

RNPA

CONTRAILS

ISSUE NO. 166

MAY 2008



Courtesy of the C. H. Westcoat family, Copper Harbor, Michigan

Northwest Airways Sikorsky S-38, circa 1931-32

See page 20

RETIRED NORTHWEST AIRLINES PILOTS' ASSOCIATION



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Each Member!

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

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» EVENTS CALENDAR «

May 2008

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June 2008

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12 Minneapolis Summer Cruise

July 2008

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August 2008

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21 Seattle Summer Picnic

September 2008

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11 12 13 Hartford RNPA Reunion

October 2008

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11 SEA Base F/A Retirement & Reunion Party

November 2008

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December 2008

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7 MSP Christmas Party

11 SEA Christmas Party

January 2009

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February 2009

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| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |

Contents

May 2008

FEATURES ↴

30

Sunny and bumpy skies

Childhood memories of flying the Stratocruiser in the '40s and '50s

34



Southwest Florida Spring Luncheon

42

Garrison Keillor

Right here in our own magazine!



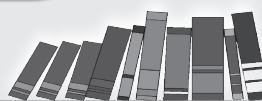
45

A SOUTHERN BOY GOES NORTH



50

"Voices From the Sky"



BOOK REVIEW

53

LOOKING BACK
...1935



EVERY ISSUE ↴

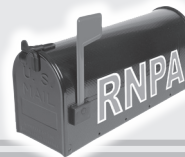
OFFICER'S

4



REPORTS

6



MAILBOX

24

The Root Cellar



Getting to Know You



26

54



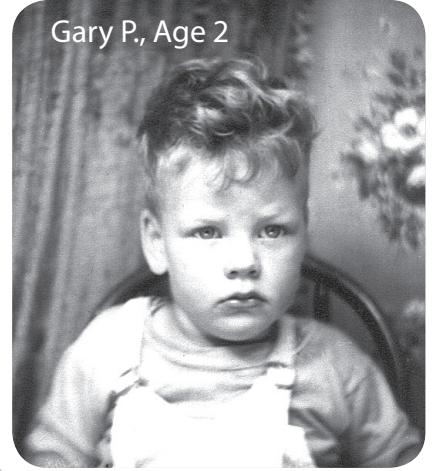
FLOWN WEST

Membership Application



63

Gary P., Age 2



Hola, Greetings,

Barbara and I have just returned from a 38 day Colonial Cities and Beaches caravan tour of Mexico. We had a great time with good food, scenic vistas and outstanding tours of the local areas. We departed Pharr, TX and worked our way to Teotihuacan, home of the Pyramids. This is also on the outskirts of Mexico City. From there we headed South to Puebla, Oaxaca and the start of the beaches. Turning north we stopped at Huautuco, Acapulco, with a side trip to Taxco, and on up to Ixtapa. We then turned inland and visited Guanhajuato, Matehuala and Saltillo before returning to Pharr.

In all we drove 2780 miles in Mexico without any mishaps and with cheap fuel (\$2.00/gal). Guanhajuato is perhaps the most unique city in Mexico. It is built in a valley with steep hills. Many of the streets are so narrow only one person can walk at a time. They have built a system of tunnels to move traffic. In a town of several hundred thousand, there are no traffic lights, and basically no accidents—amazing. As in the past, we discovered the local people are friendly and anxious to converse with us.

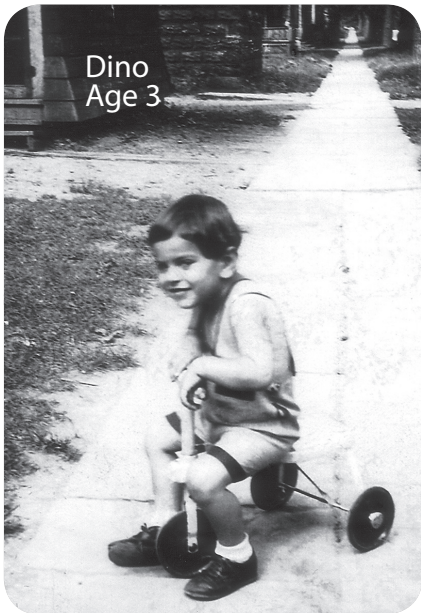
I would like to ask each of you to reconsider attending the RNPA Reunion Hartford this coming September. Dux has arranged a great venue, equal to those in the past. We will have guided tours of the Coast Guard Academy, visit the Nautilus submarine and spend time at Mystic Seaport, a whaling village of yesterday. Other things to do in the area are visiting the air museum at Bradley Field, seeing the fall colors of New England and visiting Boston or New York City, or both. And of course, meeting and greeting your fellow retirees.

This year we have elections for those positions on the Board of Directors. If you are interested in holding one of the positions please let either me or Dave Pethia know. The Board works hard to provide information and venues for all the retired pilots. There are two Board meetings a year, one in June and one at the reunion.

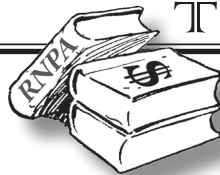
Thanks for your continued support and hope to see you in Hartford.

Gary Pisel

Dino
Age 3



TREASURER'S \$ REPORT



For some reason we had a problem with the delivery of our dues notices this year. A few of our members did not receive their initial dues notice. Because of that we extended the dues payment deadline until April 20th. Those members that had not paid their dues by that date were unfortunately removed from membership.

With each mailing we send out I receive a couple back with the notation "moved forwarding time expired." I try to locate them, but some

EDITOR'S NOTES

OUR "FAMILY" ALBUM

Credit the idea for this to Dick Schlader. We talked about doing this a long time ago—when he was abusing me as his Assistant Editor.

Weren't we cute?

No stick pony for me, boy! It was an airplane or nothing.

This picture always reminds me of something a relative mentioned to me not too many years ago. He said that my mother told him back when I was just a kid that she didn't know what I'd eventually do for a living, but whatever it was I'd be wearing a uniform.

Now how do you suppose she came to that conclusion?

MORE SERIOUS STUFF

Putting these baby pictures here may have been a mistake. Looking at them and then looking down at the backs of my hands on the keyboard, which are now speckled with liver spots on inelastic and wrinkled skin, causes me to wonder how in the hell all those years slipped by so terribly fast. And we all agree that each year is shorter than the last.

If you're anything like me, you haven't planned much for what may be close at hand—the possibility of having to depend on someone else for our care. What an absolutely revolting proposition! So I choose to just not think about it, which may be the ultimate in procrastination.

The *LA Times* had a series of stories last month about "Aging in Place," meaning, bluntly, how to avoid the nursing home, which I found interesting. I thought that maybe I could reprint three of the short articles here until my request was returned noting that the *Times* "non-profit rate for reprints" was \$75 an article. No chance of that.

Instead, I'll give the link for anyone who may be interested enough to read it: <http://www.latimes.com/features/health/la-he-aginghealth3mar03,0,3607084.story> On that page is another link to "Where to turn for senior assistance" that has a long list of resources.

times am not successful. Here are two that I cannot find: Tom McIntyre and Francis Brosnan. If anyone knows of their address please let me know.

On a more pleasant note, we are looking forward to the Hartford convention. A good friend of mine's son attended the Coast Guard Academy and played football there. Each year we attended a game and spent time touring and enjoying the surrounding area. Those of you

that will attend the reunion will certainly enjoy it. The Coast Guard has the only tall ship in the United States and represented our country in the tall ship parade into New York harbor during the bi-centennial celebration in 1976. It is home based at the academy and is scheduled to be home during our convention. A tour of the ship is on our itinerary.

Dino Oliva



Gary F.
Age 4½

Many of you have already been intimately associated with the difficulties of caring for aging parents and/or spouses, and are well aware that there simply aren't very many really good choices without imposing heavily on the family—either financially, emotionally or both.

I don't have any answers. I just thought you may be interested in thinking about it. I'm sure not.

'NUFF OF THAT

In addition to the stellar work of our two Contributing Editors, this issue has an article from a guy exactly my age who recalls what it was like travelling by plane in the '40s and '50s. And JC Hanks sends a mini-memoir about a good ol' southern boy heading north to find work.

There are many pages of the good stuff—The RNPA Mailbox—that I think you'll enjoy. Keep sending those cards and letters.

To cap it all off, a nice little essay from Garrison Keillor just to add a touch of class to the magazine.

Whatchabeenupto?

Gary Ferguson

THE MAILBOX

Keith Sterling

Dino,
"The check is in the mail."

Ginny and I spend summer in Hackensack, MN on Webb Lake and winters in Ft. Myers, FL at Cypress Woods RV Resort. We spend more time in the RV than we do in our home but we enjoy being on the go. Drag racing is still my summertime hobby. We traveled to 13 race weekends in 07—mostly in Iowa where I qualified in the top ten in my class and represented Tristate Raceway at the NHRA Divisional Race in Topeka, Kansas. Son Mike and his wife Laura as well as her dad drag race so it's frequently a family weekend.

2008 finds us cruising the islands and the Panama Canal as well as Alaska and will spend some time in Denali. No RVs on these trips.

We really enjoy the Contrails! Thanks to the whole staff for a great job!

Ginny and Keith Sterling



Dan Stack

Hi Dino et al,
Record December snow here in central New Hampshire. More than 50 inches!

Starting to look forward to Florida trip. Got to Minneapolis for the Holiday Party—GREAT! Unfortunately I will miss SW Florida Luncheon this year because of schedule conflicts.

My best to all,
Dan Stack

Skip Foster

Dino,
Happy 2008 to all the guys! Kathy has finally retired after 35 years in education. Her last job was as the Chief of Staff for the Superintendent in Clark County—300,000+ students.

We plan to do more travelling in '08, and are currently on the Big Island until mid-February, the Caymans in March, and back to Wisconsin in late Spring to early Fall. We will be in Hartford for the convention, and hope to catch up with old friends. I had knee replacement surgery in October and Kathy had a carpal tunnel operation in November, so our Doctor is enjoying the windfall! Both of us are doing well, and pretty much fully recovered.

All our traveling has cut down on the 210 flying, so I'm going to put it on the market after the annual gets done in March. Thanks to all of the RNPA staffers for all their hard work. See you in September.

Skip Foster

John Pieper

Dear Dino,
We are doing well. Julie is as good as can be expected. Thank you every one for all your cards. We have moved into a assisted living facility. Our new address is as follows:

14890 Beaver Dam Rd Apt. 120
Brainerd, MN 56401-6019
Phone: 218-828-7057

Thanks to all for a good job well done.

John Pieper

Leif Elstad

Hi Dino,
Must have missed #4 on the annual dues statement. But found it, so will forward a check for RNPA dues, and a brief note for Contrails editor, along with a great big Thank You to all involved in producing Contrails.

After retiring, Audrey and I used our motor home to escape from the summer heat that overwhelms Boulder City every year. We were able to spend time in all of the "lower 48" while being tourists and volunteers in the Family Motor Coach Association.

As a chapter representative on the National Governing Board of FMCA, we traveled coast to coast twice a year to attend rallies and national conventions. The misfortune of a break-in and robbery took all the fun out of the motorhome, so we returned to Boulder City and sold the motorhome.

After a very hot summer in Boulder City, we decided to look for another "escape from the summer heat". The escape that we selected was a condo, on the Clark Fork River, in Missoula, MT.

We now have the best of both worlds—desert landscaping here, and a condo up north. I do not own a snow shovel or a lawn mower, and I do not miss either one!

Along the way I've gotten much rounder (fat), had a heart attack, gotten 3 stents inserted, and had hip replacement surgery. Needless to say; I'm enjoying retirement, and look at each new day as a special gift.

Leif Elstad

Art DeBernarde



Hi Dino,

When I sent my dues I mentioned I hoped the synapses all connected and that I would remember to send an update... and whadaya know! Here it is!

Around this time last year we were busy applying to and looking at universities for our daughter, Lindsay. She wound up going to the last one we visited, and our first choice, Texas A&M. We were truly impressed with this university and its traditions. Since Lindsay is a pre-vet major we wanted her to attend a university that would provide the class work and facilities to give her a leg up in that pursuit. A&M has one of the finest vet schools in the country, and in particular has the facilities for the large animal track she is pursuing. Equine veterinary medicine is her goal, and A&M has phenomenal facilities. Lindsay is also a natural born cowgirl and is really enjoying the Texas culture. Our only problem is that she is 1500 miles away. For a family that has been as close as we have, that's been a struggle. But she is doing so well we are learning to cope with the new circumstances.

As for Carla and I, we're learning how to be empty nesters. We haven't quite broken the code yet, but we're working on it. In the meantime I keep busy working at our church, where I have been on the staff for 5 years now. The work is very fulfilling but at times can be pretty all consuming. We're not sure how much longer I'll be doing that work, now that our nest is empty though. Carla would like to start being able to travel in our motor home more and I think that sounds like a pretty good plan.

Well, keep up the great work you're all doing and thanks for your efforts on our behalf.

God bless,
Art DeBernarde

Tom O'Brien



Thank you Dino for all your work on behalf of RNPA.

Tom O'Brien

Pete Hegseth



Dino:

Can not believe it's 11 years since I retired. Still in Kenyon, Minnesota, right now it's -14° F, but not much wind! We are enjoying good health which is all that is important. We got to Northern Florida three times last year, one time was for an A1-E Skyraider reunion which was very special. Thanks to all who work so hard for RNPA.

Pete Hegseth



Manny Muller



I retired the end of December in 1993 as an agent in Billings, Montana. I worked for a few years after that for a car dealership in Billings transporting cars. Since my wife retired in 2001 we have been spending our summers in Billings and our winters in Mesa, Arizona. A year ago we sold our home in Billings and moved to Lynden, Washington to be closer to family.

Last Spring on returning from Arizona I was diagnosed with leukemia. I took a new chemo and was in the University of Washington hospital the month of May. In September we came to Seattle and I had a stem cell transplant. I am doing very well and should be released to return home within the next week.

I enjoy reading the RNPA magazine very much.

Manny Muller

Bob Gibson



A few "health" problems have delayed a departure south. Hope to get away on/about Feb. 1st. In the meantime we are expecting some minus zero temps but it's the "quality of life"—and we don't have to go out to the parking lot to start cars.

Bob Gibson

Bernie Worrell



Dino,

Enclosed is a check of \$25 for the RNPA. I'm looking forward to it and some of the back copies too!

I started flying on January 9, 1967—and I have been based in Detroit since 1991.

Hopefully I'll see you at one of the happenings.

Thanks & God Bless,
Bernie Worrell

Loren DeShon



Dino,

Happy New Year! Thanks for your efforts on behalf of us retirees.

Still in the same place, now named Sammamish, WA. I get over to the DLI golf event and see a lot of the gang. Kathie loves to travel, so we try to get a trip in once or twice a year to some foreign spot. Still busy with my investment business and I'm helping my son with his flight school and charter company in Friday Harbor, WA. He was furloughed (American Airlines) after 9/11 and went to Friday Harbor for a charter pilot job. Ended up starting his own company and I've assisted on the business side. A new hangar is just about done and he hopes to expand a little. If anyone gets to Friday Harbor, stop in and say hello to Dan. Company name is "Westwind Aviation".

Cheers,
Loren DeShon

Lee Carver



Gary:

My name is Lee Carver and I live in rural Buffalo, MN. I got your name from a former (retired) NW Pilot named Terry Marsh. Here is my story:

I am a Corvette lover (and owner) I actually have 4 of them, a '59 & '63 "Split Window" a '66 and a new one, ALL are Red. I am on a mission to try to find Owner History on the three older ones, I am not having real good luck—some, but not enough. My latest purchase (and favorite) is my 1963 "Split Window" Coupe, if you know what they are? Every bolt and nut have been recently replaced as well as a body-off restoration and engine, transmission and rear end rebuild—it's literally a new car.

I have searched DMV in both Minnesota and Wisconsin and unfortunately those states do not go back as far as I need. WI goes back just 7 years and Minnesota goes back 3 owners. GM, Chev or Corvette DO NOT have records going back to this era either.

So this is what I know to date: I am the 6th Owner (apparently). I know owners 2 thru myself. Ironically owners 3, 2 and 1 were ALL Pilots. Bob Duncan, Eden Prairie (private Pilot) was no. 3 and he purchased from Bruce Warhanik of Onalaska, WI (was pilot of Midway) in 1978. Bruce knows for sure he purchased from a NW pilot in Minneapolis in perhaps summer of 1972 and that pilot lived here and perhaps purchased this car new here? However Bruce can not recall his name nor has any paper work reflecting this car at all.

I was thinking if there was some publication or newsletter that goes out to NW pilots that maybe a miracle could happen and we could find owner No. 1. Knowing what I know now, I am thinking this is only a very rare shot at best. If I found

owner No. 1, that would then get me the dealership it was purchased from (that would be very rare find).

Is there any way you could help this old man out and possibly make a remote dream come true? I know I am asking a lot of someone I don't know and if this is not possible I certainly will understand, I then would know I have hit the proverbial stone wall.

Thank you,
Lee Carver,
612.237.9206
lcarver@sil-pro.com

Beginning May 15
at 11am,
the Seattle lunches
will be at the
Black Angus Restaurant
2400 S 320th
Federal Way, WA

Ron Rep



Dino-

All is fine here! Had a bout with prostate cancer but appears to be gone now.

If anyone questions a PSA of only 4.05, have it checked with a biopsy. It isn't that bad! Also had the prostate removed/frozen with the "cryo" procedure. Sure was easier than surgery. Home in four hours.

If anyone has questions, call me.
Happy 2008 and Thank You.

Ron Rep

Alice McCabe



Dear Dino & Staff,

Keep up the good work. I really enjoy the magazine. Retirement is great.

Alice McCabe

Dick Brown



Dino,

Thanks for all the work you have been doing. My wife of 62 years & I still live in Deephaven on the East side of Lake Minnetonka. We have been here since 1949. I mow the grass in the summer and blow the snow in the winter. We have a boat on the lake and I play golf a couple times a week. I shot my age again last year, it's the ninth time. Our children all live nearby so no reason to head South anymore.

I miss my old WW 2 Buddies, Joe Farrell, who flew as my co-pilot on 26 missions in the B-26 Martin Marauder. He got his own crew then but we lived together and then spent 36 years in close contact on NWA. Earl Luikens was a mechanic on the B-26 during the war but I didn't know him at that time. We got to know each other when he became a pilot on NWA. We shared a B-26 booth the past 6 years at an air show held at Flying Cloud Airport. Between the two of us we could snow the people under. He passed away this spring before the show.

That's all for now,
Dick Brown

Dave Elbow



Hi Dino,

Still an ANC F/O—doesn't look like I'll get my Captain seat back before I retire in '09.

Thanks for all your work on this.
Dave Elbow

Bill Sorum



Happy New Year Dino,

I just bought a computer and joined the real world. I'll send you an email when my grandkids get me checked out.

Keep up the good work.
Bill Sorum

Pete Dodge



Hi Dino et al;

I forwarded the dues for 2008 via snail mail. All is well in Arizona where we spend three quarters of the year and in Mecca (Minneapolis) where we spend the rest of our busy lives. The kids and grandkids are in Minnesota. We seem to be on the road all the time. Besides the US and Canada travel, last year we were in Italy, Argentina and the Dalmatian Coast. So far for 2008 our plans call for the southern Caribbean (cruise) and Mexico, more Canada and US. Too many places, not enough time.

We both do manage to work in golf and tennis. You can't be all play you know.

After a couple of hiccups in 2006, our health status is great. We seem to catch something from the grandkids each visit, but who doesn't?

I'm looking forward to being on the sidelines for the inevitable next round of mergers. I am surprised that at the time I didn't realize that I might well have worked during the "golden years" of commercial aviation.

Thanks to you and all the staff that keep RNPA such a vibrant organization. And the publication is terrific. Very professional.

Pete Dodge

Don Nordlund



Hi Dino,

Contrails gets better & more interesting every year—thanks to your great staff.

Oh where does the time go! On February 2nd I will be starting my 21st year of retirement, wow!

Last year in February I had a follow-up appointment for an angiogram with my cardiologist and they found blockages. Two days later I had bypass surgery to replace five veins. I was hospitalized in Daytona Beach. No stroke and no pain from surgery. Just discomfort.

We are planning a few trips with friends in February and March and will be unable to attend the Spring Luncheon in Sarasota.

Best wishes to you and your family in 2008.

Don & Phyllis Nordlund



Joel Long



Dear Dino,

I am running a little late as I just got the dues notice. My house became charcoal on 16 Dec. 2007. Presently I am rebuilding the house, making it more livable. The house was well insured.

I served as Master of McCal-ester Lodge #290 AF&AM this year. I was able to give six scholarships for \$1000 each. The Grand Lodge of Minnesota is building our third cancer research building on the campus of the University of Minnesota. Partners for Life is the fund established by the The Grand Lodge to raise money for the building. They have a Five Diamond award system which I was able to lead our Lodge to the five diamond level, in fact the only Lodge to reach the four and five diamond level.

This is important to me as a 20 year small cell lung cancer survivor. Less than 5% make five years, most less than a year. I spend a lot of time talking to cancer patients letting them know you can survive.

I am believed to be the longest surviving small cell cancer patient. What is important to me is I am on the white side here in Minnesota, looking forward to being on the green side in a couple of months.

Joel Long

Gordie Bickel



Thanks for the great job you guys do. As I am the only one left from the original "new aircraft acceptance team" started in 1956 by my good friend, Paul Soderlind, it is hard to believe it was that long ago.

We were "breaking in" a lot of new aircraft. It was a lot of work, but also a lot of fun, which makes for a bunch of interesting memories.

Gordie Bickel

NEW RULES FOR PILOTS OVER AGE SIXTY

The recent change that allows airline pilots to continue flying past age 60 has generated some interesting discussion. The following rules for 'older' pilots were recently proposed at several major airlines:

1. All pants must fit and not be up in your armpits.
2. You must walk without shuffling your feet.
3. No Depends on the flight deck.
4. When using a toothpick, you must leave your teeth in your mouth.
5. If you need more than tri-focals, you are DONE! (period!)
6. No pictures of great-great-grandchildren.
7. Anytime you call the other guy "Sonny," he can hit you.
8. Never, ever mention AARP.
9. When in a restaurant with your crew, don't request the senior discount.
10. When checking into the overnight hotel, don't ask if the exercise room has shuffleboard.

Rick Adams



Gary,

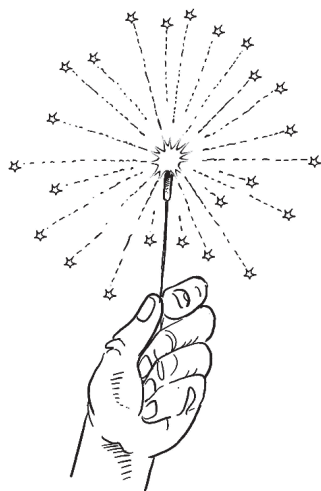
You've done our preflight class proud. The "Contrails" is a very professional and fun magazine. The only time I've been inside an airliner is in "19C" or a similiar location. Many of my friends chose that route. I found several of them in [the RNPA] publication.

Thanks for the nice mention of the time we spent together during our reunion and the Pensacola events. A very important postscript to the comments about my two rather exciting rescues is found in the middle of page 15 of your [Feb.] magazine.

Bill Waechter (NWA Retired) had a front row seat to the one from just north of Hanoi; he was flying the helicopter that picked me up. Bill had incredible courage to drive many miles deep into North Vietnam braving almost constant ground fire. Without him and his crew I'd have been in the Hanoi Hilton instead of wearing a pretty blue flight suit. Thanks Bill.

Rick/Bulb VF-162
[Rick Adams]

If you are unsure about what Rick is talking about or are confused by this letter, please see the Editor's Notes in the February issue. -Ed.



Don Abbott



Dino,

Thank you Dino, Dick, Gary and all the RNPA people who have made RNPA the very best. May you all have the best of health and happiness in this New Year.

Lois and Don Abbott

George Hamernick



Dino,

Thanks for all the work you do to keep this organization airborne.

George Hamernick
Flight Dispatcher

Earle Scott



Hi Dino,

For me, a much more mundane year. A year older, but with my PSA down below 0.3 (after seeding with radioactive iodine), I am back in the low cancer risk area, thank goodness.

I just got over having the shingles during the whole month of December. I was NOT inoculated so perhaps this should be a reminder to all others who have not been inoculated by now that shingles is very painful and will last 3 to 4 weeks minimum. I told Dottie that I would have my gall bladder out 3 or 4 more times rather than endure shingles again. And if you haven't had shingles, get the shot, 50% of us get it by age 80. Google "Shingles" and you will become a believer—nasty looking pictures. I had a mild case, but even then it was very painful. And some people can have the pain for more than a year.

Thanks for keeping us reminded.

Regards,
Earle Scott

Ron Riel



Dino,

Another year, several more of our members have flown west! It makes you wonder if the next year is all that secure. But Kathie and I have enjoyed the year and look forward to several more.

We missed a great convention in Nevada. Previous plans had us occupied. But it sounds like we surely missed the fun and excitement, the camaraderie and the pleasure of the convention and of the air races. Do that again!

We helped our daughter Laurie and family complete their move to St. Mary's, Georgia where our son-in-law is head of the security force at King's Bay Naval submarine base. We spent hours throwing paint and making their new house a home. April is so nice in Georgia because the heat and the bugs are still absent.

June saw us in north Minnesota on a lake in a cabin loving the fishing and the grandkids and the time with our daughter Michele. It is amazing how fast a week flies by when the only thing to get up for is fishing, playing, and eating! But Minnesota still has that northern charm and we loved every minute.

We just completed another trip to Georgia on NWA. What an airline! On time, smooth flight, good service, cramped seats, but Bose transforms the noise to pleasure so another retired experience on the world's greatest airline.

I love the new RNPA magazine. Your articles are interesting, the pictures are super, and the efforts to make it all happen so nicely are very much appreciated. You all are doing us a great service. Thank you. Enclosed find my check for dues well spent!

Ron Riel
(Retired 1998)



☆☆☆☆ LITTLE KNOWN NAVAL HISTORY ☆☆☆☆

The U.S.S. Constitution, "Old Ironsides", as a combat vessel, carried 48,600 gallons of fresh water for her crew of 475 officers and men. This was sufficient to last six months of sustained operations at sea.

She carried no evaporators (i.e. fresh water distillers!). However, let it be noted that according to her ship's log, "On July 27, 1798, the U.S.S. Constitution sailed from Boston with a full complement of 475 officers and men, 48,600 gallons of fresh water, 7,400 cannon shot, 11,600 pounds of black powder and 79,400 gallons of rum." Her mission: "To destroy and harass English shipping."

Making Jamaica on 6 October, she took on 826 pounds of flour and 68,300 gallons of rum. Then she headed for the Azores, arriving there 12 November. She provisioned with 550 pounds of beef and 64,300 gallons of Portuguese wine.

On 18 November, she set sail for England. In the ensuing days she defeated five British men-of-war and captured and scuttled 12 English merchant ships, salvaging only the rum aboard each.

By 26 January, her powder and shot were exhausted. Nevertheless, although unarmed, she made a night raid up the Firth of Clyde in Scotland. Her landing party captured a whisky distillery and transferred 40,000 gallons of single malt Scotch aboard by dawn. Then she headed home.

The U.S.S. Constitution arrived in Boston on 20 February, 1799, with no cannon shot, no food, no powder, no rum, no wine, no whisky, and 38,600 gallons of water.

GO NAVY!!!



Gary Ferguson

Joe Fouraker



Dear Dino,

Thanks for the timely dues notice. And the request for an update on our activities and happenings. Sometimes we don't feel that anyone out there is interested in what we are doing, but I know I enjoy reading about what all my former friends and co-workers are doing to pass the years. So her goes:

Gale, my wife of 32+ years, was diagnosed with a rare form of bone cancer a couple of years ago and the doctor wouldn't let her travel during 2006. She still has to take a shot every week to help the red blood cells along, but otherwise, she is doing great. So we kind of made up for it in

2007. Our two daughters both live in Las Vegas and a visit to them played right into the Reunion in Reno. What a time we had seeing the guys and gals we flew with for so many years. I can't believe how old some of them have gotten.

On the way back to Las Vegas we drove down the California side and then across Death Valley. An experience we had not done before, and it was well worth it to see what some of our pioneers had to go through. Our daughter planned several side trips for us, including Zion National Park.

Seems most of our vacations are done by car. We are seeing the ground now from 4 feet instead of

35,000 ft.

We toured New Orleans, Houston, Dallas, Atlanta, Kansas City, and of course Cleveland, where Gale's mom and dad live. We have a cruise planned in February and a trip to the Big Apple in April. So we are staying busy enjoying the weather in Florida and seeing the country. Oh, by the way, I became a great granddad in September. That was another side trip to Arkansas to see my new great granddaughter, Rilynn. And she is a beauty, if I do say so myself.

God has been good to us and we are enjoying His blessings.

Joe and Gale Fouraker

Tom Higgins



Dino,

I'm off to a good start. Just received your RNPA dues notice today, so I won't be late this year.

I'll get an email off to Gary with all the latest from snowbound Durango.

Keep dodging those hurricanes. Thanks for all you do to keep us in touch. Contrails is excellent and I always enjoy it, cover to cover.

Say "Hi" to Karen for me.

Regards,

Tom Higgins

Gerry Kennedy



Dear Dino & Great Staff,

Thanks for the great job you do on Contrails. I do enjoy every issue, even if there are less familiar names after all these years.

Joe also enjoyed every issue before he, as you say, Flew West.

Keep up the good work.

Always,

Gerry Kennedy

Wray Featherstone



Thanks again for all that you and others have done for all of us for all of these years.

Sincerely,

Barbara & Wray Featherstone



Mel Christensen



Dear Dino,

I retired in 1981. We purchased our place in Clearwater, Florida in 1979. We had 25 years of good winters there until we sold. We sold our villa when you could still sell it.

We still have our home in West Bloomington near Hyland Park. It is ideal for biking—you see deer and osprey.

Keep up the good work.

Mel Christensen

Ken Bennett



Sorry I missed the last convention. I had signed up for it but came down with an ear infection the day I was going to travel.

Since retirement, 1980, I have been a farmer again. I lectured in grade schools on beekeeping and taught beekeeping—a one day course for beginning beekeepers. My dad was a farmer, beekeeper, so I've been around the little suckers for 70 years now.

I teamed up with a young man that wanted to get into beekeeping commercially. We built up to 1,000 hives, and have our own Freightliner trucks for hauling them around the country. I'm sure most of you have heard of the problems we are having in the bee industry in relation to the bees dying.

This year we did get hit hard and lost many hives. We will move into the almonds in California in early February and if we have 250 hives by then we will be lucky. We will try to build back and make splits (another hive from a strong one) and put a new queen in it.

Think maybe it's time for me to retire again.

Thanks Dino for all your work in keeping us all in touch with each other.

Ken Bennett

Ken Morley



Dear Dino et al;

My darling Linda—without threatening our four-decades-plus marriage—is finding herself now regularly in bed with a man of many more years than she ever bargained for in the spent flower of her youth.

To compensate for her patience, forbearance, and charity, I do on rare-but-regular occasions arrange a down-payment on a half tank of Navion gas and fly her away to an exotic (but nearby) destination for a Happy Meal...!

Less extravagant moments—the ones that coincide with the handful of dry moments awarded us by our Pacific N.W. weather—find us financing a gallon or two of Harley gas and enjoying yet another lap around the block.

Thus do we stay on the green side of the grass... and off the rocking chair porch.

We live somewhat remote from the RNPA main herd—which serves to sweeten all the more our infrequent meetings with NWA brethren—encounters we encourage should your travels bring you near I-5 Exit #68.

Ken and Linda Morley

Bob Fuller



Dear Dino,

Not much going on with the Fullers this past year. Took two trips. First to my 65th high school reunion in Wisconsin and then to the RNPA gathering in Reno.

Returning from Reno we swung by Bakersfield, California to see our new twin great grandsons and family. They sure grow up fast. Our oldest great grandson graduating from high school this spring.

Thanks to all of you for Contrails and another great reunion.

Bob Fuller

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT THE PAST IN BLACK AND WHITE

Under age 50? You won't understand.

You could hardly see for all the snow. Spread the rabbit ears as far as they'd go. Pull a chair up to the TV set. "Good Night, David. Good Night, Chet."

My Mom used to cut chicken, chop eggs and spread mayo on the same cutting board with the same knife and no bleach, but we didn't seem to get food poisoning.

My Mom used to defrost hamburger on the counter AND I used to eat it raw sometimes, too. Our school sandwiches were wrapped in wax paper in a brown paper bag, not in ice-pack coolers, but I can't remember getting e. coli.

Almost all of us would have rather gone swimming in the lake instead of a pristine pool (talk about boring). No beach closures then.

The term cell phone would have conjured up a phone in a jail cell, and a pager was the school PA system.

We all took gym, not PE... and risked permanent injury with a pair of high top Ked's (only worn in gym) instead of having cross-training athletic shoes with air cushion soles and built in light reflectors. I can't recall any injuries but they must have happened because they tell us how much safer we are now.

Flunking gym was not an option... even for stupid kids! I guess PE must be much harder than gym.

Speaking of school, we all said prayers and sang the national anthem, and staying in detention after school caught all sorts of negative attention.

We must have had horribly damaged psyches. What an archaic health system we had then. Remember school nurses? Ours wore a hat and everything.

I thought that I was supposed to accomplish something before I was allowed to be proud of myself.

I just can't recall how bored we were without computers, Play Station, Nintendo, X-box or 270 digital TV cable stations.

Oh yeah... and where was the Benadryl and sterilization kit when I got that bee sting? I could have been killed!

We played 'King of the hill' on piles of gravel left on vacant construction sites, and when we got hurt, Mom pulled out the 48-cent bottle of Mercurochrome (kids liked it better because it didn't sting like iodine did) and then we got our butt spanked.

Now it's a trip to the emergency room, followed by a 10-day dose of a \$49 bottle of antibiotics, and then Mom calls the attorney to sue the contractor for leaving a horribly vicious pile of gravel where it was such a threat.

We didn't act up at the neighbor's house either because if we did, we got our butt spanked there and then we got our butt spanked again when we got home.

I recall Donny Reynolds from next door coming over and doing his tricks on the front stoop, just before he fell off. Little did his Mom know that she could have owned our house. Instead, she picked him up and swatted him for being such a goof. It was a neighborhood run amuck.

To top it off, not a single person I knew had ever been told that they were from a dysfunctional family. How could we possibly have known that?

We needed to get into group therapy and anger management classes? We were obviously so duped by so many societal ills that we didn't even notice that the entire country wasn't taking Prozac! How did we ever survive?

For all of you who didn't share this era; sorry for what you missed. Most of us wouldn't trade it for anything.
- Author unknown.

Richard Briggs



Dear Dino,

My name is Richard Briggs, son of Don Briggs (727 F/O MSP red book retired) and am interested in joining the RNPA as an affiliate member. My dad took disability retirement in 1989, and passed away in January of 1990. But if he were here, I'm sure he'd already be a member.

Discovering your website (even though I can't log in) brought back many memories for me, and initiated a photo search through my extensive collection of NWA memorabilia for old pictures that dad had taken, etc. So thought it might be appropriate that I would be able to join the RNPA and share some of those photos. Im sure there are plenty of members that would know him, once they see the pictures.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to becoming a member.

Sincerely,
Richard Briggs

Cy Peterson



Dear Friends,

Stanton Airfield is becoming a beehive of activity again, mostly due to the Light Sport Aircraft activity. The CT is the most popular aircraft on the field. And you don't need an FAA physical! Pat Watson and John Lee are still active in the management. I just try to stay out of the way now, though Kathy still keeps the books.

We sold our beloved Bonanza in November '07. It was not getting the exercise it deserves. We are reduced to buying coach tickets on NWA when we travel.

Best to all, and thanks to the indefatigable RNPA management.

Cy Peterson ('89)

Barb Hastings



Dear Mr. Oliva,

Please find my dues included. Life without John (after 56 years) is lonely, but as the saying goes, "Life goes on."

Grandchildren help! Our grandson "JJ" is employed with NWA as an instructor and hopefully as a pilot in the future, following in Grandpa's footsteps. Our next oldest, Jeremy, is a machinist making airline parts. Then there are two granddaughters ages 14 and 10 and our latest, Joshua age 5.

Thank you so much for the nice article about John. Love your publication and read it cover to cover. Also the extra copies were well received by the grandchildren.

Sincerely,
Barb Hastings

Cy Cole



Dear Dino,

I'm getting the magazine here, and am enjoying it a lot. You guys do a fine job with it, and thanks a lot.

I can't write very well any more and hope you can make it out.

Things have slowed up for me the last couple years. Had a stroke 2 ½ years ago, and things changed a lot. Never thought I'd live this long—93, but it is OK I guess.

Thanks again for such a good magazine.

Cy Cole



Florence Felber



Holiday Greetings Friends and Family,

It was a year ago on October 26, since Harvey had his stroke. Nothing has been the same since! Very life-style changes for the both of us. Harvey has been in a Nursing Home (Martin Luther Manor, Bloomington) ever since. I spend about 8 hours every day with him thru the love and generosity of many friends thru our church. I eat my noon meal with him, which is good for both of us. Harvey sleeps most of the day and night—and seems to need it. He can't walk otherwise I'd have him home with me. He can't understand why he can't be "Home with me." At first, he didn't understand "Where was home!"

In this past year, Harvey had a birthday on July 1st, which made him 95 years old. We had a good party for him. On October 26th the relatives came for a birthday party for me (Florence). I received 90 roses—one for every year of my life. Then on November 15th, 2007, we celebrated 69 happy years of our marriage! They truly have been wonderful years.

Thank you for your prayers and love. Son Howard has been a great help thru all of this. As has been granddaughter Debs and family. Thanks to our wonderful relatives and friends for your Love, Help, Visits and Prayers.

Sincerely,
Florence & Harvey Felber

Terry Julian



My wife Nadine and I celebrated 50 years of marriage last June. We also celebrated 12 years of her being cancer-free after having breast cancer. We have been truly blessed. Thanks again for all of your work.

Terry Julian



Hi Gary,

It has been a long time since I have made contact with you and the "Contrails." Too long! Remembering when we flew trips together on the 707. They were good times.

I had to retire three years early due to heart problems and as a result carry a stent and a Medtronic defibrillator. It has worked out well, despite having 50% heart function.

I lost Raymona early in 2003 after our marriage of 43 years. It was the result due to the complications of diabetes. As things turned out I met Zohreh, a wonderful lady, and we married, so another page of life has turned.

Your work as editor of the journal has been excellent. I was taken by the article about Nick Mamer and Art Walker with the flight of the Spokane Sun God. Art was a good friend and I saw him many times before he went west. He was with NWA from 1934 to 1957 and left to run the aviation department of Standard Oil Co.

Enclosed are some pieces of history you might find worthy to use in future issues of Contrails.

Best regards to you and rest of staff.

Fred C. Ellsworth

Readers will no doubt be seeing some of Fred's "pieces of history" in future issues. -Ed.

"Sometimes we don't feel that anyone out there is interested in what we are doing, but I know I enjoy reading about what all my former friends and co-workers are doing to pass the years."

– Joe Fouraker

Noel Smith



Dear Dino,

We expect to spend March in Bonita Springs, so we hope to make the luncheon in Sarasota!

The big event for us last year was that we took 15 family members back to Hawaii in July for a reunion. (Most had not been back since '72, when they closed the base and we had to move here.)

We are so glad that we did, as in October our 46 year old daughter, Cathy, died quite suddenly from a brain aneurism. So it was a sad Christmas this year.

Regards,

Noel Smith

Dick Haddon



Dino,

Not much has changed with Marge and I; did a little salmon fishing last summer and some hunting in the fall. We went on a vacation with our daughter, son-in-law and our two grandsons, ages 6 and 2. We had a real interesting time; the only problem was we missed the Seattle RNPA picnic. Now we are getting ready to head south in our motor home for about six weeks.

Thanks again for all that you guys do to help keep RNPA the organization that we are privileged to belong to. Keep up the good work.

Dick and Marge Haddon

Lloyd Melvie



Dino,

I continue to serve as pastor of Lake Union Covenant Church in rural South Haven, Minnesota. Sharon continues to teach nursing at Ridgewater College, Willmar, Minnesota, and is almost finished with her on-line masters program.

We are finally grandparents with the birth of Christian Aric on Thanksgiving Day to our son, Travis, and his wife Becki who live in Buffalo, Minnesota.

Thanks for keeping RNPA going. If I "retire" some day I'll get to some of the functions.

Lloyd Melvie

For the Active Pilot About to Retire: Some Choices About

Phoenix, where...

- You are willing to park 3 blocks away because you found shade.
- You've experienced condensation on your butt from the hot water in the toilet bowl.
- You can drive for 4 hours in one direction and never leave town.
- You have over 100 recipes for Mexican food.
- The 4 seasons are: Tolerable, Hot, Really hot, and ARE YOU KIDDING ME??!

OR

California, where...

- You make over \$250,000 and you still can't afford to buy a house.
- The fastest part of your commute is going down your driveway.
- You know how to eat an artichoke.
- You drive your rented Mercedes to your neighborhood block party.
- When someone asks you how far something is, you tell them how long it takes to get there rather than how many miles away it is.

OR

New York City, where...

- You say "the city" and expect everyone to know you mean Manhattan.
- You can get into a four-hour argument about how to get from Columbus Circle to Battery Park, but can't find Wisconsin on a map.
- You think Central Park is "nature."
- You believe that being able to swear at people in their own language makes you multi-lingual.
- You've worn out a car horn.
- You think eye contact is an act of aggression.

Don Vimr



Greetings:

Another year—still hanging on at 91. Don't go far or do much.

8 ½ more years???

Don Vimr

Bruce Olson



Dino-

I didn't read item #4 [dues notice] and laid it aside. Sorry.

Thank you again for all you have done for us.

Bruce Olson

Bob Youngren



Dino-

I am blessed with macular glaucoma.

Bye-Bye. Thank You!

Robert Youngren

This note was written large on a large note pad. We hope you can get someone to read Contrails to you, Bob. Our best wishes to a true gentleman. -Ed.

Terry Saturday



Dino,

I am still enjoying my second career thanks to ALPA. I am in ATL working as a senior contract administrator/attorney representing DAL, ASA and CMR pilots. I enjoy every minute of it.

Best regards to you and all RNPA members.

Terry D. Saturday

Randy Dunne



Dino,

I live in Traverse City, Michigan in the summer and Estero, Florida near Ft. Myers in the winter. My wife, Diane is still flying at NWA. In our spare time we enjoy boating, biking, flying our hot air balloon and trying to stay healthy.

I miss flying the line but the industry has changed a great deal. I wish all at NWA the very best of luck.

Best wishes to all,
Randy Dunne

Bruce Burkhard



Dear Dino,

Thanks for all that you do on behalf of the retired pilots. Your time is certainly appreciated.

Susan & Bruce Burkhard

Mollie Reiley



Hi Dino,

Thanks for being willing to do this. It is fun keeping up with everyone, especially for those of us still trudging along at NWA!

Sincerely,

Mollie Reiley



Where to Live You can Live in...

OR

Maine, where...

- You only have four spices: salt, pepper, ketchup, and tobasco.
- Halloween costumes fit over parkas.
- You have more than one recipe for moose.
- Sexy lingerie is anything flannel with less than eight buttons.
- The four seasons are: Winter, Still winter, Almost winter, and Construction.

OR

the Midwest, where...

- You've never met any celebrities, but the mayor knows your name.
- Your idea of a traffic jam is 10 cars waiting to pass a tractor.
- You have had to switch from "heat" to "A/C" on the same day.
- You end sentences with a preposition: "Where's my coat at?"
- When asked how your trip was to any exotic place, you say, "It was different!"

OR

Florida, where...

- You eat dinner at 3:15 in the afternoon.
- All purchases include a coupon of some kind—even houses and cars.
- Everyone can recommend an excellent dermatologist.
- Road construction never ends—anywhere in the state.
- Cars in front of you are often driven by headless people.

Mary Render Orr



To Whom It May Concern,

I am enclosing a check for membership in RNPA. Have been a member, but think I let it lapse. Sorry about that. Also, my status has changed.

I am Ralph J. Render's widow, as of 4 ½ years ago. Last May I remarried. He is a retired Frontier pilot and former Vice President of Operations for that company.

We were friends, as couples, and both lost our spouses. He has 5 children and I have 4. All is well. We live in Denver 5 months—also spend time at Dick's cabin in Telluride. The rest of the time is spent in Arizona.

Has been a busy year—hence the membership lapse!

Mary Render Orr

Pete Vinsant



Thank you Dino, for all the good work you do for all of us.

Best Regards,
Pete Vinsant

Earl Lunde



Dear Dino,

Enclosed please find my check for \$35 for another year's dues.

We are doing well, spending some time in Arizona during the winter, and Christmas and summers in Minnesota.

Thanks for all your service for us retirees! We appreciate it!

The magazine is really choice reading, from cover to cover!

Earl & Corrine Lunde

John Coppage



Hi Dino,

Sure like this retirement. Best job they ever invented! Still flying my Chinese rice rocket Nanchang CJ6 M14P in airshows and to Quiet Birdmen fly-ins, etc. Fun stuff—no work.

Best wishes,
John Coppage

PS. Still active in CAF Warbirds of America, Quiet Birdmen, Knights of the Round Engine Table OX5 Silver Eagles.

Lydia Dawson



Enclosed is my check for the new subscription.

Thank you for all the hard work that all of you put into every issue.

I really enjoy reading it and thank my friend Larry Patrick for my first subscription.

Lydia Dawson

Dave Nelson



Hi Dino,

Enclosed are 2008 dues, and of course we are happily contributing to the Pilot Retiree's Fund.

We took a wonderful seven day Christmas cruise through the Hawaiian Islands. It was our first cruise and we absolutely loved it! We are still putting on the final touches on our building project down in Baja. It has taken a year and a half to realize that "mañana" does not mean "tomorrow."

Happy New Year—and hope to see you at the next reunion!

Dave & Holly Nelson



Here is Chuck Paines RNPA dues for 2008. I'm sorry to say that after a series of tests in December, they have diagnosed Chuck with dementia.

He still knows most everyone. I am BJ most of the time, but sometimes his sister, sometimes our daughter, Katie, sometimes "that lady" that was here awhile ago. Reminds me of that comedian's line, "That's no lady, that's my wife."

He looks for his uniform and "brain bag" at times saying he has to be ready as "they" might call. It's sad to see, naturally, but he's still the same sweet guy, just highly confused a good part of the time. He also has to have dialysis three afternoons a week.

Interestingly enough when he puts on the baseball cap, that has RNPA on it, I will ask what those letters stand for and he comes back immediately with, "Retired NW Pilots."

We enjoyed the Christmas RNPA lunch at Emerald Downs. He didn't recall having attended the next day but that's okay. We sort of live only in the "now" with lots of repeated questions and answers forgotten within minutes. My sense of humor remains intact, so we're hanging in there.

Regards to all you flyboys and your gals.

The Chuck Paines/Seattle

Don Schrope



Dino,

Thanks many times over for all of the work you and the rest of the Board do for RNPA. You all do a great job and we appreciate it. It's a great organization.

Edith and I are planning to attend the Florida Luncheon this year and look forward to Hartford in September.

Don Schrope



Larry Potton



Greetings Dino and Gary,

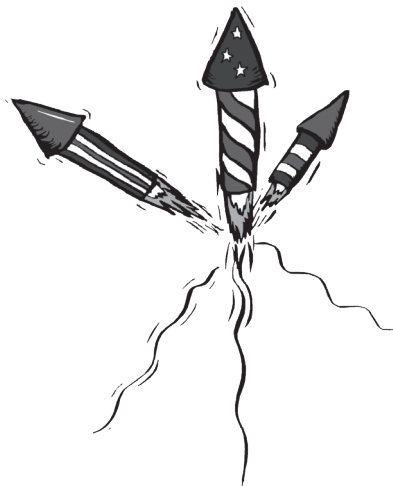
My wife just asked me, "What will happen when the guys taking care of RNPA and publishing the CONTRAILS magazine won't do it any more?" Perish the thought. Hopefully, there will always be others just like you, who have the talent and persistence, to keep us informed and entertained. You do such a spectacular job. Many, many thanks!

As far as activities and happenings in my life go, they revolve around grandchildren—just as yours and other lives are centered on the "second issue" so to speak. My wife, Linda, and I have a great time following hockey, cross-country, gymnastics and soccer. We also purchased 55 acres of timber and 25 acres of Connell's Red apple trees located near Menomonie, Wisconsin in 2001 and have been trying to figure out how to manage the forest crop and apple crop. The apples I can eat. Enclosed is a picture of Molly and me on one

of our orchard, winter treks.

I am always saddened to learn of legends like Don Abbott and Bob Mielke flying west, but I am heartened by exploits of the rest of you doing great and wondrous things. The flight attendant articles in "Bits and Pieces" are welcomed reminders of a great career and time past, but not forgotten.

Sincerely,
Larry Potton





Dear Dino,

Enclosed are my dues for 2008 and my thanks to you and all the others for keeping RNPA going. My check to Lowell Stafford and the Retirees Fund is going today also. Both of them are sent with a smile and alot of gratitudde for being able to do so.

Barbara and I are doing well, our health is excellent (thus far), and we're very active. In November '07 I finally got to see the Ala Moana Hotel after hearing about it for decades (I never flew into or out of Hawaii). The Ala Moana was the official hotel for those of us speaking at the event that was taking place in Honolulu and we really enjoyed it.

I had a book coming out last year, due to hit all the national stores on September 1st, but it crashed ten feet short of the runway. At virtually the eleventh hour someone in the publishing company insisted on several last minute changes that clearly affected the integrity of the story. I'd worked hard with the Editorial Director (whom I really liked) and I'd been willing and cooperative, making many concessions along the way. But the integrity issue was unacceptable and I refused. Although a little sad and very disappointed, I returned a healthy advance and cancelled the contract. In years past, we had turned down two movie offers solely on the issue of story integrity and I wasn't going to sell out at this point.

Immediately afterwards I accidentally happened upon an advanced promotional ad for the book in Amazon.com. So (grin) I at least got to see what it would have looked like!

The story was originally written as a family legacy for grandkids and others who will follow, and that's now been accomplished so I'm absolutely okay with things.

I'm still flying with a first class medical but with fuel prices hovering between \$4.50 and \$6.00 a gallon, I flew the least number of hours last year that I've flown in the past twelve years.

The past hunting season wasn't as good as I'm accustomed to but I still have no problem scrambling up and down trees and dragging deer out, so all is well there. I'll hit the big 7-0 this year but I plan to just ignore it. Barb stopped aging about 15 years ago so she's well ahead of me on defying birthdays.

One of these times, when the annual RNPA thing doesn't conflict with my other stuff, we hope to get back and see everyone. In the meantime, thanks again for all you and the others do!

Blue skies,
Lyle Prouse

Vic Kleinstueber



Gary:

Don't know if I am too late with this as I forgot to send it right after Reno.

Regarding volunteer service in our communities:

I have been doing Volunteer Driver trips for Wright county since 1998. We take elderly or disabled people in the county to their Doctor appointments, therapy, etc. Not a big deal but a way to give back to others in need and, who knows, maybe some day I will need the service.

I am also an active member in the Monticello Rotary club, since 1976. We Rotarians have done numerous local civic projects like installing Rotary park benches, planting trees after storm wind damage, & planting flower gardens in the Rotary Park & the Monticello area.

Regards,
Vic Kleinstueber

HELPFUL TECHNOLOGY?

I can't wait for the next ground delay or long taxi due to weather somewhere to get a smart ass with a freakin iPhone shoving it in my face saying, "It's NOT raining there... SEE !" Too late... already happened to me. We push back, get advised of a ground stop in MEM due to storms in the area. Go to the penalty box and wait. My Captain does the lecture over the PA. Not one minute later, we get dinged from the F/A, "Some guy with an iPhone says the weather is good, and wants to know what the real reason is for the delay. Is something wrong with the plane?"

I want to tell this clown what he can do with his *idiotPhone*—but the Captain does it even better. He gets on the PA and makes the following announcement :

"If the passenger with the iPhone would be kind enough to use it to check the weather at our alternate, calculate our fuel burn due to being rerouted around the storms, call the dispatcher to arrange our release, and then make a phone call to the nearest Air Traffic Control center to arrange our timely departure amongst the other aircraft carrying passengers with iPhones, then we will be more than happy to depart.

"Please ring your call button to advise the Flight Attendant and your fellow passengers when you deem it ready and responsible for this multi-million dollar aircraft and its 84 passengers to safely leave."

Needless to say, the pax was pretty embarrassed. The F/A later told us the rest of the plane was outright laughing at this dude.

What a clown.



Stan Baumwald got some email from one Richard Adams looking for info about the Sikorsky S-38. Portions of three of Mr. Adams' emails are reprinted here that will explain. He also contributed the photo on the cover. -Ed.

Stan,

I am modeling a Sikorsky S-38 that Northwest Airways flew between St. Paul and Duluth, using the Duluth harbor, in 1931-1932. I have located a photograph of this airplane when it was hangered at the old field in St. Paul. I have also located a color copy of the emblem that was on the fuselage but need to know the colors of this interesting airplane.

I ran across your name on the internet as a collector of NW Airlines memorabilia and wondered if you might be able to help me out?

I'll include a copy of the photo [on the cover] that I found in an old friend's family archives. The Smithsonian A&S Museum now has the original. I'll also include a photo of my model.

My best guesses at this point are that the fuselage/hull is grey, maroon, black going from the top to the bottom. I suspect the lettering and striping may be yellow or gold.

Any help you can be would be greatly appreciated!

Thanks,

Dick Adams

The history of this aircraft is that it was bought by my friend's grandfather in 1932 from Northwest Airways and repainted and used as a shuttle between Houghton, MI and Isle Royale, which had just become a national park. My friend has located an old timer who remembers royal blue and silver with gold lettering. It is possible that the main colors were not changed. I'll attach a photo of it in Royale Lines' livery.

Thanks again,

Dick

Can you find any color references for any airplanes that NW operated in the era?

My airplane will be published in R/C Micro World and I will send you a pdf file when that happens and you are welcome to use any of the article or photographs. I suspect I am about 2 months away from its test flights and about 3 months away from having the article published. As it is an online magazine, the time between submission and publication is always quite short.

This weekend I finished the detailing of the exhaust manifold and exhaust pipe on my dummy Pratt and Whitney Wasp engines. To appreciate the beauty of 1/36 scale understand that this is an airplane that spans 28" and will be powered by 2 geared pager motors and will weigh less than 3 ounces ready to fly, AND will have retracting landing gear designed by a retired mechanical engineer from Oregon that weigh about 5 grams.

Thanks,

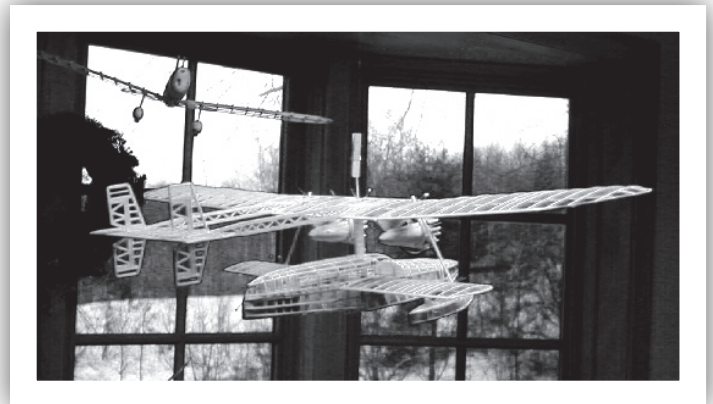
Dick



engineer from Oregon that weigh about 5 grams.

Thanks,

Dick



Contact: Richard Adams

Gogebic County Prosecutor's Office

200 N Moore St

Bessemer MI 49911

Work: 906.667.0471 Home: 906.667.0177

rradams@charter.net



David Gauthier's replica Fokker DR1 Triplane recently entered display at the Evergreen Air Museum in McMinnville Oregon. It hangs in the Lobby of the IMAX Theatre in combat with a replica Nieuport 11.

A dedication of the aircraft will be held June 1st, 2008, hosted by the Evergreen Air Museum. A one hour presentation accounting the history of the original aircraft and the replica will begin at 11:00 am, June 1, 2008, followed by a cake and punch reception.

The Evergreen Air Museum will provide a shuttle from the McMinnville airport to and from the museum for those who fly in to the McMinnville airport. For a map and driving directions visit www.sprucegoose.org. If you have additional questions, please email:

kfcarp@comcast.net.



Dave Gauthier and his Fokker DR1 Triplane



Calling All Writers **It's a Short Story Contest**

Any writers out there?

Fame and fortune awaits. Well, maybe not as famous as Mark Twain, but an estimated 3500 readers are sure to at least read the first paragraph or two. As to the fortune... not so much.

The rules are simple: **Fiction, any subject. 2500 words or less.** Open to all RNPA members and their immediate family. The author of any story that is published in Contrails will be awarded a free year's membership in RNPA. *(Not open to the staff members of Contrails or their families, which is a shame, since the Editor's daughter is a talented writer. Besides that, it would be too easy for Bob Root, don't you think?)*

Email entries preferred, but any format will do. The Editor's contact info is on the inside front cover.



Gary [Pisel],

A quick update on the 747 family day event.

It was great!! There were 4 pilots that showed up, Chuck Hagen, Claude Benedict, Ken Finney and myself. Two former flight attendants (I'm pretty sure they were Stewardesses) were also present. We casually rotated the show & tell spotlight between us. The folks were delighted to talk with pilots that actually flew ship 601. Even in retirement we can't get away from the "picture with the pilot and autographs" shtick. In all honesty, it was a very memorable occasion. The event drew quite a large number of people and the 747 was a popular display. The ground level view was extremely impressive to them, as they never see the aircraft from that perspective.

One man with his family identified himself as a lawyer with NWA in governmental affairs in DC and was appalled that some pilots were not invited to the big bash on the 14th (as you mentioned). He indicated that they would have enhanced the presentation, acting as docents. Apparently the decision makers do not realize that we would do just about anything for a free meal, not to mention drinks.

Feel free to use the attached photos for your dart board.

Safe skies,
Bill Layton



Bill Layton and Ken Finney

N601US at the Smithsonian

This nose section is from a Northwest Airlines Boeing 747-151.

First flown in 1970, this 747 was the first built for Northwest and the first 747 to open service across the Pacific. It was retired in 1999.

Gift of Northwest Airlines, Inc.



Come Early • Stay Late • Special Catered Food
Convenient Airplane Parking
Furnished: Soft Drinks, Wine, Coffee
Cost \$25 per person

LOCATION:
Evergreen Sky Ranch
36850 204th Ave SE
Auburn WA

INFO:
Mary Gauthier
(360) 825-3515
redbaron@skynetbb.
com
Doug Peterson
(360) 889-0079
db-peterson@
comcast.net

DIRECTIONS: From I-5 - east on Highway 18 - exit onto Auburn Way South (Highway #164) - turn left at Cooper's Corner. Cooper's Corner is SE 380th Place and is 100 feet past the overhead pedestrian crosswalk yellow flashing light - turn right onto 160th Place SE - left onto SE 384th Street - left turn at 212th Ave SE - left turn at SE 376th St. - right turn onto 204th Ave. SE - right turn at end of road.

From I-5 - east on Highway #18 - exit at Auburn-Black Diamond exit - turn right onto Green Valley Road - turn right at 212th Ave SE (218th Ave SE and 212th Ave SE intersection- green metal bridge at side of road) - turn right at 376th St - right onto 204 Ave SE - right turn at end of road.

From Bellevue - Highway #405 - exit south on Highway #167 - exit to Highway #18 - to either Auburn or Auburn-Black Diamond exit as stated above.

Fly-in information:
Evergreen Sky Ranch. Runway 16/34 - 2600 feet grass. EL 580 feet. GPS is 51WA. Radio 122.9 MH. 122.92 five clicks to turn on light & VASI. Left traffic.

SEATTLE SUMMER PICNIC

Thursday, August 21st, 11am

Printed please:

Name(s) _____

_____ @ \$25 = \$_____ (After Aug. 18th it's \$35
per person at the door.)

No refunds after reservation deadline of August 18th.

Checks payable to **The Sunshine Club**, please.



Mary Gauthier
36850 204th Ave SE
Auburn WA 98092

TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY MAN

My calendar indicates that the year is 2008. That would put us well into the 21st Century.

People, mostly friends and loved ones, have been telling me that I am stuck in the 20th Century. They seem to feel I should know certain things which I do not. Just when I was getting a bit proud of learning a CD is a “compact disc,” my friends and loved ones came up with a DVD, followed by a DVD+R, to which may be added DL. Big deal that I do not know what a DVD+R DL is! I do know one can purchase a 25-pack of them for \$19.99 at a place called Fry’s Electronics somewhere in Arizona.

Oh, and if you happen to need a Powerline Turbo 85Mbps Ethernet Adapter for \$32.99, or a USB 2.0 **GB Flash Drive for \$34.99, those are available also at Fry’s. Or how about an XFX GeForce 8800GS 384MB PCI-Express Video Card. (\$177.99)

Oh, and if you happen to need a Powerline Turbo 85Mbps Ethernet Adapter for \$32.99, or a USB 2.0 **GB Flash Drive for \$34.99, those are available also at Fry’s. Or how about an XFX GeForce 8800GS 384MB PCI-Express Video Card. (\$177.99)

My point here is that I do not know if I need one or more of these things because I do not know what they are. To me, TIVO sounds like something that might be an upgraded Lego, a Blackberry is something I might find on my cereal and a JT8D was a great engine.

Technology is not the only area that has left me behind. My time in the Navy taught me to wear a hat with the brim in front and make damn sure you took it off before going indoors. (Otherwise, you bought the drinks.) To me, Cialis is something one might do if the lady issuing automobile license tags is named Alice. And, like, when exactly, like did the word like become so important, like, that it has to be said, like, as often as an athlete in a television interview says “you know?”

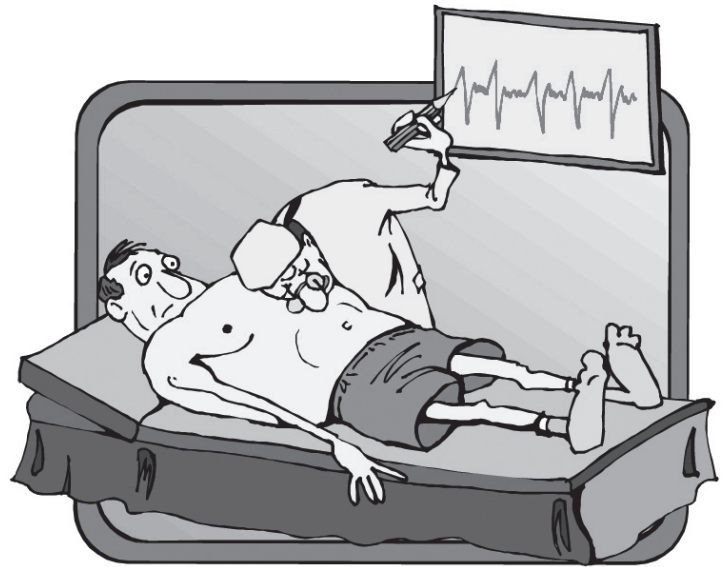
Some who read this may recall how they dressed for a check ride—coat and tie (properly knotted), shirt tucked into trousers, real socks under something other than athletic shoes. We did this because we were trained that it demonstrated respect for the FAA inspector who would be wearing a suit and tie. I note that Jay Leno shows up every night in a suit and tie. Damn few of his “guests” demonstrate the respect we showed for the inspector. I do not know when or how this all changed.

The information above could, of course, lead one to suspect that Old Bob is stuck in the 20th Century. Well, I am here to tell you that Old Bob has recently joined the 21st Century in ways that are not only “upgrading,” but downright scary!

Meet *The Shark*, *The Flash*, and *The Blade*

We all must play the hand we were dealt in life. And so it is without rancor, but for explanatory purposes only, that I report here a circumstance which occurred at age 55 when, while on a layover in Paris, I became quite ill. With the help of a wonderful copilot and second officer, I returned to the U.S., went to see my flight surgeon, and found myself in the hospital. There I was told that my flying days were over, probably because a virus had damaged my heart. For me, there would be no retirement flight with gracefully arching streams of water from a fire truck.

Eventually, my heart condition led me to a cardiologist by the name of Scott Sharkey. Dr. Sharkey, whom I affectionately call “The Shark,” has treated my “condition” now for 14 years.



He has, in my opinion, kept me going. Last summer, he told me that, while the problem within my heart had not worsened, the treatment for said problem had changed over time and now it was recommended that a defibrillator be implanted in the upper left chest area of people in my situation. (For clarification purposes, I state here that I have not suffered a heart attack and, until recently, not undergone an angiogram.)

“If the need arises, our friends at Medtronic will provide you with an automatic kick-start for your heart which will feel like a mule kicking you in the chest.”

The Shark practices in Minnesota. I determined that it would be more convenient for me to have the surgery in Arizona, a decision that led me to Dr. Michael Gordon in Phoenix. Dr. Gordon made an instant and favorable impression at our first meeting when he sat and chatted with my wife and me for over an hour, despite the fact that we had appeared in his offices (by mistake) one week prior to our scheduled appointment.

Dr. Gordon (Flash, to me) did not seem overly impressed with The Shark when we explained that I had never been subjected to an angiogram. He suggested a new test; so new that “your insurance won’t pay the \$100.00 it costs.”

As an act of humor, I produced from my wallet five \$20s, thinking he would laugh. Instead, he took them, handed them to his assistant and ordered a receipt and the test.

A week later we returned for the results of the test.

“You flunked,” he said. Then he produced a scale for the test which began at zero.

“When it reaches 400, it is awful. You are 4000!”

Suddenly, Flash was talking angiogram. Several times the word “bypass” was mentioned.

Clearly, he expected, during the angiogram, to find clogged tubes not discovered by The Shark. Equally clearly, he was shocked when the arteries proved to be no more blocked than one would expect for a man of my age. It was apparent that his respect for The Shark had increased. We were back to the defibrillator.

Enter The Blade, Dr. Mark Burns, dubbed The Blade because he’s the guy with the knife. I met him after I was strapped to the operating table and after the surgical nurse had said:

“Gee, I hope this thing works okay, we got a really good deal on eBay.”

When The Blade was finished, I had a bulge in my

upper left chest and was told I was not to swing my brand new Ping G-10 golf clubs for six, count them, six miserable weeks. I was also told to return to The Flash’s office in two weeks for a check on my new body part.

On Saturday of that week, I attended my regular ROMEO (Retired Old Men Eating Out) breakfast. One member of the group, upon hearing of my implant, said:

“I have one of those. Mine went off once eight times in 20 minutes.” Maybe that’s why I have been thinking a lot lately about Murphy’s Law.

Two weeks later, there I was, as was my wife, in a little examining room when in sauntered some guy I had never before seen, pushing a cart upon which sat a computer, a printer and other 21st Century electronics.

“Came to check your pacemaker,” he said.

“But I don’t have a pacemaker. I have a defibrillator.”

There is an old saying that goes something like this: “Everybody on the airplane is in deep trouble when the captain says, ‘Watch this!’”

“Oh yeah,” said the man, “watch this.” He then printed an EKG tape of my heart’s performance. I could see my trace on his screen. There were no wires attached to me! He then tapped on the screen with a stylus. My heartbeat sped up! Next, he showed me how he could increase my heartbeat by tapping on my swollen chest area.

“If you get lucky some night, just give me a call,” he said. “You will have a box to plug into your phone and I can pump you up.”

I have no words to put here which would truly convey how weird all this was for me.

Oh, and perhaps I should report about my hearing aids. At the hearing aid office, the lady can plug them into her computer and know what I have been listening to since I was last there.

Like, man, I really am into, like, the 21st century. Maybe I should change my name, like, from Old Bob to like, Bionic Bob.

Bob Root, April, 2008

I really do plan to some day write about something other than me. Perhaps I should start now:

Yesterday was opening day for most major league baseball teams in 2008. You need to know that of the 403 players who actually participated in a game yesterday, 137 had last names ending in a vowel or a Z., including eight of the Chicago White Sox starting defenders. ★

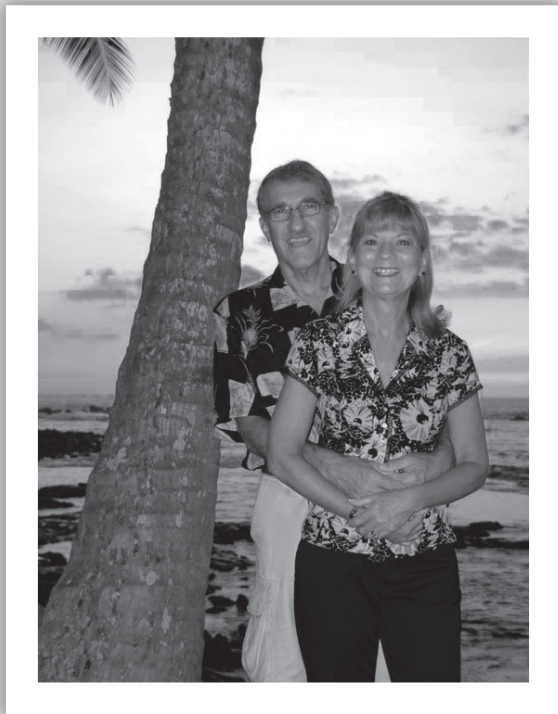
Sue Duxbury's Getting to Know You



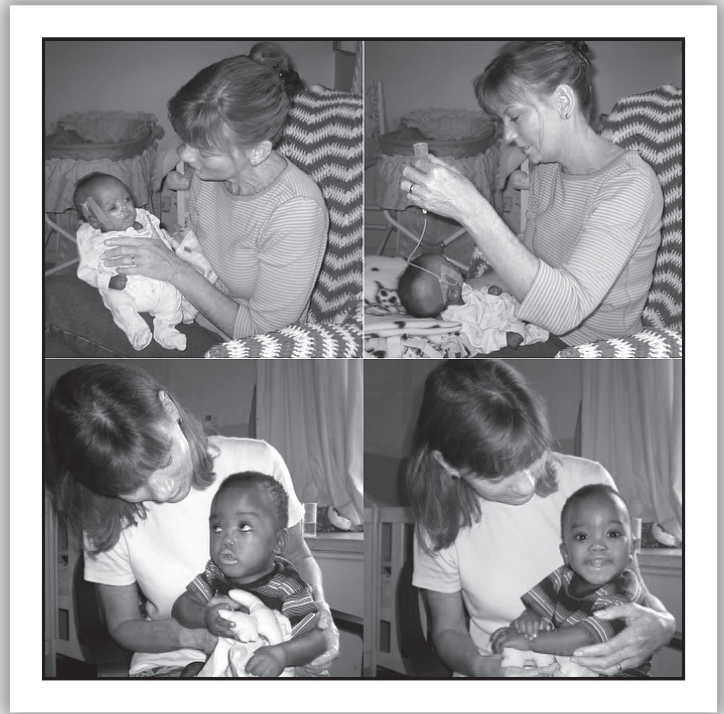
Lynn and Ron Heitritter

“How fortunate we are that our hands are able to do the work of our hearts.”

Each December Lynn and Ron Heitritter leave their comfortable home in Wayzata and fly half-way around the world to South Africa where they volunteer their love, compassion, time and skills at The Love of Christ (TLC) home for abandoned babies. At TLC, the Heitritters merge their hearts and faith with the mission of TLC to: “Care for the most innocent victims of extreme poverty, violent crime, homelessness and HIV/AIDS.”



The Heitritters in Hawaii before returning to Africa



Lynn puts her nursing skills to good use

For six months Lynn and Ron live at 4,400 feet elevation on a twenty-three acre farm in rural Eikenhof, thirty five kilometers south of Johannesburg. TLC was the inspiration of Thea Jarvis, a white South African woman of English/Dutch lineage. Since rescuing the first abandoned infant in 1993, Thea Jarvis has seen more than 650 babies pass through TLC. As the number of abandoned babies in her care increased, Thea was joined in her endeavor by her five adult children—and eventually by international volunteers from around the world. The orphanage is currently staffed with 20-28 dedicated international volunteers who commit themselves to making life safe, comfortable, healthy, educational and loving for abandoned infants and toddlers who arrive at TLC from dire and destitute situations. TLC cares for about 40 babies at a time. Some babies are turned over to TLC by their mothers who are HIV positive or have AIDS and are too weak, sick or poor to care for their babies. Other babies are abandoned at hospitals, in shops or alleys or wrapped in garbage bags. But for each, arriving at the gates of TLC is truly a blessing. They are unconditionally loved, fed, and clothed within the gates of TLC.

Dick and I were fortunate to spend an evening with Lynn and Ron at their lovely home in Wayzata where we shared a delightful meal and good conversation as we got to know the Heitritters and how they came to give so much of themselves to such a noble cause.

Ron grew up on a farm in Iowa. In his early years of flying with Northwest, he concurrently served eight years in the Iowa Air National Guard flying the F100. When his guard unit was activated and sent to Vietnam in 1968, he flew 243 combat missions. For his extraordinary achievement in Vietnam, he was presented with the Distinguished Flying Cross. Ron had a thirty-seven-year career with Northwest Airlines, retiring in 2002.

Lynn graduated from Purdue University as an RN and later joined Northwest, as a flight attendant. After a six-month career as a flight attendant, Lynn returned to the nursing profession at the old Hennepin County General Hospital. She enjoyed her work on adult medical wards where she often cared for the less-fortunate and indigent patients from the streets of Minneapolis.

Besides having two daughters of their own, Lynn and Ron provided licensed foster care to physically and sexually abused adolescents. They also



"Mowgli" and Lynn in December of '05, and (inset) back in February of '04

cared for Ron's mother who was afflicted with Alzheimer's disease in later life. As Lynn's motherly duties lessened, she returned to school at the University of Minnesota where she earned her Ph.D. in 1999 in the discipline of Family Social Science. She wrote her dissertation on understanding the experiences of newly-settled Somali refugees to Minnesota.

Ron's retirement opened a window of opportunity for him to combine his love of flying with his faith-based humanitarian interests. Immediately following retirement, he and Lynn joined Air Serv—a non-profit organization that provides air transportation for international disaster relief. During their time with Air Serv, Lynn and Ron lived in Conakry, Guinea in West Africa. Ron flew his Air Serv King Air into refugee camps in Central and West Africa transporting medical evacuees, Doctors without Borders, U.N. diplomats and missionaries. One of Lynn's endeavors was transcribing oral life stories and family histories of refugees so they might preserve their experiences for future generations.

Through working with Air Serv, the Heitritters became aware of ways that employment by non-profit organizations might (unintentionally) adversely affect a local family's financial system—leaving them worse off in the long run than they were before. Thus, the Heitritters looked after the cook who worked for them; ensuring that he had continued employment



Above:
 "Big Papa" was quite proud of whipping up all those bottles of individualized formulas for his "Grubs"... and proud of having "all his ducks in a row," so to speak...



Left:
 "Auntie Lynn" with a real lap full

when the time came for them to return to the United States. To this day, the Heitritters remain in contact with their former employee and his family in Guinea. After 318 missions in six months with Air Serv, the Heitritters returned to the US—leaving part of their hearts in Africa. They were committed to the goal of returning to Africa in a non-aviation capacity.

In December of 2004, the Heitritters followed their hearts to another humanitarian mission and joined the volunteers at TLC. For four years they have worked tirelessly to provide for the sick and abandoned little ones who populate the TLC farm in South Africa. In their roles as TLC volunteers, the Heitritters have cared for well over 200 infants and toddlers. Many babies at TLC are eventually adopted.

If children are unable to be returned to their biological family or extended family, a local South African family is sought. If no South African adoptive family can be found, the babies are placed internationally, mostly into families in Germany, Austria and Denmark. Because the US has not completely implemented the Hague Convention (signed in 1994), no South African babies have been placed in families within the United States. However, the Heitritters are hopeful that within the next year many barriers to US adoption of TLC babies will be reduced.

I was curious as to how Lynn and Ron dealt with the death of children in which they had invested so much of themselves. Lynn answered that even though they were not able to save each child, at least they know that those babies died warm, fed and loved rather than alone, cold and hungry. The Garden of Remembrance on the TLC farm is a very special place and it is here that babies who have passed away are remembered. On the other hand, to compare pictures of the babies who arrive at TLC malnourished, sick and underweight with pictures of them a few months later after they have been loved and nourished is to see a miracle.



Big Papa is often found in the role of King of Wishy Washy. He puts on a great deal of frequent flyer miles hauling the laundry cart back and forth from the nursery to the new laundry cottage.



The infamous gang of nine

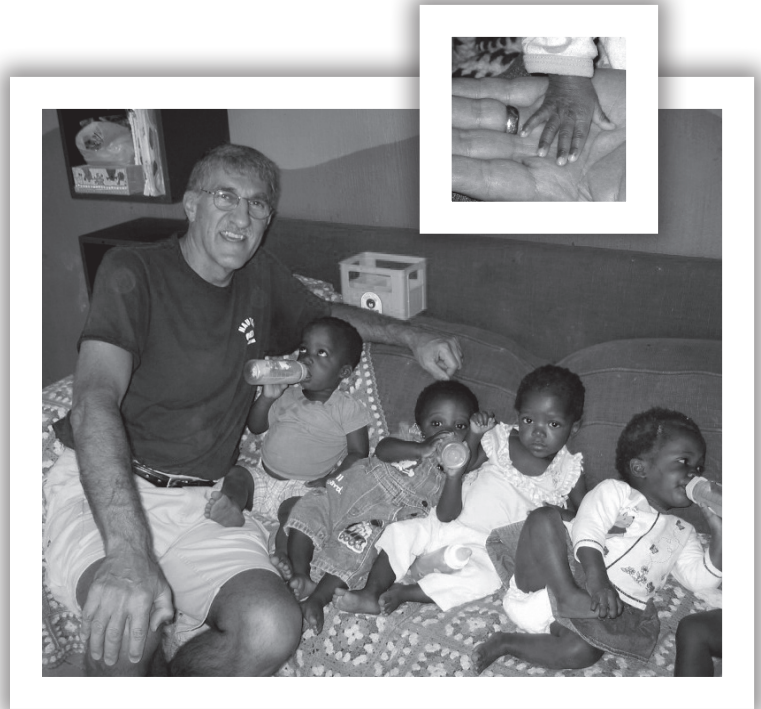
Lynn is known at TLC as Auntie Lynn. Besides being invaluable for her medical knowledge and nursing skills, she also serves as volunteer coordinator for TLC. Ron is nicknamed TLC's "Big Papa" and, as such, he is caregiver for babies from preemies to preschoolers, makes constant repairs of equipment and drives babies to clinics and hospitals.

The Heitritters have two daughters, one on each coast of the United States. Shelly and Brian live on the Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake Bay where they are restoring a historic 1894 Victorian house. Shelly and Brian own their own ISP business in which she designs business web sites and he is a computer hardware engineer.

Shannon and Eoin live in Seattle, Washington. Shannon is a "Top Doc" endocrinologist at Polyclinic in Seattle, while Eoin is a critical care pulmonologist, conducting international research projects at the University of Washington.

As I write, the Heitritters are back in South Africa. In their latest web site entry, Lynn speaks of the festivities and hope of the Easter celebration, as well as the latest loss at TLC. Lynn was at the hospital taking her turn to sit at the bedside of a sick baby from TLC. In the neighboring hospital crib, a nine-month-old baby died. Lynn asked that Ron bring a red rose from a bouquet he had purchased for the Easter celebration. The two of them placed the rose on the hospital crib where the nine-month baby drew its last breath. Lynn wrote: "It just seemed like someone in the world needs to notice that a little baby from a squatter's camp had once lived among us."

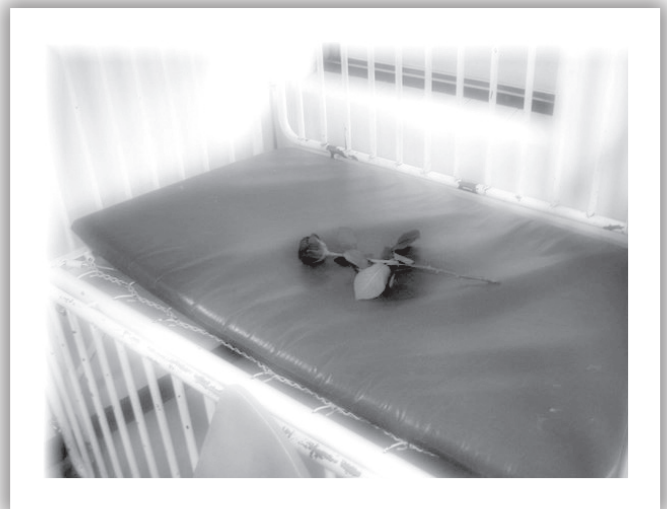
In our conversation, Lynn mused about what changes might come about if they have grandchildren



Ron and the "Creepy Crawlies"

in the future. That would likely affect their volunteer time in South Africa. The Heitritters have recently purchased a town home in Cambridge, Maryland on the Eastern Shore where they anticipate splitting their time between Cambridge and Seattle.

I highly urge you to log onto the Heitritter's web site, ronandlynn.com for a more personal, thorough presentation of the work done by Lynn and Ron and the dedicated staff at TLC. The pictures will warm your hearts.



"Every child is precious, Every Story Unique"

Susan Duxbury, April, 2008

Flying sunny and bumpy skies in the 1940s and 1950s

by Bob Fliegel



THE YEAR WAS 1949 AND I WAS NINE YEARS OLD. My parents and I had been spending winters in California for several years, but we had always driven there or gone by train. We were about to take our first cross-country flight as a family.



Perhaps you remember the old airport at Wold-Chamberlain field. I recall most vividly the smallness of the terminal, the absence of chaos, and the well-dressed waiting passengers. We might all have been preparing to board the *Queen Mary*. In fact, it almost *was* the *Queen Mary*. It was a Boeing B-377 Stratocruiser—more about that glorious aircraft in due course.

We had luggage galore. Those were the days when luggage limits were expressed in pounds, not pieces, and, just as now, one could pay for additional weight. Carry-on baggage was virtually unheard of. One checked everything through, rarely resulting in either lost bags or interminable waits in baggage-claim areas. Of course, the number of passengers on any given flight was much smaller than it later became, as was the number of flights that baggage handlers had to attend. Dad never carried our suitcases, instead putting them in the hands of friendly skycaps, many of whom we all came to know by name.

Looking out the terminal window onto the tarmac, I saw the magnificent double-decker Stratocruiser. A stunningly gorgeous stewardess (now we call them flight attendants), dressed in a smartly tailored Northwest Airlines uniform and stiletto heels, greeted us at the base of the stairway. Even to a nine-year-old, she was as magnificent as the airplane itself!

The aircraft was all one class. Northwest did not introduce first-class service until the late 1950s, but that was okay, as the airlines did not adopt today's sardine-can seating configuration until years later. At that time the seats reclined much farther back than they do now, and leg room abounded.

Kids got special treatment. The stewardesses gave us little kits of goodies—crayons, coloring books, and the like. Adults received folders of Northwest stationery, postcards, pens, and decals. And remember the gum? It was always peppermint Chiclets. The stewardesses distributed little packs of it during the frequent periods of turbulence and just before landing to help passengers cope with air sickness and changes in cabin pressure. We also received rudimentary ear plugs—internal aircraft noise was deafening by later standards.

Inflight meals were major events— and the food was wonderful. Several years later, in 1954 to be exact, I had a summer job on Chuck

Milestone Events at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport

1920

First hangar constructed at the Twin Cities Motor Speedway Field (Twin Cities Airport) to accommodate airmail service

1923

Airport renamed Wold-Chamberlain Field for local pilots Ernest Wold and Cyrus Chamberlain, killed in combat during WWI.

1926

St. Paul withdraws from the Twin Cities Airport to build Holman Field

1928

City of Minneapolis buys Wold-Chamberlain field from Snelling Field Corporation for \$165,000, renames it the Minneapolis Municipal Airport

1943

State legislation creates Metropolitan Airports Commission

1948

Becomes Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP)

1962

Lindbergh Terminal opens

1967

More than 4.1 million people use MSP as passenger growth far exceeds projections

1989

Minnesota Legislature establishes long-term planning process to address passenger growth and in 1996 authorizes MSP 2010 long-term plan and funds \$3.1 billion in improvements

2001

Humphrey Terminal and Lindbergh Terminal's Transit Center open

2004 Light-rail service connects downtown Minneapolis, MSP, and Mall of America

Saunders' Bloomington farm, where I cared for 2,600 laying hens. Saunders, who owned Charlie's Café Exceptionale, sold the 90 dozen eggs that I gathered each day to Northwest Airlines. Yes, one could get fresh eggs for breakfast!

The trays plugged into holes in the arms of the seats, as there was too much distance between the rows to have allowed the seat-back tray-stowage system of today. Meals were served on real plates, placed on small white tablecloths—and passengers ate with real flatware, not plastic forks.

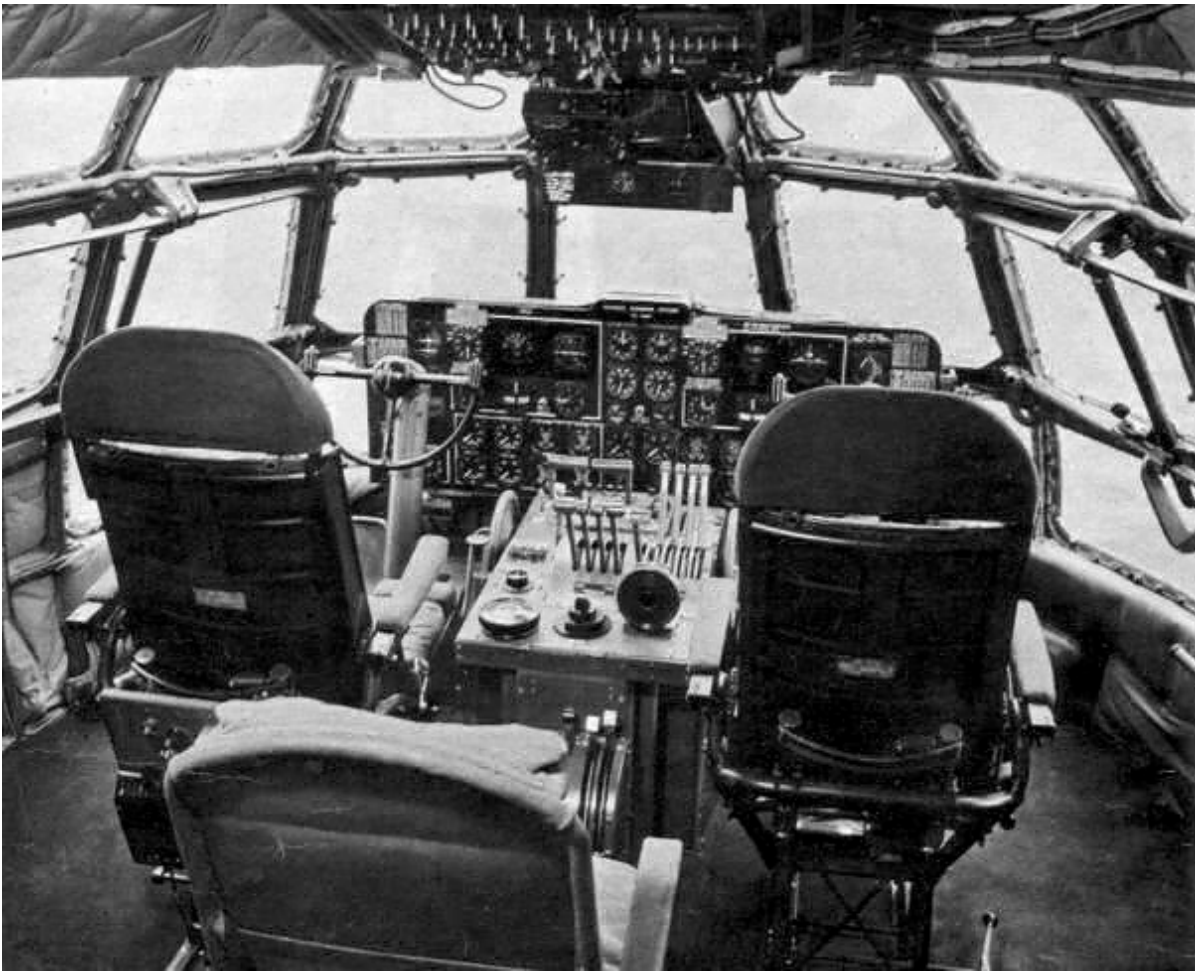
Northwest began offering alcoholic drinks with the advent of the Stratocruiser, advertising: "Enjoy the lounge: one drink to St. Paul [from where?!], two drinks to Seattle." Rolling drink cart service didn't exist in those days. One simply pressed the stewardess call button for whatever drink you liked.

The best was yet to come. On night flights (yet to be called "red eyes") passengers in the first few rows had access to overhead bunks that pulled down from the area of today's carry-on stowage compartments. I remember the mattresses as thick and comfy. For privacy, you pulled a curtain across the bunks—it was quite a trick to get into one's pajamas in such a restricted space, but at age nine I was a skilled (and small) contortionist.

The Stratocruiser's lower deck lounge was accessible via a short stairway from the passenger compartment. Though the lounge did not run the full length of the aircraft, it featured seven seats available for sale in addition to the chairs and tables available to all. During periods of relative calm, children enjoyed climbing between the two decks. Because commercial airliners of that era flew at

Milestone Events for Northwest Airlines

- 1926 Begins carrying air mail to Chicago with two open-cockpit biplanes
- 1938 Develops first practical aviation oxygen mask, making possible high-altitude flying over the Rocky Mountains
- 1941 Stock is publicly traded: passenger revenue exceeds mail revenue
- 1945 New York service from the Twin Cities via Milwaukee and Detroit; introduces Douglas DC-4, its first four-engine aircraft
- 1947 Northwest Orient service to Tokyo, Seoul, Shanghai, and Manila
- 1948 "Red tail" (still in use today) painted on all Northwest aircraft for the first time, creating a trademark known around the world
- 1949 First Boeing B-377 Stratocruiser, with first beverage service on U.S. flights
- 1955 First Lockheed L-1049 Constellation; voluntarily becomes the first airline to operate without government subsidy on Trans-Pacific and United States-Alaska routes
- 1959 First jet, Lockheed L-188 Electra turbo-prop airliner
- 1960 Begins "fastest U.S. jet service to Asia" with Douglas DC-8 aircraft, the airline's first "pure jet"
- 1963 First all fan-jet operator; Boeing 707-320
- 1968 Leads U.S. airline industry in net profit
- 1971 Cited for national leadership by noise abatement organization
- 1976 First airline approved by FAA to install coordinated flight crew training
- 1978 Deregulation of airline industry
- 1984 After 35-year hiatus, resumes service to China
- 1988 Bans smoking on all North American flights, first major airline to do so
- 1991 Northwest and KLM Royal Dutch Airlines launch joint service, twice-weekly flights between Minneapolis/St. Paul and Amsterdam
- 2000 First major carrier to offer Internet check-in
- 2002 Northwest, Continental, and Delta sign cooperative marketing agreement
- 2005 Declares bankruptcy because of mounting debts
- 2007 Emerges from bankruptcy



“Any child who walked forward and peeked in was invited to chat with the captain and copilot.”

low altitudes—often under 20,000 feet—rough periods were far more frequent than on today’s flights. I soon became intimately familiar with the air sickness bags tucked into the pockets of seat backs.

I thought the pilot was God. Most of Northwest’s pilots had been U.S. Navy or Army Air Corps aviators in World War II, and they were rakish fellows indeed. Though there was a door to the cockpit, it was left wide open for most of the flight. Any child who walked forward and peeked in was invited to chat with the captain and copilot. On a later occasion, the copilot arose and helped me into his seat! Children who took advantage of this opportunity received junior pilot wings before returning to their seats. What fun that was!

Yes those were the good old days. Service was highly personal, airports and airplanes uncrowded, passengers well-behaved, the food plentiful and good, intrusive and delaying security measures unnecessary, luggage quick to be unloaded and rarely lost, fares consistent,

with a sense of adventure about it all. Still, the ride was often bumpy, the cabin smoke-filled, and the cross-country flights longer than we care to remember. On balance, are we better off in today’s world of commercial air travel?

You decide.

Thanks to Dru Dunwoody and Pete Patzke of NWA History Centre, Bloomington, for helping to confirm the accuracy of my childhood memories.

Bob Fliegel is a graduate of Blake School (1957) and Carleton College (1961). He is retired and lives in St. Augustine, Florida.

This was first published in Hennepin History (Hennepin History Museum) and sent to me by some thoughtful member whom I have forgotten, which bothers me a lot since I do appreciate your contributions so much. (It also bothers me that my memory ain’t so much like it once was.) It is reprinted here with the author’s permission. -Ed.

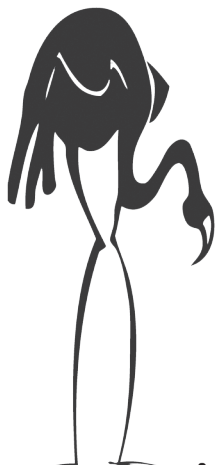


One hundred thirty five members and guests gathered for the annual luncheon at Marina Jack's in Sarasota hosted, once again, by Dino & Karen Oliva (at the right in the photo). Others at the table, clockwise from bottom left: Dale Nadon, Dennis & Boki Olden, Phyllis & Noel Smith.



Dan Farkas, Dick Carl

Al & Jean Teasley, Paul Sahler, Keith Finneseth, Dan Farkas, Dale Nadon, Steve Towle ▼



SW Florida Spring Luncheon





Tim Walker, Glenna McDonald, Katie Lund, Linda Walker



Jane Sanderson, Edith Schrope, Kathy Lowenthal



Dick & Doni Jo Schlader

Photography: Dick Carl and Gary Ferguson





Ed Johnson, Connie Thompson



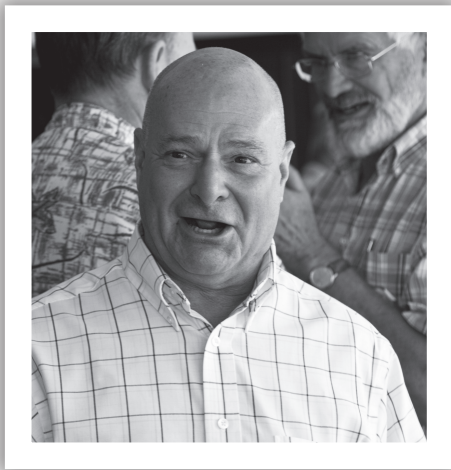
*Dino Oliva,
Doni Jo
Schlader ▶*



*Ben Brown, Howie Leland,
Paul Sahler, Don Hunt, Paul Nungesser ▼*



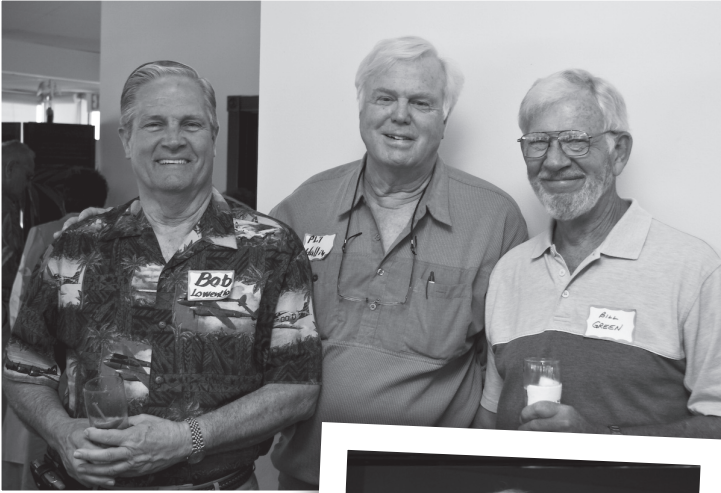
Dave Sanderson, Don Schroppe



Jim Mancini



ATTENDEES: John & Claire Lackey · Wendell Hurst · Gary & Jaclyn Smitson · Wayne & Rita Ward · Ben Brown · Wendy Howell · George & Bobbi Laschinski · Bruce & Suzy Armstrong · Gary & Cortney Webb · Joe & Gale Fouraker · Steve Towle & Stevie Gilbert · Phil & Eileen Hallin · Al & Jean Teasley ·



▲ *Bob Lowenthal,
Phil Hallin, Bill Green*

George Handel ►



◀ *Tony LiCalsi,
Gary Ferguson*

*Ed Johnson,
Steve Towle,
Arnie Calvert* ▼



Glenna McDonald · Tim & Linda Walker · Shirley Groff · Bob Blade · Douglas & Dianne Wulff · Gary & Linda Mau · Lois Haglund · Kennedy & Martha Kohlbrand · Hans & Mary Waldenstrom · Noel & Phyllis Smith · Tyrone Beason · Arnie & Linda Calvert ·



Lind Calvert, Connie Thompson, Katie Lund, Barb Ness



Keith Finneseth, Ty Beason, DK Miller



◀ *Gary Webb,
John Lackey*

▶ *John Scholl &
Carol Hardy*



Gary Smitson, Gary Webb, Jaclyn Smitson



*Wendy Vinsant, Boki Olden, Janet Baron,
Dennis Olden, Linda Calvert*

Robert & Kathryn Lowenthal · Don & Evelyn Hunt · Dan & Joyce Farkas · Howard & Marilyn Leland · Jim Parkins & Barbara Hess · Bill & Linda Green · Connie Thompson · Ned & Ellen Stephens · George Handel · Robert & Barbara Vega · Keith & Ginny Sterling · Vic Britt ·



Mona Ferguson, Donna Carl, Doni Jo Schlader



Tom Adams, Roger Moberg, Hans Waldenstrom

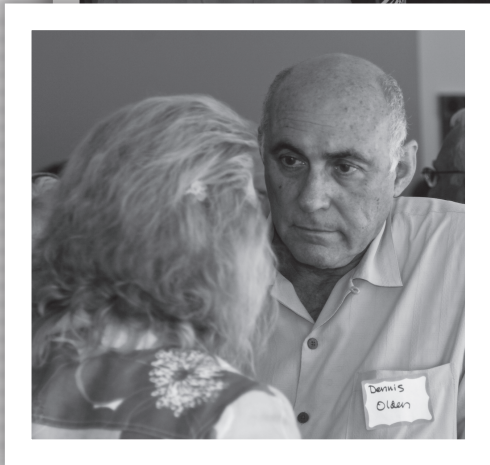


Phil Hallin, Dick Turner

Don & Edith Schrope · John & Marvel Godin · Bob & Kathryn Clapp · Audry Hastings · Robert Bromschwig · Christian & Janet Hanks · Roger & Julie Moberg · Keith & Verna Finneseth · Dave & Joan Replog · Tim & Marilyn Olson · Dennis & Boki Olden · William & Katie Lund · Paul & Jan Sahler



Vic Britt, John Badger



Don & Evy Hunt

*Barb Vega,
Kittie Alexander,
Edith Schrope*

Dennis Olden



Wendy Vinsant, Cortney Webb, Glenna McDonald

Bruce Armstrong, George Lachinski

Dale Nadon · Bob & Judy Chandler · Richard & Doni Jo Schlader · Dave & Jane Sanderson · John Scholl & Carol Hardy · Raymond & Kittie Alexander · William & Nancy Waterbury · Tony & Lorraine LiCalsi · Bruce & Susan Burkhard · Paul & Pamela Nungesser · Dick & Evie Turner



Dick Turner



▲
*Cortney Webb,
John Scholl,
Phil Hallin*

▶
*Tony &
Lorraine
LiCalsi,
Dennis &
Boki Olden*

◀
*Jaclyn Smitson,
Gary Webb*



Suzy & Bruce Armstrong, Don Hunt



Dan Farkas, Gary Mau

Tom & Berit Roberts · Edward J. Johnson · Tom Adams · James & Nancy Bestul · Romelle Lemley ·
Joe & Janet Baron · Dick & Donna Carl · Gary & Mona Ferguson · Peter & Wendy Vinsant · John &
Candy Badger · David Miller · Lawrence Owens · Bill Isaacson · Jim Mancini

It was a fabulous journey and now like a surreal dream. Bon Voyage!

Singing the Delta blues

By Garrison Keillor

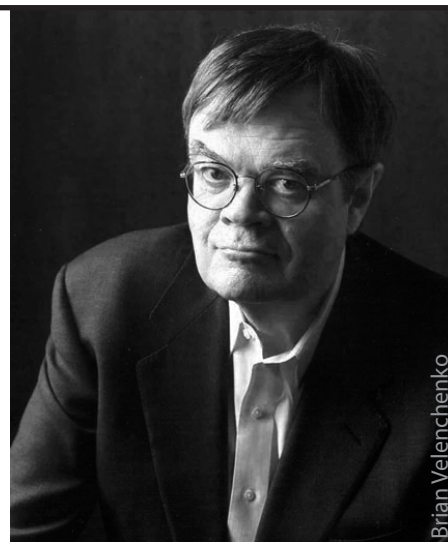
April 16, 2008

I flew to New York on the day spring arrived and all along 90th Street a lovely blue flower called Pushkinia blossomed which is named for the poet who, according to Russians, cannot be translated into English, but Tchaikovsky made a gorgeous opera of “Eugene Onegin,” which is some consolation, and then there is the flower.

I flew on Northwest Airlines, which now, like Pushkin, will vanish into the earth, devoured by Delta, and this makes me a little sad. Not sad enough to write an opera but enough to write a column. The company used to be called Northwest Orient and was founded in Minneapolis in 1926 to carry mail to Chicago. I used to live in a house in St. Paul once owned by Croil Hunter, a president of Northwest Orient, who, when Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt was stranded at the airport by a blizzard, put her up in the guest room of his house.

The company grew after the war and launched the Minneapolis-New York route in 1945 and two years later started flying to Tokyo, Seoul, Shanghai and Manila. Back in my youth, Dad sometimes took us to the airport to watch planes take off and land, such as the Boeing Stratocruiser, a double-decker equipped with passenger lounges. There still were farms out by the airport then, and in the majestic Northwest Orient radio jingle I grew up hearing, a Chinese gong went whannngngngn after the word “Orient” and you imagined lifting up from cornfields and flying away to the West until you got to the East.

Our family did not fly, we drove, and Spokane was as far west as we went, where Uncle Lawrence and Aunt Bessie lived, and so Northwest Orient was not a carrier to me, it was a romantic concept. We middle children are filled with restless longing, trapped as we are between the Sacred First-Born Miracle Child and the Darling Infants. I grew up with middleness, a B-minus student in the middle of the country, and I longed to get out of the Midwest and fly away to the edge of the world, and I knew that Northwest Orient would take me there.



Brian Velenchenko

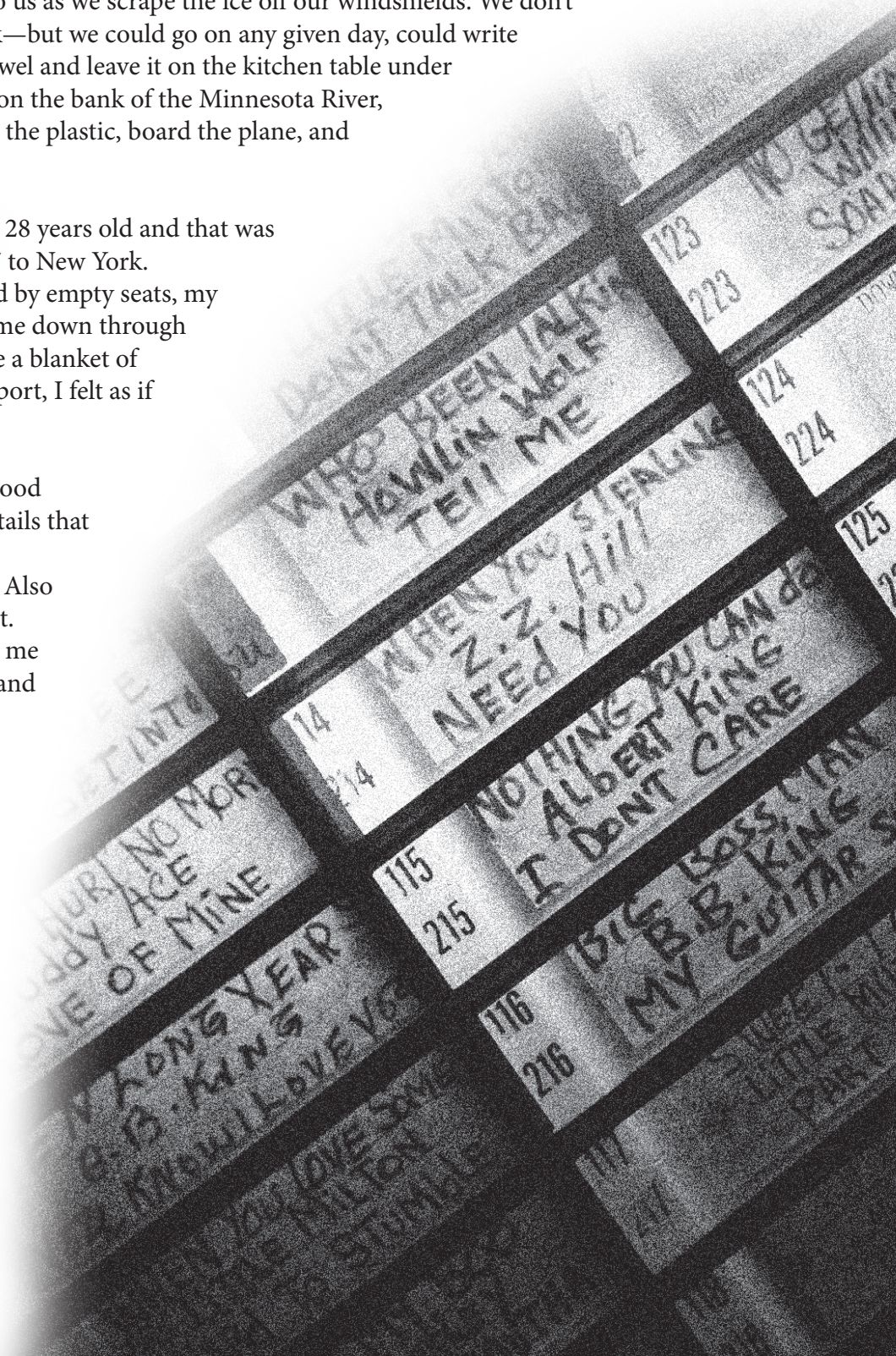
(When I say Northwest, I am talking about a childhood romance, not a corporation as such. The company was founded by romantics, men who loved aviation, and in 1989 it fell into the hands of rapacious bandits who ate its heart and plunged it headlong into debt and could be as cruel to employees as any other big union-busting corporation. But we cling to childhood illusions.)

We are good travelers, we middle Americans, and when Northwest opened a route to Beijing, everybody and their cousin talked about going there, and this spring the direct Minneapolis-Paris route opened, a beautiful idea to us as we scrape the ice off our windshields. We don't actually go, of course—we go to work—but we could go on any given day, could write “Au Revoir, Ma Famille” on a paper towel and leave it on the kitchen table under a salt shaker and drive to the airport on the bank of the Minnesota River, abandon the car in a snowbank, flash the plastic, board the plane, and wake up in Paris, like Lindbergh.

I did not fly in an airplane until I was 28 years old and that was a late-night Northwest flight on a 747 to New York. I sat back in the 30th row, surrounded by empty seats, my nose to the window, and when we came down through the clouds to the great city spread like a blanket of glittering stars and into Kennedy Airport, I felt as if I'd been given a great prize.

And so I mourn the loss of my childhood airline and the silver planes with red tails that rose from the corn. What is a Delta? A delta is mud deposited by the river. Also the fourth letter of the Greek alphabet. Also a sort of triangular shape. But to me it is mud which forms a rich bottomland where they grow cotton and late at night old black men sit in a juke joint and play an old beat-up guitar and sing: “I wanted to go to the Orient someday. Get on a silver plane marked NWA. But that plane that would take me, it done flew away. I heard it on the morning news. They're wiping out the Ns and Ws. That's why I got these Delta blues.”

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"Yeah, like I finally told him I'd go with him on his cruise. He explained, like, it was only for an afternoon. But he did tell me, you know, that we could make a whole day of it. He's got it all planned out. Like, he says after the cruise I can go shopping, like, right there in Stillwater at some of those cute little shops and, while I'm, like, shopping, he can take a nap in the car and then we can, you know, go to dinner at the Lowell Inn. Can you believe it? Even, like, **planning a nap!** Now I'm sure he's not really only 49. Probably not even 59!"

*But don't **you** get caught napping!
Sing up now for the*

Minneapolis Summer Cruise

*aboard the good ship Avalon
sailing promptly at 11:30 am*

Thursday June 12th

Price:

\$29

per person

**CASH BAR
ON BOARD**

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

Boat sails
PROMPTLY
at 11:30 am

Send check payable to: "Vic Kleinsteuber"
15258 Curtis Ave NW
Monticello MN 55362
Phone: (763) 878-2534

Names, too!

St. Croix Cruisin'

"Start number one!"

"AWL PRESSURE NUMBER ONE."

The captain's head snaps around to look at me and the second officer's panel, and I think, "Oh s---! What's wrong?"

I'm on probation in my first month. He does not say anything and turns to finish starting the remaining engines.

"Awl pressure number two."

The captain turns with a smile, "Is that oil?"

"Yes sir, awl pressure," as I point to the oil pressure gauge on the number two engine. Damn, these Yankees don't talk Southern up here. With initials for a first name and dripping with "southern-ness" I took a lot of good-natured kidding. One day in late September while jogging around Lake Nokomis in Minneapolis with a "Northern" friend he casually said, "This lake will freeze and cars will drive on it and ice fish."

I looked at him and said, "You're not talking to a rookie, that can't be possible." I hadn't spent much time north of the Mason-Dixon line.

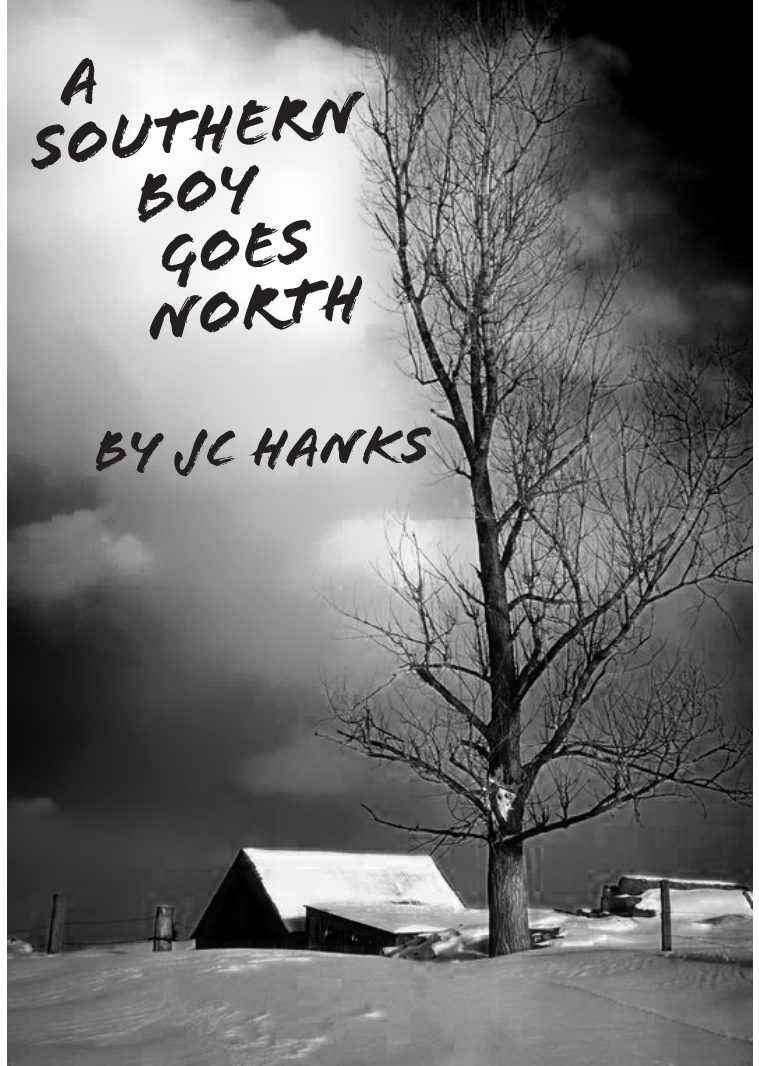
I arrived in Minneapolis at the Wold-Chamberlain airport in September 1968 with all my coats and ties ready to start and eager to please. The weather was pleasant and I rented a house for \$300 near Lake Nokomis. My wife was pregnant with our first child; my starting pay was \$525 a month; life was good.

In December I brought my wife from Atlanta to the Twin Cities during what the locals called "a minor cold snap" of 17°. She was impressed, but not pleasantly so. We spent New Years Eve wrapped in a blanket watching a 14 inch black and white TV with aluminum foil clinging to the "rabbit ears" to improve reception. We sat our drinks on the cardboard box that served as our coffee table and celebrated the New Year with optimism. We were young and very happy. Our rented house faced south (just so we would know which way to pray) and we watched the sun rise about 9:30am and set about 4:00pm and never getting higher than the leafless trees out front. That was in the winter of 1968-69 and what a surprise, snow everywhere. My wife was not overjoyed with the weather.

It happened after driving my 1960 Volkswagen, with no heater, to eat at Diamond Jim's in Lower Lillydale to celebrate our first wedding anniversary. Returning home we could not get into the driveway

A SOUTHERN BOY GOES NORTH

BY JC HANKS



because of the snow storm. Walking to the back door my wife broke through the ice and stormed into the cold house with wet feet. Shivering she said "I'm not living in this (expletive) place, you can stay in this frozen tundra, I'm living in Atlanta." She had been in Minnesota less than five weeks.

I'm not sure if I have the bragging rights to be called the first "full time" commuter at Northwest, but in January 1969 I started commuting and never lived in Minneapolis or any other base except when we moved to Honolulu in 1994, and that's a no-brainer!

During my first year on probation while flying and having a get-acquainted conversation with the co-pilot he asked, "Where do you live?"

"I live in Atlanta."

"Where do you live in Minneapolis?"

"I don't, I live in Atlanta and commute."

He turned slowly and looked at me saying, "You can't do that." Apparently commuting was not allowed. Years later he was living in Seattle and commuting to Minneapolis. During the BRAC strike I was off work for six months and started building houses; I sure missed the \$1,200 a month. The strike produced

several more commuters. After the next three strikes, many pilots were commuting out of Minneapolis.

Returning to work some months later I realized that everyone talked funny except me. I was asked by a cabin attendant (that's what they were called at the time—with the bumble bee uniforms) if the heat and humidity in the south was the reason Southerners talk and act slow.

"Well, I suppose that could be a possibility if y'all consider that I can't even talk after walking in a February snow storm from the parking lot to check-in."

My first year at Northwest was wonderful for a slow talking Southern Boy and the Montana layovers were educational. I had never seen that beautiful country. Reading the graffiti in the men's room at the Bozeman airport was a truism:

CLEAN AIR SMELLS FUNNY

My first Billings layover the captain directed me to meet in the lobby at seven. As I remember, we were going to a restaurant/bar across the tracks. It was a great place with music, cowboys, cowgirls and good food. The cowgirls loved, at least made fun of, my southern accent and I enjoyed the dancing. Talking cows and planes, one cowboy told me that it gets so cold sometimes that the cow's ears freeze and break off. Now, I've never confirmed that; but he's not talking to a rookie, that can't be possible.

I remember the old South with "colored and white" water fountains and signs: "Negros must use rear entrance." In 1957 the year I graduated high school and Orval Faubus's refusal to integrate Central High School in Little Rock was the first time I understood the iniquitous position for blacks that existed in our nation. In the 'fifties and 'sixties the South was defined by racial strife and intolerance and I did not take offense when a captain said, after the King shooting, "You should be ashamed of the way you treated the blacks."

I replied with the question, "What about the way you treated the Indians?"

"Oh, but you don't understand!"

When I was ten years old we had a black man working for us and my mother gave him a glass of water. I was playing in the yard and when he left I ran over and finished the water. I was thirsty. My mother saw me and said I should never drink after a Negro.

"Why, I asked?"

I remember my Mother looking at me and saying,

"Oh, but you don't understand," and went back to the house.

The South certainly had many prejudices, bigotry and intolerance. The North was different from the Midwest which was different from the West.

One political writer defined the difference: "The South treats the individual Black with respect and disrespects the race. The North disrespects the individual but respects the race." I met a flight attendant from Minot, North Dakota who had never seen a black person except on TV.

After my probation year I was allowed four free (\$8) passes a year. Commuting, I was using 75% reduced rate tickets (form TR-29A) to travel the rest of the year. Later, after ten years, I would get unlimited passes. Upon applying for my eleventh pass I was notified that ten was considered "unlimited." Do you remember, "MEAL NOT AUTHORIZED" stamped on our deadheading passes? During those years Northwest sure knew how to take care of its pilots. That said, I still consider the flying and Northwest a wonderful opportunity and a great life experience.

We moved to Florida in 1982; I was based in New York, Boston, Los Angeles, Detroit, and temporarily in Anchorage, commuting to all. By then commuting was accepted as a way of life at all airlines and I finally got unlimited free (\$25) passes. I have no way to prove that commuting caused the airlines to offer pilots jump seat authority, but it sure cut down on sick calls.

During my first winter as a second officer and never seeing snow that actually accumulated over a half inch, we were taxiing out for departure in a major snow storm. I'm not talking snow flurries here—I'm talking ¼ mile visibility with heavy blowing snow.

The captain and co-pilot, seemingly unconcerned about what I considered "serious" weather, were talking about what we talk about when women are not present. They're not concerned and I'm thinking, "We're really going to take off in this weather?" Maybe a "get acquainted to winter weather course" should be required for all southern pilots going to Minneapolis. After a few winters and landing on white runways I was no longer a rookie.

Somehow I survived my first winter. I remember trucks hauling the record snow away to prevent flooding of low lying areas during the spring runoff. South St. Paul Airport flooded that year and I'm thinking these people are frozen tough. Minnesota

is beautiful in the summer and fall, but winter and early spring for a southern boy—well, like a local pilot said, “It’s always 72° in the bar.”

I spent time sitting on my front porch during the BRAC strike and watching the construction of a new house across the street. I would walk over every day to add my unwanted supervision to the confusion (you know how pilots are!). One of the carpenters suggested that, “Maybe you should build your own house.” Do you think he just wasn’t intelligent enough to absorb any more of my wisdom? I had never built anything before and did not know that 2x4s were not exactly two inches by four inches—not even close! I also thought a 16 penny nail cost sixteen cents!

Well, it just didn’t look that hard, so I bought a building lot and started my first spec house. I did not make much money but I sure got an education in construction. When it’s your money you tend to pay more attention.

I met my wife when she worked for me. I owned two beauty shops (hair salons, today) she was a beautician. Owning two beauty shops and dealing with women is another funny story. I’ll write about



that later. And the only reason I mention this was to give credit to her for saving us from starving during the strikes and helping my new building enterprise. I was looking at twenty acres to develop into seventeen building lots but could not make that leap until she said, “Well honey, if you don’t take a shot you damn well won’t hit anything.”

I bought the property and a few years later after more strikes I would have five spec houses building at one time, flying mainly on weekends.

I bought more property, and built more houses. During this period I would find pilots and pay them to fly my trips so I could take care of my real income. The chief pilot called me saying, “You can’t do that.” Just like commuting, it wasn’t allowed! I’ve built over 100 houses and two commercial projects and it sure helped with retirement. Finishing a commercial hangar last year at the local airport, I announced to my wife (yep, the same one) that I was never going to build anything ever again. My wife just rolled her eyes and said, “Yeah, right.”

I remember the first commuter pad in South St. Paul and all the young pilots who shared those three rooms with one bath. Art Daniel, Jack Herbst, Billy Cole, Wendell Hurst, Al Stinson, Larry Creekmore, Bob Dickson and many others I can’t remember. Only one true southerner from Texas for a roommate, Ken Barnes, I believe was his name.

I had a 1961 Plymouth for my commuter car. The floor was rusted out and you could see the pavement with an occasional slush of wet snow landing in the back seat. Linda Thomas (Casey) was driving it when the muffler fell off. Not knowing what happened and seeing a large object laying in the road, she backed up, got out in her uniform, put the hot muffler in the back seat and drove loudly to work.

I have not been to Minnesota in several years but all the friends and parties I recall are great memories. Nostalgia is somewhat selective and I have “selected” the few memories I feel would be interesting.

I’ve lost most of my southern accent. However it does come out occasionally when I’ve had a beer or two. My wife is still fully southern and has not lost much of her accent. I never learned to speak Midwestern. I do remember Bob Mielke’s, “You betcha” when you gave a correct answer.

I can’t decide if the first year as second officer on the 727 was more fun and exciting than my last year flying captain on the 747. There was, however a slight difference in pay! ✈

HARTFORD

★ REUNION ★

“Of all the beautiful towns it has been my fortune to see, this is the chief.” -Mark Twain

SEPTEMBER 11, 12 & 13, 2008

The general outline of the planned schedule of events is shown on the opposite page. We have made **our** plans. It's definitely not too early to start making **your** plans, since everyone registering before June 1st, 2008 will have a chance for a free room stay or free reunion fee.

REUNION FEE
\$175/PERSON*

***Need another
reason to
register now?
After June 1st, the
fee increases to
\$190!**

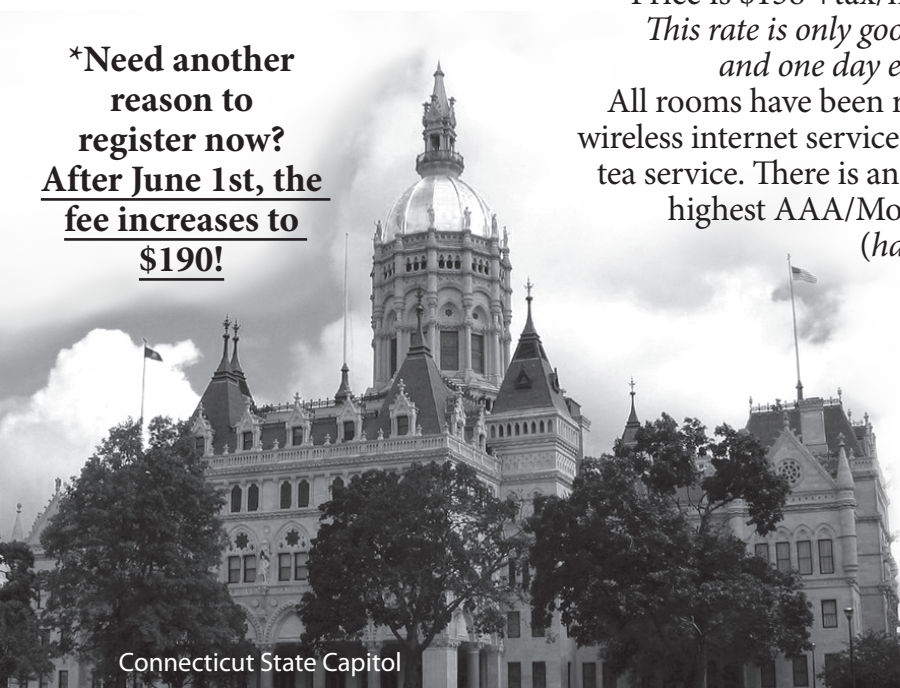
The Hartford Marriott Downtown rises
alongside the Connecticut River.
Price is \$138 +tax/night. Reservations: (860) 249-8000.
*This rate is only good for the three nights of the Reunion
and one day either side (10th thru the 14th).*

All rooms have been recently updated and are nonsmoking,
wireless internet service, cable TV, hair dryers, coffee maker and
tea service. There is an indoor rooftop pool. The hotel has the
highest AAA/Mobil ranking of any Hartford hotel.
(hartfordmarriott.com)

Hartford Convention and Visitors
Bureau: enjoyhartford.com

**Freebie room stay or
Reunion fee**

Getting your registration
in **before June 1st** gets
you a chance.



Connecticut State Capitol

We'll be there:

Member _____

Spouse/Guest _____

Amount enclosed \$ _____

Checks payable to "RNPA"

Mail to:

Terry Confer

9670 E Little Further Way

Gold Canyon AZ 85218

!! REGISTRATION DEADLINE AUG. 1st, 2008 !!

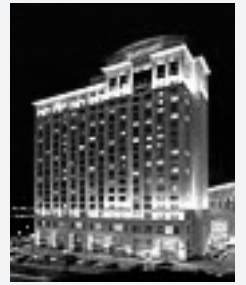
THURSDAY

Morning and afternoon registration at the Hartford Marriott.

Board of Directors meeting in the morning.



HEAVY hors d'oeuvres at the traditional **reception** to meet and greet old friends beginning at **5pm**. You will not go hungry. Cash bar available, of course.



FRIDAY



We'll begin the day by visiting the **U S Coast Guard Academy** in New London. This will include a guided tour of the academy and the square-rigged Eagle, which is due back in port by the end of August.

Next we'll be visiting **Mystic Seaport** and the area. Once there, we'll have a chance to wander around and visit the museum if desired. Lunch will be on our own from a good selection of restaurants.



In the afternoon we'll be visiting the **Naval Submarine Base New London**, which is technically in Groton, CT. This will include a tour of **Nautilus**, the first nuclear submarine.

After a busy day we'll have the evening to enjoy dinner with friends and to walk the streets of Old Hartford along the Connecticut river.

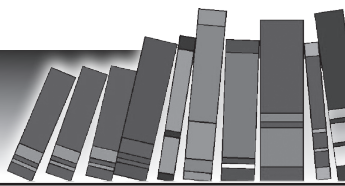
SATURDAY

The RNPA membership will meet in the morning to conduct officer elections and for a Q & A session.

While the (mostly) gents are at the meeting the spouses will gather for coffee and conversation.



To cap off the Reunion, we'll all get dressed up for a reception at 5pm and the **Reunion Banquet** around 6:30pm. Cash bar, including wine by the bottle for the table. We will once again conduct an auction to benefit the Paul Soderlind Scholarship Fund, as well as presenting the 2008 Sholarship winner. Good food, lots of fun.



BOOK REVIEW



You can get your own copy by sending a check for eighteen bucks (\$15 for members) plus \$2 S&H to:

**NWA History Centre
8101 - 34th Avenue South
Suite B-747
Bloomington MN 55425-1642**

Or stop by if you're in the area.

This is only the second time we have published a book review in *Contrails*. I think this is a special book that deserves some special attention. Come to think of it, a regular Book Review section may not be a bad idea. Anyone want to volunteer as the Book Review Editor?

Robert L. "Bob" Johnson has put together a wonderful collection of stories, the majority of which I had not even heard about before. Unlike so many of the books that have been published about Northwest Airlines which are mostly photos of airplanes and airports, this one is entirely just the opposite. There are only four pages of photos in the back that help identify most of the stories' subjects.

If you are one who just likes to page through a book to look at the pictures this one is not for you. But, if you're interested in learning about the real pioneers in the birth and early growth of good ol' NWA you will find it fascinating.

By the time I was less than halfway through it I found myself wishing I had known all this when I began my career. Those pilots of my vintage (in my case, '67) frequently tell each other that we were there during the "golden years." There can't be much doubt that all those wonderful aircraft and sound operating procedures tended to spoil us. I have been heard to say that I'm sure glad I didn't have to bang through the weather at low altitude without weather radar.

On the other hand, by the time I finished the book I was wondering if being along with Hugh Rueschenberg and Joe Kimm in their Ford Trimotor on the Northern Transcontinental Survey Flight in the dead of the January, 1933 winter might not have been just a tad more "interesting" than that three-holer trip from MSP to EWR that I have no memory of whatsoever.

All profits go to further the goals of the History Centre. -Editor

"I had a rival all our married life—the airplane. He'd often be gone until the wee hours of the morning. But I knew where he was. He was with Col. Brittin and they were talking aviation. They were both absolutely dedicated to aviation."

- Elvera "Dee" Holman, in 1981

(On their wedding day, "Speed" flew his bride upsidedown under the Mendota Bridge...)

"Walter Bullock left Northwest Airlines in the mid-1930s and rejoined the airline in 1937 after his Hanford Airlines adventure. So he started out at the bottom of the seniority list again. I had more seniority than he did."

"I don't think Walter ever quite came to terms with that. He'd look at me sometimes and I could figure what he was thinking. I was the young kid he'd hired to help him in his model airplane business and now I outranked him. He helped me so much. He had almost been a father to me."

-Joe Kimm

"Johnny and Ken crashed about two miles short of the Watson runway, possibly because of severe icing, about 7:15 pm. Mechanic Ted Swanson remembers it vividly. 'I heard the plane circling,' Ted told me. He said he went about his business and then realized he hadn't heard it land. This was in February, 1943. We searched for that plane for more than two months before we found it, only two miles away. That's how rough the terrain was up there. That's what started us on the red tails."

- "Red" Kennedy, recalling his lengthy experience in the Northern Region.



RNPA Seattle Christmas Party

Thursday,
December 11th, 2008

EMERALD DOWNS RACE TRACK · AUBURN, WA
\$35 per person with reservation · \$50 per person at the door

Information:

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Make checks payable to "Sunshine Club"
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36850 204th Avenue SE
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Reservation deadline: December 8, 2008 · No refunds after this date!

MINNEAPOLIS CHRISTMAS PARTY

Chart House Restaurant
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Lakeville, Minnesota

Social Hour 5pm
Dinner 6:30pm

\$38 per entrée

Choice of:

Champagne Chicken

Baked Salmon Fillet

Prime Rib

Sunday Dec. 7th

Got questions?
Need more info?
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Doug Wenborg
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952.892.6987
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Ken Kreutzmann
952.432.0520
Steve Lillyblad
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2008 MSP
CHRISTMAS PARTY

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

Name:

Entrée:

Spouse/Guest:

Entrée:

People @ \$38 ea. =

RSVP by Saturday, Nov. 29th

WHERE DO WE FIND MEN LIKE THESE?

PILOT IS FORCED DOWN NEAR CITY

Controls severed by flying tip of propeller

1935 Billings, Montana

Tail controls severed by a propeller tip that ripped its way through the nose of a trim Lockheed Electra transport plane, a Northwest Airlines pilot brought his ship to a safe landing in a field near the Polytechnic drive Monday afternoon after one of the twin motors hurtled to the ground.

The 14-inch propeller tip shot precariously through the ship's nose, missing the brave pilot's feet by 3-inches, and into the side of the other motor. No persons were hurt in the incident.

The pilot was Hugh B. Rueschenberg, a veteran member of Northwest's flying staff, who duplicated his heroic feat of about a month ago when he brought his ship to a safe landing in Helena, Montana after crashing into three Whistler swans in mid-air. Copilot Fred West was with Rueschenberg for the Helena incident as well.

Scores of people gathered at the scene of the forced landing a few minutes after the ship hurtled an irrigation ditch, a road and two fences before coming to a stop a short distance west of A. J. Rehberg's dairy.

Pilot Rueschenberg's account follows:

"We were about five miles west of the Billings airport, at 5300 feet above sea level, slowly descending, when all of a sudden it seemed like an explosion. Immediately the ship started vibrating terribly. I knew right away that a propeller blade had broken. I noticed the left engine was partly torn loose and looked like it might drop any minute.

"The first thing I tried to do was to pull the nose up, thereby slowing the speed of the ship to decrease the vibrations and found I had no elevator control. After cutting the switch of the damaged motor, Mr. West, Copilot, immediately radioed the Billings airport on an emergency call. He then hastened to the two passengers and fastened their safety belts. He started back to the pilot's cabin and realized he did not have time to make it back before landing so he sat in the rear of the plane to help maintain nose up attitude.

"In the meantime I radioed Billings to make sure they knew of our position and rolled the elevator trim tabs completely forward which aided in offsetting the forces due to the lack of elevator control. As soon as I received landing okay, I cut the master electrical switch which disconnects the battery from all the electrical circuits thereby eliminating any possible dangers of fire.

"I gunned the right engine at about 300 feet altitude above a field to decrease the rate of descent. I saw that I couldn't land at the field I had selected as I had hoped. About 200 yards ahead of us was a drainage ditch sided by a three-foot embankment. I cut the gunned engine causing the ship to strike the ground and bounce over the ditch. The impact bounced the ship about 15 feet in the air and 300 feet forward. The second impact bounced us over two fences and a road. After clearing the road the ship at last arrived at the field I had earlier selected.

"The left engine fell to the ground at the moment of the impact. The ship slid to a stop before the end of the field"

"When the propeller tip shot through the nose of the ship, a piece of the bracing about six inches long was imbedded into a traveling bag owned by one of the passengers. The passenger asked me if he could keep the piece for a souvenir and I told him surely."

This and several other similar articles you may have seen recently come from a family scrapbook and have been submitted by James Lindley. -Ed.



Don Abbott 1923 ~ 2008

Abbott, Marlin “Don, Actually,” of Richfield, Minnesota flew west for a final check on February 2, 2008 at Methodist Hospital of Cancer. Born September 16, 1923 in Minneapolis, Minnesota he proudly served in the US Navy during WWII in the V5 cadet program, as an aviation radioman, and as an aerial gunner. He was a crewmember on PBY’s doing coastal patrols and training between Florida and “Gitmo”, and later served with evacuation squadrons flying R4D’s and R5D’s bringing home wounded and sick or injured POW’s from the Philippines, Iwo Jima, Okinawa and finally Japan.

In 1946 Don was hired by NWA as a radio mechanic and worked at line stations in EWR, PDX, SEA, and DCA. While in DCA he got his engine & aircraft mechanic’s license where Fred Staudt was his first crew chief. Most importantly DCA is where Don met and married the love of his life, Lois. Son Daniel was born in DCA before a transfer to ANC where sons David and Michael were born, followed by a transfer of the family to Tokyo. In 1958 while in Tokyo Don got a bid as Flight Engineer and subsequently checked out as FE on the DC-6, DC-7, B377 Stratocruiser and the Lockheed Electra. When the IAM FE position became an ALPA S/O position Don joined the ALPA list and checked out as first officer on the DC-6 and DC-7 aircraft.

Don worked for Gene Schmidt as a FE instructor, and John Carr as a Second Officer instructor. When Schmidt and Carr got captain bids in 1964 Captain Spence Marsh, the Director of Training, made Don Manager of second officer and FE training. It was a challenging time as Northwest was hiring new pilots and acquiring new aircraft on a monthly and sometimes weekly basis. Don was allowed to set up the training program and choose his own group of instructors. He was proud of his instructors, his “boys”, and he always gave credit to them for the success of the Northwest Airlines flight training programs. Don returned



to the line in 1979 and finished his flying career as a first officer and second officer on the B747-200.

When Don retired in 1992 after 46 years of service to Northwest Airlines, his old second officer instructors gave him a plaque with pilot wings and cap insignia attached that read:

“Dedicated and loyal to Northwest Airlines and to his fellow pilots. A friend to all, raconteur extraordinaire, and a hell of a good man to work for. With Appreciation from ‘Your Boys,’ the second officer instructors on the B707, B727, B747 and DC-10, from 1964 to 1978. Thanks.”

Don’s passions in addition to writing and poetry included flying, photography, and his lake home at Lake Francis. Survived by wife, Lois; sons, Daniel, David and Michael; 8 grandchildren; nieces, nephews, and other relatives and friends.

FROM THE GUEST BOOK

Jack Cutler: I learned today (March 28, 2008) in the ALPA magazine of our great loss of a truly unique and respected individual. Many benefitted from Don’s incredible sense of humor and knowledge - a rare combination in most men. He helped us learn what we needed to know to become the best we could be as professional pilots. But it was at the end of his career, when he and I flew several London trips together that I got to know and truly enjoy this wonderful guy. Trying to keep up with him with his long legs as we shopped for

various items in Brighton took a lot of energy. Then we had the pleasure of downing a pint or two, and listening to his tales in the Pub behind the hotel. These are the times and guys like Don that I miss. I'm sure he and Bob Mielke are waiting for us up there with a fresh set of jokes and questions.

Bill Hansen: I don't really know what to say. I was out of town and missed the funeral. I learned a tremendous amount from Don about many things other than just aircraft. He was a great boss and a great human being. I last saw Don at Bob Mielke's funeral and, although already ill, he was the same Don that I came to admire and respect so much. Thanks Don—for everything. RIP

Richard & Doni Jo Schlader: We remember with great fondness trips flown with Don and the social events with RNPA. I especially recall a trip to the Douglas factory to pick up a new DC-10, with Jerry Fredrickson, Glenn Doan and Don, all now flown west. How he made us laugh with the tale about "Orange Marmalade" in England during acceptance of new DC-10 simulator. We also checked out together on Pan Am 707 interchange aircraft. He will remain an icon in NWA history, loved and missed by us all.

Ray and Dee Dolny: Reading thru this guest book says volumes about the impact Don had on the careers of all of us. May you be comforted in words of so many friends that Don was a special guy. We're sorry we missed the funeral as Dee and I were out of town. May God comfort you in this difficult time.

Chloe Doyle: My memories of Don are happy ones of John telling me some funny story related to Don. I hope they have some good tales to tell when they meet again soon. Call or write me any time you wish. I found it very helpful to share the experience of losing my life's partner with others who had been there before me.

Ray Alexander: Spent a few minutes with Don at the RNPA Christmas Party. He was warm and gracious as always. He will always represent to me the best that Northwest Airlines pilot training had to offer. What a great man and great friend to us all!

David Pethia: Don... left a valued and meaningful impression on all that he had contact with. Remembering Don Abbott will forever bring memories that make me smile. A very special instructor and member of the NWA pilot group. I feel a deep sense of loss with his passing.

Earl and Corrine Lunde: We first met Don and Lois in 1951, in an Alexandria, VA, apartment where we lived after we were just married. The Abbotts came

home with their new son, Danny. Don was so much fun, full of jokes. We feel so fortunate we could visit with him at the RNPA Christmas dinner. In spite of his health problems, he was smiling and fun, never a "downer". We were sorry we couldn't be there for his funeral. Don is at perfect peace now, and we will miss him. God be with you, Lois and family

Dick Migas: Don will be missed. He gave me several orals and checks with great humor and unlimited knowledge... truly one of the good guys.

Vic Britt: Don Abbott was as good a boss as anyone could wish for, and he pulled my fat out of the fire more than once. I had two good visits with "MDA" a couple of weeks before he died. We traded many jokes, one of his and my favorite pastimes. We talked about all the good guys who have already "Gone West," and enjoyed reliving past times like the Salina operation, DC10 training at Long Beach, the many strikes, and the politics swirling around the flight operations and flight training departments over the years. Actually, in other words, Don and I just enjoyed each other's company. While we were in his "office" looking at all the memories on the walls, my eyes caught two racks of commemorative Irish Whiskey bottles. He said someone had left a bottle with no card late Christmas Eve each year for about 20 years. Don still had no idea of the identity of his benefactor. I got two emails from Don a week before he died. One was an inspirational slide show he titled "I'm Blessed even with my health problems." The second was lighter, titled "Learn Chinese in 5 minutes." His instructions were to read it out loud, and the first of 16 phrases was, "That's not right... Sum Ting Wong." He was Don Abbott to the very end.

Bob Root: He was my boss for years. I have had none better. He was my friend as well and he left this earth having made himself an important niche in aviation history. There are few who have helped more.

David Abbott: Goodbye, Dad. I hope your journey has blue skies, tailwinds, and CAFB weather. Put in a good word for me with St. Peter, because I can use all the help I can get. Your loving son, David.

Sue Moore: I will never forget the year that I was invited to share in your family Christmas celebration, the Karaoke machine and Don singing Danny Boy all night long! It was a hoot! Don sure liked to have fun with his grandkids!

Gordie Bickel: I had the pleasure of knowing and working with "Don Actually" during my 42 years at Northwest. He had the ability to make the job seem more like fun than work. He will be missed by all of us

lucky enough to have known him.

Larry Potton: Donald Nyrop or Don Abbott? Actually, both are equally legendary in the true and proud annals of NWA history. Thanks, Don, you are always present where two of us gather together. God's speed.

Harry Bedrossian: I started with NWA in 1958 and went through several airplane checkouts with the help of Don "Actually" Abbott. He was so sincere in his instructing that a pilot couldn't help but pay attention and respect this man. He was always a pleasure to be with whether in a ground school class, or as a member of the crew. He was a man among men, and will be missed by all of us that had the privilege to be in his company.

Bill Skokan: A true gentleman and a great instructor. My condolences to the family. His students are Legion within NWA. He shall be missed!

Bob Landkamer: I received my initial second officer check ride from Don. A memorable and pleasant experience. God bless and keep you Don.

Nate Cobb: We send heartfelt condolences, and God's prayerful support, in Don's passing. Don converted technical data into anecdote form, with a "better understanding" for all in NWA pilot training. As Don transitions to his "heavenly home," he is experiencing "blue skies, following seas and tailwinds" in a brighter galaxy—a wonderful person.

Tom Giefer: Don's worth to NWA and the thousands he so ably trained was beyond value. Have a smooth trip west, my friend.

Rich Glover: Don was a great guy and a wonderful and dedicated instructor. He will be missed.

John Campbell: Don is one of my best and most vivid memories of my career at NWA. I always felt he was there to help you. He was a fine gentleman.

Ken Finney: I was just another pilot along the way, but I am saddened to hear of Don's passing. Don had a profound influence on me, and taught me much as I passed through my career... It was a pleasure to have known him, laughed with him, and benefitted from his vast knowledge and skills. I'd bet Don's life with his family was really fun and exciting. Many of us will remember him fondly. I wish you peace and comfort as you grieve, and release him. He's at peace now.

Leroy Burkemper: Things we remember about Don, his smile, his optimism and his eagerness to help his fellow pilots will be missed. God bless you Don.

Ken Waldrip: Don was a true gentleman in all respects. I learned a great deal from him. Farewell...

Dave Schneebeck: I began with NWA in May of

1967. I met Don in the Training Department where his teachings guided many of us through our career. Thank you, Don, "actually" for your help.

Nate Gonner: R.I.P. Uncle Don. I am sorry I never got to play that last game of cribbage with you. Thank you for everything you taught me and I am sorry I didn't get to say good bye.

Bob Bartholomay: Thank you for all your help during my many check outs on NWA. You were the best text book possible and I know you made it all happen for me. Have a peaceful trip west and we shall certainly see you at some future date, God Bless.

Stanley Willbanks: Don gave me my first check ride as a NWA Second Officer on the 727 and was involved in my training as a S/O instructor and many more positions that I flew in my almost 30 years with NWA. The thing I most remember about Don was his fair treatment of every pilot he instructed. His was a life well lived. When St. Peter asked what right he has to come through the "Pearly Gates" I can just hear him as he said, "Well, actually, I trusted Jesus as my Savior." God Bless all of you family members who will miss him so much. So will all of his NWA friends.

John Stinnett: Don was a true mentor to me. He gave me my first oral exam to become a turbojet flight engineer. I still remember his first question. "What is a KVAR?" I thought my career was over already. He went with me on my first trip to Tokyo in the DC-10. He showed me around the Ginza. I think he knew more about Boeing electrical systems than anyone in the industry. Don was a delightful man to work for. He and Bob Mielke made a great team. I'm sure they are teaching Angels how to do flow patterns. My sympathies go out to his family. Sincerely,

Bill Halverson: Please accept my heartfelt condolences. I had the privilege of knowing and working with Don many times. His enthusiasm and sense of humor were infectious. He will be fondly remembered.

Giles Velte: Don, thank you for all the great mentorship you gave us all. It's not forgotten.

Dale Schendel: That old Buick I bought from Don ran forever. Thanks for the memories.

Art Daniel: Don was one of my first instructors in 1965. He had a passion for sharing knowledge. His great sense of humor, love of basketball, and the twinkle in his eye will never be forgotten.

Gary Pisel: Don was a mentor, a gentleman and a true friend. I will oft remember times spent with him, either in training or at functions. His leadership and guidance was a strong factor on the professionalism of

Northwest Pilots.

Ken Barroll: Wishing you CAVU and a Happy Journey Don—and thanks for being such a good friend to so many of us! And a fellow pilot and ham, from W7OP!

Fred Breitling: Don had a wonderfully positive influence on those of us who passed through the NWA training system in the past 40 years. His great personality coupled with his teaching talents affected all our careers. My sympathy to his family.

James Lindley: Don was the reason I made it through 727 S/O check out in 1966. He secured my 40 year career, by helping a 21 year old rookie. I will not forget.

Neil Potts: Don was one of the top instructors in the NWA training department. During his career he had some contact with every pilot who flew for NWA, and there never seemed to be a bad word. Don you were a great guy, and you will be missed.

Joe Baron: Don was an instructor when I started with NWA and was one of the best. He knew the 707 systems like no one else. He made learning a great experience. He could be funny but always kept the students attention.

Donnis Bergman: Don was “one of a kind” at putting fun into learning about the second officer panel.

Jim Fernandez: I actually learned a lot more from Don than my personal increase of use of the word “actually” after returning from his tutoring. He was a deeply dedicated man who really was a great help to me as a new hire. I always enjoyed seeing him and enjoyed his sense humor through the years in ground school, where he was in his element. I’m sure heaven is “actually” better now.

Dave Leighton: Nice, Nice Man—a fixture of the “Old NWA”. He “actually” gave me my 727 “Oral” in 1969. One more to miss.

George Solandros: Good bye Don. Thanks for everything you did for all of us, especially in training.

Doug Wulff: We have all lost one of the greats of NWA! I was fortunate enough to have Don as a ground school instructor when I started with NWA. He was a great instructor and an extremely nice gentleman. It has been my privilege to have known him over the last 40+ years. Have a smooth trip west Don! We will all miss you!

Few at Northwest Airlines realized that Don was a better than average poet. He wrote the following poem which was included in the program at his Mass of Resurrection:

Last Flight Home

*The time has come to make this flight, I'll fly it all alone.
A place that God promised all of us, a place that we call home.
A place so peaceful and divine, where suffering is left behind.
I'm greeted by family and old friends, to help me through this day.
It's been a very rewarding ride, and a happy life on the way.
So please don't grieve my leaving, as I'm where I want to be.
I'm happy and contented, as I'm pain and trouble free.*

Don Abbott

Lyle Prouse: Barbara and I send our heartfelt condolences to Don’s family at this difficult time. Don was always a joy to work with and my time with him was always enjoyable. He was one of the gents who really made NWA a better place. All who knew him are saddened by his departure. May God bless... Blue Skies.

Bob Immel: Flying with Don was just pure joy—laugh and play cribbage.

Paul Haglund: Don had a heart of gold. He helped a tremendous number of people as they went through various training programs at NWA. A good man.

My own remembrance: Electricity not being my strongest suit, I somewhat nervously faced Don for my initial flight engineer’s “oral” wherein, after some “numbers” questions, he asked the same dreaded KVAR question that he asked John Stinnett. Deciding that my only defense was to go on offense, my answer was more of a question for him. For a good portion of the oral he was busy drawing those little cars going up and down sine wave graphs that many of us remember so well. When we finished, I was proud of myself for his comment of “Nice oral,” thinking that it was pretty smart of me to keep asking him the questions. It wasn’t until sometime later that I came to realize that it was just Don’s chance to do some more in-depth teaching. After all, he knew that we all knew the basic stuff well by then.

His energy and enthusiasm for teaching was infectious and effective. He personified the noble profession of teaching done at it’s best. We were lucky.

- Editor



Mel Ott
1942 ~ 2008

Melvyn J. Ott, age 65, a retired Northwest Airlines Captain of Merritt Island Florida, flew west for his final check February 7th, 2008. Mel "Tarmack" Ott was born on April 6th, 1942 in Aberdeen, South Dakota. As a young boy Mel was a typical farm kid who worked with his family to raise cattle and wheat. As a young boy Mel had the chance to hunt with Marine Corps Ace Joe Foss, and his first airplane ride was with his Uncle Capt Jack Volkel, a Northwest Airlines Pilot who owned a personal DC-3.

Mel was inspired to be a professional baseball player while attending South Dakota State University, but after talking with several baseball scouts he decided to pursue flying. Mel convinced his father to purchase a Cessna 150 so he could amass flight time and provide Flight Instruction, and in 1965 he was hired by Northwest Orient Airlines as a S/O on the B-707.

Mel flew 32 years with NWA flying the B707, B727, DC-10, B747, and B747-400. He was routinely flying orient routes since the early 1980s. Mel was given the nickname "Tarmack" since he was repeatedly seen on the ramp area smoking. In 1980, Mel moved to the southwest Florida coast along with his wife Shirley, daughters Stephanie and Stacy, and son Randy. He was very active in boating and named his boats "Jetlag" referring to the tiresome time zone travel of a long haul

wide body pilot. In 1990 Capt. "Tarmack" flew the inaugural New York to Tokyo nonstop 747-400 flight. He was also an active general aviation pilot and longtime Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) member, owning several aircraft including the complete Grumman aviation line and a Christen Eagle II. In 1998 he



finished a Curtiss Falcon replica biplane (shown here) that was featured in several popular aviation magazines and made the front cover of EAA's "Sport Aviation" in 2001. Mel had taught his son Randy to fly, and he was later hired by United Airlines. He would often follow his son to aerobatic contests in which his son competed in an Extra 300S. Mel also liked to camp at EAA Oshkosh and EAA Sun-N-Fun, often going early to get the best possible camping spot and always taking his small dog "Curtiss" with him.

Mel also was active with Personal Computer Flight Simulation, in which he was a beta tester for various companies, including Microsoft, that market the flight simulation software. He also authored a book about flying the B747-400 and was well known within the flight simulation community (AvSim).

Mel is survived by his wife Shirley of 43 years, daughters Stephanie Ott-Schwartzberg and Stacy Kamp, son Randy Ott and two grandsons, Tristan Kamp and Brady Schwartzberg, all living in Florida. He is also survived by his brother Jerry Ott, and sisters Anita Voss and Donna Job.

Mel will be honored at the 2008 EAA AirVenture "Oshkosh" with his name on the Memorial Wall at the EAA Oshkosh campus reflecting his dedication, spirit, and passion for aviation.

Later this summer his remains will be scattered over the Atlantic Ocean as he requested.

Dad, may you have strong tailwinds on your flight west, excellent weather for the approach, plenty of fuel upon arrival and many cold beers and fellow aviators waiting for you at the bar! May you enjoy your meals at the "Captain's Table". Your contrails will never fade and your legend and memories will live on forever.

The following comments were left by childhood friends and Northwest Pilots in Mel's guest book:

▪ **Marilyn Sour Rundberg:** Mel left a legacy as a great pilot, husband and father. He regaled us with his wit and humorous writing. We shared lots of fun as teenagers, and I feel lucky to have known him. My sympathy and prayers are with his family.

▪ **Ann (Knickrehm) Winegar,** Groton (SD) High School Class of 1958: The Ott kids and the Knickrehm kids grew up living a short 2 miles apart. Our parents were good friends, and enjoyed card parties together. I remember Mel with fondness, and send my prayers for peace and comfort for his family.

▪ **Larry Owen:** Mel Ott, an excellent pilot, a loving husband, a good father and grandfather and a very fine friend. I for one will miss you so. I knew Mel from the get go at NWA. We never got to fly together until we made captain on the 747. We were in the first class to fly the "400" and flew together a lot. Thanks for those wonderful times we crossed the pond and had a cold "Saporro" at day's end. I know you have had a smooth flight west and passed that last check ride with flying colors. Please say hello to all the guys and don't forget to save me a seat at "The Captains Table!" Until then, so long my good friend. Shirley, Stephanie, Randy and all the Ott clan, you have our deepest sympathy for your loss.

Sir Lawrence of Miami (as you always called me) and wife Susan Owen.

▪ **Jay Jorgensen:** I am left with many cheerful memories of my times spent with Mel over the years. God speed on his final flight west.

▪ **Jack Herbst:** Mel will be missed by many. I always enjoyed his writings and viewpoint on life and how it works. Have a good flight west my friend.

▪ **Fred Raiche:** Although we never had the opportunity to be on the same crew, we often talked about the "ifs" IF we had! Instead, we settled for the GOOD times we DID have when we'd be in the same area. Those are the times that I will long remember. You are missed by MANY - I am but one! I'll see ya... "down the road." Another lucky friend.

▪ **Bill Horne:** Mel was a delight to fly with and I had the pleasure to fly with him in many aircraft and I learned a lot from him. He will be missed and I am happy to have had the experience of flying with Mel.

▪ **Doug Wulff:** "Tarmack" will be missed by those at Northwest who knew him. He always had a crowd gathered around listening to his stories. Have a smooth flight west Mel!

▪ Mel and I were roommates in MSP some years ago (at George Blair's apt.) and we all used to have great times especially when it was time to decide where we would go to dinner. Mel and the Colonel (Larry Womack) would always argue over everything, and the place to eat provided just another opportunity.

Here is wishing Tarmac the best ~ Blue skies,
Richard Farmer

▪ I remember "Tarmack" well. I only got the privilege of working with him once. Seniority made things work out that way. I do remember that whenever he walked into a room the room would come alive. People congregated to him to listen to the tales he would tell and the way he would tell them. He had a special way of putting his thoughts into all the emails and articles he wrote.

Doug Wulff

▪ Greetings from **Jerry Pritchett:** I have fond memories of past flights with you when I was a new 727 Co-pilot in 1969. We had layovers in Bismark, ND and would go to the Red Owl grocery where you had the habit of buying a giant steak from the meat department and then getting it cooked to order at the lunch counter in the store for an additional \$0.88 (including a baked potato and Texas Toast). I think I playfully called you CHEAP and you always defended by saying you were just FRUGAL. Anyway it was all great fun. I also enjoyed your stories of your growing up on the farm in South Dakota. I now readily admit that you were the champion at holding your water while we were having our beer on these layovers whereas I was off to the men's room after one or two. All my best to you Mel,

Your friend, Jerry Pritchett

▪ My name is **Jim Driver** from Bowman, ND. I flew copilot for Mel on the 727 as many times as I could. Every time we went past enemy swim lake there was another story! Even the time both he and his dad both bought new Cadillacs at the same night was a hoot. I understand the no memorial service or cards, However that would be one WAKE that I would like to have a tape recorder in my pocket. My thoughts and prayers.

▪ **Bill Day:** Mel's name is synonymous with physically strong men imbued with great strength of character. I knew him as a leader, a highly skilled pilot, and a most trustworthy man. In my mind Mel Ott is a timeless person.

▪ **Phil Pattie:** My sympathy to Shirley and Mel's family. Mel will be missed by all he touched at Northwest.

(continued)

▪ Dear Stephanie and Family

I remember our last KIX breakfast together, when he confided about his impending early retirement. Glad he decided to leave the rat race of NWA, and to enjoy the company of friends and family when he did. Always generous to a fault, my strongest impression is how Mel always was the first to buy a round of beer. Likewise, he was always proud of you kids and had plenty of pictures to share, to prove it. Same's true of the stunning pictures of your Mom.

In short, glad he was surrounded by those that loved him best. Most people are never that lucky... What a great guy, terrific airman, and dedicated friend and father! His impact and influence will be sorely missed. He passed away knowing that he loved his friends and family, and that they, in turn, loved and treasured him. When it's all said and done, Mel had the pride and satisfaction of a life well lived. Most important, his contributions really mattered, and the world is a far better place because of the life he lived. Finally, Mel was confident that his pride and joy would carry on in his tradition. Nothing more to add, other than I'll really miss him...

J.K. (aka) John Katona

▪ We all go through life and pick just a few people we would go to war with. Mel would be one that I'd like in my foxhole!

Your friend, **Jim Dandrea**

▪ I was a roommate of Mel's as well as Richard Farmer. I waited so long to check out as Captain Mel said that I should be a Colonel and that stayed with me as long as we were roommates. We had some great times. When he went to the shower he always took two towels. I asked him why and his answer was, "I am not going to wipe my face with the same towel that I wipe my butt with." I suggested he wipe his face first but that didn't work!

Larry (Colonel) Womack

▪ Every time I think of you I have to smile just remembering the good times of flying with you on the 727. Mel, you were always a pleasure to fly with. Also the meals at Aki's and the Yellow Awning when we flew the 400 were special, too.

Then the time our son, JD, and Randy delivered the Gruman Tiger to New Hampshire over the 1988 Thanksgiving Vacation has always been a story of many conversations. I'm sure both Randy & JD learned

a great deal on that trip as they started their flying careers by being weathered in at JAX-flying through the high density areas of the Northeast, etc.

At times like this it's hard to know what to say as we all would like to be able to help in some way. I find peace in believing that the God who created All has provided for eternity through His Son. I'll be praying for you and the family for comfort and peace.

Mel, thanks for the good times we shared.

Sincerely, **Howie Leland**

▪ It was with great sadness that I read about Mel's illness. A copy of an email was posted on a bulletin board in the Northwest Airlines Flight Planning Room located in the Tokyo, Narita Airport and I stumbled across it.

I had only one opportunity to fly with "Tarmack" about 20 years ago when I was a Second Officer on the 747-200. He was a pleasure to work with and truly a "prince" of the sky. As a captain I've attempted to emulate

Mel, who was not only a technical master but had the unique ability to make everyone he worked with feel respected and valued. One wanted to do his/her best when working with him. Only a few captains I worked for made a lasting impression upon me. Mel Ott was one of them.

Over the years, I enjoyed his well-written and insightful postings on the ALPA bulletin board. I sorely wish that he had been elected as Master Executive Council Chairman when he ran for that office. Our union would have benefited tremendously had we been blessed with leadership of a man as courageous as Mel.

Please convey to your family my best wishes.

Sincerely, **Jack Cinque**

▪ Mel my friend, you were the best while here with the rest of us. I can see your smiling face now, sitting with friends who've gone before you. You're at the table, sipping a nice cold Sapporo, continuing your great stories and bantering with the best of them about ALPA, management and what a great job this has been. Now you'll be there watching safely over the rest of us. I just wonder what story you told at the pearly gates to slip on through... I'll bet it was a good one. I thank you Mel for the great many long flights we worked together on the 400... and the days end layovers at the many local joints that we frequented. It's been a joy to have known you and I look forward to seeing you again. HAPPY TRAILS TO YOU, UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN.

James Keitges



Askeland, Gladys L. (Gladdy): Age 89 of Columbia, Missouri formerly of Richfield, Minnesota was preceded in death by husband Robert C. (Bob) Askeland, a retired Northwest Airlines Captain. Survived by children, Bill and Lorrie; grandchildren Tyler, Ryan and Kyle and sister-in-law Lois Hoy. Some Northwest pilots and friends who knew Bob and Gladdy had this to say about them:

Noel & Petie Smith: Gladdy and Bob Askeland were great friends. Finally they are both at peace and together again. We shall always think of them with love and wonderful memories. Our condolences to the family, we know how much they must miss them.

Jim Freeburg: I remember Bob and Gladdy as very special people, and I especially remember her as the beautiful lady who was secretary to my father, in the chief pilot's office during the early 1940's.

"Avie" Warren Avenson: (Gladdy) you had to have known that for each of us new copilots being sent to the Flight Office was what we hoped for. So long.

Bill Naegele, Lord Fletcher's: To the Askeland Family, We were so fortunate to have had the chance to get to know Gladdy and Bob. They were both such genuine loving people with wonderful perspectives on life and living. They were next door neighbors anyone would like to have. They were Founding Members of Lord Fletcher's Cardian Club and were enjoyed by all the neighbors. Gladdy and Bob are eternally at peace now. May the Askeland family sense God's presence and peace during the difficult days following her death. With Love, Bill & Stephanie Naegele & all of the Associates at 'Lord Fletcher's.'

Hayes, John C. "Jack", age 73, a retired Northwest Airlines Captain, of Fort Myers, Florida and New Richmond, Wisconsin, flew west for a final check on Easter Sunday, March 23, 2008.

Jack retired from the U.S. Navy after 20 years of service as a C.W.O. His 42 years at Northwest Airlines included various positions, culminating as captain of a 747-400. Among his hobbies were airplane building, golfing and restoring his '66 Mustang. He was an active member of the Lake Board for Cedar Lake and was very concerned with the conservation and preservation of the lake. Guests at their homes knew Jack to wear many hats: a tour guide, pontoon "captain," Mr. Fixit and the grill master. He was preceded in death by daughters Kathleen, Joan and Jean. He is survived by his devoted wife of 54 years, Mary; sons Michael, Thomas and Richard; sister Patricia; brothers Michael and James; many grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

Marsh, Helen Mae: of Bellevue, Washington died on March 31, 2008 and was preceded in death by husband Kenneth A. Marsh a retired Northwest Airlines Captain who died in 2001. Helen graduated from Hutchinson High School and the Minneapolis School of Business. She married Kenneth Marsh in 1943 and they raised their family in Richfield, Minnesota. Helen was compassionate, courageous, strong in spirit, loved her family, and was a wonderful friend. She was creative, leading quilting and needlepoint projects in the schools and church. An avid gardener, she also enjoyed skiing, golfing and hiking. Ken's job took them to Hawaii in 1969 and later to Bellevue, Washington in 1971. Their travels took them all over the world.

She is survived by her sister Audrey; her daughter Nancy; sons Jay and Chuck; and beloved grandchildren: Daniel, Scott, Ana, Libby, Kelly, and Peter.



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



Save the Date!

SEA BASE NWA FLT. ATTENDANT
RETIREMENT & REUNION PARTY

~
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2008
~

DOUBLETREE GRAND BALLROOM
(ACROSS THE STREET FROM SEA-TAC)

Honoring FAs who were ever based in SEA

Retirees/Resignees from May 1, 2006
to August 30, 2008 to be honored

5-7 cocktail hour, followed by dinner of chicken or vegetarian entrée and dessert/coffee. Please let us know the food choices when you purchase your ticket(s). Unless you ask for a vegetarian entrée, chicken will be ordered.

\$55 February 1 to June 1, 2008

\$65 June 2 to October 10, 2008

\$75 at the door on a space available basis

No Cancellations! Funds Will Be Used for Next Year's Party!

Please send checks to:

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**Seating is limited!
Get your tickets early!
Ten (10) to a table.**

Full tables will not be booked until Karen Fishburn has received full payment for that table. The best way to reserve a full table is to have all checks sent to her at one time in one envelope. Partial tables/individuals will be booked as soon as she receives your checks. No reservations will be booked without full payment. Save money and book early!

Karen Lehman will forward to Karen Fishburn all reservation requests along with the checks put in her crib file at In-flight.

**Parking is hosted—mention
NWA party on the way out.**

There will be a slide show depicting honorees' illustrious careers. We need photos ASAP! To be returned in good order. Do not use ink of any kind on the back of your photos if mailing!

Please send your photos via mail and/or email to:

Tammy Aguilar:

tammyt112@hotmail.com

(C) 206.280.6509

PO Box 82837, Kenmore WA 98028

Karen Lehman:

krlehman@comcast.net

206.325.0260 and 206.683.4031

2038 42nd Ave E, Seattle WA 98112



Membership Application and Change of Address Form

NAME

SPOUSE'S NAME

PERMANENT MAILING ADDRESS

STREET

CITY

STATE ZIP+4 PHONE

EMAIL* (See note)

SECOND OR SEASONAL ADDRESS (for RNPA annual directory only)

STREET

CITY

STATE ZIP+4 PHONE

DATE OF BIRTH (Optional for affiliate member)

DATE OF FIRST EMPLOYMENT WITH AIRLINE AS:

AN EMPLOYEE A PILOT

DATE OF RETIREMENT FROM AIRLINE AS:

AN EMPLOYEE A PILOT

IF CURRENTLY EMPLOYED BY NWA INDICATE:

BASE POSITION

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

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

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF HOURS LOGGED

AIRLINE AIRCRAFT TYPES FLOWN AS PILOT

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

CHANGE: This is a change of address or status only

MEMBERSHIP TYPE

REGULAR (NR) \$35
Limited to pilots no longer on NWA pilot payroll

NWA ACTIVE (NA) \$35
Limited to pilots currently on NWA pilot payroll

AFFILIATE (AF) \$25
Spouse or widow of RNPA member, a friend, former colleague, or a pilot from another airline

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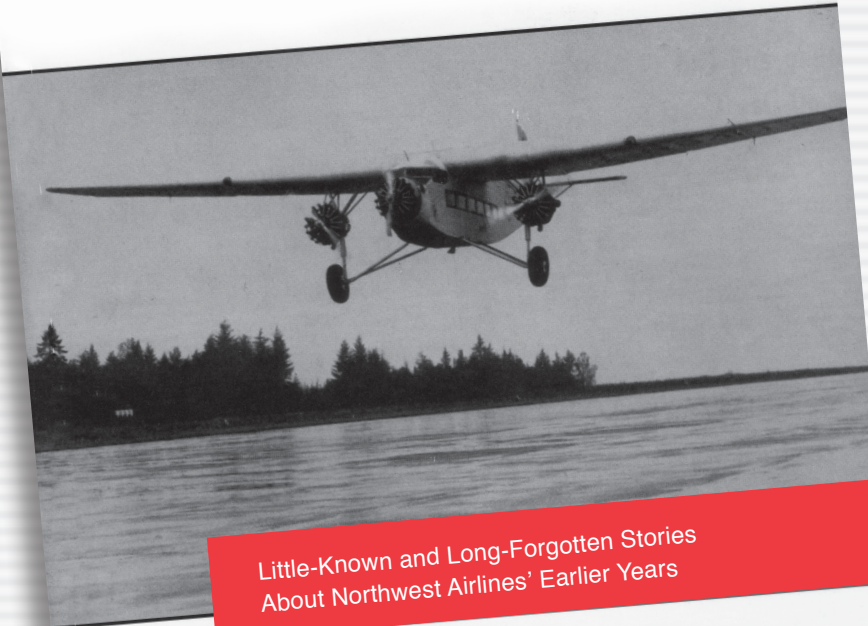
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