he separated from active duty on Aug. 21, 1978. His airline career progression as follows: The Air Force to Sun Country Airlines; Sun Country to Braniff Airlines; and then the defunct Braniff to Northwest Airlines. Norm was hired by Northwest on Jan. 11, 1985. During much of his ensuing airline career Norm stayed in the Air Force Reserve retiring as Lt.Col. serving in a C-130 Airlift Wing.

Norm’s twenty-eight year airline career includes twenty-two years at NWA flying the 727, 757, and 747/200. When he retired on February 15, 2007 he was flying captain on the Boeing 747/200 from the Anchorage base.

Having never married, Norm’s life centered on flying and spending time with his extended family and many friends. He was an avid water sportsman. Much of his life activities and residences were near waterways: including Mound, MN, St. Pete Beach, FL, and Bemus Point, NY.

His passions included international travel, riding Harley motorcycles with friends, RVs, ATVs, boating, golf, tennis, racquet ball, and the social interactions associated with these activities.

In retirement Norm was an active member of the Bemus Point VFW, Fluvanna War Vets at Jamestown, NY, the American Legion at St. Pete Beach, FL, and numerous other organizations. Norm was generous about opening his homes at Bemus Point, NY and St. Pete Beach, FL to others. Many differing organizations and people benefitted from his generosity.

Norm is survived by two brothers, Don Rice of San Jose, CA and Jack Rice of Colorado Springs, CO, plus nephews David, Bill, and Chris and one niece Danielle.

(- Bill Day)





## BLAIR SMITH 1945 ~ 2016

**Captain R. Blair Smith**, age 70, passed away peacefully on March 13, 2016 surrounded by his family in Chandler, AZ. He succumbed to congestive heart failure. Blair was born on June 30, 1945 in Rexburg, Idaho to Arthur and Ila Smith. The Smiths had six children, five sons and one daughter, Blair was a twin and NWA pilot Vern Smith was an older brother. The Blair family had deep roots in the LDS church.

Blair, a gifted athlete as well as a good student, also had a penchant for poetry and writing. After high school Blair served his two years LDS church overseas mission in Uruguay and Paraguay. From this experience Blair remained fluent in Spanish. Decades later he served a second mission at the Bishop's Storehouse in Palmer, Alaska. After his overseas mission, Blair completed an Associate degree at Palomar Community College in San Marcos, CA. At the time of graduation he was offered a full-ride scholarship to attend Brigham Young University to play basketball. His brother Vern, being aware of the vicissitudes of airline hiring, convinced Blair to waste no time in acquiring his pilot ratings. Blair passed up the Brigham Young scholarship to attend Herrod School of Aviation in Billings, MT.

Mike Ristow reports that he met Blair at Herrod School of Aviation in early September 1967. "We were in the basement of the airport at least twelve hours a day, six days a week, either flying or studying. One day Blair's brother, Vern Smith, flew through Billings in an Electra and with Smithusiam Vern hurried us out to the airplane in which he had five mounted heads of animals

he had shot in Alaska and had taxidermist mounted in Butte. The heads were placed in First Class seats. I think Vern got two weeks off for that escapade, but he sure impressed Blair and myself with what "Captain's authority" must mean. Blair and Vern should have been born 100 years earlier so they could hunt with muzzle loaders, and trap with Jim Bridger."

Blair and Mike Ristow were hired on September 23, 1968 into the last initial-hire class of 707 Second Officers. Both were assigned to Seattle after finishing training. Blair flew many Boeing 320C military charters to Vietnam and remained based in SEA until the 1970 BRAC strike. His career progression thereafter was Boeing 727, 707, the DC-10, and completing his 36 year flying career as captain on the

747 at Anchorage. Blair and his first wife Bonnie raised five children together. He acquired two stepchildren in a second marriage to Krikitt.

"Work Hard and Play Harder" described Blair's adventurous spirit. He was a backcountry outdoors guy whose hobbies included hunting and fishing, building and flying radio controlled model airplanes and his favorites: skiing and racing catamarans with his kids. Blair's daughter Jolyn reports that, "When Dad would keep us home to go skiing he would always come up with some ailment that sounded almost like a good excuse for skipping school like you seem to have fuzzy vision... you just can't see us going to school today." Late in life Blair enjoyed making wooden ink pens, a hobby he shared with his children and grandchildren.

Not many of his peers knew that Blair was also a gifted fiction writer and poet. His repertoire included five books and many poems they include:

The Po Drive – written, but unpublished in 1987

Re-edited and re-Published 2013 as an ebook

The Real Sasquatch—published 2014

Other yet unpublished works include: Tanka, the Boy Brave; Tanka and the Portal; Tanka, Through the First Portal.

Mike Ristow summed up Blair's life, "Blair was the definition of 'unbridled enthusiasm.' In my experience everything he did was with full energy, and he really liked getting everyone else involved. He enriched the lives of everyone lucky enough to know him."

Blair is survived by his wife of 20 years Krikitt Smith and his children; Sonya, Jared, Jolyn, Jacob, Travis Smith, Wayne Humbert and Stephen Zazilenski. He is also survived by 17 grandchildren and one great grandchild. Blair was preceded in death by his parents and his brother Vern Smith.

(– Bill Day)



**JOHN ADRIAN NEVELLE, JR.**  
**1938 ~ 2015**

**Captain John Adrian Nevelle, Jr.**, age 77, passed away peacefully with his sons by his side on October 22, 2015. His sons remember him as a very generous man, always providing for anyone in need.

John was born on April 20, 1938 at Beloit, Wisconsin to John and Agnes Nevelle. He grew up in South Bend, Indiana. John was the oldest of five siblings. His twin brother died at childbirth. During his teen years John often served as a primary caregiver for his younger brothers and sisters. He attended Riley High School in South Bend where he excelled in football, becoming one of the first football players to make the Indiana All State Team. His football skills earned him a scholarship to Florida State University. At Florida State John played football at quarterback and fullback positions. He later finished his college education at Mankato State University.

John enlisted in the U.S. Navy as a Naval Aviation Cadet and began his training at NAS Pensacola. During flight training he was designated for a multi-engine track. After earning his wings and commission John was assigned to a Lockheed P-2 squadron. As the P-2 was being



phased out, he was assigned to VP-30 at NAS Patuxent River for advanced training in the Lockheed P-3 Orion. John was upgraded to aircraft commander on the P-3. He participated in the 1962 Cuban blockade and later flew combat mission in Vietnam. John separated from active Navy service in 1968 and joined Northwest Airlines on April 08, 1968.

In January, 1966 John married and began family life. In time he and his wife had two sons, living most of their years together in Bellevue, Washington. His first assignment at NWA was as a Boeing 727 Second Officer. During his 30 years of employment at NWA, John flew the Boeing 727, the 707 series, the DC-10, and Boeing 747. His career ended at age sixty on April 20, 1998, at the time he was a proud captain on the 747/400.

As a parent John loved watching and coaching his two sons in their sports. Coaching was important to him. John had an intense love affair with animals and they loved him. He was definitely a devoted football fan and loved his Dallas Cowboys. As the years accumulated John continued to perfect his skills as a golfer and became a cable TV news junkie. Life wasn't just about sports and news; his sons report that John was always up for a good time.

In John's later years he resided in Hawaii, Indiana, and Arizona. In 2011 John moved back to Bellevue, Washington to be closer to his sons. He wanted to be remembered as a great father and someone who was tough. John is survived by his two sons John and Dirk; his four grandchildren; and five siblings. *(- Bill Day)*





# 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 <input type="checkbox"/> NWA <input type="checkbox"/> DELTA AS:	
AN EMPLOYEE	A PILOT

DATE OF RETIREMENT FROM <input type="checkbox"/> NWA <input type="checkbox"/> 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
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IF NOT, INDICATE TYPE OF RETIREMENT: MEDICAL	EARLY	RESIGNED
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APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF HOURS LOGGED
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AIRLINE AIRCRAFT TYPES FLOWN AS PILOT
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REMARKS: Affiliates please include information as to profession, employer, department, positions held, and other relevant info:
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<input type="checkbox"/> <b>CHANGE:</b> This is a change of address or status only
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<input type="checkbox"/> <b>REGULAR (NR) \$45</b> Pilots: Retired NWA, post-merger retired Delta, or Active Delta
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<input type="checkbox"/> <b>AFFILIATE (AF) \$35</b> Spouse or widow of RNPA member, pre-merger Delta retired pilots, other NWA or Delta employees, a friend, or a pilot from another airline
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<b>PAYMENT</b> MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: "RNPA" AND MAIL TO: Retired NWA Pilots' Assn. Dino Oliva 3701 Bayou Louise Lane Sarasota FL 34242-1105
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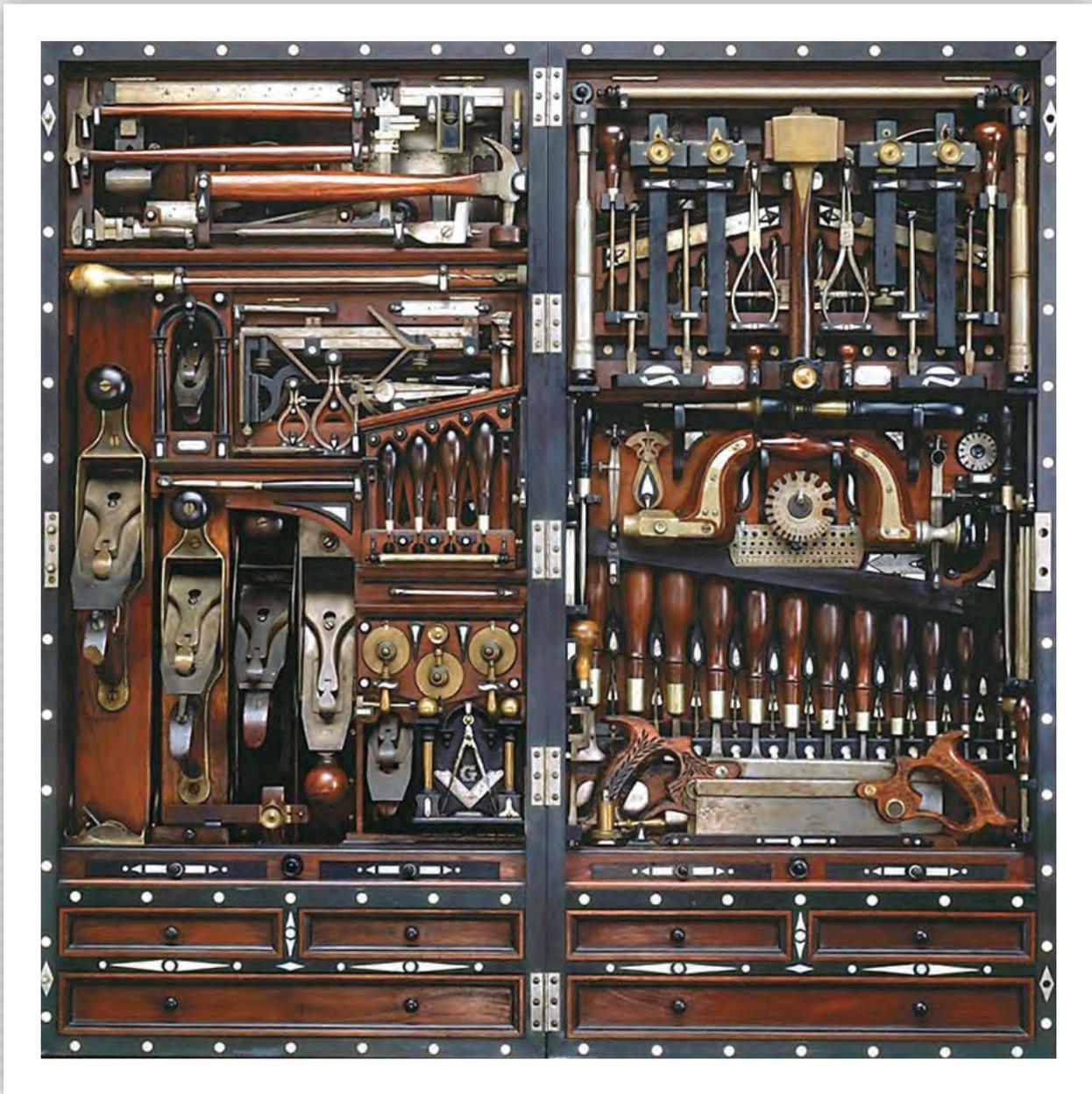
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