

# CONTRAILS

ISSUE NO. 204

NOVEMBER 2017



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The last Contrails but  
our memories remain

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 and to promote their general interests. We assist those active pilots who are approaching retirement with the problems related thereto. Membership is \$45 annually for Regular Members (NWA or Delta pilots, active or retired) and \$35 for Affiliate Members.

### ADDRESS & PHONE CHANGES

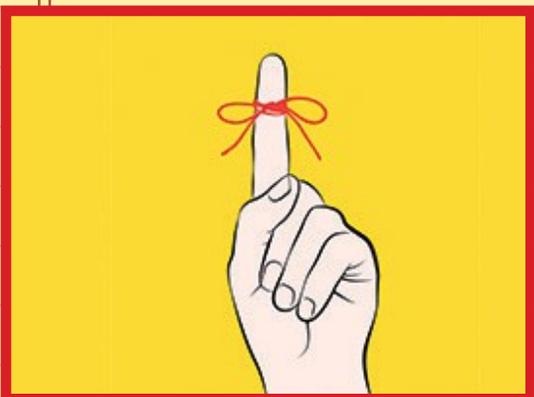
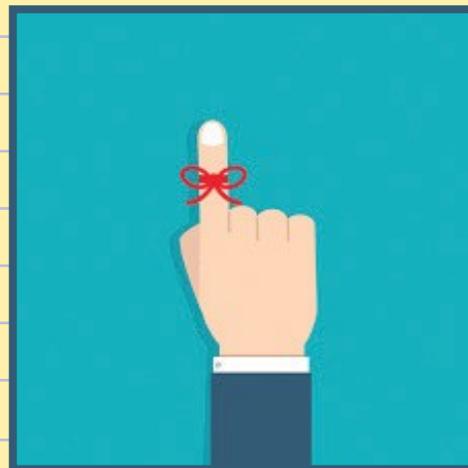
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From here on out the most critical thing is *NOT* to **FLY THE AIRPLANE.**

Instead, you *MUST* **KEEP YOUR EMAIL UP TO DATE.**

The only way we will have to communicate directly with you as a group is through emails. Change them here, and ONLY here:

**[RNPAnews@bhi.com](mailto:RNPAnews@bhi.com)**

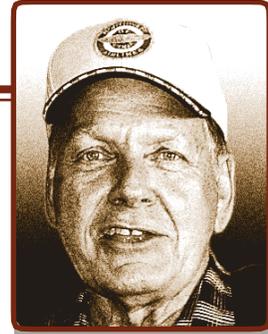


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*Howie can't change your email address changes  
&  
RNPAnews can't fix your address and phone changes!  
They both need to be kept up to date.*



## President's Report: Gary PISEL



Members of RNPA,

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you of the changes made at the Board Meeting in Dearborn. Since, at this time, there is no reunion planned, therefore there is no venue to hold a general meeting of the membership. Therefore the Board agreed that: The current Board of Directors and Advisors shall hold their respective office until such general meeting is held. It was also agreed that the Board of Advisor members shall have a vote at any board meeting. Last but not least, it was agreed that the Board shall have the right to vote for dissolution, should the need arise.

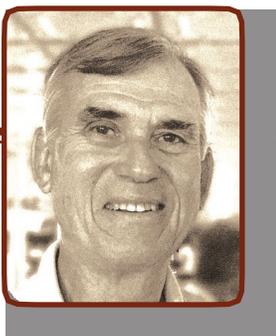
Our Dearborn Reunion was a great success. Tom Ebner coordinated all the functions with ease. The tour of the Henry Ford was the highlight of our free time. A trip to Millers for a burger (across from the Sleepy-Bear) brought back several memories.

We understand many of you still want reunions. We are looking at various venues. We have tried to keep the costs below \$200, however that is nearly impossible. We need ideas, leaders and help. If you have ideas please e-mail me at [gpisel@aol.com](mailto:gpisel@aol.com).

Gary Ferguson is working diligently on the new electronic edition of Contrails. Once that is finalized and we know the costs our new dues structure will be announced. Remember there are NO DUES for 2018. Keep a watch for information on the new Contrails. If you know a fellow pilot that is not connected help him to do so. This will be a huge change for some.

I would like to thank Dino Oliva for his many years of service to both Northwest Pilots and RNPA. His leadership was valuable.

Thank you for your confidence over the past 17 years. I feel we have made progress on several fronts, not the least of which is the Survivors Checklist. Hope to see you soon at one of your local functions.



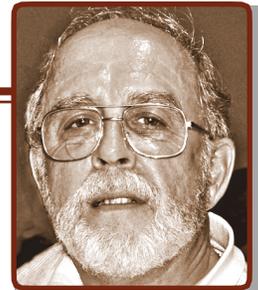
## Treasurer's Report: Howie LELAND

As I get my feet wet as treasurer, I find one of the main challenges is keeping the membership data base up-to-date. If you move or change your phone number please send me the new information. I find the most reliable way to contact you is through cell phone or email, so please share them with us. [But see the previous page for how to change what. – Ed.]

We do not want to lose touch with anyone. My contact information is on the previous two pages.

Some good news: If you are a member in good standing for 2017, your membership will be extended through 2018 without additional dues. This is the result of switching to electronic "Contrails" on the website.

As always, we continue to seek new members. Thank you for your continued support and commitments to RNPA.



## SUGGESTIONS WELCOME

This final issue is all put together and ready to send to the printer but I'm sitting here trying to figure out what to say. I did the same thing yesterday, October 15th, the date I usually send it off. I gave up without writing a word.

I guess what's most important is to try to explain my intentions for the new website. What it will NOT be is a digital version of this magazine. Rather, it will be much richer in content without the inherent limitations of so many pages to fill and yet only so many available. At least I hope it will.

When I first offered to help Dick Schlader, telling him that I thought we could do better with the newsletter, I had to learn the software. If you will recall back then my efforts were something less than sterling. It took me a while to learn that printing black and white with a single ink was less than satisfactory. (A true black needs four inks to produce it with offset printing.) But the steep learning curve soon shallowed out. I am now faced with another learning curve — hopefully not so steep.

The goal is to have the website up and running by the first of the year. That gives me two and a half months from today. And I will have help — Dick Dodge and Jay Sakas have both offered. They will be involved just as soon as I learn enough about what help to ask of them. That means there will be redundancy, unlike Contrails depending on one aging guy. So, lots to do as we develop this thing. Wish us well.

The graphic on the right is intended only to show the kinds of subjects you will be able to interact with. There's that word "interact." It's what gives the new technology the advantage over printed material, especially when it comes to getting the news out. No longer will your letter wishing everyone a Happy New Year appear in the May issue of Contrails.

Future plans include printing a Membership Directory annually (not the kind of info we want exposed to the world.) We anticipate dues, beginning 2019, to be somewhere between 5 and 10 bucks a year.

Thanks again for supporting RNPA and Contrails.

HOME	Landing page where the menu is found.
COMING EVENTS	Regional events flyers. Register and pay online.
RECENT EVENTS	Photos of latest events. Anyone can add photos.
THE MAILBAG	Real time letters that anyone can respond to.
PHOTO ARCHIVES	Photos and VIDEOS sent by members.
CABIN CREW	Flight attendants dedicated page.
COLUMNISTS & STORIES	
CONTRAILS ARCHIVES	As many old magazines that I can find.
SUGGESTED READING	
FLOWN WEST	Obits by the Obit Editor or by friends and family.
IN MEMORIAM	List of all Northwest pilots Flown West
SURVIVORS' CHECKLIST	Very important. Printable copy available here.
JOIN RNPA & PAY DUES	Submit payment and join online.

 The only way to keep linked to RNPA activities is by keeping your information updated. Page 3 has the details.

# We've Got Mail



COOKIE  
GREENE

MT

Dear Gary,

First and Foremost! Thank you to everyone who has worked so diligently to make this publication so fun and interesting to read! I wasn't even aware it existed until several years ago when another F/A told me about it and I immediately joined.

I've enjoyed every single article that has brought back so many good memories. Way too many to list but here are a few.

Ah yes, the good ol' days of flying the 727 mountain hops through Montana where the crews would enjoy the ice cream at the MSO airport. I recall the time when a bat decided to board the aircraft in MSO and wasn't discovered until after takeoff. The bat flew forward and aft in the aircraft all the way to Helena and the passengers would scream each time it flew by. Upon landing, the resourceful 2nd officer grabbed a pillowcase and was able to catch it and release it to its new home. Pax applauded the pilot for that life-threatening feat!

Does anyone remember the 727 races between Helena and Missoula to see who could beat the best time? The best time was beat but unfortunately the aircraft went off the end of the runway.

Remember paper bidding when the same crew flew together the entire month? We got to know each other pretty well in those days. My first year on the 747 flying to HND and the 'experienced' crew would tell the newbies that they had to submit a urine sample for customs? I fell for it hook, line and sinker. Have you ever tried to pee in a cleaned out small pax salad dressing container? I was told the aircraft ran out of regular containers for this purpose.

HND; my first set of stoneware and yen was 898 to the dollar; the staff house. ICN-I lugged back three pachinko machines! ANC-the Bird House. SEA-In-flight in the hanger. Probation: having your girdle, fingernails and hairdo checked every flight. Blue gro-grain ribbons to tie your hair back, no longer than two inches. Earrings: gold or pearl, must be smaller than a quarter; weight checks! No roller bags.

Sitting in the cockpit during domestic night flying and watching lightening explode in the clouds below.

Sitting in the cockpit at night, flying into HKG... when it was still allowed.

No jetways at the smaller airports, envelopes with destinations marked with grease pencils on an envelope was the boarding pass. Walking across the ramp to the south satellite in SEA to board the aircraft. Selling liquor on the ground out of a bucket because the flights were so short; cash only, no one used credit cards then.

I graduated in May of 1970 and was laid off when the BRAC strike started 2 months later. I was laid off for one year and worked at several different jobs. The most memorable was for Johnson's Flying Service in Missoula. Mostly I did filing in the office but when we did have a flight to work, it was on the DC4 and we flew fire fighters or equipment around to fire camps in the west. I did start to take flying lessons with that company (\$5.00 an hour!) but when NWA called, I rushed back to MSP and did not continue the lessons. It didn't occur to me in those days that I could become a commercial pilot; a female? Unheard of.

There are so many great memories of really fun times (and grumbling about the company). I will be eternally grateful for these, the job and all the good friends it brought into my life. I miss those that have 'flown west.' I'm equally grateful to be retired today!

Sincerely,

Cookie Greene

F/A: MSP, SEA, LAX, DTW 1970-2004

CHUCK  
HAGEN

MN

My God Gary. Fifteen years at this? Way, way beyond the call of duty. I am surprised that our group would let you devote that kind of effort. In my book, that is borderline taking advantage of an over abundance of good will and loyalty to a group you care about. For me, it grabs hard at my Appreciation feelings and "then some." Time off your clock, my friend, that you'll never get back.

In the final analysis, I only hope I will qualify to be counted as one of your many thankful friends.

Semper Fi,

Chuck Hagen

Dear Gary..

Consider this a letter of thanks and regret.

First the thanks:

I can't think of anyone who has devoted so much of his time and effort to a particular project that meant so much to so many.

You called it a quirky little hobby, or a habit that you just couldn't shake.

Each edition was an improvement over the last and with each edition of Contrails your expertise shone through with more professionalism than the last.

I cannot find words to express how much your efforts to continue to grow each edition has extended my career with a great company and friends with whom I have enjoyed so many years.

Your decision to discontinue the Contrails magazine after all these years is certainly understood and appreciated.

The regrets:

Whereas we are all in the autumn of our life, it is only reasonable to accept the inevitable and recognize that all good things must come to an end.

And so we accept the inevitable.

I'm sure that the online version will be just as great and I look forward to trying to download it as well.

We should not forget to be thankful for the efforts of the staff who so faithfully arranged for the national RNPA convention for so many years..

You have all extended my career with NWA to over 50 years.

Fraternally:

Larry K. Daudt

Hi Gary -

Superlatives can't express the gratitude that I have for you and the work that you have done for RNPA over the years. So I offer to you a simple "Thank You," for a job well done. You will go down in history having gone "above and beyond" for RNPA.

Enjoy the remaining years of your life in peace, and knowing what you have meant to our group.

Best regards,  
Rollie Baumann

Gary,

I write this note with a heavy heart. The magazine Contrails, your baby, was always a quality product. Most of us can't comprehend the effort that you put forth on every edition.

You mentioned that it was your hobby but hobbies are no longer fun when they become hard work. If only I could have flown as well as you publish, wings would not have been required.

I worry that too many of us pilots took all your hard work for granted. Most of us looked forward to Contrails' arrival, read it cover to cover, felt a sense of brotherhood, smiled, and laid it aside. It probably never occurred to most that some sort of response would be appreciated.

You never complained and worked long hours hoping that your selections would be appreciated. In my opinion you went well beyond the call of duty.

Thank you,  
Darrel Smith



New Yorker cartoonist Will McPhail dips his toe into politics, lights up the twittersphere, decides he doesn't like it much and leaves.



Hi Gary-

I have always enjoyed Contrails and I hate to see it end, but I understand. Thank you very much for your time and effort!

I retired at age 60 and now it is 20 years later. Hard to believe. All was well until a little over 2 years ago when we discovered my wife Chyree had brain cancer. She passed away in just a few weeks. We had been together since we were both 19 years old, so it has been a life changing, tough adjustment. I sold my Tennessee lake shore home and have moved to the Tampa, FL area to be near my daughter and family.

You asked for "inputs," so I will give you 2 cents worth of my military history. The TV show "60 minutes" did a segment several months ago on the longevity of the B52 bomber and how it has been used. I started flying the B52 in the summer of 1960 as a 2nd LT copilot at Biggs AFB, El Paso, TX (runway was 13,500 ft long and 300 ft wide).

I eventually became an Aircraft Commander with my own crew. I have more than 2000 hours 52 time and memories of H Bomb loaded flights during the Cuban Missile Crisis, Gulf Of Tonkin affair and flights out of Guam during 1964 & 65. I didn't do any combat drops from Guam, because my squadron was designated as the "Big Stick" in reserve and we were always loaded with nukes. During the early 1960s Cold War, the Air Force kept a certain number of B52s in the air 24/7. These were 24 hour duration flights which involved 2 air refuelings. We would take off in the morning and fly northeast to coast out near Boston and air refuel with a KC-135 (707) out of Westover AFB, Mass. Then we would head north towards Greenland and the Arctic. Food for each crew member was usually 2 chow hall box lunches (dried out ham & cheese sandwiches) along with jugs of coffee and water.

My wife would send me out the door with a thermos of hot vegetable soup which always tasted good. About 15 hours after takeoff, we would be southbound approaching Alaska, near Barter Island. Time for another air refuel. Our bombardier (RadarNav), would use UHF radio and his radar to pick up the airborne tanker (KC135 out of Eielson AFB, Fairbanks) and direct a rendezvous. Had to fly tight, in trail formation and stay on the boom for 20 minutes or more, to get enough fuel.

The B52 flight control and thrust response was similar to a 707-320, i.e. not very quick. Needed lots of concentration and small inputs. This refuel was usually tough because everyone was tired, pitch black, often no horizon, and sometimes turbulence and Northern

Lights. Always felt great when it was finished and we had the fuel! Then we would turn towards Russia and fly near the border for awhile, before turning south to El Paso. The tail gunner had it the worst. He had to spend the entire flight in a small, tail end compartment, facing aft. We would do frequent inter-comm checks to make sure he was okay. The newest model of the B52 have the gunner moved forward and operate the guns remotely.

During the Cuban Missile Crisis, I flew 5 of those 24 hour flights in less than 3 weeks! Ah---the good old days! My best wishes to you and all the troops!

Bill Plehal

DENNY  
BAUMANN

VA

Hi Gary,

I just want to add my voice of regret for the end of Contrails. It's been a great publication which a lot of retirees enjoy reading. However, I too can see the writing on the wall and know that these things just don't last forever. I will also regret the day when RNPA doesn't have enough members to survive. That too will be a very sad event. Meantime, I want to thank my fellow NWA pilots for getting me started on a project which has done a lot of good for a lot of VERY poor people.

Almost 25 years ago, I put up some notices in every NWA pilot base, asking for donated computers for a poor school in Mississippi. I needed 12 desktop computers and told my fellow pilots that they could just use their FEDEX benefit and send their donated computer directly to the school. I don't remember how many computers were sent, but it was more than 12 and they came from NWA pilots all over the U.S.

That little project is still alive and well. We have now donated more than 3100 computers to schools and clinics all over the world. The computers now come from other sources, but it all started with an overwhelming response from my fellow NWA pilots.

You may wonder what Contrails has to do with this. The answer is that Contrails has done a fantastic job of telling the story of what retired pilots can and will do after they've had a great career and now have the resources to help those less fortunate than themselves. As everyone knows, airline careers have changed a lot in the last 20 years or so. We are the lucky ones; and for that I am eternally grateful. So let's keep the association alive as long as we can in hopes that more of us will read something that catches our imagination and encourages us to use our "retired" status for the good of others.

Thanks again for your great work and please don't quit now,  
Denny Baumann



Oops!



# SEA Christmas Party



**DECEMBER 7TH**  
**10:30 TIL 3:00**



This year in lieu of the wrapped raffle baskets we are asking guests to bring an **unwrapped** toy which will be donated to Hopelink, a non-profit agency that serves North and East King County assisting families who are less fortunate. We thank you!



**Meal Choices: SEARED SALMON with Horseradish Marmalade**  
**HERBED CHICKEN with Pomegranate Balsamic Glaze**  
both include salad, rolls, coffee or tea and cheesecake with berry sauce

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
email \_\_\_\_\_

Chicken  
Salmon

Mail to:  
Kathee Nelick  
13208 Muir Dr NW  
Gig Harbor WA98332  
253-514-8786  
knelick60@comcast.net

**\$35**  
**per**  
**person**

Amount enclosed: \$35 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_  
Checks payable to "Sunshine Club"

**Registration DEADLINE: December 1st**

## NOTAM

The print version of the CONTRAILS ends with the beautiful version of RNPA publications we have grown to love and respect. My wisdom has grown considerably after reading the several articles of great quality, especially in this “last one” ... and my appreciation of the significant factors has grown mightily as I observed the incredible, and later discovered the great significance of the “hot air” balloon on the back cover. It quietly and effectively seemed to be purposeful and appropriate to the content of the editorial section titled “NO UNANIMOUS DECISIONS” ...

The short of it: It is the best “moon job” I have ever seen but I am not one bit surprised as Captain Oliva has always been very appropriate and significant in his major service to the future we now live. Thank you Dino, and I will laugh with you in your great and giant farewell and

protest of our survival through “COBRA DAZ”. I think of Dino and thank him at each retirement check and will continue to find justice in the “hot air moon” ... of 31? scabs; official letters “signed in blue ink;” the forgetting of hochfire? (Or was it hock-burn? mak’in bacon.) the memorial to MR? Moneybags Nyrope; de’nut and de-bolt are naturals together de-mooned! Thank You Dino Oliva for your tremendous service and for the (aviation style) “Moon to remember...”

man-o-pause — a little close to home but a very nice stabilized approach to a final landing.

Mutton chops and selfies making records in aviation — Thanx John Doherty...

“I DUMPED ON TOKYO, 1966” rekindled MY 1965 memories and similarities from the perspective of a Marine helicopter pilot assigned permanently on the ground but very involved in all Marine aviation as the

*One more time!*

## Why I Want To Be A Pilot

When I grow up, I want to be a pilot because it’s a fun job and easy to do. That’s why there are so many pilots flying around these days.

Pilots don’t need much school; they just have to learn to read numbers so they can read their instruments. I guess they should be able to read road maps, too, so they can find their way if they get lost.

Pilots should be brave so they won’t get scared if it’s foggy and they can’t see, or if a wing or motor falls off they should stay calm so they’ll know what to do.

Pilots have to have good eyes to see through clouds, and they can’t be afraid of thunder and lightning because they are so much closer to them than we are.

The salary pilots make is another thing I like. They make more money than they know what to do with. This is because most people think that plane flying is dangerous, except pilots don’t because they know how easy it is.

I hope I don’t get air-sick, because I get car-sick and if I get air-sick I couldn’t be a pilot, and then I would have to go to work.

*Tommy Tyler, fifth grader in  
Jefferson School, Beaufort, SC  
(Not pictured)*



3/3FAC/airliaison officer assigned on the perimeter security of the “soon to be airport of Chu Lia.” Yes, I know of red dust, beautiful beaches, JATO bottle t/o’s, hottents, cool support, warm beer... But the fantastic support we “grunts” received from the Marine Attack Air (A-4s) and the vital support of the HMM squadrons 362, 361, 165, 363, 163. (Please notice no F/A-4s, THERE BUT NOT SURE WHY.)

“Gether done” — Just before 3/3 made an amphibious landing at the future site of Chu Lai there were 2 incidents that were brought to light — 1. the 3/3FAC team went to Cubi Point for live control of close air support and (2) two marine pilots made a trip from Okinawa to Iwakuni — in a twin beach/C-45), Secret Navy Bomber -SNB) it was “hair brained” but we “gothier done” and I got to enjoy ice cubes, real food and sheets again. (Just 4 years later I saw the fallacy of my confidence when noticing the doppler drift gage as we turned south out of

HND on the “south” 707 trips)— scary...

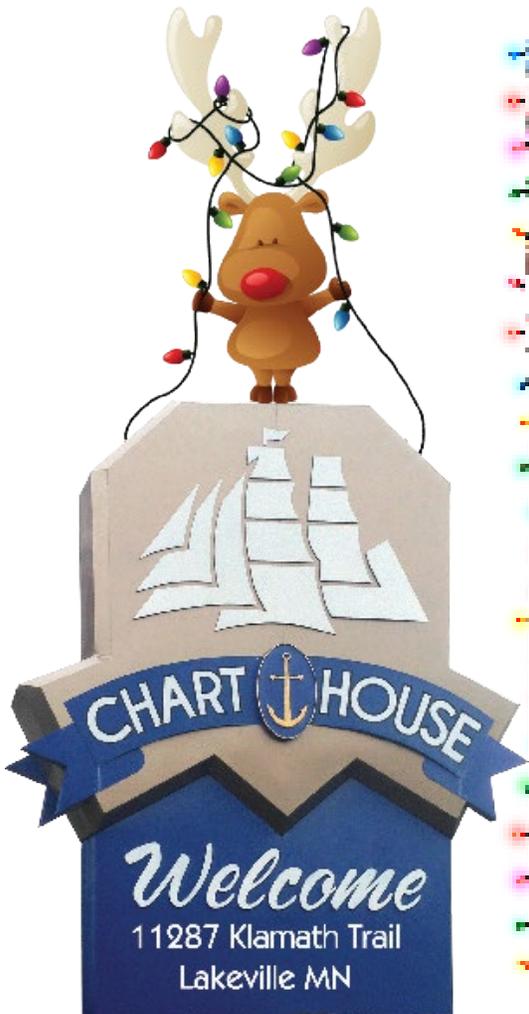
“This Old Truck”-wow!

Northwest History — Joe Kimm was #1 while I was somewhere between 800-1000... Dino and crew managed to get us through THE AL CHECCHIERA (remember the “For Sale” signs that showed up in the cockpit w/s of brand new (leased) 747-400s) without the land of “shovel and swat” or the AFL/CIO taking ownership AND now we have full retirement — Thank You Dino and crew... and Thanx Delta for the free ride every once in awhile...

Way to go NWA Class 6/12/67 (there must be some good listeners there)...

IF IT AIN'T BOEING I AN'T GOING! (787?),  
Howie Schwend

# MSP Christmas Party



**Thursday, December 7th**  
**Social Hour: 11:00am • Luncheon: 12:30pm**  
**\$39 per person**

Entrée: A combination of Prime Rib and Parmesan Crusted Walleye. There is no “choice” of entree. We have combined the two most popular choices from preceding years into one offering.

Make check payable to **Steve Lillyblad**  
**"MSP Christmas Party"** **8493 133rdSt**  
 (39 bucks each) and mail to: **Apple Valley MN 55124**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
 SPOUSE/GUEST \_\_\_\_\_  
 email address \_\_\_\_\_

**RESERVATION DEADLINE: DEC. 1ST**

Your 2017 Committee: Sherry/Doug Wenborg, Ann/Pete Brown, Sharon/Ken Kreutzmann, Steve Lillyblad, Diane/Jim Kary, Kittie/Ray Alexander, Kathleen Palmen, Bob Blad, Sara/Nick Modders, Joan/Gary Thompson, Stu Bauman/Linda Kelley and Beverly/Art Bein.

### **Flying the L-188 Lockheed Electra in the sixties. Or, this will never happen again.**

After less than a year flying 707 S/O out of MSP our class (June 1966) was sent to ground school for the Lockheed Electra. It meant upgrading to F/O since the L-188 still used a non-pilot flight engineer. As a low time pilot I couldn't believe my luck. These were the days where one said: "Yesterday I couldn't spell pilot, today I are one." Our Electras, for instance, had no autopilot; they'd been taken out. Every flight was hand flown from take-off to touchdown. Yes, including cruise. Another feature of that time was that we could cancel IFR and fly VFR in clear weather. In so doing I enjoyed such sights as Harper's Ferry, Fall colors in the East at low altitudes and Niagara Falls, to name a few. On my first trip West, climbing out of BIL, I commented on the incredible snow capped mountain scenery to the southwest in superb clear weather. The Captain told me to cancel IFR, he turned SW and we flew over Red Lodge, then flew along the snow covered Beartooth mountains on the way to BZN. MSP to SEA or PDX with seven or eight stops enroute. We were limited to 25,000 ft on account of not having drop down oxygen masks. Usually we did not fly very high, in those days when fuel was cheap. This was hands-on flying at its best, with multiple stops including non precision approaches. I could not have wished for a better learning environment. And in a hot flying airplane. The engines always ran at full rpm. The power levers merely changed propeller pitch. We were never committed. As we experienced one evening, on short final into BZN after dark when we raised the nose and our landing lights illuminated a bulldozer without lights moving on the runway. We went around and were later told some kid was joy riding.

But let me digress one moment. On one of my early Electra flights we were at 13,000 or so tooling southeast crossing the Mississippi when the Captain got up, said, "You got it Dutch" and left the cockpit. And here I was, flying a 4-engine turboprop at 300+ knots all alone with only a non pilot flight engineer for company. And no autopilot. And all of about 250 hours (not counting ten months of S/O time), divided between single engine land, a glider rating, a helicopter rating and flying the Super Cub towplane at the Minnesota Soaring club in Stanton.

When the Captain returned and settled in he started a conversation: "What's your background, military?" "No, no military." Then he asked me how much flight time I had so I told him. He looked at me for a long time, didn't say anything for awhile. He did not leave the cockpit again during our multi-day trip but turned into a great

teacher. I really wish I could remember his name. Further down the line other captains, mostly relatively young, became teachers, let me make mistakes, allowed me to learn and gain valuable experience. A few names I recall, like Jim Bestul, Steve Towle, Ed Kartic and Fred Ellsworth, who became a good friend and fellow 'yachtie' sailing out of Lake City on Lake Pepin. Not too long ago I visited him in Henderson and admired his aviation memorabilia. I was sorry to learn that he had recently flown West.

Unfortunately and eventually, we had to go through refresher and after that we were no longer allowed to fly VFR. Also, the take off and climb segments were changed to have us adapt to jet standards when the Electras were to be sold. I lucked out by staying in MSP. I put in about 900 hours of solid hands on flight experience while those in our class who selected our SEA base were still flying sidesaddle. I will always recall with pleasure the last of the real flying that the Electra provided. Eventually, we transitioned to 727 F/O.

In 1971 I transferred to SEA. Sadly, after flying out of Seattle for three years I lost my medical and had no choice but to resign, with a mere 3,800 hours. But I truly cherish those seven years flying, especially those in the Electra.

### **Yes, officer, I do have an excuse.**

After a night flight from ANC to MSP I was heading home to Inver Grove Heights at around 0200 when the flashing light went up behind me. I stopped and waited for the officer. He shone his flashlight into my VW Beetle, noted my uniform. "Well, he said, apparently you didn't come out of a bar." He checked my license then said "Tell you what, you give me a good excuse and I'll let you go with a warning. Otherwise I have to give you a ticket for speeding." By luck I had an answer: "You see, officer, I've been tooling along at 480 knots for the last six hours or so and it's kinda difficult to slow down to 40." He cracked up laughing, said he hadn't heard that one before and he let me go.

Ed "Dutch" Trautwein

*Perhaps a personal note, if I may, as I approach 84 years, with some health issues. I emigrated alone to the US in December 1959 with \$160 to my name, one change of clothing and a decent command of English, thanks to working at an American Air base construction in Morocco for almost two years. Five months after entering the US I started flying lessons at Holman Field in St. Paul. Six years later I could quit playing piano at Shakey's pizza parlor in Bloomington and start flying for Northwest Airlines. A country where one can work hard and accomplish goals, combined with a healthy dose of luck, is a good country to live in. So I am grateful.*



Jerry Harrott found this rather large photo on the floor of NATCO after the final auction. He thinks it was representing the fleet around 1979

JOEL  
VANDERWAAL

FL

Hi Gary et al,

I'd like to express my thanks to all who have made RNPA such an outstanding organization. Your efforts are much appreciated!

I am grateful for my NWA career and was fortunate to have retired off the left seat of the 747-400 in 2012. I was a 1984 hire with prior background as Naval Aviator and a corporate pilot. Opportunities for advancement came fairly quickly for our new hire class and I progressed through all the seats of the B-727 and 757, with a short stint on the DC-10. I was one of the few RB pilots who flew captain on the MD-80 and made many friendships with the former Republic pilots early on.

An instructor gig in the training department allowed me good memories of working with NWA pilots from all the bases. After going through the Delta merger, I had a new appreciation for our old NWA training dept. Whatever your memories might have been, it was sad to see the NATCO building torn down.

In retirement, I've had the chance to explore the waterways on my trawler named WATERMUSIC. I cruised down the Mississippi from St. Paul to Mobile via the inland rivers. The original plan was to complete the "Great Loop" of the

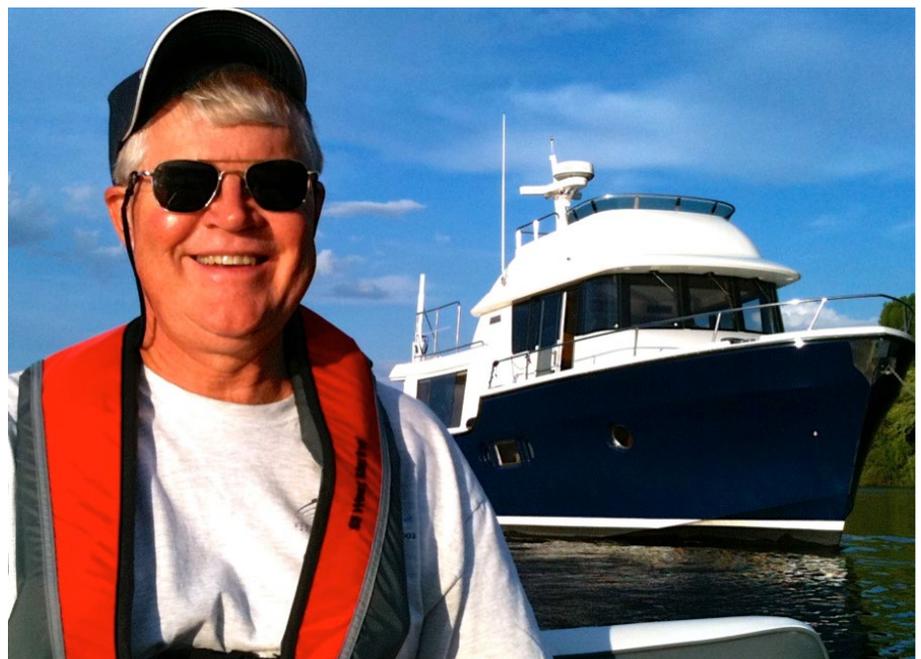
US by water. (Intracoastal around Fla, up the east coast to the Hudson, then the Great Lakes to the Illinois River back down to the Mississippi).

However, we liked the warm weather in Fla and got stuck there! WATERMUSIC is currently in the Abacos Islands and we've enjoyed the Bahamas for 3 years. I'm not sure where our float plan will take us next, but that's what's nice about being retired!

The picture shows me on our dinghy named "HANDEL". We use HANDEL like the family car and allows us freedom to explore and visit other cruisers.

Best regards to my friends and former co-workers!

Joel



# Thank you

First, a big *Thank You* to **each of you** who have supported *Contrails* through your ever-increasing dues and your written and verbal encouragement for these last fifteen years. I understand the disappointment you have expressed to me and wish that it could be otherwise.

There are several others that contributed to whatever success *Contrails* has achieved. Without these contributions the magazine probably wouldn't have lasted as long as it did.

I hadn't thought much about this first recognition until now, but the current and previous members of the **Board of Directors** have always been supportive and cooperative.

The job of Obituary Editor is probably the most demanding of sheer effort and time. Most recently **Bill Day** has done a fantastic job. Previously, **Vic Britt** did the same for some twelve years. A special Thank You to both of you.

Recruiting our Contributing Columnists is one thing that I am proudest of. Each one of them, when asked, agreed without hesitation.

1. The very first was our friend **Bob Root** who wrote *The Root Cellar* for almost 9 years (35 issues). I have no doubt that he would still be contributing had he not succumbed to his ailing heart in 2014.
2. Back in late 2007 I wanted to get some perspective of the ladies of RNPA and asked in a Board meeting if anyone they knew might be interested. As I remember it, Dux "volunteered" **Sue Duxbury** for the job. Happily, although busy with other writing projects, she agreed and stuck with *Getting to Know You* for two plus years (9 issues).
3. I cannot recall when I first read something that **James Baldwin** had written but it was plainly obvious that the man could write. It took me almost no time at all to ask him to join what I was beginning to call my "stable" of contributing columnists, which he agreed to. It turns out that his column *A Stabilized Approach* has appeared a record 36 times—a solid 9 years!
4. When **John Doherty** asked if I might be interested in publishing *Shazm* (the only story that I have published a second time) I immediately asked him to join the "stable." His column *The Way it Was* has appeared 22 times in the course of five and a half years.
5. Our newest Contributor, **Erika Armstrong**, has provided us with a diverse cross-section of the aviation world with *A Chick in The Cockpit* 14 times in 3 1/2 years. She recently published her first book with the same title, which I highly recommend.

Of course there are other members who enjoy writing and have added to our enjoyment. I call them Regular Contributors: **Darrel Smith** still claims he's not a writer. **Jay Sakas** has contributed some great stuff, as has **Bill Emmer**.

So to each of you, and to those whom my weakening memory cells have overlooked, a very heartfelt *Thanks!*





# A STABILIZED approach



Contributing Columnist James Baldwin



## ALL GOOD THINGS...

I was just staring at what looked like a recently painted number on the white fuselage. I looked at it for more than a minute and was a little surprised I hadn't been paying enough attention to know what it meant. But there it was in print: 531.53 miles per hour! It didn't take much listening to find that someone, in this case a way younger than me kid named Steve, or Stevo to his friends, had just set a record. I still didn't really know the details so I verbally reached out as obliquely as possible to others nearby. You know – look like you know what you're talking about and get the other guy to fill in all the details while you protect your ignorance. This was a technique I learned early at the big NWA during various conversations in the cockpit. Those guys may have been up front in the right or left seat, and for sure they were senior to me, but some of them didn't know anything! It took me awhile to figure out who they were in particular

and how they hid it. I'm sure glad none of my copilots ever said things like that about me!

Anyway, it was about eleven in the morning and the Reno Stead Airport, just north of town, was enjoying atmospheric conditions nearly perfect for the 2017 Air Race qualifications. I had entered the field to the west near the hangars holding the Formula 1, Biplane and Sport class airplanes. It had been about a mile and a half of skip-hobble-skip on the brand new right hip replacement from three weeks previous. Mechanically, all seemed to be working pretty well, so far. There were no open write-ups on the hip and the MEL for it was clear. My main worry was that if needed, there might not be an Uber to take me back to my car if things didn't work out. But, confirming to the best NWA pilot tradition was more important; the walk through the deserted military housing complex obviated the need to pay for parking.

The entrance I chose put me right among the aviation gear heads who were making last minute adjustments to the contraptions they used probably only once per year, and September is that time of year here at Reno Stead. Some of the Formula One Class airplanes, mostly based on the Cassutt design airframe, looked to be in need of serious upgrading relative to the really serious contenders who had sleek composite airframes. Like most classes of race planes at Reno, qualifying speeds show there really were only two or maybe three real contenders for the gold trophy in each. The rest, I'm guessing, were there for the camaraderie or just plain fun of racing others around pylons as fast as they could go.

As I made my way towards the serious end of the flight line, the magnificent, highly modified Grumman F8F Bearcat named "Rare Bear" appeared, almost whimsically. Surely an airplane shaped like that doesn't really fly like anything we know of, does it? Inside the cowlings transplanted from a Douglas DC-7, was the 18 cylinder Wright R3350 Duplex-Cyclone radial scrounged from a Douglas Skyraider. Behind the huge orange spinner was the massive propeller they installed from the same airliner. Like last year, I was disappointed it would not be competing but was happy it was displayed just so we could look and marvel.

Closer to the flight line, resting under a white, tent-like canopy next to its 18 wheel support transporter, was the highly modified North American P-51 Mustang named "Voodoo." Retaining the look, but little else of the original design, the cowlings were off and attended by several guys who looked like they knew what they were doing. It was easy to appreciate all 1649 cubic inches of the magnificent Rolls Roy Merlin engine residing under the polished aluminum valve covers. The highly modified and polished propeller was crowned with a spinner which reflected the leisurely looking but highly choreographed pace of inspection and purposeful order of preparation. Myriad items would be inspected before its later qualification run that afternoon and the estimate was this machine needed three hundred maintenance hours for every hour of flight. I watched while at least eight or ten eyeballs examined every one of the nearly endless number of items they had touched, tightened, adjusted or massaged that morning. Voodoo was ready.

And now, at least, I knew from my surreptitious research, that just two weeks previous, Stevo Hinton, son of Steve Sr. of the Planes of Fame Museum in Chino, California, had flown this same airplane through the four required runs over a 3 kilometer course to set the speed record for the fastest propeller driven airplane. 531.53 MPH began to mean more.

Just looking at these airplanes gives no hint to the aerodynamic sophistication and technology any of the Gold Class Unlimited leaders employ today. It just wasn't available in the 1940's when they were designed. Heck, during that time and just after the war we still considered the sound barrier to be a barrier. We really didn't know definitively it could be broken.

The wings on Voodoo were modified using 1960s Learjet wing profiles. The Merlin engine of war time was limited to 12 psi or 58 inches of boost and 3,000 RPM. Theoretically. In a pinch, war emergency power went as high as 67 inches of mercury. It's reported Voodoo runs up to 75 psi of boost, or 150 inches manifold pressure,



and allows engine speeds of up to 3500 RPM. It's no surprise the resulting horsepower increase needs a more modern propeller, and a lot of the Reno racers running radials use the monster prop from the A-1 Skyraider. The engine internals have been upgraded and the racers gladly accept an interval between overhauls that's a fraction of the original design goal.

The original P-51 enjoyed laminar flow for about 40% of the wing chord which for the time, was quite a breakthrough. Voodoo's design, modified from the Learjet, is laminar more than 60% of its chord. This too really wasn't possible in the 1940's. Voodoo didn't surpass 500 MPH because the pilot pushed the throttle up, engineers and aerodynamicists played a big part.

True to form for the Unlimited class, as with the others, the only real competition Voodoo faced this year was from another highly modified and well known past winner. The P-51 named "Strega," flown by James Consalvi had qualified faster and thus given notice there really would be a race this year. Next year I guess we'll have to wait and see, as the owner of Voodoo has said he will retire the aircraft from racing around the pylons but might give the speed record a final thrash.

Still, as they hooked up the tow bar to the main wheels and pulled Voodoo past me, I couldn't help but notice the number again: 531.53 miles per hour! I knew

I'd never seen that kind of speed in anything I'd flown with a propeller, but then I thought, how about the 727? Or even better, maybe the 747-400? I can't remember where the airspeed indicator was redlined on the three holer, but I do remember the day the captain laughingly encouraged me, a brand new F/O, to push the throttles up on our way to LAX from San Diego. You know you're down low and smokin' when ATC asks for your speed! The good old days!

Memories being what they are, do I remember correctly the 747-400 redline being 360 knots indicated? (Sorry, this is the last edition in print — letters of correction to the editor will not be allowed).

With that number in mind and trapped trance-like watching Voodoo as it was towed to the flight line, I wondered just how fast we might have gone that day at 11,000 feet after an ATC requested level off out of Manila. Thanks to that girl named Siri hiding in my cell phone, I soon had the answer: 360 knots at that altitude at temperatures near ISA works out around 426 knots True. If we multiply by 1.15 to get miles, it turns out we're only going 490 MPH. I could just picture looking out the side window to see Stevo flashing a smile as he motored past in Voodoo. And, the 386 souls in back wouldn't even know it had happened — the movie wasn't over yet and their shades were still down!

Jarred back to reality by the sound of the Jet Class qualifiers buzzing past, I considered how serious these contenders were about speed records. Of course it's possible that it's a genetically influenced pursuit, as it was Steve Hinton Sr. who in 1979 set the record 499.05 MPH in the highly modified RB51 Red Baron. Ten years later it was Lyle Shelton in 1989 in the super modified F8F Bearcat "Rare Bear" at 528 MPH. That record stood until early September of this year, when the modifications de-



vised by a select group of engineers and aerodynamicists allowed the record to be bettered once again.

Strega followed Voodoo to the flight line late that afternoon joining four Hawker Sea Furys to determine who would have pole position for the Sunday race. Most or all of the Sea Furys had been modified to replace the Bristol Centarus sleeve valve radial with any of the more maintainable U.S radials. They all sounded warlike as the props began to turn almost in order, readying for the race. The race wasn't a real close contest as Strega outran the field to finish first followed by Voodoo eight seconds later. The third place Sea Fury was "Dreadnaught," finishing some 45 seconds later. The field was set for the Unlimited Gold Final on Sunday.

Meanwhile, the hip let me know it was time to head for the car and another enroute trip through the F1 hangar yielded no further clues on how to speed up my Van's RV8. Oh well, it might only go 200 MPH but after seeing the money being spent on anything faster, I knew I was in the right airplane. The return to the car was more hobble than skip but once again, I had been able to see machines from yesteryear that probably shouldn't be flying, let alone setting speed records.

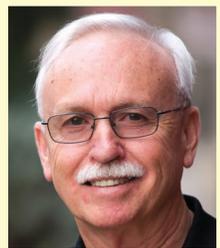
Although I didn't manage to crawl back to Stead on Sunday, I would be remiss to not at least publish the results of the Unlimited Final. Strega, piloted by James Consalvi, edged longtime winner Stevo Hinton Jr. in Voodoo. Strega covered the 62.8114 miles (eight laps of the pylon course) in 7:49.774 (481.34 mph), less than half a second ahead of Voodoo at 7:50.356 (480.744 mph). The two leaders lapped the rest of the field and third place went to Joel Swager in Sea Fury Dreadnought, who finished only seven of the eight laps at an average speed of 419.760 mph.

There might have been only two serious contenders in the Unlimited Final at Reno this year but watching and listening to Mustangs flash past is something everyone should enjoy at least once. Can't wait for next year! ✈





WAY



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CONTRIBUTING COLUMNIST JOHN DOHERTY

## Q & A With the "Hochbrunn Bulletins" Author

**Q:** There were some satire "bulletins" pretending to be from the then VP of flight operations William Hochbrunn that showed up in pilot mailboxes in the late '70s, early '80s. Are you the author of those "bulletins."

**A:** Yes

**Q:** Could you describe the political situation between the pilots and airline management at that time?

**A:** It was extremely contentious and had been for a long while. I had been in a branch of service known for its esprit de corps, high morale, and indefatigable attitude. Leaders were expected to lead by example and not by ridiculous memos, bulletins, and paperwork.

**Q:** What was the general pilot perception of Mr. Hochbrunn at that time?

**A:** I can't speak for others, but my feeling was that he lacked respect and credibility due to a number of subjects and policies coming from the office of VP of Flight Ops. And much of it appeared to be inane, ridiculous stuff.

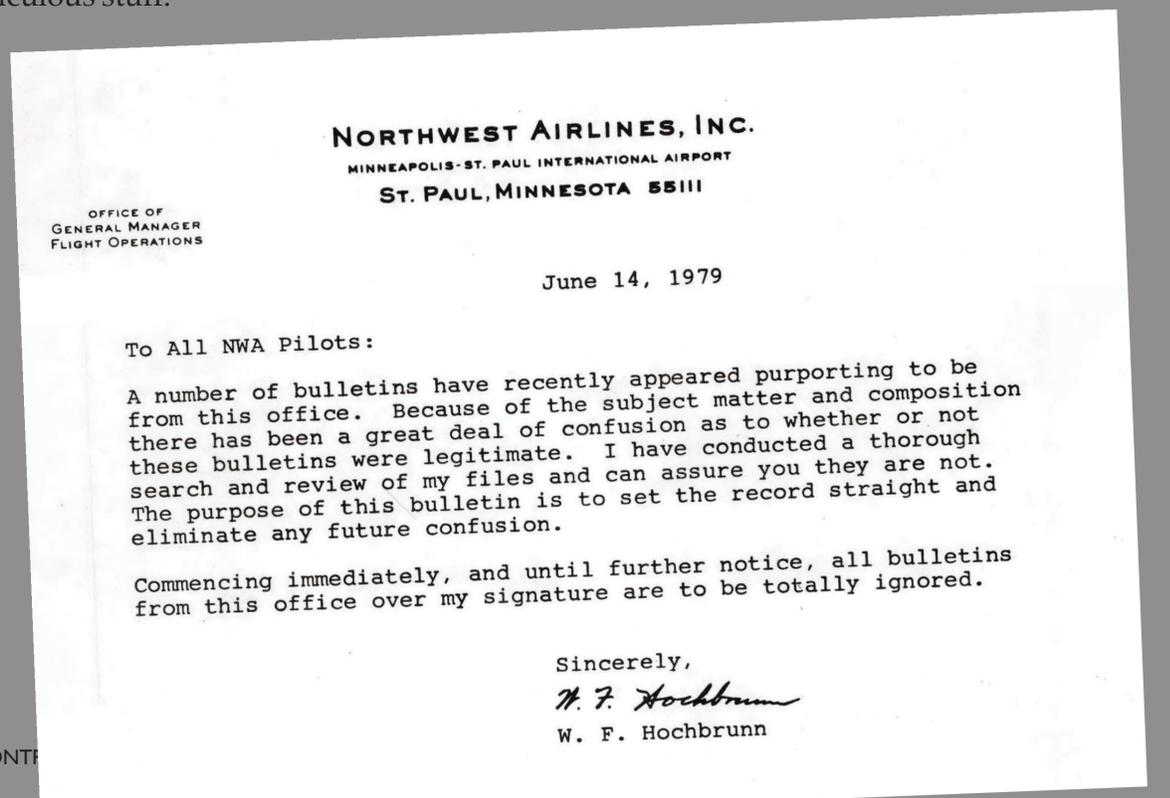
**Q:** Had you ever had any personal interaction with Mr. Hochbrunn? If so, how would you summarize that interaction?

**A:** (laughing) Well... yes, matter of fact, I have... more than once. How would I characterize it? Well, he didn't ask me to come up and have coffee with him or discuss aircraft purchases from Boeing.

**Q:** Could you describe the general tone and content of the bulletins that Mr. Hochbrunn put out from time to time?

**A:** Again, I speak only for myself but I thought some were worthy of "Catch 22" nonsensical propositions, focusing on issues that were ludicrous and meaningless to everyone but him.

I remember one legitimate bulletin that came out about pass riders and three of us were reading it and trying to make sense of it. We were in the crew room in the building where the crew bus operated. I suggested we call Mr. Hochbrunn's office and ask



**NORTHWEST AIRLINES, INC.**  
MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT  
ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55111

OFFICE OF  
GENERAL MANAGER  
FLIGHT OPERATIONS

June 14, 1979

To All NWA Pilots:

A number of bulletins have recently appeared purporting to be from this office. Because of the subject matter and composition there has been a great deal of confusion as to whether or not these bulletins were legitimate. I have conducted a thorough search and review of my files and can assure you they are not. The purpose of this bulletin is to set the record straight and eliminate any future confusion.

Commencing immediately, and until further notice, all bulletins from this office over my signature are to be totally ignored.

Sincerely,

*W. F. Hochbrunn*

W. F. Hochbrunn

September 9, 1976

TO: ALL PILOTS

A situation has come to my attention which is of great concern to me. This office does not generally involve itself with the real problems of Flight Operations, but I feel this is a subject of sufficient magnitude to be brought to your immediate attention.

The problem, of course, concerns itself with the misuse of NWA company form OP-77, (cab slips), by a few and I emphasize, a few misguided individuals. I have received numerous calls this past week, both at the office and at home, from responsible crew members and our own staff of professional pass riders, reporting that they have seen captains misusing the cab slips for such things as book marks, writing rough drafts of log book entries, etc. One cab slip was found in the MKE crew lounge folded into a paper airplane! Can you imagine what the press could do if they got a hold of that one? These practices must stop! There have also been numerous cases of improperly filled out OP-77. The most common violation being failure to fill in the rate section as required in Ref 20:10:05 Page 6, of your "C" manual.

It is extremely important that all crew members know and obey these rules. As I have said in the past "you will all be captains in a few short years", and one of your responsibilities will be doing a real professional job with the cab slips you are issued.

In summary, I cannot overemphasize the seriousness of this matter. A copy of the rules is attached for your ready reference. They will be strictly enforced. It is essential that pilots police their own ranks and report violations or suspected violations to the responsible Company officials.

I somewhat regret the necessity of bringing you this information, but I really didn't have anything else to do today.

*W. F. Hochbrunn*  
W. F. Hochbrunn

P.S. Don't think I don't know that some of you are not using your towel to wipe the basin as a courtesy to your fellow passengers. But more on that in my next letter.

him directly about it.

So I phoned his office and his secretary answered. I'd been to the office a number of times and she knew me so I gave her my name and asked for Mr. Hochbrunn. She said, and I quote, "*Captain Hochbrunn is out to lunch* (italics mine)." For the benefit of my two friends I repeated exactly what she'd said except I used "Mr." instead of "Captain" as I queried, "Mr. Hochbrunn is out to lunch?" and she said, "Yes." I then said, "Is that a temporary absence or a state of mind?" and she stifled a spontaneous and involuntary laugh and said it was a temporary absence. I said we'd call back later. My two friends were laughing out loud and we all got a grin out of it. I was pretty sure she wouldn't repeat my verbatim question to Mr. Hochbrunn.

Q: How did you first get the idea of writing your "Hochbrunn Bulletins?"

A: I don't recall, frankly. That was a long time ago. It may have been during a particularly fertile mental period when nothing was growing in my cerebral garden.

Q: What was it about the actual Hochbrunn bulletins that inspired you to take on this effort?

A: As mentioned previously, they seemed to embrace the concept of trying to pick fly poop out of the pepper versus anything positive, productive, and meaningful to the pilot population. There was a sense of absurdity about many of them. All I did was take what had been offered and play on that and exploit it, extending it a bit.

Q: Did you have any purpose other than amusing the troops in writing the "bulletins?"

A: Well, I'd learned from my military days. Having gone through Escape and Evasion school prior to Vietnam, which was a hell of a thing no one looked forward to, that I had to resist (as a POW) to resist and torment my schoolers when I could. And that those efforts had to be small, subtle, persistent, and unassuming, in order to keep those in charge from becoming unsettled and upset; but they would have to be underground, disguised, and charged to avoid discovery and retaliation. In my pilot group, at that time, to the POW camp since we were mostly captive and helpless to do anything about it.

Q: Did you take precautions to keep from being discovered as the author of the bulletins?

A: Yes, but they're 'classified.'

Q: So far as you know, did the company make any efforts to determine who wrote the bulletins?

A: Yes, on one occasion they sent a station manager to the small town where I lived. He had a copy of one of the bulletins and canvassed the local print shops trying to determine where it had been printed and who'd had it done. So they were apparently 'narrowing' things down.

Q: Do you think they ever came close to determining the author of the bulletins?

A: The situation I just described was a 'near miss' and could have ended badly. Fortunately, it was the

owner of the shop, a friend of mine, who dealt with the station manager and then immediately called me. It was at that time I came out with the last one, describing all of the previous bulletins as being confusing "due to the subject matter and composition" and informing the pilot group that "any further bulletins from this office and over my (his) signature were to be totally ignored." That one created considerable reaction in his office, I was told. But no more bulletins came out after that.

**Q:** Do you think you were particularly targeted in any company investigation?

**A:** (laughing) Well, I received some feedback from one source that attributed some speculation directly to Mr. Hochbrunn.

**Q:** Sometimes well done satire can be mistaken for the "real thing." Did any pilots "fall" for the bulletins believing they had actually come from Hochbrunn?

**A:** I saw that happen in Billings right after one had been posted in Ops there. The captain, who shall remain nameless, was reading the latest bulletin and kept shaking his head, walking away, and returning to read more of it, and I was amusingly watching him. As he returned for the final time, he suddenly exploded and said very loudly, "The SOB has absolutely gone nuts! I knew this was going to happen... he's absolutely gone nuts!" I just continued working on the flight plan and said nothing.

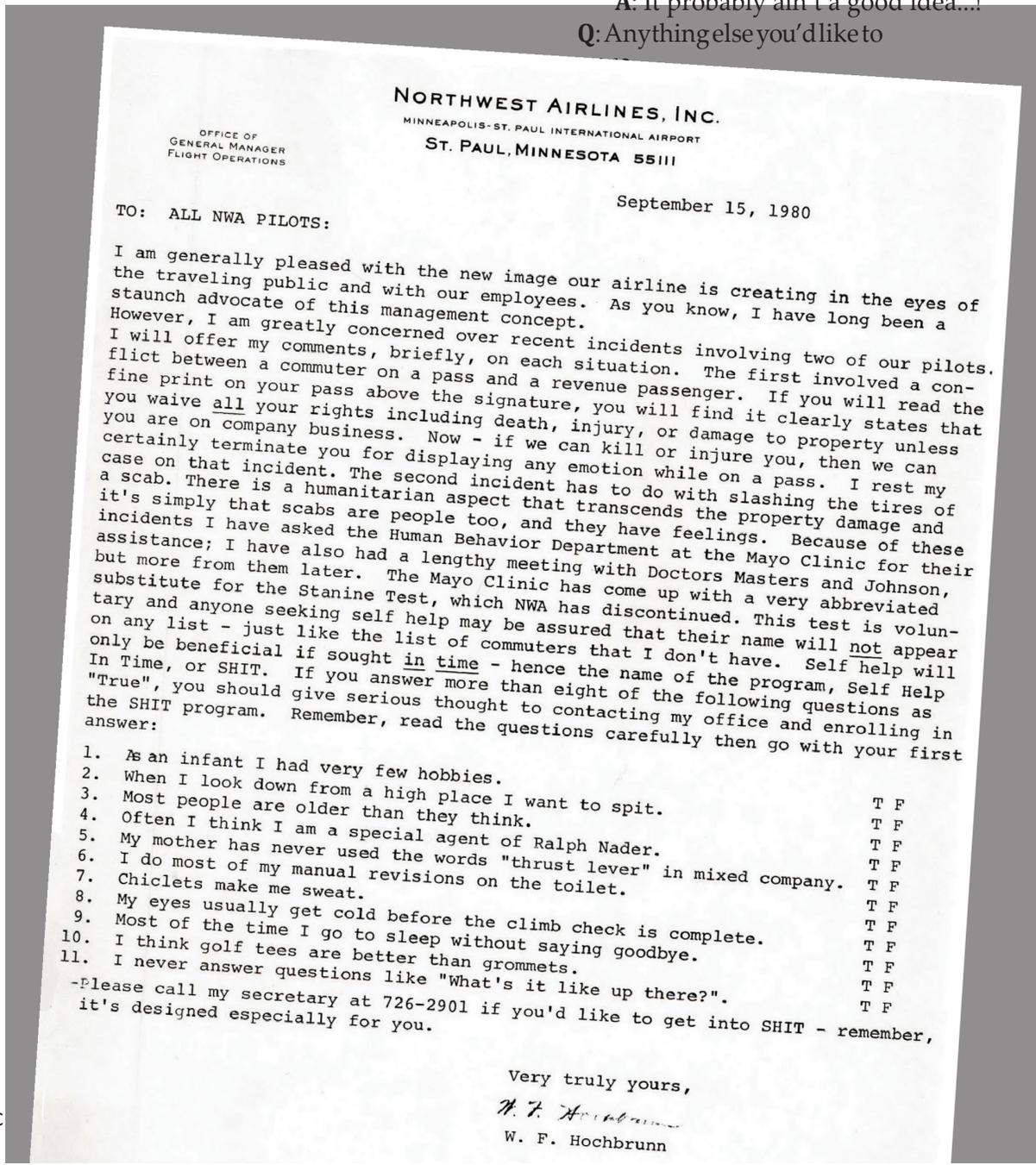
**Q:** what is your assessment of how the bulletins were received by the pilot group as a whole?

**A:** I don't really know. I think they may have provoked some chuckles and hopefully raised the morale a tiny bit. I hope that was what happened, anyway.

**Q:** What advice would you give a young pilot considering a similar satirical effort?

**A:** It probably ain't a good idea...!

**Q:** Anything else you'd like to



A: I was fortunate to serve with people in the pilot group whom I admired greatly and with whom I felt a great sense of camaraderie. All of us dealt with a lot of adverse things during that particular time at NWA and the work atmosphere was not like anything I'd ever experienced before. It was strange and foreign to me, and not conducive to good leadership and good morale, both of which were sadly lacking at that time. I just tried to do something that would create an undercurrent of giggles and resultant irritations that floated in the air and couldn't be watted away by those responsible for some of the nonsense we had to endure. I knew it was like a gnat continually biting them on the neck and I also knew it frustrated them because they could do nothing to stop it.

Interestingly, one day Bill Wren, then station manager in PDX and a really outstanding gent whom everyone liked and admired, pulled me aside as I was passing through. It was after a bulletin had just come out and he said, "Just wanted you to know, Don Nelson was here yesterday and he loved that bulletin!" I smiled and said, "That's great, Bill, but why are you telling me?" Bill just grinned back and I went on my way. I thought, "Heck, even Nelson likes these..." and I knew there had been no love lost between him and Hochbrunn. But I never expected Don Nelson to ever openly comment about them. It was fun while it lasted...

OFFICE OF  
GENERAL MANAGER  
FLIGHT OPERATIONS

NORTHWEST AIRLINES, INC.  
MINNEAPOLIS - ST. PAUL INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT  
ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55111

May 2, 1979

TO: ALL NWA PILOTS

Recently it has been necessary for me to issue several bulletins, ranging in subject from a slide presentation which was offensive to any FSA who might be gay, to parking lot violations and provisions for riding the crew bus. There have been reports made to me that these bulletins have been met with sneers, snickers, and in some cases outright giggles. I would like to take a minute to explain to you why these subjects are important enough to deserve attention from my office.

Most of you are not in a position to observe "the big picture" and cannot appreciate the severity of parking violations, non-regulation haircuts and shoeshines, poorly written cab slips, chaotic behavior on the crew bus, and a general decline in the behavioral norm of airline personnel.

May 23, 1980

TO: ALL NWA PILOTS

In the past months there has been a rash of administrative faux pas (screw-ups) attributable to Captains. I have always said "the job isn't complete until the paperwork is in" and that statement is more true today than ever. Avoidance of severe weather, approaches to minimums, and landings with maximum crosswind components does not exempt you from correct and proper completion of the paperwork that goes with the job. The Captain is responsible for all paperwork regardless of individual job assignments. I realize that the paysheet is normally accomplished by the Second Officer (even though I suggested otherwise in a previous memo), and the GN-47 (flight envelope) is normally filled out by the First Officer, leaving the Captain with a signature on the flight plan and the completion of the cab slips.

The following procedure becomes effective immediately. With it I intend to standardize paperwork procedures and eliminate the very costly errors that have been occurring. Effective immediately each Captain will submit to this office a notarized signature specimen (please note - signature specimen). A facsimile stamp will then be prepared from the Captain's specimen and issued to him under the same conditions as his ID card, to wit, a replacement cost of \$15 if it is lost (this provision will appear to hit hardest at wide-body Captains). At the commencement of each flight pattern the Captain will sign-out the facsimile stamp to the First Officer, who then becomes the designee for all paperwork completion. The First Officer will then either complete the paperwork himself or carefully screen each document before utilizing the Captain's facsimile stamp. In order to assure the Captain of final control and responsibility he (the Captain) must initial a space next to the facsimile stamped signature. Any document received without the Captain's initials will be considered incorrect and appropriate action will be taken. Should a Captain downgrade to First Officer he must turn in his facsimile stamp to the Director of Flying for his particular region. Should the Captain elect to up-grade at a later date he must submit a request, in writing, to the Director of Flying indicating the date on which he will again commence his duties as a Captain. Once the Director of Flying has verified this with crew schedules in the individual must report to the Director prior to his first trip and, in his presence, again submit a specimen to be compared with the facsimile stamp. If a match occurs he will be given the facsimile stamp.

Very truly yours,

William F. Hochbrunn



# *A Chick in the Cockpit*



Contributing Columnist Erika Armstrong

## Aviation Mountain Gods: Enter the Mosh Pit



Aviation Gods thrive on watching pilots learn. They are proud of us as we muddle our way through our ratings while they throw a variety of weather and mechanical challenges at us. They giggle as we bounce a few landings, panic when we realize we're lost, and they hold their breath when we forget to turn on the carburetor heat. They cheer as we strap into our first jets and yell "Yee Haw" each time we get past V1 and rotate. But, they especially enjoy the day we think we know it all. My Aviation God smirked the day it was time to show me what mountain flying really meant and from that moment on, I knew I'd never know everything about aviation.

I'm from Minnesota (now, say that again with a Minnesotan accent). I learned to fly at 900 feet above sea level so the aircraft I flew performed as expected despite the twisted airframes of the trainers. As I progressed into the corporate jet world, the Citation II I was flying felt like a rocket (but, since this was my first jet, I didn't think it could get better than that!). Even on hot, muggy Minnesota days, the Citation happily complied with whatever I asked of it. When the charter company I flew for needed to provide pilot services to a client who wanted his jet flown to Telluride each weekend, I nearly broke my arm trying to raise my hand to volunteer

first. Telluride. Shangri-La at 9,070 feet nestled in a box canyon surrounded by 14,000 foot peaks. After years of flying the flatlands of the Midwest, I was going to take on the challenges of Colorado airports.

I was typed in the Citation II, but was still very low time and happily flying as copilot. My first few trips to Telluride were with the chief pilot and I'm glad it was him who was flying because I could hardly stop looking at the scenery out the window. I flew in there before they took all the fun out of it and fixed the dip in the middle, installed EMAS, and added length to create the 6,900 foot runway it is today.

Since I was the enthusiastic new pilot, I gladly did all the performance chart calculating, weight and balance, and flight planning. I wanted to do it all. Based on performance charts, we had been going back and forth between no-flap takeoffs and flaps-set takeoffs depending on the temperature. The Citation has single-slotted trailing edge flaps. Nothing fancy, pretty simple, but this simple choice almost cost us our lives.

I had made a dozen trips out to Telluride when the chief pilot's schedule put him over duty time so he couldn't cover the weekly trip. I was paired with a captain who I'd flown King Airs with, but had not flown the Citation with him. He was new to the Citation, but had twice as many total hours as I did, so I respected his opinion and assumed my roll as "copilot." Having a "copilot mindset" is something we sometimes fall into despite all that CRM training. Even though sitting in the right seat we are truly a CO (equal) pilot, it's sometimes simpler and human nature to delegate responsibility so we must remind ourselves that in this world of aviation, we're pilots, not humans. On this trip, I forgot to be a pilot first, human second, and I should have spoken up.

We had a 1000 departure and it was still chilly when we arrived at 0830, even though it was the middle of July. Our passengers notified us they'd be a little late, so we now had a noon departure and it had gone from chilly to toasty. I worked out our performance numbers and the charts said a no-flap takeoff. The winds were gentle, but swirling, so they weren't going to be any help and at any moment can turn into a tailwind. While waiting for the passengers, I told the captain we had to plan a no-flap takeoff. He looked at me like I'd said it was snowing out and replied that he'd never done a no-flap takeoff and that the runway was too short to risk it. Oh boy, challenge a new enthusiastic pilot and see what happens.

I went out to the airplane, grabbed the charts and showed him. As we were going through the variations, our passengers (the owner of the airplane and his guests — and one extra passenger who we didn't expect) arrived. The owner was an aviation enthusiast who never quite had the time to get the pilot certification but loved

learning about it. He asked us what we were bickering about and I explained a little about drag and the flap/no-flap conundrum at Telluride. If we set flaps, we'll get off the ground quicker, but then we'll be in the air at a slower airspeed. No flaps, we need more runway but once airborne, have more speed and ability to climb. Since Telluride sits on a high plateau, it's disheartening to see the end of the runway coming up fast and knowing if you don't lift off, you're skidding off the end with a vertical drop down the valley which assures you're done learning. But, it's better to have the speed by the time you get there so your wings can not only fly, but climb as well.

Because we were having fun with the debate, it really didn't settle into my head the ramification of going against what the charts recommended. The captain was firm with his decision to go with flaps set and since this airplane had never come close to letting me down, I assumed it was not going to be a problem... it was the second touchdown on takeoff when I knew the ASSumption was going to make an ass out me.

It began with a gentle takeoff roll. We entered the runway and the captain did a slow throttle up for a smooth takeoff. He was so used to providing passenger comfort, he forgot how dangerous it can be. Takeoffs (and landings) at mountainous airports require assertive pilots and passenger comfort is not in the equation except a good passenger briefing about what to expect.

I called, "V1...(waited for what seemed like eternity here), rotate."

The captain pulled back on the yoke but nothing happened except a skip. He pulled back again and the airplane jumped and settled back down. We didn't take off so much as simply running out of runway and holding ground effect. As the steep drop to the valley opened up, the ground effect holding us up disappeared and we dipped into the valley. How many pilots can say they've flown below the runway they just departed from and lived to tell about it? Since we had no runway left, I yanked up the gear and even though the captain didn't call for it, he grabbed the flaps, put them up and flew down the valley as we gained enough speed to start a positive rate.

It only took ten seconds, and as a pilot you know what I mean when you simply deal with one issue at a time and then realize later that if you had done one more thing wrong, you wouldn't be around to worry about your wounded ego.

No one said a word as we finally reached positive rate and turned up valley towards flatter land. I stole a glance at my captain as I got a hold of ATC and could see he was as white as a ghost. To add to the joy, the owner of the airplane came up to ask us, "What the f\*^& was

that?" That, was my captain's last flight for this customer. He told him so right then and there. The owners simply punched me (gently, I think) in the shoulder and said, "You were right, but you didn't have to teach us all a lesson."

It did teach us all a lesson, but especially me. I did many things wrong that day, but most of all, I didn't let the facts speak for me. I should have told the captain I was not departing unless we followed the guidance of the performance charts. It is rare that we ever fly on the edge of these performance charts but that day was it. It was hot, humid by noon, the winds were shifting enough that we probably had a tailwind, and we had one more passenger than we originally expected. I had calculated density altitude, but how much had it changed in the forty-five minutes between calculation and departure? Probably a lot at that elevation. It can be 35 F degrees at 0700 and 80 degrees F by noon at these high, thin-aired airports. So, to avoid being human, here are a few reminders about the important elements of high elevation airports.

### **DENSITY ALTITUDE (DA) - AN ANALOGY YOU'LL NEVER FORGET**

In plain English, let's think of air like a mosh pit and your airplane/wing is the lead singer about to jump into the mosh pit, expecting the audience to hold him up. When it's really hot, the audience members don't stand as close to one another because they stink and they're sweaty. So as the singer jumps into the pit, there is still lift, but not as much as if the audience was closer together. In contrast, if it was cold, the audience/air molecules would stand closer together, trying to stay warm. When the singer/airplane jumps into the pit, there is more lift when it's cold. Okay, it's really more complex than that, and I could go on about the laws of physics, but for a pilot sitting at the end of the runway looking at the mosh pit at the end, this is all I need you to remember.

### **HIGH ALTITUDE**

Pressure also affects air density. The atmosphere has weight and it's heavier at the surface of the mosh pit than in the rafters above. Increasing pressure smooshes the mosh pit together — like putting all the audience members in the basement of your mosh pit auditorium. For every thousand feet you make them climb up, fewer audience members can climb that high (totally out of shape and they give up in percentages every thousand feet or so) so the difference in molecular compression due to pressure is much less in Telluride than at sea level. Simply, there are fewer people in the mosh pit at 9,000 feet to hold up your singer/airplane.

### **OXYGEN**

I live at 8700 feet in Colorado so I love taking my Minnesota friends and relatives to the bar their first night and buying them drinks. There is so much less oxygen here than what they're used to, their bodies don't burn alcohol like at home. For your airplane to create power, oxygen is required to burn the fuel. If you have less oxygen, you have less power. You still need the proper fuel/air ratio so even if you have plenty of fuel to throw at your engine, you still don't have as much air to burn with it. Sure, there are ways to compensate, but that's another article.

### **SWEATY MOSH PIT**

I'm going to add one more important element in here which is harder to determine. If your mosh pit is sweaty (high relative humidity and high temps), hotter air can hold more water than cool air which means your audience members/molecules are all holding beers when it's hot so they have less ability to lift you/your singer. Your audience members/molecules will also be a little more sweatier and slipperier and it will have an effect on performance, but we don't really factor humidity percentages in most performance charts. Just be aware it's one more thing that might let your airplane down or drop your lead singer.

### **WHAT YOUR TAKEOFF WILL LOOK LIKE**

The most disconcerting thing about high, hot altitude takeoffs is that the picture looks all wrong. Your peripheral vision will be screaming, holy cow, look how fast we're going, while your airspeed says "meh." Since we determined our mosh pit is pretty thin up here, we still need a certain airspeed to create the lift we need, so we're going to have to go faster to get enough molecules/audience members to lift us up. You'll actually be increasing your true airspeed which means your ground speed is going to increase, even though you're watching for your regular indicated airspeed, just like at sea level. You're not hitting as many audience members/molecules with your pitot tube so you'll have to go faster to hit the required number.

Pilots have relationships with their airplanes. Just like a marriage, you'll be going along, expecting your spouse to behave a certain way and then suddenly, they do the unexpected. You'll blame them for the errant behavior, but if you analyze the situation a little closer, you'll realize they did what they had to do...

Photo credit: [summitpost.org](http://summitpost.org)

# The Last Reunion

By Jay Sakas

Maggie was standing by the door with my hat in her right hand and a cup of coffee for the road, in her other hand. I went over to get my goodbye kiss and listen to her words of wisdom, which were the same before every trip. "Be careful out there and remember, there isn't a woman that loves you more than I love you. Fly safe." As I reached for the kiss a voice broke into my head.

"Captain Rogers, Captain Rogers wakeup." A soft voice entered my head. "Sorry to bother you," she said.

I opened my eyes into a heavenly sight. Slightly foggy was the vision, but a beautiful face.

"I'm sorry, was I snoring?" I asked sheepishly.

"No, no, though you did have a smile on your face," she said as she sat down beside me.

"I'm Molly Davidson the passenger service manager. I have good news. Someone higher up must like you, we got a message to upgrade you to first class. So here is your new boarding pass."

"Well, after 25 years of retirement it is about time I got some recognition," I replied jokingly.

"Congratulations old timer," she said as she stood up. "By the way, boarding will be little late. The crew has been delayed due to a serious accident on I-5." I smiled as she walked away, even at 85, I still appreciated a good-looking lady.

I glanced around the gate area at the people milling about, and every face was blurry. Then I realized I didn't have my glasses on. I looked around my seating area, but no glasses. Wondering where I might have left them, I

realized that I didn't remember driving to the airport. I remember standing by the door looking at Maggie's wheelchair. I had left it there after her last trip to the hospital as a reminder of our ritual. Maggie flew West last year, and today I'm all alone.

The last thing I remember was holding the coffee and imagining Maggie's kiss. It had been our usual before-flight ritual. My uniform would be laid out. A cup of coffee on the bathroom counter waited when I got out of the shower. Only some hard-boiled eggs and toast for breakfast; enough to hold me till the end of the first leg. My wife and mother of four great kids would stand by the door holding my hat, plant a great kiss on me, along with her refrain, and waved as I drove off.

But today I could not remember how I got here. Lately I have been having these moments. Getting in the car to go to the store, only to find myself at the store and not remembering how I got there. But I do remember why I had to come to the airport. It was to fly to the last RNPA reunion.

Last year only twelve retired old pilots attended our annual reunion, and this year we were down to five. We were the last of the original Northwest Airlines pilots. Everyone after us were Delta.

The five of us talked throughout the year and came up with the idea of the last reunion. We decided to have it in Minneapolis, where all our careers started. Fort Snelling was still there and the memories of those days were still fresh in our minds.

For me, it was 25 years ago that I retired. The Feds changed the age rule to 65 the month before I turned 65. I had 35 great years,

We were hired at the start of the golden age of aviation, the '60s. We lived through the strikes of the '70s with Mr. Nyrop. They didn't call us the Cobra airline for nothing; never knowing when we would strike again. Then the Rothmeier tenure arrived with the Republic merger, which brought chaos and financial woes to the airline. The age of Checchi and Wilson, brought about a leveraged buy-out, and threats of bankruptcy. It was followed by the expansion to the Orient under Steenland and Anderson.

The merger with Delta took place after I retired; with a pension saved by ALPA, management and congress. There are some good memories of my time there. There were many friends made and lost. Finding Maggie on a flight and having four great kids was the icing on the cake. I have lived my dream.

There was a slight commotion around me and looking up I saw the crew rushing to the gate in a very somber mood. The word got out that there had been a collision between a truck and a small car. They were delayed due to the traffic jam and had to drive around the accident site. It appears that the site of the accident shook them up, or maybe it was just being delayed.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, the crew has arrived and we



will be boarding in thirty minutes." Molly's voice came across on the loud speaker. I leaned back and shut my eyes. Thinking to myself that fate has been good to me. To reach 85 and still have good health is exceptional. My family survived many years with me gone weeks at a time. Got grandkids and a great grandchild on the way. Life is good, living the dream.

I must have dozed off because there was Molly's voice again calling, "We will be boarding first class and those needing assistance shortly." I stood up, and for the first time in a long time, I felt spry. I reached for my cane, but I could not find it. I didn't need the cane except when my right leg got tired. I sauntered over to the line for first class. Molly was watching me, and approached and asked if I need to be pre-boarded.

"Do I look like I need help? I'm in excellent health and

mobility," I replied, as I tried to stand tall.

"Well Captain Rogers, it is only because you came up to the podium earlier with a cane and now I don't see the cane," Molly sweetly replied. "But we will let you board with the pre-boards and the children."

Did Molly just put me down? I just smiled back at her and said, "Thank you ma'am." But I didn't move.

After a couple minutes, she called first class and VIP members. I headed that way. Walking down the jetway I looked at my boarding pass and noted seat 2A. I dislike window seats. I spent too many years by the window, but more than that, there was a physical issue.

As I walked into first class, I noticed it was half empty. That explains the upgrade. As a very attractive lady sat down in 2B, I stood in front of her and asked, "Excuse me, I have 2A, would you mind switching seats? My bum right leg needs to be extended." With the sweetest smile, she responded, "I don't mind Captain Rogers." She picked up her purse and slid into the window seat.

"Thank you, I appreciate it. But how do you know my name," I asked quizzically as I sat down and stretched my right leg.

"I heard the agent call your name while you were sleeping."

"I'm Angela and it is a pleasure to meet you," she said as she held out her hand.

"I'm pleased to meet you, Angela."

As we settled in she kept glancing my direction. Finally, she asked the first of many questions.

"When did you start flying?" she asked, as she turned in her seat toward me. "I bet you have some very interesting stories to tell."

"More than enough to put you to sleep on this flight." I said, fastening my seat belt. "But, I'm an old man who will probably put himself to sleep."

She laughed. "Well, I am a writer, specializing in aviation novels. I've got a couple novels under my belt," she said as she flicked her hair. "Maybe you have read them, *Contrails* or *Mayday*."

"No, I haven't. But first chance I get, I'll make a point to get them." I replied.

I settled back in my seat and closed my eyes, hoping not to get quizzed by Angela. The next thing I knew the flight attendant was asking me what I wanted to drink. "Ah, red wine please," I replied, and my seat mate interrupted with, "I'll have the same."

The flight attendant brought the wine, and I handed Angela her glass. Just as I took my first sip, Angela hit me with the first question. "What makes you go to Minneapolis?" She politely asked. I suspected the first of many questions.

"I'm going to a reunion for retired Northwest Airlines pilots."

She gently touched my hand and said, "I hope you don't think I'm prying, it is just the writer in me. I am working on a new novel and I'm always looking for new material. I bet you have had a very interesting career, and I would love to hear them all," she said and then sipped her wine.

I could tell this trip was not going to be fast enough, so I told her about the reunion hoping that would be enough. But before I realized what was happening, I was in my glory sharing stories of the past. Her questions just kept coming, and Angela had a way of pulling from me more and more stories and I enjoyed reminiscing. It was like an episode from the old TV series "This is Your Life."

At one point, she asked if I had ever done anything that I regretted. That was when I realized that I had said too much. I excused myself and went to the bathroom.

Once I entered, I looked in the mirror and I saw an old man with a lot of miles behind him, air miles. Regrets, yes. Not proud of some of my actions. There were also moments when I had to think fast, and on occasion I made a mistake. Somehow the Fates turned the mistake into a solution. After washing up, I returned to my seat only to find Angela missing. I figured she went to the back biffy. I sat down and closed my eyes, again.

Next thing I hear, "Captain Rogers, wake up." I quickly opened my eyes and suddenly I am gazing into Angela's green eyes.

"We have landed. We're at the gate. Time to get off," she softly said.

"How long have I been sleeping?" I asked.

"The entire flight. When I got back, you were sound asleep, and I didn't want to wake you. During approach, we tried a couple of times to wake you, to put your seat-back up, but it was like trying to wake the dead."

"Are you making fun of my age?" I said as I got up out of the seat. "I'm spry for my age. As a matter of fact, I can't believe how refreshed I feel." As I approached the door I noticed that the entire airplane was empty. I turned toward Angela to ask what she thought of that, and she was gone. I was alone.

I looked around the airplane again, and it was eerily empty. I started to walk up the jetway. Each step I took seemed to be better than the last one. From where I stood, I could even read the sign on the door clearly, without my glasses. I am having a hard time understanding what is going on. I got to the doorway and pushed it open.

Suddenly, the brightest of white light hit me. I was blinded.

"What the hell is going on here," I shouted.

There was a burst of laughter, and I looked out at a crowd of people laughing and clapping their hands. Then

the cheering started. Looking out at the crowd, I saw the faces of pilot friends, ones that had already had flown West. There was Don, best man at my wedding and my best friend. There was Tom, Ben, Richard and all the pilots I flew with who had flown West. There were a lot more faces that I recognized but their names were blank. Off to the side of the crowd, stood my Mom and Dad and beside them was Angela with big smile on her face. Then it dawned on me as to all those questions she had asked. She was writing my Book of Life.

It finally hit me. On my drive to the airport, the accident happened to me. I was driving on I-5, blacked out and ran off the road only to wake up upon the shoulder of the road. I had oversteered and spun the car into the path of a truck. I was broadsided and my car became a sardine can. I had flown West, as the string of life had been cut by the Fates.

Suddenly, Maggie is pushing her way through the crowd. She rushes up to me and grabs my shoulders. Instead of kissing me, she starts to shake me, yells into my ear.

"Wake up JJ, wake up. You are having a bad dream."



I sat up in bed and looked at Maggie's blue eyes. I was alive. I wasn't dead. Maggie wasn't dead!

"Hurry up and get your smart ass out of bed," she said pulling my arm, helping me to sit up. "We have a flight to catch. You don't want to miss the last reunion, do you?" she yelled rushing toward the bathroom. But at the door she stopped, turned and asked, "Who is Angela? You called her name a couple of times in your sleep."

"You wouldn't believe me if I told you," I said, as I slowly got out of bed, and sauntered to the window. Looking out at the sunrise, I could not believe the dream I just had. It was so vivid that my shirt and shorts were sopping wet.

Turning back from the window, I looked around and realized that I am the luckiest guy in the world to be here. Made it to 75 and based on the dream, 85 looks good. I just have to keep Maggie around to share it. I sighed. Whatever happens, the fates will decide. Might as well take a shower and go and enjoy this last reunion. ✈

# SW Florida Spring Luncheon

## March 6th • 11am~2pm



MARINA JACK  
SARASOTA

**\$29 per  
person**

Info: Dino  
Oliva 941 349  
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Meal Choices: Grouper Oscar • London Broil • Island Chicken  
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NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Grouper L. Broil Chicken

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**RESERVATION  
DEADLINE  
FEBRUARY  
28**

*Since there will be no February Contrails this is the only printed reservation you will receive.*

# Seattle Summer Picnic



Aerial photo:  
Sterling Bentsen  
The others:  
Your Editor

Genesis Farm & Gardens • Enumclaw • August 17th





Front: Kathee Nelick, Geri Bedrossian, Montie Leffel, Irena & Jerry Harrott, Anne Simpson  
 Back: Rex Nelick, Harry Bedrossian



Front: Evie Suggett, Carolyn Cheney, Veda & Dave Hall  
 Back: Mel Suggett, "Bud" Cheney, Betty & Bill Huff



Front: Montie Leffel, Kathy Eglit, Kathy Stark, Joen Parks  
 Back: Skip Eglit, Wayne Stark, Howie Parks



Front: Mary McAllister, Andrea Lungren Schneebek, Nancie Russ  
 Back: Darl McAllister, Clair Peffer, Dave Schneebek, Gary Russ



Front: Joan Fields, Katie Pethia, Alayne Hudspeth  
Back: Bill Fields, Dave Pethia, Jay Sakas, Jack Hudspeth



Front: Corky Black, Mary Ann Allmann, Marilyn Nelson, Dottie Hall  
Back: Jacl Allmann, Mark Allmann, Chuck Nelson, Dave Hall



Front: Lennie Good, Patty Dills  
Back: Sandy Lucas, Darlene Jevne, Sandy Snead



Front: Mary Ann Nolan, Nancy Bates, Pat Rieman, Gayla Bredahl, Joanne Aitken  
Back: Bill Nolan, John Bates, Dave McLeod, Myron Bredahl, Chuck Carlson



Front: Holly Nelson, Mavis Stears, Karen & John Pennington  
 Back: Dave Nelson, Larry Stears



Front: Linda Rolczynski, Barbara Peterson, Sandy & Curt Bryan  
 Back: Dave Rolczynski, Doug Peterson



Front: Eileen Halverson, Georganne Burton, Suzie Lievens, Pam Beckman, Charlie Huffaker, Wilder Huffaker  
Back: Charlie Welsh, Dave Nelson



Front: Nadine & Sterling Bentsen, Hika, Towa  
Back: Will & Becky Harris



Moon Mullen brought this framed collection of some famous stickers, once prevalent in many areas of our workplaces, to be donated to RNPA. It was quickly decided to donate them to the Museum of Flight in Seattle.

Accepting this historic artifact is RNPA member, and recent NWA captain retiree, Anne Simpson, current Chairwoman of the Board of Trustees for the Museum. She said she couldn't guarantee that it would be displayed in the Museum but it could likely be found in her office.



# Donor Stories from the Museum of Flight

## An Investment in Aviation's Future

A shared interest in aviation inspired Betty and Sam Houston to name The Museum of Flight as a beneficiary of their estate.

Frank "Sam" Houston has a background that can only be described as heroic. He flew many B-17 bombing missions in WWII's European theater, including seven missions into Berlin, and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (730th Squadron, 45th Bomb Group) for his service.

Sam volunteered for the Aphrodite program, a top-secret effort based in England to fly remote-controlled planes, laden with 20,000 pounds of high explosives, into targets near the European coast. This program was a result of intelligence that Germany was developing the V-3, a "supergun" cannon to be used to bombard London from northern France. The Aphrodite aircraft were very dangerous. The two crewmen on board had to bail out at 1,000 feet after the airplane was put on course near another controlling aircraft. The Aphrodite program was eventually cancelled, but it helped lay the technical framework for today's remote-controlled unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). Sam's bravery was evident as many pilots were lost because the airplanes would sometimes prematurely detonate before the crew could bail out. One of those was a Navy pilot flying a P4Y on Aug. 12, 1944: Joe Kennedy, Jr.

After serving his country, Sam met his bride-to-be in Spokane, Washington. They moved to Seattle, where Betty held two full-time jobs while he looked for work. Betty's nights were spent at Northwest Airlines as one of only eight reservationists booking tickets for NWA passengers. During the day, she worked at Bon Marché in the menswear department. When Betty was young, she took flying lessons but could not afford to get her license. She also could not afford to attend college and



felt her career was limited because she was a woman.

Sam became a pilot for Northwest Airlines and flew mostly 747s for more than 30 years. In 1982, Betty hosted his retirement party in The Museum of Flight's Red Barn before the T.A. Wilson Great Gallery was built. That same year, Sam became a Museum trustee, serving until 1986.

Betty and Sam enjoyed many friendships throughout the world. Although the couple had no children of their own, Betty helped bring orphans to the U.S. from Asian countries after she retired from Northwest Airlines.

The Houstons made plans in their will for The Museum of Flight to be the residual beneficiary of their estate. The Museum would receive the remainder, what was left after providing for other beneficiaries. Sam passed away in 2002 and Betty made sure their updated will honored the wishes they had agreed on together.

Through their planned giving, Betty and Sam chose to provide educational funding and flying lessons, and to give young women the opportunities that Betty was not afforded. They also wanted to support the Museum's B-17.

The Frank "Sam" and Betty Houston Education Endowment was established at the Museum after Betty's passing. The endowment will provide increased educational opportunities and will encourage young women to explore aerospace careers. The Houston's dreams and passion for aviation will live on for generations to come. ✈





# Dearborn

September  
14~16  
2017





# Reminon



*Photos by  
Your Editor  
except as  
noted*



*Dino & Keren Oliva*



*Ron & Carol Vandervoort*



*Bill & Joyce Barrott*



*Ned & Ellen Stephens*



*Charlie & NanSea Welsh*



*Dick & Mary Ann Robbins*



*Thomas Edison's  
Menlo Park Office & Library*

*Barb Pisel*

## *Greenfield Village*



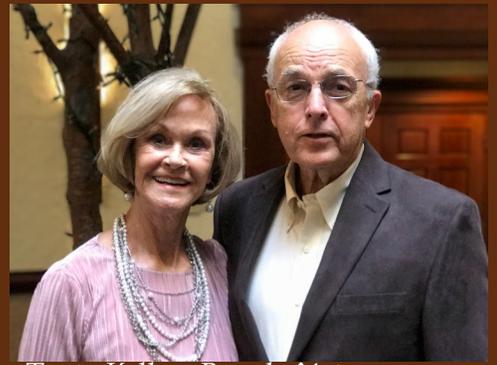
*Barb Pisel*



Wayne & Rita Ward



Steve Bowen, Tom & Judy Schellinger



Tootz Kelley, Rowdy Yates



Bruce Armstrong & Gail Olsen,  
Hal Hockett



Chet White & Sandy Ensmen



Jane Chadwick & Jennifer Johnson



Barb Pisel



Barb Pisel

### George Washington Carver Cabin

The outside of this building was modeled after the Missouri slave cabin where George Washington Carver was born. It is based on his memories of the cabin.

This simple cabin reminds us of the many ways that George Washington Carver worked to improve the lives of Southern farmers.

George Washington Carver was born into slavery, but was later known for his achievements as an agricultural chemist. He looked for ways that Southern farmers could move from cotton-only farms to those that grew a variety of crops. He is best known for his experiments with peanuts and sweet potatoes, using them for food, ink and rubber.

Built in 1942 in Greenfield Village.



Barb Pisel



*Gary & Barb Pisel*



*Jack & Alayne Hudspeth & son Ron*



*Phil & Eileen Hallin*



*Sterling & Nadine Bentsen*



*Ralph & Jill Christ*



*Montie Leffel, Prim Hamilton*



*Barb Pisel*

# *Henry Ford Museum*



*George & Bobbi Lachinski*



*Larry & Linda Potton*



*Kathy Pamen, Dave Lundin*



*Bob & Judy Royer*



*K. C. & Matha Kohlbrand*



*Hal & Shirley Newton*



*Barb Pisel*



*Skip & Kathy Eglet*



*Tom & Sue Ebner*



*Gene & Helen Frank*



*Larry & Lenuce Daudt*



*Howie & Marilyn Lelend*



*Chuck Carlson & Joanne Aitken*



*Your Editor*



*Dave McLoud & Pat Rieman,  
Sheri Ball*



*Jim & Nancy Bates*



*Don & Edith Shcrope*



*Dick & Sue Duxbury*



*George & Arliss Williams*



*Sheri Ball, Ron & Carol Vanderroot*



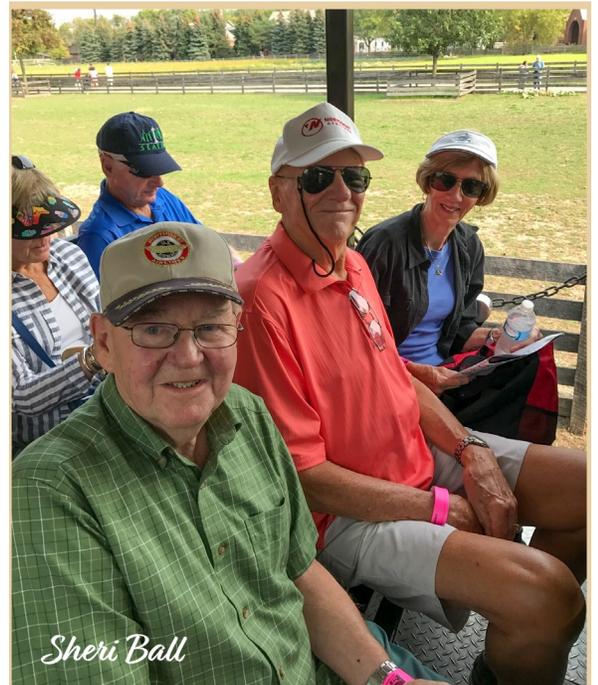
*Lower  
half  
photos:  
Sheri Ball*



*Sheri Ball*



*Sheri Ball*



*Sheri Ball*



*Sheri Ball*

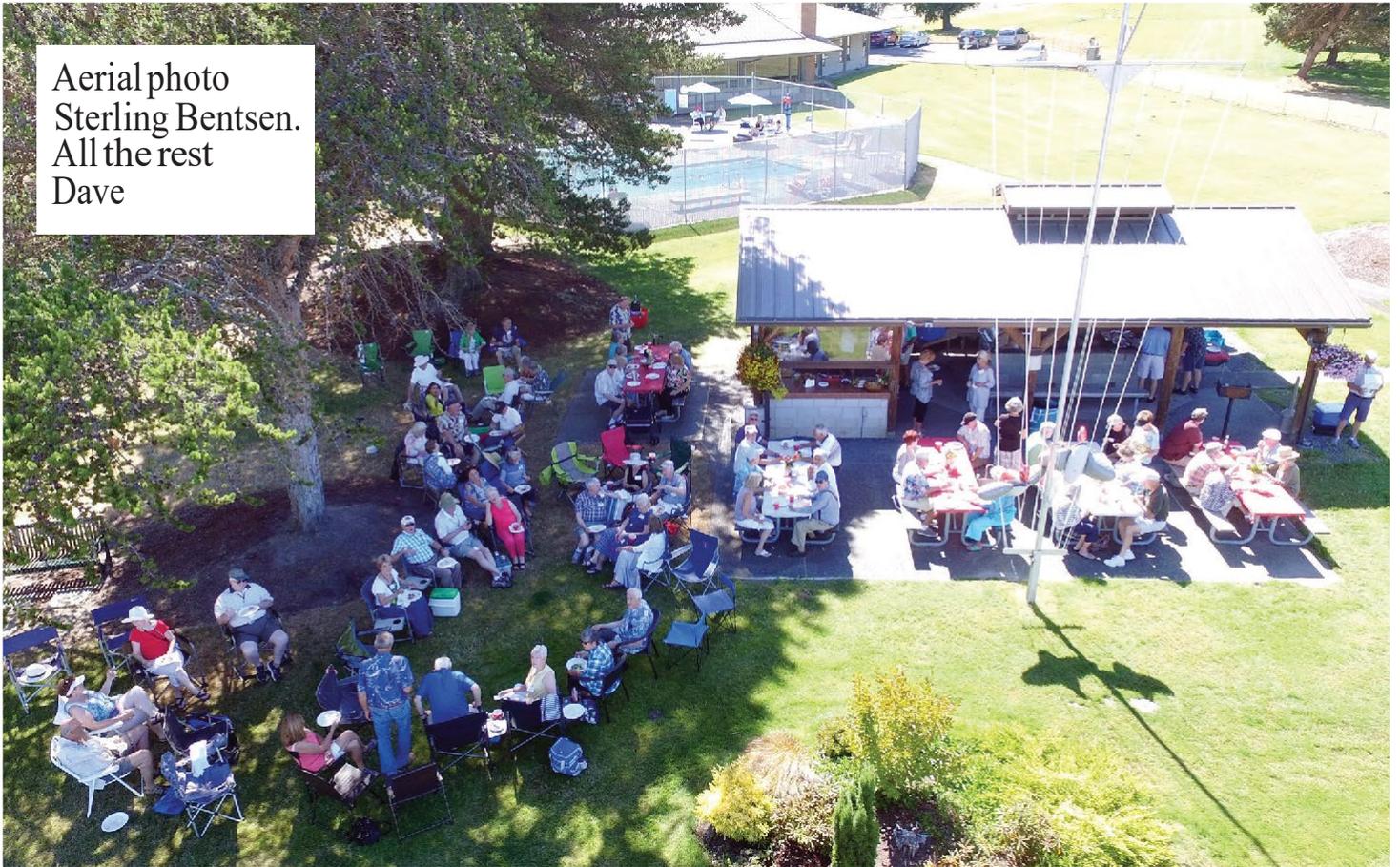


*Sheri Ball*



*Sheri Ball*

Aerial photo  
Sterling Bentsen.  
All the rest  
Dave



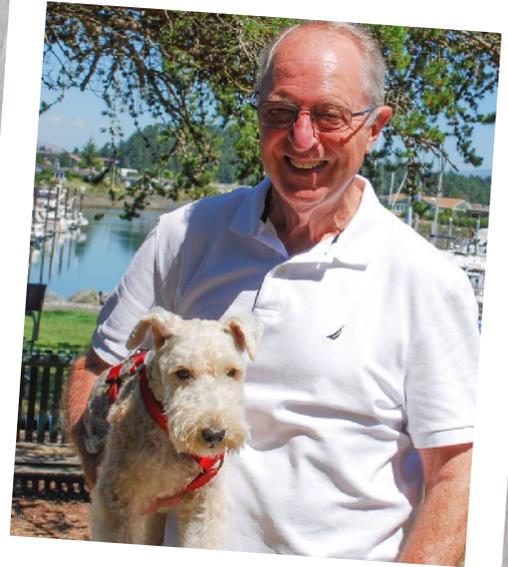
Sous Chef Dave Schneebeck (L) and Chef Claus Dassel



# North Puget Sound Picnic Shelter Bay • July 25



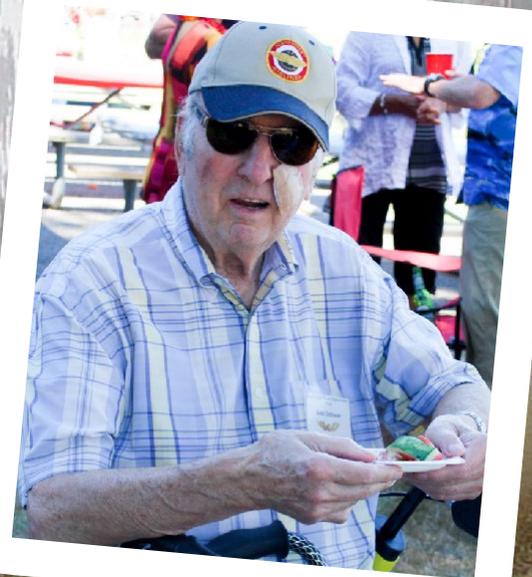
Janet Rogge & Sig Herman



David Wilder and Abby



Gordy Crowe



Bob Dickson



Bill Barrott and friend



Jan & Walt Mills



Karol & Dave Kocher



Dave Schneebeck, MaryDell Rarick,  
Andrea Lungren Schneebeck



*Lowell & Dorothy Schroeder*



Eileen Halverson, Sandy Schmidt



Gerri & B.J. Molé



Joyce Barrott, Bill & Lynn Day



Roseanne & Doug Jones



Lynn Day, Turid Dassel



Bruce Berger, Mike Orecchio



Ruthie & Dan Dumas



Charlie Welsh, Ralph & Sonya Taylor



Jim & Ruth Seccombe



Sterling & Nadine Bentsen



Connie Bowen, Skip Eglet



Marty & Joyce Foy



Bob & Lorna Higgins



*Phil & Phyllis Miller*



Jens & Adrianna Houby,  
Dave & Holly Nelson



Skip & Kathy Eglet



Lynn & Ron Heitritter



Demetri Vasiliades, Mary Ann Noland



Wanda & Steve white



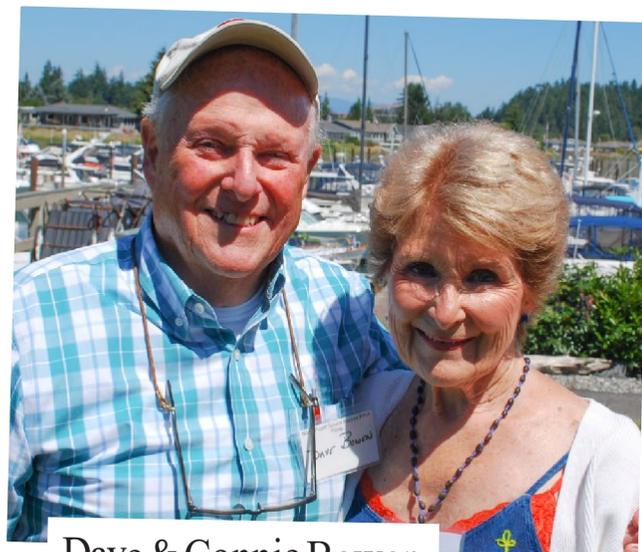
Claus & Turid Dassel



Bill & Mary Ann Noland



Wray & Barbara Featherstone,  
Walt Plimpton



Dave & Connie Bowen



Wray Featherstone, Bob Higgins



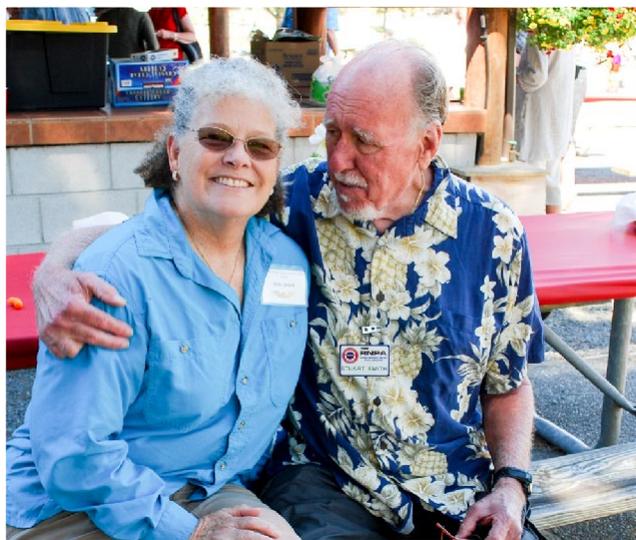
Ginny & Gil Baker



Paul & Donnie Becker



Linda & Nick Niccum



Kitty & Stu Smith



Skip Eglet, Ron Heitritter,  
Ted Swan, Walt Mills

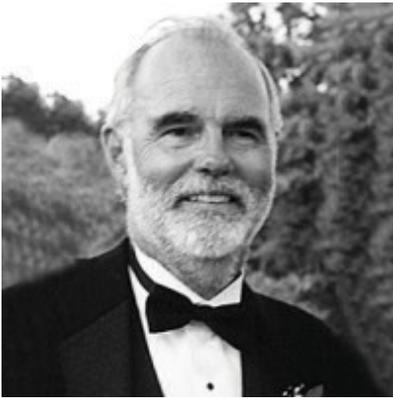


Pat & George Groth, Jeanine & Rex Smith



Walt & Margie Plimpton





**LEE BRADSHAW**  
1933 ~ 2017

**Captain Winthrop Lee Bradshaw**, age 83, passed away peacefully of old age on July 27, 2017. Lee was born on December 17, 1933 to Lee Sr. and Billie Yates in Maryland. He grew up close to his step-father Emerson Phillips.

Lee enlisted in the Air Force in 1951 and served for a little less than four years, part of that time was as an aviation cadet. The Air Force gave Lee an 'early out' allowing him to enroll at Parks College of Aeronautical Technology in St. Louis. He graduated from Parks in the spring of 1958 with a BS degree in Aircraft Maintenance Engineering. Northwest Airlines hired Lee soon thereafter on October 30, 1958. Lee then bid adieu to St. Louis, packed up and moved to Minnesota. He would live most of the rest of his life in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Most of the 1958 NWA new hires started as copilot on the DC-4 and later flew copilot on the DC-6, DC-7, the Boeing Stratocruiser and the Boeing 707 series. Lee flew captain on two aircraft—the Boeing 727 and the classic Boeing 747. Unfortunately in 1974, while performing an airshow aerobatic demonstration in a Pitts Special, Lee had a serious accident. The medical authorities informed him he would not walk again, much less fly airplanes. In a very determined way, he proved them wrong. Starting with gliding (sailplanes) he worked his way back to the cockpit. It was a long hard fight, but he returned to flying and ended his 35 years with NWA flying the classic 747 at MSP.

Lee was renowned for being an aviation enthusiast who shared his passion for flying with others. He founded the St. Croix Sport Aviation group through which he taught others to fly sailplanes, seaplanes, aerobatic aircraft, taildraggers, gyrocopters, and lighter than air balloons. This fellow would fly just about anything and held all seven FAA instructor's

ratings at one time, including that of FAA designee. It is no surprise that he mentored a number of young people toward aviation careers.

Lee also loved travel, flying his own airplanes all over the U.S. and Canada; venturing out from Minnesota to such diverse places as Florida, Maine, and Alaska. There was a special haunt near Paducah, Kentucky that welcomed Lee and his light aircraft.

He touched all seven continents; including the outback of Australia, an African safari, and two trips to Antarctica. He far preferred pitching a tent or sleeping in a hanger to hotels. Lee loved the outdoors almost as much as flying. The Bradshaw offspring were introduced to camping by their dad at a young age. Lee could paddle and steer a canoe with great skill, portage with the best of them, and is purported to have made 75 trips into the Boundary Waters Canoe Area of Minnesota. He owned land near Mora, Minnesota where he would sit by the campfire reading, often sleeping out under the stars—including in the snow.

Forever an avid reader, Lee had an extensive library of aviation and military books. He knew these subject histories well and took pride in being born on the anniversary of the Wright Brothers first flight. Given his active mind, Lee was often self-taught; he conquered Spanish, played the harmonica, and when preferring classical music he would load up the Boston Pops and whistle along. He once said that he had no room for lamenting about "what he hasn't done" or "wished I did" and perhaps that is the way it should be.

Lee is survived by his children Madonna, Rebecca, Martin, Susanna, Gregory, Christopher, and Nicholas; brothers Bane and Jim Phillips, and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by sons Phillip, Douglas and Andrew. (—Bill Da...)

DATE	FLIGHT FROM	FLIGHT TO	EQUIPMENT FLOWN				H. P.
			AIRCRAFT MAKE AND MODEL	CERTIFICATE NUMBER	ENGINE		
9-19	E. St. Louis	LOCAL	PIPER J-3	88097	CONT	65	258
9-20	St. Charles	FAM-E. STL	DC-120 T-CRAFT	33905	CONT	65	258
9-20	ESTL.	CREVE COUR	PIPER J-3	88097	CONT	65	258
9-24	CREVE COUR	LOCAL	PIPER J-3	88097	CONT	65	258
11-2	MSP	LOCAL	DOUGLAS DC-4	N 95416	4/P+W	1450	
11-3	MSP	LOCAL	DOUGLAS DC-4	N 95408	4/P+W	1450	
11-4	MSP	LOCAL	DOUGLAS DC-4	N 95408	4/P+W	1450	
11-4	MSP	LOCAL	DOUGLAS DC-4	N 95408	4/P+W	1450	
11-5	MSP RST-MOU		DOUGLAS DC-4	N 95408	4/P+W	1450	
11-5	MOU-MSN-RST-MSP		DOUGLAS DC-4	N 95413	4/P+W	1450	
11-11	MSP-FAR-JMS-RIS-RIL		DC-4	95408	4/P+W	1450	

THE RECORD ON THIS PAGE IS CERTIFIED TRUE AND CORRECT:

PILOT *Win. Bradshaw* ATTESTED BY \_\_\_\_\_

His log book entry for his first flight at NWA



**RON RIEL**  
1938 ~ 2017

**Captain Ron Riel**, age 79, passed away peacefully September 10, 2017 at home in Spokane, Washington. He was born to Ronald J. and Alice A Riel on March 23, 1938 in Yakima, Washington.



Ron grew up on a family owned hop farm in Wapato, WA where he learned to operate heavy equipment and acquired solid work values. He acquired a love of flying early in life and earned his private pilot license while still in high school. Ron graduated from Marquette High School in 1956 and Gonzaga University in 1962 with a degree in marketing. While at Gonzaga he enrolled in the USN ROTC program and participated in the renowned Gonzaga Glee Club. Ron married his college sweetheart Kathie Acher in 1962. They recently celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary with a family gathering in Minnesota.

The summer of 1962 Ensign Riel and his bride Kathie crossed this huge country destined for USN Flight Training at NAS Whiting Field, Florida. After earning his USN wings, Ron received specialized multi-engine training and was assigned to VP-1 at Ault Field – Whidbey NAS, Washington. After qualifying in the P2V, Ron deployed to NAS Sangley Point, Philippines to support U.S. operations in Vietnam. The VP-1 flight surgeon, Dr. Martin Wilcox has written about Ron, including his struggle with USN one size fits all weight restrictions that allowed little accommodation for men with Ron's muscle mass. .

Dr. Wilcox reported that Ron could be very, very funny. "Like his self-extraction of his entire body from his car on a ferry between Port Townsend and Whidbey Island during one of our reunions. They had parked him very close to a pillar and he was either going to stay in the car or squeeze himself out. Out he wriggled. Like a tube of toothpaste. It was hilarious. And then he went back into the car by the same route. Those who had seen the initial extrication were waiting with cameras."

Ron separated from the US Navy in 1969 and was hired by Northwest Airlines on July 29, 1969. This date of hire destined Ron to endure lengthy layoffs. He worked various jobs for a few years and was eventually recalled to resume a long tenure flying 'side saddle' on the Boeing 727. Nevertheless, Ron had returned to his true calling as a pilot. Over the first ten years at NWA Ron and Kathie happily welcomed five children into their home. The children remember their father as a hard-working man who encouraged them to pursue their goals. He was always there to share his wisdom. Their frequent childhood camping and motorhome trips remain cherished memories. Ron was privileged to fly many different types of aircraft at NWA and retired as a Boeing 747-400 captain.

Upon retirement, Ron and Kathie returned to the Pacific Northwest settling in Spokane, WA. Ron remained active in retirement. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus at

St. Mary's Catholic Church where he held several officer positions. As an active member of the Spokane Valley Kiwanis Club Ron served in numerous capacities and was ultimately honored to preside as Lieutenant Governor of Division 46 of the Pacific Northwest District. Ron was a dedicated member of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Spokane Valley where he served as a Eucharistic Minister. A Gonzaga alumni, he was also a lifelong Gonzaga Basketball fan, attending both the men's and women's games for many years. It wasn't hard to find Ron, he was often found working their yard on his tractor or indoors enjoying a fine novel. He retained a lifetime passion for fishing and enjoyed his last fishing trip on Father's Day with one of his sons and a granddaughter.

Ron is survived by his wife, Kathie Riel; his sister Jan Martin, his sons Ron and David, his daughters Cherie Wall, Laurie Gilstrap, and Michele Haus. His children blessed him with sixteen grandchildren and two great grandchildren.  
*(- Bill Day)*



**WILLIAM HELFRICH**  
**1933 ~ 2017**

**Captain William E. Helfrich**, age 83, flew west on August 01, 2017 at Fountain Hills, Arizona after succumbing to lung cancer. Bill left no spouse.

Bill was born on October 24, 1933 at San Diego, CA.,

the oldest child of two children. His father was a US Army medical doctor and due to his father's overseas assignment Bill attended high school in the Panama Canal Zone. Dependent children in the Zone were popularly known as CZ Brats. Those Canal Zone high schools serving US government and military dependent families were known for their high school Junior ROTC programs, these programs approaching military academy curriculum.

Bill entered the USMC through the US Naval Aviation Cadet Program. After electing a USMC commission, he flew fighter/bomber aircraft on active duty. Released from active duty in early 1959, Bill flew the AD Spad (A1E) with VMF-234, a USMC Reserve Squadron at NAS Twin Cities. Squadron mates were Roger Bruggemeyer, Dino Oliva, Wally Walbaum, and Bob Keys.

Bill was hired by NWA on April 23, 1959. His probationary flight crew assignment was copilot on the a DC-6. Completing probation Bill was downgraded to the DC-4 copilot which befit his seniority. In time as seniority permitted he returned to the popular DC-6. During the remainder of his 34 year career, Bill flew the DC-7, the Boeing 707 series in all three crew positions, the Boeing 727, and he completed his career flying the classic Boeing 747. He retired from NWA on October 2 1993

Retirement at Fountain Hills, Arizona was in response to Bill's passion for a warmer climates, golf, movies, and Mexican food. He is survived by his sister Julie Welch and his nephew Ted.  
*(- Bill Day)*



## DENNIS W. BURTON 1941 ~ 2017

**Captain Dennis “Denny” Burton**, age 75, Flew West for the last time on September 13, 2017 in the presence of his wife Georgeanne, two sons, their wives and two oldest grandchildren. Denny was born to Rollin Burton and Margarette Leamy Burton on 12 December 1941 in Albany N.Y. His Mother was an Irish immigrant and nurse and his father was a police officer.

Denny grew up in Albany playing sports and serving catholic mass as an altar boy. Denny was a basketball star at Colonie High School and a Notre Dame Basketball prospect but his grades and an altercation with police (imagine that) changed plans and he accepted a basketball scholarship to Ricker College in Maine where he lettered as a freshman. During this time Denny also began his first aviation job driving a truck for Kamen Aircraft Company where his oldest brother, father figure, and WWII Veteran served as an executive in company security.

Following in both his brothers’ footsteps Denny enlisted in the Armed Forces in 1963 and entered the Army warrant officer candidate program in hopes of becoming an Army Aviator. Of course being a Warrant Officer in the mid-sixties led to an assignment in Southeast Asia where he found himself in 1966 assigned to an Aerial Observation Unit flying L19 Birddogs. Not long after arriving in Phu Loi, Vietnam he was sent to Dien Hoa Air Base for training by the Air Force as a Hue Forward Air Controller. He flew out of the Special Forces Camp Xuan Loc and revered the Green Beret. He would forever boast on behalf of the ground troops he was commissioned to assist and carried the weight of the infantryman he couldn’t save for the rest of his life.

During this time Denny welcomed two sons, Shaun and Dean with his wife Linda whom he grew up with in Albany. He was proud to support his sons in their career endeavors, Shaun following in his father’s footsteps as a pilot and Dean as an attorney graduating from NYU.

Denny returned to the states in 1967 and instructed at Ft. Stewart and Ft. Rucker before being hired by Northwest Orient Airlines on Sep 9th, 1968. During his time at NWA Denny crewed the B707, B727, DC-10, and 747 Classic, becoming a captain on each one except the B707. He loved flying the B727 but his favorite was “The Whale.” The best moment of his career was when he met his wife and best friend NWA flight attendant Georgeanne Masterson and the couple married in the spring of 1987 and they tried to fly all their trips together from that point on until Denny retired on December 12, 2001.

Denny truly loved his years with NWA and especially the pilots he flew with and got to know well. He bragged about his friends like they were brothers or sons. He was especially in awe of friends who had been fighter pilots and when he spoke about them it was as if he were speaking about mythical Greek gods. He always found something in each of his friends to be in awe of, though, whether it was an ability to run long distances, invent an anti-collision light, be a devout Christian, survive zero altitude low speed ejection, perform in aerobatic competitions or ride broncos, fly F8s off aircraft carriers, nurse a crippled 747 back to the runway after a catastrophic engine failure, be one tough Marine, or be a stalwart POW in the Hanoi Hilton for seven years. He told these stories and many like them about his friends and the pilots he flew with over and over again right up to the day he passed way. He loved you guys like brothers.

Denny was also extremely proud that the oldest sons of both of his brothers followed in his footsteps and became fellow Army Aviators. He himself continued to serve his country in the Washington State Army National Guard flying Birddogs first but transitioning to helicopters, and later the U21. He retired from the Army as a CW4 on August 30th 1987.

Denny went out of his way to take care of the down-trodden throughout the course of his life and was always on the side of the underdog. He believed everyone should get a second chance; he never gave up on anyone.

In family life Denny was the best father, father-in-law, grandfather and uncle his family could ever ask for.

Dennis Walter Burton will be greatly missed by his wife Georgeanne, son Shaun and his wife Simone with their son and daughter, son Dean and his wife Alicia with their three boys, niece and former NWAFA Erin Burton Matino.

(– Shaun Burton)



**PETE VINSANT**  
1935 ~ 2017



**Captain Peter Edee Vinsant**, age 82, passed away July 30, 2017 surrounded by family. He died peacefully in his sleep after fighting a three-month battle against lymphoma.

Pete was born on January 24, 1935 in Pawnee City, Nebraska to Ray and Gwendolyn Vinsant. He was the younger of two children. Much of his childhood was spent in Summerfield, Kansas where he acquired his father's passion for flying. Ray Vinsant, MD, was known locally as 'The Flying MD' for using his airplane to reach remote towns needing medical services. The Vinsant family raised horses and even as a young child Peter's father put him on the horses to break them — there were lots of tumbles, but he loved it. Pete's high school years were spent at Shattuck — St. Mary's School in Fairbault, Minnesota. At Shattuck he excelled at football (All State) and track. Pete matriculated into the University of Nebraska where he earned a bachelor degree. Concurrently he earned a USAF commission through ROTC. It is ironic that Pete failed the eye test for his USAF pilot training physical which motivated him to transfer services and pursue flight training with the Navy.

NAS Pensacola was Pete's entry point for USN pilot training. He was 'winged' in early 1960 and thereafter assigned to VP-1 at NAS Whidbey Island. At Whidbey Pete qualified in the Lockheed P2V. Future NWA pilot Wayne Stark was a squadron mate at VP-1 and where the two developed a life time friendship. VP-1 often deployed to Kodiak Island and NAS Adak to fly anti-submarine and shipping patrols over Alaskan and international waters near the Soviet Union. In late 1962 Pete returned to NAS Pensacola for instructor duty with the Training Command until the summer of 1964 when he separated from the active duty Navy.

The future Captain Vinsant was hired by Northwest Airlines on October 19, 1964. Upon completing initial crew training Pete

served as second officer on the 707/720-320 series aircraft. During his 31 year career Pete flew the 707 series, the Lockheed Electra, Boeing 727, DC 10 and Classic Boeing 747. He ended his career flying the line as a Boeing 747/400 captain.

During his early NWA years Pete continued military service flying with the U.S. Navy Reserve at NASTwin Cities. On one flight from MSP to Willow Grove Naval Air Station, cruising at 6,000 and about 20 miles from Lock Haven, PA, the left engine backfired and Pete ordered it shut down. Five minutes later the left engine caught fire and the crew was unable to extinguish the fire. The options were to land immediately or bail out. Pete opted to put the P2V into Lock Haven Airport despite the very short runway. All eight crew members escaped unharmed, but the aircraft burned after landing. Pete completed his Naval service as a Lt. Commander.

Junior pilots bidding their monthly schedule often sought Pete's schedule. Securing a monthly bid with Captain Peter Vinsant was assurance of a pleasant month of teamwork flying while watching a true pro at work. As all good things have to come to an end, Pete stowed away his NWA flight bag on January 24, 1995.

Pete had three children from a previous marriage; Valerie, Ron and Diana. In 1977 he married his wife Wendy with whom he spent most of their 40 years together at their lake home in Wisconsin and winter residence in St. Petersburg, Florida. Pete's daughter Valerie met a tragic end in a flying training accident in Arizona.

General aviation had a niche in Pete's flying repertoire. Pete and Wendy flew extensively in their Grumman Tiger and Cirrus SR-22 aircraft. Wendy became a skilled cruise pilot herself, capable of emergency takeoffs and landings.

Pete enjoyed retirement playing golf, boating, riding motorcycles and horses, snow skiing, traveling the world, storytelling, volunteering at the VA hospital, playing with his dogs, and being a wonderful husband, father, grandfather and friend. He loved everyone and his infectious smile, kind heart and great sense of humor made it easy for everyone to love him back.

Peter was preceded in death by his parents, Ray and Gwendolyn; his daughter Valerie Vinsant. He is survived by his spouse Wendy Vinsant; his sister Pat Hoffman; children, Ron Vinsant and Diana Davis; five grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

(— Rachel Davis and Bill Day)



**MICHAEL TOVEY**  
1936 ~ 2017

**Captain Michael Tovey, Jr.,** age 80, passed away on June 22, 2017. He had long suffered from PAD (Peripheral Artery Disease) which left him with a lot of pain, inability to walk, and eventually surgeries.

Mike was the fourth of five sons born to Michael and Velma Tovey in Dickinson, ND. His parents followed teaching jobs in the western states — in such towns as Ringling MT, Goldendale WA, and Dufur OR. Then eventually settled in Gray OR where Mike attended high school. Thereafter Mike matriculated into the University of Portland where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree and completed USAF ROTC.

The University of Portland and ROTC enabled Mike to pursue both career and family life. There Mike met his future wife Joyce who, after repeated attempts to ignore him, eventually agreed to a date. After college graduation the Air Force quickly lay claim and assigned him to pilot training at Mission Air Base —

deep in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. After receiving his Air Force wings, Mike was ironically assigned to Harlingen AFB, a navigator training base, just 47 miles east of Mission, TX. There Mike flew the T-29 (Convair 240), the primary Air Force navigator trainer with 8-10 navigator students. During Mike's era those students included George Lachinski, Bill Day, Gary Wolter and other future NWA pilots. Training flights overflew Texas, Louisiana and much of the Gulf of Mexico. An Oregon boy can get pretty lonely down in The Valley and memories of Joyce beckoned him; not surprising Mike Tovey and Joyce Thomas were married on August 13, 1960.

Mike served the Air Force in Texas, plus a short tour in Seattle, before being deployed to Vietnam. His previous time flying the twin engine T-29 was a logical precursor to flying the C-123 in Vietnam. After eight years of Air Force life, Mike opted to swap his Air Force blue suit for a Northwest Airlines blue uniform.

Hired by NWA on September 05, 1967, Mike started his 29 year airline career as a Second Officer on the Boeing 727 and 707 series aircraft in MSP. The Tovey clan soon grew to include five sons; Michael, Mark, Shawn, Brian and Chris. In 1975 Mike and Joyce moved the family to Lakebay, Washington, a small town with a view of Mt. Rainier and Puget Sound. When not flying, Mike was busy around the property always working on something. He also kept his five boys busy chopping wood, mowing lawns, hauling, moving, digging and planting. When home between trips, Dad managed to set aside time for Joyce and their sons for camping, fishing and coaching sports.

During one of the infamous NWA labor strikes, Mike worked in a fiber board plant in Sumner WA along with Howie Parks and Dennis Swanson. In a bit of humorous irony, at the fiber board plant Mike was management while Howie and Dennis were lowly worker bees — yet



both were senior to Mike on the NWA pilot seniority list. This became a source of private humor between the three.

Mike flew the standard repertoire of aircraft for his era at NWA; Boeing 727, 707 series, DC-10 and the Boeing 747 classic. Those of us who flew with Mike warmly remembered him as a delightful companion and a rock solid aviator. Mike retired at age sixty on July 06, 1996.

In retirement Mike specialized in grand-parenting and growing beautiful dahlias. He also played tennis, golf, and traveled the world with Joyce. Grand-parenting seemed to come naturally to Mike. He also served the Key Peninsula civic groups, delivered Meals on Wheels for over 10 years, and faithfully participated in St. Nicholas Roman Catholic Church. Most of all Mike loved his wife and his family; he is greatly missed by each one.



Mike is survived by his wife Joyce and sons Michael, Mark, Shawn, Brian, and Chris who blessed their parents with 13 grandchildren. On the day of Mike's funeral, the oldest grandson informed Joyce and family that they should expect a new little Michael in late fall — their first great grandchild.  
 (– Bill Day)



*I have come to realize when someone you love dies the continuity of life is a difficult surprise. The birds still sing, the flowers bloom, people are in love and the one thing that skips a beat is the heart of the broken-hearted...*

– Mary Rethlake, NWA Flight Attendant



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