

CONTRAILS



ISSUE NO. 174

MAY 2010



RETIRED NORTHWEST AIRLINES PILOTS' ASSOCIATION

RNPA CONTRAILS



EDITOR / PUBLISHER

Gary Ferguson
1664 Paloma St
Pasadena CA 91104
C (323) 351-9231 (primary)
H (626) 529-5323
contrailseditor@mac.com

OBITUARY EDITOR

Vic Britt
vicbritt@tampabay.rr.com

PROOFING EDITOR

Romelle Lemley

CONTRIBUTING COLUMNISTS

Bob Root
James Baldwin

HISTORIAN

James Lindley

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Dick Carl
Phil Hallin

REPORTERS

Each Member!

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

ADDRESS CHANGES:

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

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24, 25 & 26 RAPID CITY REUNION

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FUTURE REUNIONS

OMAHA:
SEPT. 25-27, 2011
ATLANTA:
SEPT. ??, 2012

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ON THE COVER: Phoenix picnickers toured the Commerative Air Force museum at Falcon Field February 23rd (L-R): George Buck, Camille & Jack Herbst, Mike Buckley, Linda & John Schell
Photo: Wayne Anderson

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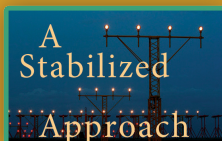
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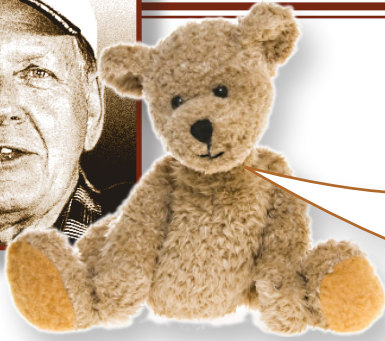


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President's Report: Gary PISEL

Pssst...
Captain Pisel just
whispered that there's going to be
a huge Teddy Bear convention in
Rapid City, too!

Greetings All,

Winter is nearly over, at least for most of us and summer is rapidly approaching. Also rapidly approaching is the **RAPID CITY REUNION**. Time to send in your reservation form and make plans to attend! Be sure to include in your plans to bring a **TEDDY BEAR** for the Police and Fire Depts.

Barbara and I flew to Sarasota to attend the SW Florida Spring Luncheon. A great time was had meeting old friends and making new ones. Dino and Karen did a fantastic job of setting up the Luncheon.

While in Sarasota we sold the last of the NWA Coffee Mugs we had. To date we have distributed over 1,000 mugs. **But do not fear**, I have been able to secure more. They will be available on the Summer Cruise in June and at the SEA Picnic in August. At the present time there are no plans to mail any. I have been assured by the distributor that I will be able to order in the future.

I hope you were able to read the March 2010 edition of *Air Line Pilot*. There was an article in the MailBag calling all former Northwest Pilots to join RNPA, whether retired or not. Several pilots and others have responded with applications.

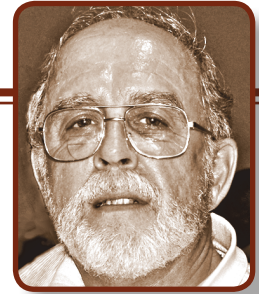
At the Reunion in Rapid City elections will be held for the principal officers of RNPA. If you are interested in becoming a member of the RNPA Board please contact Dave Pethia. Your participation would be warmly received.

Thank you all for your support. RNPA is alive and well and growing.



Treasurer's Report: Dino OLIVA

I am writing this report earlier than usual as the May newsletter will be out a little earlier than normal, so these comments may not be completely accurate. As of today there are still 64 members that have not paid their annual dues. In about a week, those that are still delinquent will be removed from membership. A couple of weeks back I sent out reminder notices to about 110 members that they had not as of yet paid their dues. The reminders take a considerable amount of my time and are an expense to RNPA. To cover this expense, the RNPA Board has imposed a \$5 penalty for late payment. When the initial dues notice goes out we admonish our members to "do it now," to avoid the penalty. Some of our more frugal members wait until the last minute to pay so as to earn the maximum interest on their money while in the bank. If I figure correctly the interest on \$35 for two months in the Credit Union comes out to 2.91 cents. Of course when you wait that long



SICK BAY?

I am a member of Kaiser-Permanente Medicare Advantage here in Southern California. A couple of weeks ago as we loaded up the elevator on the fourth floor of their medical facility here in Pasadena, I looked around to see nothing but silent, somber looking, shall we say, seniors. As the last elderly gent was struggling with his walker to get into the remaining space I said, "Has anyone noticed that there aren't any youngsters in here?"

To a person, everyone broke into a big smile and began chattering away with something to add to the conversation, some laughing heartily—an instant mood change. It is what it is: we have that in common.

On page 7 Jerry Kreuger asks that we consider including a sick bay section. I have considered it, but don't think it's a good idea for several reasons, not the least of which is physical space and budget considerations.

The stark reality is that many, if not most, of us in the final season of our lives have some sort of health deficiencies—some not so serious, and some of the other kind. Those who may be seriously ill may not feel like burdening others with their ailments or simply be too busy dealing with them.

Even though not all of our group have email capabilities, I think that method remains the best way to get the word out for our friends.

Having said all that, let me be clear: There is no reason you cannot mention health related problems a friend may be suffering, or *you* may be suffering, in a letter to the editor—I just prefer not to designate a separate section for that purpose.

Wanna see a list of *my* ailments?

I didn't think so.

WE HAVE LETTERS!

Thanks to those who sent letters—mostly accompanying dues payment. This issue consists of twelve pages of letters from fifty contributors. Laudable to be sure, but that still only represents less than four percent of the membership.

With the exception of two that I received just prior to publication, the mailbag is now empty again.

I know you probably get tired of me haranguing you about this, but there is something that baffles me a bit: Most who have an opinion tell me that we have one of the best newsletters in the business. As editor, I receive many newsletters from the other retired pilot groups. I think it safe to say that most of them have many more letters to their editors than we do.

It's embarrassing.

Dues notices won't be here for another two issues. I hope you will consider that after this issue and each of the next issues arrive and let the rest of us know what you're up to without being prompted by a dues letter.

Email is preferred, but any form is welcome—pen, pencil, crayon or typewritten will do. Turn back one page for my contact info.

JERRY LEATHERMAN OBITUARY

Due to space limitations in the last issue I wasn't able to publish all the Guest Book comments for one of our more colorful members. You may read those here:

<http://issuu.com/contrails/docs/leatherman>

I'll bet by now you can fill in the blanks.

W _____?

you usually forget to send in your payment and are then hit with the \$5 late payment fee. Seems to me that it would be much better to pay your dues when you get the initial notice.

Our membership has actually increased since NWA has ceased to exist. Those NWA employees now working for Delta in many cases want to retain their association with their former fellow employees. We do not now have any way to contact these individuals when they reach retirement. You may have noticed in the ALPA magazine the article we had published informing any ex-NWA pilots about our organization. We have had a favorable response to that article and have added new members because of it. RNPA will cease to exist if we do not maintain our membership. We ask each of you to ask any of your old NWA friends either retired or still active to consider joining RNPA. Your officers and board are doing all they can to keep RNPA alive. We have conventions planned for the next four years and plan to continue beyond that. It is up to you to insure that we can do so by helping to recruit new members.



DAN MATHEWS

January 31, 2010 (Narita)

Had something of a milestone (or two) the last few days... thought I'd share.

Flew my last Northwest Airlines flight from Tokyo's Narita airport to Manila, P.I. the other evening. My last Northwest Airlines flight because today—on the 31st of January—I flew my first flight for/as Delta Airlines Flight 280 from Manila back to Tokyo/Narita.

After almost 31 years here it really felt strange to say "DELTA 280" and not "NORTHWEST..." It just didn't roll off the lips.

Obviously, I was not alone. The 31st was the cutover date—the last "NORTHWEST AIRLINES" flight has been flown—henceforth, all our flights will be "DELTA," as our merger rolls right along.

Talk about mixed feelings. Northwest had flown for nearly 60 years into Manila alone. So it was no surprise, yet very moving, that no fewer than nine mechanics and ground guys all came up to the cockpit just before we left Manila in a sort of observation (not celebration) of the milestone/moment: No more NORTHWEST... the lady is no more. Her passage is nearly complete. We all shook hands and awkwardly tried to joke a bit, but you really could feel the emotion and meaning of that moment—for all of us.

We're big boys—we don't cry—but the memories and history and

all that we were somehow trying to "put to bed" at that moment were not lost on any of us there. We all shook hands. Maybe as if we were reaching back to all who have been here—in Manila, or wherever Northwest flew—and for all they did to serve people around the world as the red-tailed squadron. So, we're being repainted now, sporting new uniforms, and now using a new call sign. But it's really worth taking a moment to remember—the tradition, the history, the safety record, the ups and downs, and how it's not just about planes. It's about people, many people, who were and are and just maybe might always be NORTHWEST proud—because we worked at being NORTHWEST—from Manila to Manchester and forever. As we departed Manila and headed north, the controllers were obviously also tuned in to the moment, asking: "Confirm Delta 280, and not Northwest?" We confirmed the call sign and the milestone with our "Roger," but really wanted to say something more. But we didn't.

So, thanks for reading this. We know that obviously there are more important things—like family and all—but, when you get right down to it, we all felt like and are the Northwest Family. And that's why we all knew something important happened today.

Just thought I'd share.

Captain Dan Mathews
NORTHWEST ORIENT —
BONG — AIRLINES !

SHORT SHOTS

Thanks Dino!

Keep up the great work.
Tony Chace

Dear Dino,

Thank you for the reminder & service. Best regards to you both.
Have a great year.
Sandy & Lu Mazzu

Happy New Year Dino to you and yours. Thank you for the hard work.

Thomand O'Brien

Thank you. the magazine is beautiful.

Joann Olson

Dino,

Thank you for forwarding the newsletter when my forwarding address time expired.

Wendell Howell

STEVE LUCKEY

Dino,

Just want to send a quick note to thank you for all of your dedication and hard work. Everyone appreciates all that the outstanding "team" of veterans do to keep RNPA on track and make it what it is; a top quality organization.

I'm still in the security business and probably busier than ever. I can remember the good old days when we worked less than half a month but retirement meant a full time 24/7 commitment. We appear to be making a lot of progress with over a thousand armed pilots in the cockpit and a lot less bad guys in the gene-pool!

Keep up the good work and stay safe.

Steve Luckey

KEMER NELSON

Gary,

First a note to mention the outstanding job you do on “Contrails.” LIFE magazine has nothing up on you.

I frequent OVER SeaTac airport once or twice a month in my aerial photography. While shooting a site just east of the NWA hangar on January 6, 2010 I noticed the OLD and the NEW happening.

It appears the Grim Reaper, sign remover, was about to remove the “NORTHWEST” sign.

Sincerely,
Kemer Nelson



JERRY KRUEGER

Hi Gary:

Greetings from the wind and rain swept Emerald Shores of the Red-Neck-Riviera of Destin Florida. We have ‘escaped’ to the warmer climes of the south from the angry weather in the outback of Sodak—aaaaand the wx is dreadful down here also. Seems to just follow us.

The new format of the Contrails is just exquisite—we all appreciate so much what all of you guys do for us Old Zoomies to keep us in touch. We eagerly look forward to each and every issue of the Big C!

*** Idea: We noticed in the Feb issue of Contrails in your “Editor’s Notes” that you had a New “Section” titled “Sick Bay.” Why not include this very helpful bit of information with each issue? As we are all “aging,” the old bodies begin to be dependent more and more on “Health-Providers” and it is always heartening to hear of some of our ‘old-buds’ who need a little cheering up or a few words of support? Having such a close relationship with so many great personalities over the length

of our careers, it would be helpful to us all if we could hear from some of them as we ‘AGE’?

As for us, the years just seem to slip by so rapidly. I am 74 and Mary Ann is 76. Celebrated our 51st wedding anniversary this past December.

We both decided last fall to go in for a routine ‘Heart-Screening’—and it was quite an epiphany! They discovered the main descending artery on top of my heart was 95% blocked and I underwent an immediate angioplasty followed by insertion of a stent? My Icelandic Heart-Doctor said I was a walking time-bomb and the medical world call this situation the ‘widow-maker’! I am One-Lucky-Dude!

Just a thought for the ‘Sick-Bay’ column.

All for now. Thank You so much for your ‘above-and-beyond’ dedication to all of your fellow old-zoomies.

Most Respectfully,
Jerry and Mary Ann
Krueger
*That wasn’t really a “Section”
Jerry. As I said there, I don’t think we
would have enough room. - Ed.*

CINDY FRIESEN

Love all the information that is in the RNPA magazine, but always sad to see the ones passed away and yet I remember them as being so young & active. Thanks for all the good work that goes into our enjoyment.

Cindy Friesen

MOLLIE REILEY

Thanks Dino—

I really enjoy keeping up with everyone! Life here at Delta is very interesting and you should all be happy to be retired!!

Mollie Reiley

HELEN COLE

Cy suffered a stroke last July. Is home now—confined to a wheel chair for the most part. He is alert and enjoys the “Contrails.” He celebrated his 95th in December.

Thanks,
Helen Cole

Thanks to all who put Contrails together, it is professionally done.

And thanks for the article about the crew's saving the 747-400 on that emergency return of a flight out of Narita years ago. It was an extremely well-written account and an eye-opener; before I retired in 1994 I met one of the cockpit crew who had been on that flight and was astounded to hear details, especially the horribly ignorant way the Japanese police handled the crew in that awful situation. I was not surprised when I read about the way NWA handled the major award to the crew by putting it in a closet.

The Seattle 747-200 "good-bye" party last fall was absolutely wonderful and everyone who organized and ran that party needs to be thanked. To my way of thinking it was actually an NWA "goodbye" party and it was a great decision to hold it in the very spacious Museum of Flight, our world-class museum out here in the rain belt.

It is a good feeling to walk into the museum and say to myself that I flew some of the types on display but sad also, since certain types are now antiques and I'm not so young either.

In the outdoor display area are the 727, 707, 747 and Concorde and the museum is asking for donations so that it can build a building to display those aircraft and others.

Three museums around the country will be rewarded by NASA with one of the three flyable Space Shuttles but on the condition that the Shuttle has a home to go to, and will be indoors. Imagine a building holding every plane mentioned here. There are a B-17, B-29 and a Connie in storage awaiting their indoor space after they are to



An entire fake town, complete with houses, lawns and trees covered Boeing Aircraft's Plant 2 in Seattle. The design was intended to camouflage the vital defense plant from enemy attack

be put out of storage in April when the Boeing Plant 2 shuts down and the ground under it made liveable again.

A recent article in the Seattle Times showed a wartime photo of Plant 2 completely covered and camouflaged with fake homes, streets and trees. Plant 2 was the home of the B-17. On a quickie vacation to D.C. I visited the NASM as always and I went to see the nose of our former 747-100, Ship 601 mounted on a wall resting on its nose gear. There is a catwalk access to allow a visit to see the cockpit which is closed off by a plexiglas wall. The nose is still in NWA colors and in the rear of the cockpit area are two NWA uniforms behind glass.

There is a story to be told about how the nose was donated and by whom, and how it was cut from the fuselage and transported, and mounted, but I am not the one to dig up the story and I hope someone will do it because the NASM is tops in the world and NWA is represented there in a major fashion. That is a story which should be published.

It still amazes me that I flew

something that huge. My main interest aviation-wise is in World War Two aircraft, particularly German, and the NASM and the Udvar-Hazy Center offer displays of the best-preserved types; my visit to D.C. included trips to those museums.

Unfortunately the U-H Center is far enough out of town that if a visitor does not have a car, he is faced with using connecting buses to get there. The buses do not connect well and do not run on time. The U-H Center is at Dulles airport.

My four grandchildren are fun to watch grow and play and the twin girls nearing age four are just now getting to understand who I am and why I am near them on birthdays and such. They are very shy.

My daughter and son have their hands full with the kids. JoAnne keeps working nine to five most of the weeks while I keep busy at home. Our dog Robespierre is ageing and went through a bout of diabetes and lymphoma; he now has cataracts and his hind legs do not work well. I hope everyone's pet is doing well.

Donate to the museum if you can.

Paul Ludwig

SKIP FOSTER

Hi Dino & Gary,

Kathy & I had a great time at the ABQ convention, lots of “new” old faces and again a very well organized event. We did a quick turn-around and got on the 747 charter to Boeing Field for the first 747 retirement party. Thanks to all the folks that organized and worked so hard to make it a memorable weekend, nice to see many of the SEA old timers, pilots and flight attendants, great crowd!

We just got back from 2 weeks in Cancun, it was our first visit there, and it sort of felt like working for the Wings holding bunch, Checchi and Wilson, everyone had their hand out! I’m still flying our 210 occasionally, but doing more commercial trips than local flying and will try and sell it this Spring if the market improves. We’ll go back to Wisconsin in May thru September. I “volunteered” to help with my 50th High School reunion and it’s taking up a lot of time, but rewarding as well. I’m surprised that so many of my classmates have “gone west”.

Hope to see you this Fall at the convention.

Skip Foster

HARRY BEDROSSIAN

Happy New Year Dino,

Hope all is well with you and family.

Geri and I are getting along OK with the normal afflictions at our age. Still try and get out a couple of times a week to play golf, but it depends on the weather.

Take care and thanks again to you and everyone that puts together RNPA Contrails.

Sincerely,
Harry Bedrossian

MILT EITREIM

Gary:

I do not think that this note will ever be on the best selling list or will I be asked to replace Bob Root as a contributor monthly but I am responding to the plea for notes, stories, etc. from the editor.

Chloe Doyle’s remark about her keeping in touch through RNPA jogged my memory about John. He and I were tagged to “teach” refresher one time and we decided to use a song and dance routine to keep the guys attention but that was nixed by “them.” So we resorted to the standard, sorry guys.

Then when we were in Greece in 1972 Bob Cavill suggested that we all go skiing in Montana the following winter. Being flatlanders, Mary and I had never skied before so we took lessons at Bridger bowl and mastered the bunny slope in a mere 2 days. John Doyle coerced me into going with him and as we exited the chairlift he said, “We’ll go down here.” I, being of sound mind, looked over the edge and said, “You will go down here and I will go down where sensible people go.”

We survived the trip and as a parting gesture Bob Cavill asked Mary Lou to go one last run with him. She answered saying, I can’t, my wrists hurt too much. After Bob picked himself off the snow he said (with a straight face) “I understand.”

Stay cool or warm, whatever suits you.

Milt Eitreim

DENNIS GEUNTZEL

Dino,

Thanks again for all you do for RNPA and its members—it is appreciated. See you in Rapid City.

Dennis Geuntzel

AILEEN MIHOLOVICH

Hello Dino,

I always enjoy reading the Contrails and want to continue.

A thought has often come to me for a possible article, something to fill in small spaces. It would be something on the order of “Kids say the darndest things.”

For starters, my own son, when he was a toddler, used to keep the neighbors amused when he told them that, “Daddy (Ted) flew the airplane to Minneapolis juice.”

He also used to say that, “Humpty Dumpty went to Great Falls.”

There must be many more kids’ sayings connected with the names on the airline. It would be fun to hear them.

Aileen Miholovich
We agree, Aileen. – Ed.

ART PARTRIDGE

Hi Dino,

Thanx once again for your devotion to duty. Enclosed is a check for 2010 dues, with another, as always, going to Lowell for our oldest guys. My God, we’re getting there ourselves!

Oregon, as always, is cold & wet in the winter, but possibly warmer than you this week!

Art Partridge

BEV SKUJA

Dear Dino,

Thanks for all that you do. RNPA would not be the same without you. My check is enclosed and I promise to send an update for Contrails soon.

Sincerely,
Bev Skuja

DAN GILDNER

Hello Gary,

I have enclosed a few words that I hope some crewmembers can relate to.

Now eight years past my NWA career I finally got around to joining RNPA. It was fun to read the back issues that came with my membership.

I'm flying a beautiful corporate jet for a private individual. I still enjoy setting the altimeter to 29.92 and getting into the flight levels.

The best to you,
Dan Gildner

FLYING BLIND

The huge 747-400 had lifted its 870,000 lbs into the air just six hours earlier. It roared off the runway from Beijing, China with all 418 seats filled. On board were mostly ex-patriots returning to the States for the Christmas holidays. Additionally, 5 mothers had babes in arms, plus 15 flight attendants, 2 interpreters and 4 pilots made up the crew. Two pilots were currently sleeping in the crew quarters.

The flight plan filed with the international civil aviation organization showed 444 souls on board. It listed the aircraft's route, altitude, speed and flight time. Remarks mentioned a red tail and yellow life rafts.

The senior captain was on duty over west central Alaska. He knew there was a full moon off to his right rear quarter causing eerie light conditions in the clouds. Over the Bering Sea he had checked in with Anchorage air traffic control. It was good to be talking to a U. S. controller after flying out of China, over Manchuria and Siberia.

The Chinese and Russians spoke English as the international aviation

language but communications were always difficult.

He considered the flight's situation as perfect. Anchorage was ahead and to the right 150 miles. 20,300 foot Mount McKinley was off to the left and closer. He had the ship in the jet stream with its 160mph wind right on its tail. Add that to his cruise speed of 550mph and he was smoking over the ground at more than 700mph.

Even though he was flying blind, the air was smooth and the situation perfect for a continued smooth flight to Detroit.

As he reflected on this, from his left seat on the dimly lit flight deck, he could visualize the darkened cabin with dozing passengers, the glow of lights from the galleys where the flight attendants chatted and planned the breakfast service. He thought about this beautiful new 175 million dollar ship. Painted under the cockpit windows was "The City of Detroit." She had been put into service just two weeks earlier and still smelled like a new car.

After 42 years of flying, including U. S. Navy service and 34 years with his airline, he was at the top of his profession. He was flying the biggest, newest equipment on the longest routes. He had a lovely wife and three bright successful children. Surely any pilot in the world would want to be in his place right now.

Did he think he was more than a mortal? God was about to give him a wake up call.

Stop and imagine the ways He could do that... suddenly the jet stream veered to the south. The 747 gave a slight shudder as it was spit out into cooler, dryer air. The captain's eyes grew very large. There, close below on the left was the magnificence of the glacier capped Mount McKinley. Its top less than 11,000 feet below and its immense entirety bathed in the full moon's

light. It looked very close and powerful.

Almost immediately a bigger glow caught his attention His eyes lifted to the green and yellow shimmering fireworks of the northern lights. They rippled across the sky like a stage curtain and covered the heavens from the northern horizon to high above the aircraft.

Pulling his eyes away to look straight ahead he was treated to the red-orange flow of the soon to rise sun. A spot of bright light, the morning star, was centered in the glow. Looking further around to the right the moon smiled at him from the southwest. Something else caught his eye, a few sparkling lights from the city of Anchorage. How small and insignificant they looked.

Below him he visualized a trapper outside his cabin, snowshoes on, rigging his dog's harness in the predawn moonlight. The trapper could certainly hear a faint sound of the jet and if he bothered to watch he would notice the occasional flash of the anti-collision light as a tiny speck crawled across the sky.

Inside that tiny speck a man murmured, "Thank you God, I needed that."

PETE HEGSETH

Dino,

Thanks again for all you and others of RNPA do. We are having an "old fashioned" winter. We do get to FL (panhandle) for a week or two.

I still farm some to keep busy. The highlight of the year was the trip to SEA to say goodbye to the 747-200—what a sad day. Also went to the retirement of 747-200 in St. Paul. We were so fortunate to work at Northwest when we did.

Pete Hegseth

BILL HORNE

“TWO ENGINES MISSING”

Time period is the late sixties, probably 1968, my second year with the airline. As you might recall, check in was in one of the hangars closest to the terminal and we climbed some stairs and walked over to a window and there was the day's trips and a place for each crew member to sign in. In addition to that was the flight number, cabin crew names and the final bit of information was the tail number of the aircraft you would be using for your trip.

Now comes the interesting part. As you might recall there was a bank of windows which allowed you to look down into the hangar and observe the mechanics working on whatever aircraft was scheduled for that day. I always liked to walk over and take a look.

That day there was a 707 sitting in the hangar and number 3 and 4 engines were off the airplane and laying on the floor with mechanics working on both of them, and around both engines were several major parts waiting to be reassembled on each engine.

I looked for a minute or two and started to walk away, but something bothered me about what I saw and suddenly it dawned on me that the tail numbers on the aircraft in the hangar missing two engines was the same as the tail numbers of our aircraft for our trip that day scheduled out in about an hour. Not believing it, I walked back over and sure enough—tail numbers confirmed.

At that point I walked back over to the check in lady and asked her to confirm that these were the right tail numbers for today's flight. Pretty quick she returned and said yes those are the correct tail numbers for your flight. I motioned for her to follow me over to the window and as she peered down I handed the check in sheet to her and the next thing I know she disappears back to the area behind where she sat to unload the ugly truth on the planners sitting back there.

Looked like Custer counting indians all of a sudden, because in those days there weren't spare airplanes sitting around and now they had 55 minutes to devise a plan and they did just that. They found a 727 that had just completed a major check and wasn't scheduled out till the next day which thrilled us as we weren't qualified so we got the day off and actually got paid for it.

Now you know the rest of the story. Those were fun days, no terrorists, no security badges, walk anywhere on the ramp, and actually get to your airplane. What a concept.

Bill Horne

DELORES CHATTERTON

Dino,

Thank you for all the work you do for so many.

Dalton has had alzheimers for 10 ½ years and is now 92 years old. I have taken care of him at home, but now have four helpers, AM & PM, the two most difficult times of the day.

We so miss all the luncheons and get-togethers at the reunions, and seeing everyone. He does not always know that I am his wife, but we can still enjoy one another. We thank the Lord for our 5 foot television set, as we cannot get out much; only to doctors and a lunch with a helper to push the wheelchair.

I could get him out a little until three months ago. Now he is too heavy for my 100 pounds to push him alone to a restaurant.

We so enjoy the magazine and pictures. Call (561) 362-6016 if in our area [Boca Raton, FL].

Delores Chatterton

BOB WHITE

Dear Dino,

I would like to extend my appreciation and thanks to all of the pilots and thier spouses who by volunteering thier time and effort to make RNPA such a great organization. Penny and I attended the “747-200 Retirement Party” this last weekend and many of us commented to Doug and Sherry Wenborg and Steve and Janet Lillyblad what a fantastic MSP Christmas Party that was enjoyed by all those who were there. It was one of the highlights of our Christmas Season.

I would also like to mention how important the RNPA communiations are to me regarding those from our pilot community who are facing illnesses and the notification of those who are grieving and those who have flown west from our pilot community.

Thanks!

Pastor Bob and Penny White
Chaplain, Minneapolis St Paul
Airport Chaplaincy

Dino,

I quite enjoy the magazine but am disappointed that there is a reluctance to publish a letter regarding any of the previous airlines & their culture. Myself & other pilots have sent in letters that we thought might be of interest & never see any results. Red or green I think we are all one and are proud of all of our histories & culture.

Great job.

Thanks,

Austin B. Bates

Austin,

I do apologize for this oversight, but it had nothing whatsoever to do with red, green, orange, pink or even Delta blue. It was simply a matter of a lost file.

Thanks for re-sending it.

When you originally sent it, I just didn't have the space for it in that issue. I had just gone to full color and space was at a premium. Yours was not the first that I was forced to delay until later.

I had a note to myself to place it in the next issue, but was then unable to locate it anywhere in the bowels of my computer. So it was indeed my fault, but unintentional.

If you actually know that "other pilots have sent in letters" which haven't been published I would honestly like to know of them. To my knowledge, this instance was unique.

Your assertion that RNPA favors ANY Northwest pilots is unfounded in fact, as has been addressed by myself and others extensively in the past. We welcome all Northwest pilots, as well as any other pilots who may wish to join our group for that matter.

My apologies again.

I'm glad you enjoy the magazine.

- Editor

When Howard Hughes purchased "Air West", the scope of the airline changed rapidly. We acquired a multitude of international contracts including: management, maintenance, wet leases, dry leases and airline advisories. The contracts were not regional, and included Burma, Philippines, Ghana, Mauritania, Liberia, England, Mexico, Japan, Venezuela and Saudi Arabia. Aircrafts included F27's, DC9's and 727's. I had the unique experience with Air Liberia of accomplishing the proving runs up and down West Africa & acting Vice President of Operations.

Proving Run Monrovia/Liberia To Abidjan Ivory Coast

Since Air Liberia was a new airline with no credit, an accountant with a gun and a briefcase loaded with \$10,000.00 accompanied the crew on the flight. Ivory Coast was a former French Colony. The landing fee, servicing fee and fuel bills were presented to us in French francs. In addition to the currency calculations, the fuel calculations had to be converted from pounds, to U.S. gallons, to liters. Customs and the weather briefings for Return flights were unique (half English, half French)

Proving Run To Freetown Sierra Leon

Once again the new airline with no credit was accompanied by the accountant with a gun and a briefcase full of U. S. dollars. Sierra Leon was a former British Colony and all fees were calculated in British sterling pounds. Once again we had to convert pounds fuel to imperial liters and back to gallons for accounting purposes. The handling fees, servicing and fuel bills were converted from pounds to U.S. dollars. Unlike the casual French, the British influence included salutes and armed escorts. The inaugural night was arranged with a formal ceremony full of speeches as to the prosperity that the Air Services would usher into both Liberia and Sierra Leon. As a footnote, West Africa, including Liberia, Ivory Coast and Sierra Leon, were considered very safe. The recent power struggles resulting in political unrest and greed for the diamond trade changed West Africa to a very dangerous part of the world.

The Board of Directors for Air Liberia was unique, that other nationalities included a British banker, a Swedish engineer from the Iron Ore Mines & the American manager of the rubber plantations. Hughes Air West members included the general manager and two vice presidents of operations. The Liberian Government included the Minister of Finance, a Minister of Labor and representatives from the Executive Branch.

The goals of the Board were:

1. Safety
2. Economic Viability
3. Liberalization

Sincerely,

Austin B. Bates,

N.W.A. Retired



MERLE HAINES

Dino,

Thanks again for another year of your fine effort and call for duty for RNPA!

I'm still dragging the old leg around with a walker and MRSA still there, but somewhat reduced.

I can still drive so I keep simple "BUSY."

Have a good year,
"Slim" Haines

WAYNE SEGULIA

My newest knee replaced one of my old knees at 75. My other new knee about to replace my other old knee at 79. It's worth it!

Still playing the white tees. Not well, but what the he__.

Hi to all and thanks to everyone who keeps RNPA and Contrails up and running.

Wayne Segulia

JIM O'REILLY

Dino,

We all appreciate what the officers and Board of RNPA do to keep this group together. Jackie and I look forward to the annual reunions and river cruise.

We still spend our winter (Oct. - May) in Surprise, AZ and summers just north of Merrifield, MN. We did spend two weeks in Minnesota over the holidays. Snowstorm over Christmas and -31° the day we left for Arizona. What we won't do to spend time with kids and grandkids for the holidays.

Another letter and check to Lowell Stafford. Those pilots before us sure did a lot for our pension.

Jim & Jackie O'Reilly

JEFF DIETZ

Dino,

Enclosed is my 2010 dues check. On 17 Dec 2009 I flew NW907 from LAX to ANC. That was my last 747 flight, my last ANC base flight and my last flight as a Northwest pilot.

Some time between now and the end of June 2010 I will start 330 training as a "widget" pilot. It has been an honor to fly the red tail for the last 30+ years.

Jeff Dietz

DICK SUHR

Hi Dino,

Thanks for the good work you and all the rest of the RNPA crew does. It is appreciated.

Not much new to report for me—still wintering in AZ and summer in WA State.

As you are aware, it is no fun being what I used to think of as ancient. That being said, I'm pretty healthy and playing bad golf. Some things never change.

I am sad that NWA no longer exists—Delta will never be as good as we were.

Tell Dick Schlader that he is in our prayers. Take care of yourself.

Dick Suhr

LOREN KIRSCH

Hi Dino,

Enclosed are my dues, (probably a little tardy).

I'm also sending a check to Lowell Stafford for the NWA Retiree Fund. Thank you and people like Lowell for your time and considerable efforts on behalf of your fellow pilots!

Loren Kirsch
F/O NWA (Retired)

EILEEN HALVERSON

Happy New Year Dino,

With pleasure I send you another year of dues for RNPA. Appreciate all you, the board and your wives do to put together another fun September Reunion as ABQ.

The Contrails magazine gets better with each edition and is a pleasure to see it in the mailbox. Thank you Gary and your entire volunteers as one for creating such a quality publication.

Look forward to seeing you in Rapid City.

Eileen Halverson

ALICE MCCABE

Dear Dino,

Am very happy to receive such an interesting newsletter every quarter. Keep up the good work.

Thank you,
Alice McCabe

JEAN FREEBURG

Dear Dino,

My thanks to all you wonderful RNPA people for your kind words and sympathy.

Love,
Jean Freeburg

TOM ERICKSON

To all those managing RNPA,

Many thanks to those who are volunteering their time and running RNPA as a first class organization. The quarterly publications are enjoyed by everyone. We always look forward to receiving them in the mail and reading it—cover to cover.

Tom Erickson

Dino,

Frank Huber and I agreed that December 31st, 2010 would be the end of the NWA Retiree's Fund program. The program was set up as a non-profit, non tax-deductible plan with a limit cap. To go over that limit would bring an audit from the IRS.

Since there are currently only two recipients left, we thought it prudent to disband the program before that happens.

I want to thank all of the donors to this fund. The recipients have been truly grateful for making a difference in their lives.

Lowell Stafford



DICK SCHLADER

Dear Mr. Editor Man:

It must be time to drop a line to the great newsletter in the sky.

Doni Jo and I along with Dick and Eve Smith and Romelle Lemley attended the Florida Spring luncheon in Sarasota on March 2nd.

It was a great show as Dino and company always put on. It was decided to hold the 2011 event here in Bonita at the Colony as before. We will try and provide a firm date before you go to press with the May issue. Give us any info you might have about conflicts during first half of March. Hope you and Mona can come.

We sat at the same table with Dick and Donna Carl, Dick & Eve Smith, Chris & Jan Hanks and John & Candy Kane Badger. Capt. Carl busied himself photographing the crowd for you.

Among about 130 or so attendees were some I hadn't seen in a while; Connie Thompson (looking gorgeous), David Reploeg, Joe Baron and Brooke and Joel Taliaferro and Chuck Hagen. I did not see Eddie Johnson. Hope he is doing ok.

I had a few minutes with Lee Bradshaw and he described his

recent flight in a 2 man P-51. Only Lee could afford that.

The whole party was well planned and the food was good. My only complaint was the way the door prize drawing was rigged. John Scholl, his son John D and their guest Carol Hardy won most of it. Fixed if you ask me.

We are uncertain about Rapid City as family weddings are going to take most of the time. We will skip Omaha, but will make Atlanta if I can get my transfer punched that far out.

I would like to take a minute to acknowledge all the greetings and well wishes, calls, cards & emails I received during my recent heart surgery episode. There certainly must have been lots of prayers because I couldn't have made it with my resume. I am presently doing 2 or 3 months of cardiac rehab, and improving slowly with the constant help of Doni Jo to whom I owe so much.

Congratulations on the recent color issues of Contrails. I remember when you agreed to come on board, I said you would be great when you reached your full potential. I still think you might.

With great admiration,
Rickie

BILL DAY

Greetings Dino,

You will note in addition to my annual dues, a membership application for NWA mechanic Stan Fukai. I am embarrassed that so many years have passed already without Stan's name on our roster. It has been my oversight. Stan has long been held in highest regard by the line pilots at NWA. We may have never had a better wrench turning friend.

Stan's first cousin Vic and I were in the same USAF Aviation Cadet class at Harlingen, Texas. Our first week, a pretty lousy week, we were assigned a graduating class upper classman to square us away. That upper classman was RNPA member George Lachinski.

Stan and Vic traveled together to Japan prior to WWII, not imagining how long it would be before either returned to the United States again.

We look forward to seeing you and others in our ranks in Rapid City.

Warmest regards,
Bill Day

EARLE SCOTT

Hi Dino,

Enclosed is my check for this year's dues.

Also, please note that this is a change of permanent address for Dottie and me. We have been driving back and forth between Minnesota and Arizona, but feel that it is getting to be a long trip so now we'll be up here near the kids all year round.

Because we returned early this year we were able to attend the MSP RNPA Christmas party at the Chart House. It was really enjoyable seeing old friends and fellow pilots. We are expecting to go on the summer cruise and even make the convention this year.

Sincerely,
Earle Scott

WAYNE FRENCH

Thanks to all of you on the RNPA team for the contributions of your time and effort. I appreciate the annual Membership Directory and I greatly value each issue of the RNPA Contrails.

I am still in Minnesota and doing fairly well.

The best to all of you in 2010!
Wayne French

DAVE WOODEN

Hi to all,

2009 was a good year for our family. My wife Lorna and I have traveled to Ireland and Brazil. We are very lucky to have good health and enjoy the good life.

To all of you out there take care.
Blue side up!
Dave Wooden

GLEN BOWERS

Editor,

Took a Delta pass last month. What a pleasant surprise. Very well organized and friendly. Even rode first class on two legs. All for "0" service charges.

Look forward to every issue of Contrails.

Thanks for all the hard work, guys!

Sincerely,
Glen Bowers

JACK CORNFORTH

Thanks to all who put out that wonderful "Contrails"—Betty and I read it through as soon as it comes.

We had a wonderful time at the Albuquerque Convention.

We drove out, stopping at Tulsa, OK to visit ol' Air Force buddies. One I had not seen for 66 years. Had a great time.

Visited relatives in Edmond, OK, then a nice trip to Albuquerque and Santa Fe. Two days of driving. We met ten couples in New Ulm, MN for October Fest. Lots of oompapa music and beer.

Thanks again to all that worked on the convention—it was great.

See you in Rapid City.
Jack & Betty Cornforth

PAUL SAHLER

Dino,

Sorry that Jan and I won't be at the SW FL Luncheon. (Other conflicts.) Look forward to seeing you in Rapid City.

Did make the 747-200 Farewell Party in MSP. Four hundred people there. Sort of bittersweet.

Paul Sahler

DIANE ANSELMO-LACY

Dear Dino and Gang,

Enclosed please find my check for annual renewal for the RNPA magazine. I continue to believe this is the best magazine of its kind and I look forward to every issue.

I'm so glad more flight attendants are taking advantage of all that the RNPA group offers in the way of inviting us to participate in your activities and trips.

Hope to see the group on an outing or two this year. Keep up the good work and thanks to all who are involved.

Diane Anselmo-Lacy
MSP Flight Attendant-Ret.

RON MURDOCK

Hi U-All,

As I write this, I just checked the AM temperatures (TV) and am amazed that we are warmer than you!? [To Dino in Florida.]

Crazy planet.

Our best regards,
Ron & Bonnie Murdock

LLOYD MELVIE

Dino,

Another year gone by and when it gets this cold in Minnesota, I sometimes wonder why I stay?

I continue to serve as pastor of Lake Union Covenant Church, rural South Haven, MN and Sharon continues to teach at Ridgewater College in Willmar. As a rather famous Florida coach said, "Maybe I'll retire someday if I don't die first."

We are blessed with good health and good friends so we will continue to enjoy work and life.

Thanks for all you do for RNPA!
Lloyd Melvie

HOLLY NELSON

Hi Dino,

Happy 2010 to all!

We had a very eventful 2009.

We spent last Jan., Feb. and March down in sunny California, while Dave succussfully went through Proton radiation treatment for prostate cancer at Loma Linda University. It was a wonderful experience... meeting people from all over the world that were all there for the same reason. It was truly a "Radiation Vacation," and Dave would be more than happy to talk to anyone that would like more information.

Some sad news is that we lost dear friends to cancer this past year. We also lost our 17 year old granddaughter. That was a hard one!

In May we had a great time with long-time friends embarking on our first river boat cruise in the South of France—absolutely charming!

Our building project in beautiful Baja continues as we are now working on landscaping and a watering system. We just hope for good health and no hurricanes!

Looking forward to seeing everyone at the next RNPA reunion.

Holly & Dave Nelson

WALLY WAITE

Dear Dino,

I took my neighbor on a buddy pass to Seattle. We took the AM-TRAK Starlight Express from Seattle to Los Angeles down the coast, then flew back to Salt Lake and home. The night part we had a full moon so we could see Mt. Shasta, then Lassen Peak and the coast from Half Moon Bay to Santa Barbara.

In February we will fly to Guadalajara, then take the First Class

bus to Oaxaca then Puerto Vallarta, Acapulco and Zihuatanejo. From Oazaca we'll go to Palenque, Uxmal and Meida, then Chichenitza, Cancun and fly home thru Atlanta.

I hope we're not doing too much Maya ruins. If we want to do more ruins we can go to Monte Alban, but we will see. The food in Merida and Oaxaca will be very good.

Our RNPA, Contrails and all that come with it get better as time passes. My thanks to all that make it happen.

Wally Waite

LARRY WEIDKAMP

Hello Dino,

We just returned from a cruise to Antarctica which included stops in Chile, Argentina, The Falklands, Uruguay and Brazil. The weather was incredibly good between Cape Horn and the Antarctic Peninsula, which was very fortunate. The experience, enhanced by beautiful weather, was surreal and almost a sensory overload! It is a must for any ablebody who has room on his "bucket list!"

We visited a penguin rookery in Chile and one on the Falkland Islands which was wonderful as well. I had trouble getting Linda back on the ship due to her fascination with the critters.

Hello to all from Saint George, Utah!

Larry and Linda Weidkamp

HANK CASTLE

Hi Dino,

Enclosed is my check for RNPA dues. Can't believe I've been retired 8 years. My wife and I are both well, dividing our time between Scottsdale and Seattle. Life is good.

Regards,
Hank Castle

CHLOE DOYLE

Hi Dino,

Peter and I are still running around, following the Dixieland Jazz circuit and moving between home in Seattle and Lincoln City. We manage to over fill our days, weeks, months with travel, family and an occasional adventure.

I enjoy reading the RNPA magazine and appreciate all who work so hard getting such a high quality publication out. It's great reading notes from guys John knew and/or flew with.

The obits of known names make me sad. Wish they all could reach 100. Maybe Joe Kimm can teach them how.

Regards, and all my best, especially to those who remember John.

Chloe Doyle

JOHN COPPAGE

Hi Dino,

Sorry this is late. Been having more fun than the law allows.

This billing got mixed up in my CAF, Warbirds, Red Star Pilots Association stuff. Anyway, this should bring me up to date.

Thanks to you and all those involved in this great publication.

Regards,

John Coppage

PS: Glad to see NWA/Delta transition certificate for one airline completed. To survive in this industry is difficult at best! JC

WAYNE SPOHN

Hi Dino,

Again, thanks to you and the staff and the "Contrails" crew. The pictures in color are great.

Wayne Spohn

SAIL THE MAJESTIC STAR

On our annual summer cruise

STILLWATER, MN
JUNE 10TH, 2010

Price of \$29.50 includes a delicious lunch and a 2½ hour boat ride on the beautiful St. Croix River. Cash bar on board.

Registration deadline
June 3rd

11:00AM – Congregate at dockside (just south of downtown)

11:30AM – Boat sails promptly!



NAME(S): _____
& _____
_____ people @ \$29.50 each = _____

Please make checks payable to:
"Vic Kleinsteuber"
and mail this form to him at:
15258 Curtis Ave
Monticello MN 55362-6250

Your phone contact: _____

DICK MIGAS

Dino:

Just a note to thank you and all the RNPA people for the work you do for the organization and the pension work. It is appreciated.

2009 wasn't the best year, as Karen passed away in July after a long illness. We take comfort in knowing she made it to 70, got to enjoy her kids, grandkids, and a full life in spite of chronic illness.

But we press on. I'm in Arizona for the winter, trying unsuccessfully to conquer golf and reconnecting with a great group of friends.

Still flying my RV9 and remind

myself one can fly and not be tired afterward. Enjoyed the 747 reunion in SEA this year—what a great event! Good health to you and the RNPA family.

Thanks,
Dick Migas

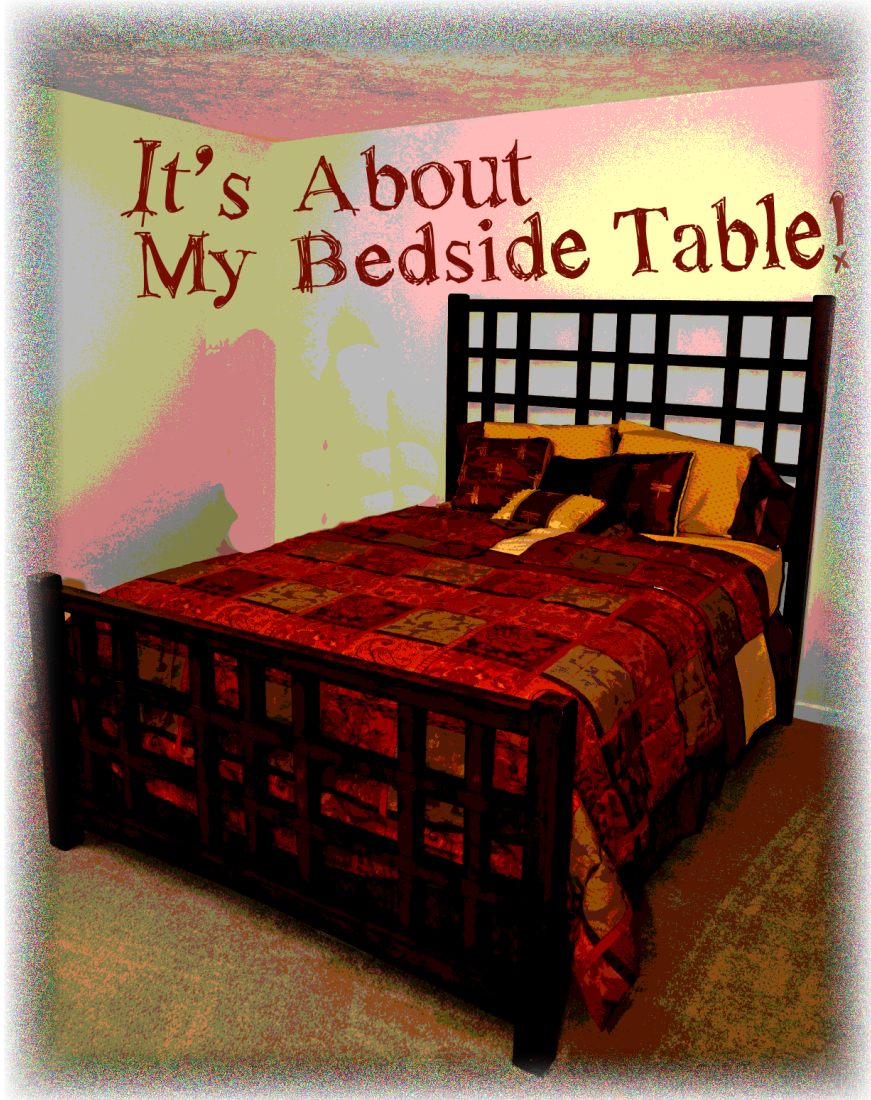
JANINE ROSS MCINTYRE

Dino,

Thanks for keeping us all in touch. It's fun to see what everyone is doing. I'm still flying out of MSP—solo these days! I miss all of you folks that have the privilege of retirement!

Janine Ross McIntyre

YOU
PROBABLY
READ MOST
OF THE LETTERS,
BUT THE ODDS
SAY YOUR NAME
MOST LIKELY
WAS NOT
HERE!



I have a beard. It is not that I particularly want a beard, it is simply that there is no mirror into which to look to shave in our home. I am concerned that, without a mirror, I may not be happy with the shaving result. So—I have a beard.

It itches. Apparently, beards itch until one has had a beard longer than I. I might consider complaining about the itchy beard, but I have other, more important, things about which to complain. For example, for several nights lately I have gone to bed in the dark, only to discover that there are at least two pets in the teensy little spot saved for me to sleep, I have my hearing aids in and my glasses are still on my nose. All of these things make me want to complain, but I have more important things about which to complain. You may wonder why my hearing aids are still in my ears and my glasses still on my nose as I attempt to lie in bed. You would be wrong if you determined that it is because I am old. My glasses are still on and my hearing aids are still in because there is no table beside the bed upon which to place them.



It is absolutely amazing how attached one can become to the table beside his bed. Things have been this way for two weeks. I have yet to figure out where to place my sensory helpers overnight. That table provided a great service to me and now it is gone. The reason there is no end table beside the bed is that there is no furniture in the bedroom except for the bed because my wife is remodeling the house and the furniture in our bedroom has been placed into the living room so that the flooring people can install a new floor in our bedroom but they decided that they couldn't do it last week like they promised because they "assumed" our flooring was in the shipment they received last Tuesday, but when they went to get it to come install it on Thursday it was not in the shipment like they assumed. I tried to explain to the incompetent ladies who own the flooring company that, as an airline captain, it was not prudent for me to assume that the copilot put the wheels down before I landed! They did not think that was very funny.

I may have mentioned above that I have things about which to complain that are more important. Like my shoulder. I could tell you how much my shoulder hurts all day every day, but I am afraid you might suggest that I seek treatment. I do not want to have my shoulder treated while I am without a toilet in our master bathroom. The other day I found the toilet buried under a stack of cardboard boxes in our garage which supposedly hold the new cabinets for our master bathroom which were necessitated by my wife's remodeling project. You may wonder why she moved the toilet in the master bathroom. By moving the toilet two feet forward, she created two feet behind the toilet in which to make a coat closet for our guests who don't wear coats anyway because this is Arizona. Of course, in order to complete the toilet-moving project, our master bathroom needed new cabinets, a new sink, faucet, lights, floor, plaster, vents, fans, outlets and, of course at least one mirror in which to look while one shaves, not to mention a brand-new water-saving toilet. All this naturally evolved into a Murphy bed in the guest bedroom (which is as far from the master bath as one can get in our small home) and new flooring for that room which entailed remodeling the guest bathroom with new counter top and sink and I would complain about all this except that my golf game is in the tank because my shoulder hurts and I had a birthday and am older and less flexible and when I suggested that

we purchase a home she likes the suggestion received an identical response as the landing gear comment to the incompetent floor ladies.

If I did complain, someone would surely explain that I do not live in Haiti or Chile.

So life goes on without complaint and without a table beside the bed. I am beginning to suspect that I might have to finally understand that my socks are still in their drawer, however their drawer is now located in the living room. Never mind that, since the living room is small, there is scant space left for living. My "easy" chair remains. I have tried several different ways to approach said chair. Each route results in another bruise, dog bite or cat scratch. (The poor pets are also living in tight quarters.) Their appearance seems a lot better than mine, perhaps related to the word coumadin. I suspect most readers know about coumadin, however, as part of the Root Cellar's continuing education program, I explain here that coumadin is prescribed by medical personnel to thin a patient's blood. This process is apparently designed to help people with damaged hearts avoid stroke. It is my belief that the term coumadin is used solely to avoid prescribing D-Con, which is exactly the same thing but conveys a different context.

At this point I could complain about the ugly bruises I get trying to approach my chair. Again, I encounter Haiti or Chile. Besides, it won't be long before I will not get accidental bruises because, in all the remodeling turmoil, I can't find the coumadin. Or three pairs of shoes I once owned, my wallet, Dopp kit or favorite golf shirt. Just yesterday I found myself struggling about the house humming: "Oh where, oh where have my car keys gone, oh where oh where can they be?"

My wife heard. "Honey," she said, "your keys are in the empty Kleenex box which is in the trash under the Benefiber bottle where they fell when you tripped over Bogey yesterday."

Yeah, I know, some readers do not believe that anyone calls me "Honey."

About a half hour later I located the trash under a mattress which had been removed from the guest room and relocated to the kitchen. Sure enough, the keys were there. Which meant I would be only about 30 minutes late for my tee time. Maybe next issue I will explain how long it took to find the car in the mess in the garage, but only after I move to Haiti or Chile! ✈

RNPA 2010 REUNION



RAPID CITY & THE BLACK HILLS

SEPTEMBER 24, 25 & 26

Rapid City is proud to host more than 2 million visitors each year who come to see and experience the awe inspiring mountain carvings of Mt. Rushmore and Crazy Horse, the Badlands and the magnificent Black Hills National Forest.

We are planning on making that about 2,000,250 or so near the end of September this year. Make plans now to meet old friends and new as part of that two hundred and fifty.



TOTAL COST

\$170 Per Person

👉 \$200 After June 1st 👈



Model of what Crazy Horse is intended to look like when finished.

HOTEL

RUSHMORE PLAZA HOLIDAY INN
505 N 5th St, Rapid City

For reservation call:
(605) 348-4000
and tell them you're with
RNPA (Code RPA)

Hotel info:
www.rushmoreplaza.com/

HOTEL RATES:

Standard or
King Leisure \$89

King Executive \$99

Suite \$119

Price good for two
days before & after

SCHEDULE

FRIDAY Registration and evening reception

SATURDAY Historic train ride, Mt. Rushmore & Crazy Horse
Lunch with the Presidents included

SUNDAY General meeting and banquet

RESERVATION

Send this form with check payable to "RNPA" and mail to:

Terry Confer, 9670 E Little Further Way, Gold Canyon AZ 85118

Name: _____

Name: _____

email: _____ OR phone _____

Amount enclosed: _____

A STABILIZED approach



Contributing Columnist James Baldwin

Links In a Chain and the Way We Learn

The sound of two physical objects attempting to occupy the same space at the same time after converging at over 800 knots is one way of defining indescribable. In this case that sound paraphrased the laws of physics, dramatically and graphically, revealing what we already know: something will have to move aside or be displaced commensurate with the energy that forced them together in the first place. And in that oh so brief moment in time where energy was dissipated as sound and metal was rearranged, it was the Caiapo Indians below, in the Amazon Basin, who heard that discordant noise. It was the 29th day of September, 2006, and the tragic collision of a Gol Transportes Aereos Boeing 737 airliner and a brand new Embraer Legacy 600 business jet, being delivered to its new owners in New York, began an investigation and project to assign blame that extends to the day this is written. The “links” in the chain of events leading to this accident are as close in relation to the actual flight portion of the mission as they are to the assumptions and actions made by someone other than the flight crew.

The assignment seemed pretty simple: Deliver a brand new Legacy 600 business jet from the Embraer facility at Sao Jose dos Campos, Brazil to the home of its new owner, ExcelAire, a charter jet travel provider, in the United States. The trip was broken into two parts, with a stopover the first night in Manaus, Brazil, some 1725 nautical miles to the northwest of the departure point. That leg of the trip was scheduled to take about three hours and 23 minutes before the crew and passengers deplaned after landing and headed for the layover. They would depart for New York later the next day.

When interpreted with our experience, the resulting notion of almost any kind of accident frequently re-

veals they are seldom the result of a single condition, unexpected occurrence or event. There are exceptions of course, one of the latest being the well publicized landing of the US Airways A320 in the Hudson River. However, history indicates the majority of accidents have causes related to decisions made by the flight crew, either in planning or in execution. This particular example encourages us to examine the prima facie facts uncovered without bias. The concept of “a link” might be equated to the concept of an opportunity to contribute to an outcome, good or bad.

A similar length airline trip, from Tokyo, Japan to Hong Kong would take about three hours and 30 minutes in a Boeing 747-400, while it covered the 1695 nautical miles. Though considered by professionally experienced international airline crews to be a simple and straightforward assignment, it requires transit through at least three distinctly different flight areas, each with their own culture, custom, communication nuance, language accent and resultant challenge. There are certainly “links” lurking here.

The ExcelAire pilots were trained and type rated on the Embraer Legacy and were both qualified to fly as captain on the aircraft. The pilot acting as captain on this flight, 42 years old, had a total time of 9,388 hours over a career of 20 years and 5.5 hours in the Legacy 600. The first officer, 36 years old, had a total time of 6400 hours with 317 hours of experience as a captain with a regional airline in similar Embraer aircraft. They had attended Flight Safety, one of several well known and used training organizations recognized and required by most insurance companies. In this case, and to ExcelAire’s credit, it was arranged for both pilots to fly the Legacy twice before also flying the airplane with Embraer factory pilots during the inspection and acceptance process in Brazil. This

story doesn't get too old before the notion of delay begins to form the first of many potential "links" as minor system difficulties caused departure cancellations with two pilots who undoubtedly wanted to get home.

The captain of the airline flight was a senior pilot with over 25 years of airline seasoning involving extensive experience during his career flying several of the aircraft types in the widebody fleet. The 747-400 was nothing new to him nor were the routing, departure or arrival procedures. It is also important to note that despite the practiced nature of an operation with a limited number of destinations, the procedures learned and operational practices are no different to a new or infrequent destination. The first officer had flown in this position for less than a year. Even though the seniority earned during his 13 year career had previously not allowed him to fly the 747-400, he'd spent enough days and nights out in the Pacific in other aircraft to learn of the nuance and culture of extended overwater and foreign aerial commerce.

The flight plan for the Legacy 600 flight from Sao Jose dos Campos, Brazil, to Manaus, Brazil was filed for flight level 370. The trip routing was pretty simple with only one noted difference: in this case the Legacy flight plan had included a planned descent to 36,000 feet to conform to the proper altitude regimen for a change in the easterly to now westerly direction of flight. In a flight plan it is nothing more than a change that the flight crew would consider to be "expected." While it is standard operation for turbojet aircraft to climb to higher altitudes as they burn off fuel and reduce their gross weight, local ATC agencies are responsible to assign and govern the usable altitudes for a given airway or direction of flight. It is unknown how much time the crew spent considering the flight or if its specifics were even noted by the two domestically experienced American pilots. The flight plan itself was filed by the Embraer Corporation as had undoubtedly been done countless times in past delivery operations.


The flight planning process for the pilots of the airline flight began about two hours before the scheduled departure time of 6:00 pm. The captain and the first officer met formally, yet in a relaxed and well practiced manner, in an international flight planning area at the airport. A computerized flight plan, prepared by a company dispatcher

assigned to that particular flight, was transmitted to the flight crew along with weather information and other miscellaneous forms and manifests. After examining the proposed flight routing, fuel burn figures, allowed equipment malfunctions, suggested altitudes and confirming the filed flight plan, the pilots participated in a telephone conversation with the dispatcher who would monitor the flight until it reached its destination. For both pilot groups, anytime planning is done by others, the communication of the plan to the operator of it defines an opportunity for yet another potential "link."

The ExcelAire pilots departed Sao Jose dos Campos just before three P.M. with five other individuals onboard, including a pair of Embraer staffers and a New York Times contributing writer. The controller who delivered the ATC clearance to the Embraer barely spoke enough English for the crew to understand their clearance, but, at a minimum of assumption, the read-back of the clearance to ATC suggests both pilots understood the routing and initially assigned altitude as well as the code to be used with the aircraft transponder. The pilots divided the workload traditionally with the captain in the left seat manipulating the controls and the co-pilot handling the radios. Within minutes after the uneventful takeoff and departure, they were comfortably cruising with the autopilot engaged at their assigned altitude of 37,000 feet. As might be expected over a country the size of Brazil, traffic was relatively light although the use of the English language, standard for ICAO, was intermixed with dialects of Portuguese, the national language. There is no time in the recording where either pilot mentioned any precaution to be taken or special attention to the very different airspace in which they were operating. They were flying a new jet with systems they were vaguely familiar with in airspace of which they had an equally sparse understanding. The chain is forming.

The airline flight crew, despite having never flown together, practiced the same airline taught procedures and checks despite the difference in experience level of the pilots. The challenge and response form of each checklist left no doubt in either pilot's mind that the necessary items had been accomplished or reviewed. Though not always the case for a particular airplane, that the captain was the more experienced of the two pilots was an advantage to the first officer still learning the specifics and cul-





ture of the Boeing 747-400. The captain announced he would do the flying this evening and the first officer could do the flying tomorrow on the return leg. Both pilots received and recorded the initial clearance and a detailed briefing was conducted on not only the departure procedure, but also on the taxi route to the runway in use and myriad details concerning the power setting, weather, terrain, abort specifics and the transition altitude. They both knew who was in charge and who was going to do what. The takeoff and climb to the cruise altitude of 38,000 feet was normal and expeditious due to the reduced fuel weight of the long range aircraft. As expected, heavily accented English was predominant although there was an occasional use of Japanese to and from other aircraft. This potential link is well known to most pilots operating in foreign lands.

The ExcelAire pilots, recorded on the airplane's cockpit voice recorder with a continuously repeating two hour recording loop, indicated an immediate level of confusion in the controller's transmissions with a less than acceptable level of questioning and follow-up by them. Further action and communication between them throughout the flight creates an impression: this was not a crew; this was two corporate pilots flying together. The copilot didn't wait too long to access the laptop computer supplied with the airplane by the Embraer factory. Installed on it was flight planning software used to calculate the landing capability later that day and takeoff performance for the next as well as myriad flight planning features. That this equated to a distraction is inarguable, but more importantly is the degree to which it initiated a subtle reduction in the crew's situational awareness of the critical aspects of the flight. At this point, with a minimum of judgment, it is equitable to insist that there is a relaxed cultural level of standardization and expected operational practice when compared to an airline cockpit. Equally notable is the result we've all seen when a laptop was recently used in an airliner cockpit.

The crew of the Boeing 747-400 relaxed after leveling off, attending mostly to items designed to allow them to fall into a familiar pattern of operation. Confirming the route the airplane was following conformed not only to the clearance but what also was programmed into the aircraft FMS was repeated again at each waypoint. They both knew where they were and what to expect from the ATC region they were navigating through. Although the flight was

relatively short with little need for altitude planning, the captain still took the time to become aware of the traffic around him. TCAS symbols combined with monitored ATC communication to other aircraft on the same route soon make it clear to those who listen. The captain was paying attention. Efficient descents into busy airports almost anywhere in the world are as much a function of competing traffic and ATC restrictions as they are using the available tools of modern digital FMS systems. It is common for the captain or first officer to request, without prejudice, a repeated confirmation of an ATC instruction, and tonight was no different. The first officer looked to the captain several times in question and the answer was always the same: "Ask 'em to repeat it."

The use of verbal communication between controllers and pilots is a complex and laborious way of getting aircraft to do what is required in the "big picture" available to controllers. Reading back the instructions issued to an aircraft is the only way a controller knows the crew heard the instruction clearly and accurately. The Embraer crew, now 150 NM south of Brasilia, was instructed to change frequency. They did but did not really understand the reply when in contact with the new controller. Despite a repeated attempt to, with certainty, understand the controller's commentative response; neither pilot insisted on yet another try. Coincident at this time of the flight, the pilots were exploring the FMS capabilities and continued in their attempt to locate various other functions in the laptop computer. After all, they were comfortably cruising under radar control in clear skies while enjoying a smooth ride. The voice recorder yields enough hints to indicate that neither of the pilots had a thorough knowledge of either the capability of the FMS nor location of any specific feature. They were unable to answer the simple question proposed by a passenger who came forward to ask how much time was remaining in the flight without multiple attempts to locate the time figure in the FMS. They continued in their attempt to pull up weather information with either the laptop or the FMS. Distraction and a concentration on anything but the flight itself was now the well entrenched mode of operation though neither the captain nor the first officer had any idea of their lack of situational awareness. Chains are made of links and a very robust link bearing the title: "communication?" had been formed.

The airline captain, well aware of the responsibility he has agreed to accept for the entire working crew aboard, has also allowed time to remain aware of the actions of the cabin attendants. He knew when the passenger meals would be served and how long it would take them to finish. He used the ACARS link to the airline ground facilities to keep track of any changes in destination weather and turbulence information supplied by the dispatcher on duty as well as ensuring the engine monitoring numbers were recorded and downloaded using the same system. The point of this detail is to explain the potential for distraction, external to actual operation of the aircraft, is at least as prevalent in an airline operation as it was to the Embraer pilots self generated commotion.

The last record of any communication by the Embraer crew to Brasilia Center was made as the aircraft approached the VOR at Brasilia and would make its turn to the west. It would be only minutes later that the Embraer's transponder ceased to reply with the secondary transponder mode which reports altitude to ATC facilities. This, in essence, is when the TCAS portion of the transponder system became inoperative, and would remain in this mode until after the collision occurred. It isn't a reach in understanding to assume that the pilots, attempting to learn and familiarize themselves with the Honeywell FMS, inadvertently switched the TCAS system off as opposed to it becoming inoperative on its own. Neither pilot would notice the small white text "TCAS OFF" on their respective primary flight displays. Leading to this conclusion is the increased level of distraction of the crew as they also attempted to figure out how to operate the copilot's new digital camera. And it was also at this time the captain elected to retreat aft to the bathroom where he apologetically spent 17 minutes. It was during his absence that the copilot finally realized that the aircraft was essentially "NORDO" and he began, after 57 minutes without specific contact with ATC, to find a frequency on which to converse.

The collision occurred while the Embraer was still out of contact with either Brasilia Center or Amazonia Center. The copilot had initially heard the blind transmission by Brasilia Center to change frequency but was not heard by the controller when he asked them to repeat the change. Just minutes later it wouldn't matter. The left winglet of the business jet sliced through the Boeing's left wing at midpoint,

severing enough structure to force the outer panel of the wing upward and into the airliner tail. One can only imagine the inertial forces the aircraft and its 154 occupants experienced as it spiraled out of control into the jungle below. The Embraer's winglet, upper surface of the left wing and tail had been damaged but enough remained that the pilots were able to maintain control and begin an emergency descent. It is during the initial portion of the emergency that significant events occur which are better left to analysis by others, but command and manipulation of the controls is passed, essentially unintentionally yet irretrievably to the copilot, who eventually completes the landing. It is also during this time that the transponder error is discovered to the surprise of both pilots and is returned to an operating state.

The information that has been relayed here was—and large parts of the story of what the ATC specialists/Brazilian ATC system did to cause this accident in the first place have purposely been left out—not to compare an airline crew operating normally versus a pair of corporate pilots, but to use this true story as an example of the way we must continue to learn and apply lessons learned by others to our own decisions.

The links in the chain of this avoidable accident could have been broken at several points by either the ATC controllers or by the pilots themselves. It is absolutely inexcusable for the controlling agency to allow two aircraft to operate on converging paths along the same airway, and it is equally derelict to sit in the sun at flight level 370 with no radio contact and a transponder in the standby position. Situational awareness of their position and its relation to the proposed altitude change would have alone prompted most pilots to query ATC as to what they might expect. It is no different a requirement than what airline pilots experience when transiting flight control regions.

Perhaps the larger lesson here, for pilots and non-pilots alike, is the notion of recognizing the links forming the chain leading to an undesirable yet avoidable result of events in our daily lives. Though there are exceptions, significant events, good or bad, are seldom simple nor the result of an individual decision or action. ✦





Clutching their Dillard's shopping bags, Ellen and Kay woefully gazed down at a dead cat in the mall parking lot. Obviously a recent hit—no flies, no smell. “What business could that poor kitty have had here?” murmured Ellen.

“Come on, Ellen, let's just go...”

But Ellen had already grabbed her shopping bag and was explaining, “I'll just put my things in your bag, and then I'll use this tissue.” She dumped her purchases into Kay's bag and then used the tissue paper to cradle and lower the former feline into her own Dillard's bag and cover it.

They continued the short trek to the car in silence, stashing their goods in the trunk. But it occurred to both of them that if they left Ellen's burial bag in the trunk, warmed by the Texas sunshine while they ate, Kay's Lumina would soon lose that new car smell.

They decided to leave the bag on top of the trunk, and they headed over to Luby's Cafeteria. They went through the serving line and they sat down at a window table. They had a view of Kay's Chevy with the Dillard's bag still on the trunk.

But not for long! As they ate, they noticed a woman in a red gingham shirt stroll by their car. She looked quickly this way and that, and then took the Dillard's bag without breaking stride. She quickly walked out of their line of vision.

Kay and Ellen shot each other a wide-eyed look

This could only be true; you simply can't make this stuff up!

of amazement. It all happened so fast that neither of them could think how to respond. “Can you imagine?” finally sputtered Ellen. “The nerve of that woman!”

Kay sympathized with Ellen, but inwardly a laugh was building as she thought about the grand surprise awaiting the female thief. Just when she thought she'd have to giggle into her napkin, she noticed Ellen's eyes freeze in the direction of the serving line.

Following her gaze, Kay recognized the woman in the red gingham shirt with *the* Dillard's bag hanging from her arm. She was brazenly pushing her tray toward the cashier. Helplessly they watched the scene unfold.

After leaving the register, the woman settled at a table across from theirs, put the bag on an empty chair and began to eat.

After a few bites of baked whitefish and green beans, she casually lifted the bag into her lap to survey her treasure. Looking from side to side, but not far enough to notice her rapt audience three tables over, she pulled out the tissue paper and peered into the bag. Her eyes widened, and she began to make a sort of gasping noise. The noise grew. The bag slid from her lap as she sank to the floor, wheezing and clutching her upper chest.

The beverage cart attendant quickly recognized a customer in trouble and sent the busboy to call 911, while she administered the Heimlich maneuver. A crowd quickly gathered that did not include Ellen and Kay, who remained riveted to their chairs for seven whole minutes until the ambulance arrived.

In a matter of minutes, the woman with the red gingham shirt emerged from the crowd, still gasping, and securely strapped on a gurney. Two well-trained EMS volunteers steered her to the waiting ambulance, while a third scooped up her belongings.

The last they saw of the distressed cat-burglar was as she disappeared behind the ambulance doors, *the Dillard's bag perched on her stomach!*

Sometimes, God does take care of those who do bad things! (And once in awhile He allows us to witness it!)

– Author unknown

LOOKING BACK



RNPA HISTORIAN **JAMES LINDLEY**



Safe Landing

NORTHWEST AIRLINES

May 15, 1934, Washington,

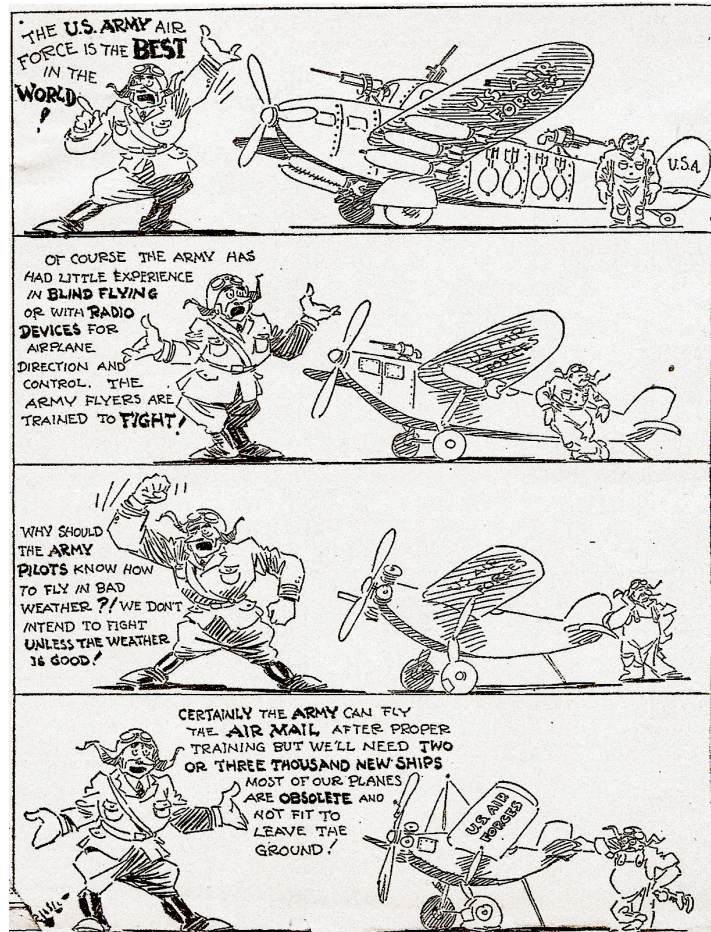
The postoffice department today awarded a contract for carrying the mail from Chicago to Pembina, N.D. to the Hanford Tri-State Airline, Inc. of Sioux City, Iowa.

A contract for air mail service between Fargo and Seattle, Washington was awarded to Northwest Airlines, Inc. of St. Paul.

On the Chicago to Pembina route Hanford bid 19.6 cents per airplane mile, the National Airline Taxi System, 24.5 cents, and Northwest Airlines Inc. 39 cents.

Not Low Bidder

The bid of Northwest Airlines, Inc., for the Fargo-Seattle route, was 33.75 cents. The low bidder for this



Army Pilots Can't fly in Weather. Where does that Leave Us?

route was the Northern Air Transport, Inc. of St. Paul for 28.8 cents. A postoffice department statement said: "This company was disqualified because the aeronautics branch of the department of commerce reported its equipment inadequate."

Northwest Airlines, Inc., has three tri-motored Ford planes to be used as standby equipment, and has three twin-motored Lockheed Electras on order for immediate delivery. Northwest also has been negotiating with Boeing of Seattle for several 247-D type planes for future delivery.

SW Florida Spring Luncheon



Hosted by Dino & Karen Oliva

Photography: Dick Carl and Bill Horne



Bill Rataczak, Dino Oliva



Vic Britt, Karen Oliva





Gary & Barbara Pisel



Doug Wulff, George Lachinski



Rita & Wayne Ward



Judy & Bill Rataczak



Adrian Jenkins, Steve Towle, Tony LiCalsi



Julie & Roger Moberg, Preston & Mary Thornbrough



Wendy & Pete Vinsant



K C & Martha Kohlbrand



Candy & John Badger, Cortney Webb



Sandi & Dan DeLosh



Tom & Tootz Kelley, Kathy Palmen,
Keith & Verna Finneseth, Connie Thompson



Jan Christman, Al Teasley, Gary Webb



Dee & Don Bergman



Gary & Cortney Webb



John & Claire Lackey



Gene & Joan Sommerfeld



Cathy & Dale Nadon, Chris Hanks



Joel Taliaferro, Tony LiCalsi, Chris Hanks



John & B. J. Boyer



Brooke & Joel Taliaferro



Barbara Pisel, Donna Carl



Cecy Glenn & Bruce Armstrong



Dave Good, Dan DeLosh



Bob Chandler, Ray Alexander, Bob Vega (back), Wayne Ward, Pete Vinsant



Al Teasley, Dick Haglund



Connie Thompson, Kathy Palmen



Jim & Nancy Bestul



Dick & Evie Turner



Terry Marsh, Jim Bestul



Steve Towle, Tim Walker



Candy & John Badger, Janet Baron



Don Hunt, Gary Mau, Don Bergman



Rita Ward, Katie Alexander, Wayne Ward, Ray Alexander



Don & Edith Schrope, Dave Sanderson, Jim Bestul, Al Teasley



Bob & Sue Horning



Kathy Palmen, Linda Calvert



Gary Mau, Bob Chandler



Greg Gillies, Tony LiCalsi




Tom Kelley, Tim Walker



Dick Turner, George Handel, Doug Wulff, Roger Moberg

And then there's
THIS PROBLEM!





THE FIERY LOSS OF STROBE ZERO ONE

BY DICK RUTAN

The only USAF General officer to die during the Vietnam conflict did so not thirty feet from my cockpit. It was an absolutely horrific experience.

It happened sometime in the summer of 1968; although I don't remember exactly when. I do remember it was on my third MISTY tour. Third tour? Why??!! Well, I couldn't face busting trees back in the south. I figured as long as I had to be there, I might as well be where the action was.

This day, I was in the back seat with Captain Donald E. Harland, who, sadly, is no longer with us. We had just backed off the tanker, and were filled with fuel when I heard a Mayday call to Waterboy (GCI). The call was from Strobe 01, an RF-4C Phantom Recce Bird coming out of North Vietnam, just above the DMZ. He reported he had taken a hit and had smoke in the rear cockpit. He was losing hydraulic pressure and was heading "feet wet."

Turning on our tape recorder, I listened for a while to the conversation and discovered we were inbound almost head-on to Strobe 01. I jumped into the conversation and asked Waterboy to vector us for a rejoin so we could check him out.

After a few vectors we found ourselves in a stern tail chase with too much speed and I overshot him. Idle, speed brakes, full left rudder, right aileron. I skidded right by him asking if he, Strobe 01, had an F-100 going by his left wing.

Embarrassed, I slipped back on his left wing and from what Harland and I could initially see that he looked pretty much normal—no big holes or streaming fluid. Strobe said they were still losing hydraulic pressure and it was getting real hot in the rear cockpit. I asked him to hold it real steady so we could come in closer and do a battle damage check.

We started looking just as Strobe rolled wings level, just a few miles feet wet and parallel to the coast. Now abeam the DMZ, he said he was going to try to make it to DaNang. His reconnaissance outfit Strobe was stationed out of Saigon, so DaNang, farther north, was the emergency recovery base.

Since Harland was new to MISTY and I had been around a while, I took control. Still a little sheepish of my grand display of flying skill because of the overshoot, I took a deep breath and said to myself, "Okay D__ S__, don't f__ this up anymore." I then slid close in underneath the ugliest fighter ever built (too many engines, too many seats).

Harland noticed it first near the nose. It appeared to be a small hole in the belly near the aft part of the camera bay. We could see a little flame flickering in the hole, but not a real big fire. We had to get real close to see but there was a small amount of smoke coming out of the seams in the belly.

As we slid out to the right side, we could also see a small amount of flame in the camera bay through

the oblique camera window.

I crossed back over to the left wing while Harland and I forwarded these tidbits of information to Strobe. During this time, we had no idea there was a General officer in front and we were not talking to the pilot, but to a “seeing eye Major” in the back seat. I thought it was just a “Poug” Captain and a Brown Bar Navigator in the back. After all, Generals are prohibited from flying up North, and these reconnaissance guys really hang it out. Company grade stuff, the field graders usually find other things to do.

Strobe acknowledged the fire and said, “Okay, we’re going to go ahead and bail out.” I thought, “Wow, this is going to be neat.” It should have been a very “by-the-book” ejection; 10,000 feet, straight and level, ideal speed, under control, leading to a routine water rescue. Up until this moment, I had not witnessed an ejection sequence up close and the notorious F-4 Martin Baker seat, known as the “back breaker,” with its complicated system would be neat to see.

I eased the F-100F out to route formation and waited and waited, but nothing happened. A review of the tape later showed it was almost two minutes before the rear seat fired.

Later I asked the “seeing eye Major” what took so long since he was told they were on fire, why the wait? He said the General did not want to eject and argued about the position of the command ejection handle in the rear cockpit. The Major, upholding his duties, wanted it in the command position (the guy in back command ejects the front).

But the General outranked him and ordered him to leave it in the off position, thereby making each seat a single initiated ejection. The Major was reluctant, but after retrieving the check list and reading each step of the bold face ejection procedures (SOP for many engines, many seats, what can you expect) to each other, the Major pulled the “D” ring on his seat, leaving his General to fend for himself.

From my vantage point, this first ejection from the rear cockpit was text book. I can still remember it vividly today, as if in slow motion. The aft canopy opened and separated cleanly, clearing the tail by a good 20 feet, then the seat started up the rails. Just as the bottom of the seat cleared the canopy seal, the rocket motor ignited, burned for 1.2 seconds and the seat went straight up very stable. When the rocket stopped, the drogue chute came out, and the seat rotated back 90 degrees eyeballs straight up, flat on his back, as he cleared the tail.

Now looking back over my right shoulder, the main C-9 canopy came out and as it started to open/inflate, the seat separated and kept right on going. Now with the canopy fully open, the pilot swung back underneath. The whole thing was as neat as hell, I thought.

But when I looked back to the stricken aircraft, I could not believe the horror I saw. The front cockpit was totally engulfed in fire. Only a white dot of the pilot’s helmet was visible through the smoke and flames. He was sitting straight up as before, he wasn’t moving, and seemed totally oblivious to what was happening. It looked like two huge blow torches were coming up from the rudder pedal wells through the front cockpit around the pilot and out the now open rear cockpit. The fire was streaming out and over the back of the Phantom, turning into a dense black smoke trail that obscured the tail. But the aircraft flew on undisturbed, not even a burble. The pilot was still not moving, still seemed unaware, as if he was enjoying the flight. The whole thing was surreal; almost dream like.

How could this be? For a moment I thought he might not be aware of the fire, and I must tell him to eject. So I began hollering on the radio, “Strobe 01! Bail out! Bail out!”

I called two or three times more, but still nothing happened. The wings were level, but now the aircraft started a shallow descent. “My God!” I screamed. “Why doesn’t he eject? How can he just sit there? What in the hell is wrong?”

Then I figured it out. It became obvious we were too far away (route formation) and he couldn’t hear me. So I drove the Hun right up next to the burning cockpit and continue calling, “Strobe 01! Bail out! Bail out!” this time with more desperation in my screams. Harland calls, “Oh my God! Look at it burn!”

In desperation, I drive closer, so close that the air pressure between the two aircraft causes the fiery ball to roll into a 30 degree bank, turning toward the right. As I pulled away, he rolled back wings level, now pointed directly at the beach in a slightly steeper descent.

By this time, the intense heat had charred Strobe’s canopy and we could no longer see the pilot’s white helmet. The paint began to blister, and there were a few small explosions that blew some of the panels loose and sent others flying off. Now, the whole nose was a charcoal mess. The flames subsided, and dense, thick smoke streamed from the nose area.

For some strange reason I just couldn't let go and continued to call Strobe, nearly begging him to get out. At about 500 feet AGL and still close on his wing, the old Phantom gave one last dying gasp. It pitched up a little and then dove straight into the beach, hitting about 100 yards feet dry.

For some strange reason, I still couldn't let go.

Harland screamed, "Goddammit Dick! Pull Up!" I always felt if it had not been for Harland's stern direction, I would have crashed right beside him; I would have just followed him in. I pulled up left and told Waterboy, "Strobe 01 just impacted on the beach."

A few minutes later, Waterboy called and asked if there was any chance of survival. My sad reply was "Negative survival, negative survival."

As we turned back feet wet to find the back seater, there was an usual amount of radio chatter about securing the area—dispatching a Medivac, etc. It seemed odd—such an intense amount of interest in this crash site.

We MISTYs have seen a lot of combat crash sites, but once it was determined there were no survivors, it's instantly written off. A blue car would be dispatched to a grieving family back in the states, and that's pretty much the end of it. Although this crash interest level was way out of the ordinary, Harland and I still had no idea who was onboard, and we wouldn't find out until we returned to Phu Cat.

It was time to concentrate on the back seater. We quickly located him still in his parachute about five thousand feet above an angry Gulf of Tonkin. We looked at the sea state and it was rough... real rough. We noticed a motorized Vietnamese sampan hell-bent and heading straight for the back seater. We came around for a closer look and saw three or four people on board the boat flying the Republic of South Vietnam flag.

The sea was rough and the boat continues to pound forward. Was this good or bad? Friendly or bad guy? Even if they were friendly, they could still kill the pilot if they did not know what they were doing. Harland and I decided these signs weren't good ones, so Harland made a low pass across the boat's bow to encourage him to turn around. We pulled up, but the boat was not dissuaded in the least and continued on toward the back seater, who is drifting closer to the water.

What to do now?

Hell, I felt we warned 'em, so now we kill 'em. But at the last minute, we decided to give the boat one final warning and Harland placed a long burst of 20mm right close across the boat's bow. This time

as we pulled up and came around, and just as the back seater hit the water, the threatening boat made a sharp 180 degree turn and "beat feet" back to the beach.

Soon afterward, the Jolly Green arrived and picked him up.

This seemed just another day on the MISTY trail and Harland and I headed back to the PAC asking Waterboy where Strobe 01 got hit. Thinking Vengeance, but no one knew exactly where, so we finished our morning cycle and returned to Phu Cat.

As we taxied in, there was a sea of Colonels waiting. Before I opened the canopy, I said to Harland, "I don't know what we've done, but it must have been a major f__ u_."

The first colonel up the ladder said in an angry voice, "What are you doing here? You should have landed at Saigon." Boy, were we confused. The Colonel continued, "It's about Strobe 01." I said, "Yeah, that was real bad and, uh, hey, I have a tape of the whole thing." The Colonel's eyes got real big and he literally grabbed the tape recorder from my hands.

Harland and I climbed out of the aircraft totally bewildered until it finally dawned on the Colonel that we had no idea who was on board Strobe 01. "It was General Bob Worley," and not knowing what to do with the recorder, he handed it back to me and said, "Get in a Class "B" Uniform, pack a bag and a Scatback (T-39) will be here in 30 minutes to take you both to Saigon. MACV wants you guys to brief the Generals.

"Oh, Goody," I thought.

On the ride to Saigon, I listened to the tape. Thank God I did, because there was one real bad thing said that needed to be edited, so I did a 18 second "Nixon Gap" treatment.

When we made Saigon, it seemed every damn General required his own private briefing and wanted to listen to the tape. These hallowed halls filled with stars was some change of pace for a couple of up country Poug MISTYs.

The real sad thing was that the pilot was General Bob Worley, a real, honest to goodness Tactical Fighter Pilot. The rest were, as you know, a bunch of SAC Pukes. A strong and much needed voice for the fighter pilot was lost that day. What was doubly sad was it was Worley's DEROS (last) mission.

I often wondered why I kept calling for Strobe 01 to bail out, and why we stuck so close all the way in not wanting to let go when it was obvious Bob was dead a few seconds after the back seater ejected.

The psychology of combat... ✈

CHANGES ANNOUNCED TO THE PAUL SODERLIND MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND



A lot happened in 2009 to change the future operation of the Paul Soderlind Memorial Scholarship Fund (PSMSF). Because of several considerations, the Board of Directors of the Fund unanimously voted in late 2009 that Wings Financial Credit Union would handle the application process and recipient selection along with managing their own scholarship program. A member of the PSMSF Board will become a member of the Wings Scholarship Selection Committee. Financial control will continue to be the responsibility of the PSMSF Secretary/Treasurer and Wings will continue to be the depository for all Fund money.

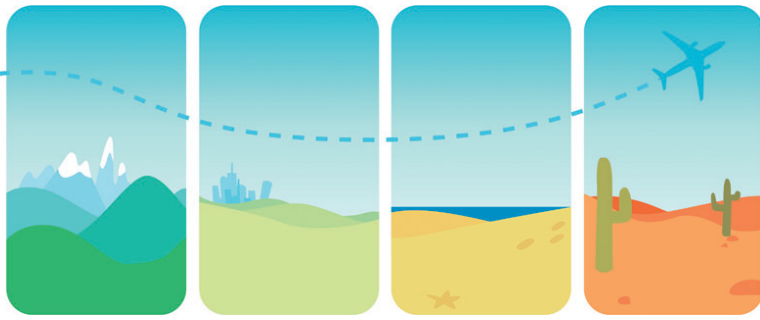
There will be one scholarship awarded annually by Wings Financial under the sponsorship of the PSMSF. The amount of the scholarship will be a one time \$2500. The applicant must be an employee of the former Northwest Airlines OR related either as child or grandchild of a current or retired former Northwest Airlines employee. Step-children are also eligible. The applicant must be attending or accepted for admission to an accredited college or university or vocational/technical school.

Applicants who wish to apply for the PSMSF scholarship and who meet the eligibility requirements must provide a completed application by mid-February of each year. The application must include a completed scholarship application form. The appearance, style, structure,

grammar and content will be considered when determining the recipient of the scholarship. It must also include a 300 word essay that discusses your career goals and why you selected your school of choice as the next step in your education.

Applications are available in PDF form on line at www.wingsfinancial.com or may be picked up at any Wings Financial office. They can also be mailed to you upon request from their offices. See the Wings Financial web site for more information regarding the PSMSF and the other Wings Financial scholarships that are being offered.

Although there is no direct connection between the Fund and the Retired Northwest Airlines Pilots' Association, its members may continue to contribute to the PSMSF through auctions, raffles, and personal donations. Individual donations can be made directly to Wings Financial by check, made out to the Paul Soderlind Memorial Scholarship Fund, along with a note explaining your wishes. Wings Financial CU will issue you an acknowledgement of your donation. The PSMSF remains a 501(c)3 corporation and all donations are tax deductible. If you have any questions regarding the scholarship program after reading about it on the Wings Financial web site, feel free to call Tom Schellinger (952-953-4378) or contact the Wings Financial Credit Union.



PHOENIX PICNIC 2010



**DO YOU SUPPOSE
THERE ARE ANY OF US
LEFT UP NORTH?**



▲ Gary Pisel selling logo cups by the dozens

◀ Jerry & Sherry Cooper checking in



Some of the pilots of RNPA, PHX Base-R



Some of the ladies of RNPA, PHX Base-R



Chow time!

Barb Pisel reports that Jack Herbst cleaned his plate, but it looks like Gene Frank is way ahead of him. ▼



Photos first four pages:
Barbara Pisel



Terry & Lynne Confer soaking up the sun ▶





The Phoenix picnic included a tour of the Commemorative Air force. Here a docent is lecturing on *Sentimental Journey*.

These four photos: Wayne Anderson





Mostly the same people in these three photos, L-R: Camille & Jack Herbst, Jerry Cooper, Gary Vessel, Larry Rakunas, Dave Schneebeck, John Schell, George Buck, Linda Schell, Andrea Schneebeck and the docent.



K P Haram nearest the Stinson

RV FLYERS,

from boats to RVs

By Dick Carl

From Boats to RVs, that is how it started. As you all will recall, there had always been a large contingent of commuter pilots that were located in the Tampa/St. Petersburg area. As pilots tend to do, a lot of them owned boats, some large, some even larger and some not quite as large. In the mid 1990's Chris Hanks, one of the retired "East Coast" (of Florida) pilots, who owned an RV rather than a boat, was visiting with some of the "West Coast" (of Florida) boat people. After a few libations Chris was able to sweet talk a couple of the WC guys into letting him give them an RV demo. Chris is really good at that sort of thing. That was the start of the transition back ashore. Slowly but surely, one by one, the "West Coast" guys traded their big and not quite as big vessels for big and bigger motor homes.

In late 1999, early 2000, a small but growing group of these pilot RV owners got together and after a couple of hours of telling tall tales, decided to organize a "lay-over" at an RV resort called River Ranch.

River Ranch is a higher end RV resort located near the town of Yeehaw Junction (this is for real, I didn't make it up) in central Florida. During the price negotiations with the River Ranch people they were asked for the name of the RV group. There was, of course, no name but this was not a problem for a type A personality like a retired airline captain. "RV Flyers" was the first thing that came to mind and with that the RV Flyers came into existence.

Since that time the group has grown and evolved but it is still a loose knit, informal group dedicated to having a good time at the cheapest price they can come up with. There are no rules, bylaws, dues, secret signs or handshakes. If you can make an event; great, look forward to seeing you, if not; then we will catch you the next time.



Our Beloved \$#@

The only elected officer is the president which at this time is Gary Mau, sometimes affectionately referred to as "That \$#@." The reason he got elected is because he was late for a happy hour get together and when he finally showed up he was "The Pres," at least that's the story I got.

Group events get started almost on a whim. As an example, here is how this latest "layover" got going. It had been awhile since the group had gotten together so "That \$#@" put out an email inquiring if anybody was interested in a layover and giving a basic time frame. He got a number of positive replies so he inquired around





“Oooo, that’s a good one!”

and found a RV park that had the room and was willing to take the chance. It was a newer RV resort called Florida Grande located just outside of the thriving metropolis of Webster, FL. Actually, Webster, population 800, is in the middle of nowhere. Webster’s big claim to fame is that it has the largest flea market in the state and it is only open on Mondays, perfect. How big is the flea market? On Mondays the town’s population expands to about 10,000.

Here is a general description of how a “layover” progresses. You arrive at the location, check in and then proceed to your assigned site via the longest route so you can see who’s here and let them know that “You” have arrived. This may take 15 to 30 minutes depending on how many times you stop to say hello. When you finally get to your assigned site and set up it’s time to take the dogs for a walk and see who you missed on the way in. Eventually everyone ends up in one place and the afternoon “catch up on things” session begins. At some point the conversation usually turns to, “What are we going to do about dinner?” It often ends up being a group dinner at one of the RV sites with everybody

bringing something, or it’s off to some hole in the wall local eatery if one can be found that will put up with us.

I can tell you that we eat well at these get togethers and we laugh a lot. It is during this time that plans are made for the next day’s events. There is usually some sort of attraction in the area that prompted its selection. In this case it was the flea market. There was also a ’50s theme party sponsored by the resort for their site owners to which we were invited. We also had our own St. Paddy’s Day party. There is never a shortage of things to do or people to do them with. There are about 20 coaches in the group and there were 16 coaches at Florida Grande. The next layover will be held when somebody thinks it is a good time to get together again.

The RV Flyers group is open to any of the NWA pilot retirees. If you want to join us for one of our events send an email request to Gary Mau <lgmau@msn.com> and get on his list. (That would be his email list.)

For those of you traveling north or south on Interstate 75 in Tennessee around the 1st of May or the 1st of October, any number of the Flyers might be found hiding out at the Big Meadows Camp Ground in Townsend, TN. located in the foothills of the Great Smokey Mountains. If you are in the area stop by, you never know who you might run into. ✈



Chris & Jan do pancakes

**LOW
SHOULDER**

**BE
PREPARED
TO STOP**

**SPEED
HUMP**

DIP

**SOFT
SHOULDER**



“Joe” Koskovich 1920 ~ 2009

Joseph John “Joe” Koskovich, age 89, a retired Northwest Airlines Captain, flew west peacefully for a final check on Sunday, December 13, 2009 at St. Gertrude Care Center in Shakopee, Minnesota. His parents John & Helen Koskovich were probably born in the Ukraine before moving with a group of families to what was then Austria, and today is part of Romania. From there they immigrated to the United States in about 1895. Joe was born on Feb. 21, 1920 near Randolph, Nebraska and he had an older sister, two older brothers, a younger sister, and a younger brother who died as an infant, making Joseph the fourth of

five siblings. He grew up in McGregor and Elmore, Minnesota, spending his early years on the family farm near McGregor in Northern Minnesota. Raising various crops, looking after livestock, hunting, fishing and gardening sustained this close knit family and provided many valuable lessons that would serve Joe well for the rest of his life.

Joe’s oldest son Mike Koskovich says his dad was great at telling stories, when you could get him going. It was only in later years that they all learned: “You had to ask Dad if you wanted to hear the stories.” Quizzed about seeing his first airplane, Joe said he thought it was in 1927, the year Lindberg was first to fly solo across the Atlantic, from New York to Paris. Joe thought it was possible that he might have been plowing with mules at the time. The sight of the airplane possibly planted a seed that would dramatically affect his life. After all, the view from that airplane had to be better than the view from behind those mules!

Prohibition and the “Great Depression” gave way to World War II, and with the help of his older brother Art (a Minnesota Aviation Hall of Famer), Joe transitioned from truck driver to pilot. He was hired by Northwest Airlines in 1942, and was a World War II veteran flying for the Army Air Transport Command, Northern Region. Wartime duty involved air transport of men and equipment during the construction of the Alaska-Canada or Alcan highway, and logistical support of the U.S. Military effort to the remote installations of the Aleutian Islands. He also participated in flight-testing B-25 aircraft secretly modified in the Twin Cities for use in Jimmie Dolittle’s raid on Tokyo in April 1942.

After World War II Northwest Airlines was given route authority to Tokyo and Joe was on some of the first flights. Joe married Muriel “Tootie” Anderson in 1948 in Minneapolis and their oldest son Michael arrived in 1949, followed a year later by Richard. In the years that followed, two more sons, James and Thomas arrived and finally the girls, Annetta and Patti for a total of six. The Koskovich family moved to a beautiful farm east of Shakopee in 1952, and Joe and Muriel lived there until 1998. Joe divided his time between his career as an airline pilot, and working the farm.

The family kept growing and soon, when Joe was away on an airline trip, “Tootie” was in charge of cattle (which sometimes escaped), horses, chickens, a dog, some cats, and six kids. She was kept fairly busy. Joe was still a young man with a bit of mischief in him, and in 1956 he brought home a brand new Chevrolet. With four doors, it was cleverly disguised as a family sedan. It also had a potent V-8 engine, a 4-barrel carburetor, dual exhausts and a straight stick with overdrive. It was a hot rod in disguise. Mike and his brothers would beg Joe to take it up to a hundred! On a straight stretch of highway with favorable conditions he would relent, but only if we promised to not tell Mom. Mike says he never told his Mom until he spoke at his Dad’s memorial service.

Joe’s airport East of Shakopee, Minnesota was the only recognized airport in Scott County for many years. It was a 2400 foot grass strip that was oriented East and West (09-27). With a windsock located approximately in the middle on the North side, it was an invitation to all manner



of aviators for many years. The extended centerline of runway 18 at Flying Cloud Airport about three miles North came very close to what was noted on the Twin Cities Sectional as “Koskovich.” For a number of years, from the early 70’s to mid 90’s, there would be an annual fly-in at “Koskovich” on Father’s day. This was a much anticipated and well-orchestrated affair for the Koskovich family. The boy’s would groom the airstrip, and Tootie and the girls would prepare coffee and snacks for the participants. Many notable local aviators participated in these annual fly-ins including: Noel Allard, Sherm Booen, Walt Bullock, Chuck Doyle, Stan Gomel, Bob Jondahl, Brad Larson, The Render boys, Ralph, Tom and Jim, and many other aviation enthusiasts. Joe’s airport became a haven for the ultralight crowd for a number of years, and he flew most every flying contraption that wound up on his airstrip.

From Mike: I didn’t realize until many years later what an amazing thing it was to literally grow up on an airport. As I matured in the flying business, it became apparent how fortunate I had been to be under the tutelage of a person like my father. Not only did he teach me to fly, he taught me how to build and maintain an airport and all the things that go along with it. Most people in the flying business did not have this advantage. In this way, I was truly blessed with Captain J.J.K. for a Dad.

Joe Koskovich had 38 years service by 1980, and at airline pilot retirement age 60 he had become one of Northwest Airlines’ most senior pilots, number 2 on the pilot system seniority list. During his illustrious career he flew nearly every aircraft in the Northwest

Airlines fleet. When he retired in 1980 Joe had flown: Stinson’s SR-10 Reliant and V77 Gullwing; Douglas’ DC-3, -4, -6 and -7; Curtis’ C-46 Commando; Martin’s 202 and 404; Lockheed’s L188 Electra; and Boeing’s B-377 Stratocruiser, B-707-720 and -320, and the “Whale”, the B-747-100 and -200. All were in the livery of Northwest Airlines. Joe was often heard to say: “If someone had a better job, I don’t know who it was.” He was born to fly and fly he did! He was an avid outdoorsman and enjoyed hunting and fishing near his McGregor Lake home on Big Sandy Lake. Joe was a first generation American from humble beginnings and he lived the American dream.

Joe had a long association with the Knights of Columbus, and he and Muriel were engaged for years with volunteer or fund raising activities at the local KC Hall. He was a longtime member and faithful supporter of St. Marks Parish, and the Catholic schools in the Shakopee, Minnesota area. Joseph Koskovich was a talented, diverse individual, skilled and knowledgeable in many areas. Joe was never happier than when he was able to help someone out of a jam. Throughout his life Joe helped those less fortunate than himself, and at that he did an admirable job.

Mike says that Joe took on a project fifty years ago that has had a highly visible and positive impact. Though some would think that someone of Joe’s political orientation would not be an environmentalist, that conclusion would be dead wrong. A parcel of land East of the Valley Cemetery and South of East 4th Avenue in Shakopee, Minnesota was nearly devoid of trees. In the spring before crops took hold southwest winds blew up annoying clouds of dust and sand. Heavy rain caused erosion and washouts, and Joe felt that some-





thing had to be done. He and his old neighbor George Seidl recognized the problem and came up with a solution. They would plant trees. Over several years Joe and George planted tens of thousands of Scotch, Norway and Austrian pine. As the trees took hold the erosion stopped, and there was no more blowing dust or sand. The habitat created was a magnet for wildlife and deer, fox, rabbit, pheasants and many other creatures flourished in this green oasis on the prairie. This environmentally sound project also provided a revenue generating benefit from the annual sale of Christmas Trees. Development has taken some of the trees, but many remain today. They stand straight and

tall for all to enjoy, while Joe's memory and spirit live on for us all to cherish.

Joe was preceded in death by his mother, Helen; father, John; brothers, Arthur and Albert and sisters, Ann and Marie. Joe's delightful parents lived long enough for all of his children to get to know them. Grandpa Koskovich passed away in 1969, and Grandma Koskovich in 1980, at age 99. Joe will be sadly missed by his loving wife of 63 years, Muriel of Shakopee, Minnesota and six admiring children: sons, Michael, Richard, James, and Thomas; daughters, Annetta, and Patricia; nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.



George Haselman 1927 ~ 2010

George L. Haselman, Age 81, of Roseville, Minnesota, and a retired Northwest Airlines pilot, "flew west" suddenly on Friday January 8, 2010. George was a loyal employee of Northwest Airlines for 38 years as a mechanic, flight engineer and pilot. George had many friends at Northwest, and Bob Bettendorf was one of his closest friends. Bob Bettendorf "flew west" four weeks after George. George will be remembered

fondly as a loving husband, dad, and gramps. His legacy will live on at the "yellow cabin!"

Tom and Kathy Haselman:

The Best Trip Ever, Composed by Dad

On January 8th Dad embarked on what he once told his brother Dick—will be the best trip ever! Some of us can picture George in the cockpit always remembering to keep the blue side up. His years spent as a mechanic at Northwest were cherished with some of the tools still in the basement. The opportunity to learn how to fly was definitely a challenge for him and for family as well, but it was not to be passed up. He lived his life with the saying: "Any job worth doing is worth doing well." The stories, the small plane thrills, the annual check rides, and even the pilot's strikes were all vivid memories ready to be retold to whoever wanted to listen. Retiring after 38 years with one company—Northwest Orient Airlines—left him to enjoy even more, the family he loved and the place he loved to go with them.

How many of you know about the Yellow Cabin? For those of you who have been there and those who may have heard stories, it remains part of the legacy for this Haselman family and it is still yellow! Now there are many routes to the cabin, but early on Dad wanted to travel via Stillwater—for there, he pointed out, was his birthplace—supposedly in that cave. Who could forget the countless hours of water skiing or fishing on Long Lake? Some of the large northern pike caught in Long Lake made all the kids think twice about swimming there. The grandchildren had



grandma and grandpa all to themselves for their special week at the cabin in the summer, creating a bond that will live on and on and on.

George Haselman did not forget his roots, his friends, nor the life he had in Frogtown. A large German/Irish Catholic family of 10 children in a large house on Van Buren Street in St. Paul, Minnesota served as the beginning of a faith and family values that remained inside of this man—steadfast to the end. Whether it was mealtime at home, “In the name of the Father” began every meal, ready or not, or being scolded by the nuns of St. Agnes High School, George maintained his cool. He liked to play pool at the Nickel Joint and thoroughly enjoyed his growing up years. His military years took him to Korea where he was an MP. Once out of the service, his bride, Lorraine Lais, entered his life for the next 59 years of marriage as two truly became one.

George and Lorraine decided to have a home built on 645 W. Hoyt and raise six children all of whom attended Maternity of Mary Grade School, and of course North Dale Playground with our own backyard as frequent back-up. We can smell the sweet fragrance of Dad’s mixed pipe tobacco—Sir Walter Raleigh and Cherry Blend. Some of us are still proud of the sturdy garage built with our hands and supervised by George Haselman.

His children, and now grandchildren, remember the many times playing “Uncle Bubbly,” a rather uncomfortable finger bending, until you said the words “Uncle Bubbly.” Then followed a tickling session. Of course, mom/grandma was ever vigilant that he remained gentle. Those younger years did not last long enough for any of us, and then Mom and Dad moved to a larger home in Roseville where they have been since.

Eventually there were six high school graduation parties, six Catholic weddings and many other parties and reasons to celebrate life to the fullest. George loved to be Irish at these times with the hope the party wouldn’t end; could there please be one more song to dance to; or could you play the Orange Blossom Special on the fiddle? His laughter filled the room and his enjoyment of the moment was truly contagious.

Thanks to Uncle Clair and Aunt Margaret, Dad and Mom discovered the life of “snowbirds” in Destin, Florida. Of course, in their ever-generous manner, they welcomed any and all of us to visit, stay and play

cribbage with them anytime in their three-month span. There was golf and fishing in the Gulf; there were trips to the dog track and treks along the beach; there were good friends, as well as extended family. In winter, Destin truly became a destination as much so as the “Yellow Cabin” in summer.

Dad read good books on the Lanai while mom cooked, and both did their crossword puzzles. He would listen endlessly to his bride whom he lovingly called “nuisance” the nickname he gave her, as she brought him up to date on everyone—six children with spouses; 18 grandchildren and now two great-grandchildren. Those conversations were daily and sometimes repeated, but always loved. The family room on 1306 Oakcrest Avenue in Roseville, Minnesota shows virtually the legacy dad created in the many ways already mentioned. From the World Book Encyclopedias to the Northwest model airplanes, to each picture of his family, with the Bible nearby—his faith, his family and his flying—will be remembered forever and carried in the hearts of each of us. Now it’s time to say: Goodnight George... We Love You!

Survived by his loving “bride” of 59 years, Lorraine; children, Tom, Cindy, Karen, Bob, Chris, Kathy; eighteen grandchildren; two Great-grandchildren; brothers, Dick, Bob, Dave; sisters, Katherine, Margaret, Mary; In-laws, and also special nieces and nephews.

From the Guest Book

Jim Morell: I had the opportunity of working with George many times over the years on several pieces of equipment. It was always a pleasure to be on the same crew with him. He was always reliable and professional.





Sandy Bannick Schansberg: Wonderful memories will last in my mind forever. What a caring, loving and patient Uncle. He always found ways to make me - The little shy and quiet niece - smile. He was always bigger than life to me. I miss you Uncle George.

Bob Haselman: My earliest memories of going to a cabin were with Uncle George and Aunt Lorraine and all the cousins. Those were the best times. Now sitting at my cabin I write this with a heavy heart and great memories. We will miss you Uncle George.

Patti Putz DuFresne: I am so sorry to hear about your dad. I have so many wonderful memories of him, most of these at the cabin, skiing, playing cards, Getting yelled at for giggling, convincing him to stop at the DQ. To this day if I smell pipe smoke (apple I think was part of his concoction) it brings me back to a very happy time. Thanks for sharing your dad with me.

Robbin (Okoneski) Brunsvold: Oh the Memories of 645 W Hoyt & 649 W Hoyt. Where else would you find two Families so close that they even shared a driveway. A couple of my favorite memories of George are: Going to see George if one of the Okoneski children had a loose tooth, or riding along with Lorraine to pick George up from the airport (Of coarse George would honk the horn going through the tunnel).

Colleen (Okoneski) HoreishI: Growing up next door to the Haselman family on Hoyt Ave for the first

twenty years of my life are some of the happiest and best times I can remember. May time heal your sorrow. You have many warm, fond, and loving memories to console you all. And I can still smell George's pipe tobacco.

Connie Haselman: Memories of Uncle George fill my heart: the smell of his pipe tobacco, his gentle mannerisms, the laughter in his eyes, and summer camping trips. Thank you Aunt Lorraine and Uncle George for happy childhood times at your home.

Lynette: I remember it like it was yesterday. Uncle George was the first person ever to give me a plane ride. I remember my very first flight in that little plane with the stick in the floor and as usual, my cousin Karen right next to me in the back. I was so scared but I knew Uncle George and Karen would never let me down. We flew over my house on Iowa! It was the greatest. I can't remember how old I was but I can still see my house from over the trees. How lucky am I? Uncle George, you adored your wife and loved all your kids, grandkids, great grandkids and had a wonderful sense of humor. Thanks for all the wonderful memories at the lake. They will still live on with the family and with the kids families. It's the Haselman bay. Your faith and family will carry you through this most difficult time. I sure hope when it's my time to go, maybe the dear Lord will let him pick me up in the plane again and take me to heaven. Wouldn't that be great?



“Bob” Bettendorf 1927 ~ 2010

Robert J. Bettendorf, age 82 of Shoreview, Minnesota “flew west” peacefully for a final check on Saturday, February 6, 2010. Bob had a long career with Northwest Airlines and met many wonderful people, many of which he cultivated into lifelong friendships. One of Bob's closest friends at Northwest was retired Northwest pilot George Haselman, and Bob “flew west” four weeks after George's departure.

Bob was born in St. Paul, Minnesota on February 20, 1927 to George and Frieda Bettendorf. As a youngster, he would watch the airplanes passing by on their way to a nearby airport in St. Paul and knew



then that he wanted to do something with airplanes when he grew up. His dreams were delayed by the onset of WWII. At the age of 17, he joined the US Navy and served aboard ammunition ships during the war. After his discharge, he joined the US Marine Corps and served as a crew chief on F4U Corsairs until his discharge in 1951. He met his future wife, Margaret Ann Vineski shortly after his discharge and they were married in 1952.

Bob started his career with Northwest Airlines in 1951 as a Mechanic. He became qualified for the Flight Engineer position and later became a First Officer, a position he absolutely loved. His career at Northwest gave him the opportunity to fly planes, which was a true passion for him. Flying for Northwest gave Bob the chance to see and experience much of the world, and he had many memorable experiences during his long career with Northwest. He loved to reminisce with old friends of their many experiences shared together.

Bob's other interests included spending time with family at his lake cabin near Amery, Wisconsin. He loved the activities that went along with living on a lake, including fishing, boating and having a place that all his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren could congregate. He spent all the time he could at the lake and friends and family were always welcome to come for a visit or to stay a few days.

Bob is survived by his wife of 57 years, his seven children, sixteen grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren. He was known for his wonderful sense of humor and storytelling abilities and will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

From the Guest Book

Jerry King, Executive Director AE Sailors Association: Bob was a member of "the greatest generation" serving during WW II on two ammunition ships, the USS Mazama and the USS Mt Katmai. He was a valued member of the AE Sailors Association and his shipmates will miss him. He kept his ships' memories alive. We wish you fair winds and following seas on your journey.

Corey Mathison: Robert's grandson, Nick, is in my Social Studies Class at Centennial Middle School. Earlier this year, Nick wrote a very nice letter to his grandpa thanking him for his military service. Nick later received a hand written letter from Robert detailing his service—World War II, two years on ammuni-

tion ships in the South Pacific, the Marine reserves as an airplane mechanic, Korean War active duty in California, Vietnam and Desert Storm flying supplies. Grandpa Bob—Thank you for your service to our country!

Patti & Troy Rowert-Eberhardt: Barb, John, Tony, Kristy and Scott, We are so sorry for your loss, and we send our very deepest and sincere condolences. Please know that we are thinking about you all and hope your sorrow heals fast.

Mary Jo (Kohler) Hogoboom: Kathy and the rest of the Bettendorf family—my thoughts and prayers are with you. Mr. Bettendorf was like a second dad to me growing up in Roseville. I will always keep the many fond memories of him tucked away in my heart. May you all find comfort from friends and family during this difficult time. Sorry I will not be able to attend the service tomorrow, but know you will all be in my thoughts and prayers.

Vic Britt: I had the pleasure of working with Bob many times at Northwest. Bob always showed up early and prepared for the task at hand. He was professional in his approach to his job, pleasant to everyone he met, and loyal to Northwest Airlines and the pilot group.

Sandy Skrypek: Kathy, we are so sorry to hear about your Dad. He was always friendly when he stopped in to see us when we lived together in Shoreview. Take Care.

Pamela (Faulhaber) Kubitschek: Barb and Bettendorf Family: I am sorry to hear of Bob's passing. As I said to Barb, I grew up with your family and felt so close to Bob and Marge. They were always so kind to me and made me feel like part of the family. I will remember Bob as a very kind and very funny person. I remember when Barb and I were in our "Starsky & Hutch" phase. One time Bob went on and on and on about how "Hutch" was on one of his flights. I knew he was pulling my leg, but Bob could really tell a story and he kept going on and on and on until I almost believed him! My prayers are with you during this very difficult time.

JoAnn Kohler: Marge and family, I want to extend my deepest sympathy to all of you at this sad time. You will be in my thoughts and prayers. I will always remember having such good neighbors in Roseville.

Dennis & Carole Bettendorf: Our thoughts and prayers are with you in your time of grief. May your memories bring you comfort.

The Gospel According to St. Fresnel of the Miraculous Lens Chapter One, Verses One through Five

In the Beginning, God created the heavens, and the Aircraft Carrier, and the seas upon which to float it; and yet there was complete Darkness upon the face of the earth. And, as we traveled there came to us, as a voice out of the darkness, an angel of the Lord, saying, "On centerline, on glideslope, three quarters of a mile, call the ball." I reflected upon these words, for I was still yet engulfed in complete darkness. With deep feeling and doubt overwhelming my countenance, I glanceth towards my companion at my right hand and saith, "What seeth thou, trusted friend?" and there was a great silence.

Gazing in a searching manner and seeing naught, I raised my voice saying, "Clara..."

And God spoke to me, and He said, "You're low... power." As the Lord saith, so shall it be, and I added power; and lo, the ball riseth up onto the bottom of the mirror. But it was a tainted red glow, and surely indicateth Satan's own influence. And God spoke to me again saying, "Power. Power.. Power!!!!, fly the ball." And lo, the ball riseth up and off the top of the lens, and the great darkness was upon me.

And the voice of the Angel came to me again, saying, "When comfortable, twelve hundred feet, turn down-wind." Whereupon I wandered in the darkness, without direction, for surely the ship's radar was beset by demons, and there was great confusion cast upon CATCC, and there was a great silence in which there was no comfort to be found. Even my TACAN needle spinneth... and lo, there was chaos; my trusted companion weepeth quietly unto himself with much gnashing of teeth. There was a great turmoil within my cockpit, for a multitude of serpents had crept therein.

And though we wandered, as if by Providence I found myself within that Holy Corridor, and at twelve hundred feet, among my brethren seeking refuge; and the voice of the Angel of the Lord came to me again, asking of me my needles, and I raised my voice saying, "Up and centered." And the voice answered, "Roger, fly your needles." I reflected upon these words, and I raised my voice in prayer, for though my gyro indicateth it not so, surely my aircraft hath been turned upside down. Verily, as Beelzebub surely wrestled with me, a voice, that of my trusted companion, saith to me calmly, "Friend, fly thy needles, and find comfort in the Lord." And lo, with deep trembling in my heart, I did, and He guideth me to centered glideslope and centerline, though I know not how it came to be.

And out of the great darkness, God spoke to me again saying, "Roger ball." For now I had faith. And though the ball began to rise at the in close position, my left hand was full of the Spirit, and it squeeketh off power and as in a great miracle my plane stoppeth upon the flight deck, for it hath caught the four wire which God in his infinite wisdom hath placed thirty feet further down the flight deck than the three wire.

And thus bathed in a golden radiance from above, our pilgrimage was at an end, and my spirit was truly reborn. And as I basked in the rapture, God spoketh to me one final time, and He saith, "Lights out on deck."

– Author unknown, contributed by Bob Root



USAF's first aircraft carrier

A REASONABLE WOMAN

After being married for 44 years, he took a careful look at his wife one day and said, "Forty four years ago we had a cheap apartment, a cheap car, slept on a sofa bed and watched a ten inch black and white TV. But I got to sleep every night with a hot 25 year old girl. Now I have a million and a half dollar home, a forty five thousand dollar car, nice big bed, a plasma screen TV and I'm sleeping with a 65 year old woman. You're not holding up your side of things."

A very reasonable woman, his wife said, "OK, go out and find a hot 25 year old girl and I'll make sure that you will once again be living in a cheap apartment, driving a cheap car, sleeping on a sofa bed and watching a ten inch black and white TV."

– Forwarded by Vic Britt



Membership Application and Change of Address Form

NAME

SPOUSE'S NAME

CHANGE: This is a change of address or status only

PERMANENT MAILING ADDRESS

STREET

CITY

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

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

MEMBERSHIP TYPE

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

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

SECOND OR SEASONAL ADDRESS (for RNPA annual directory only)

STREET

CITY

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

PAYMENT

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:
"RNPA"
AND MAIL TO:
Retired NWA Pilots' Assn.
Dino Oliva
3701 Bayou Louise Lane
Sarasota FL 34242-1105

DATE OF BIRTH (Optional for affiliate member)

DATE OF FIRST EMPLOYMENT WITH NWA DELTA AS:

AN EMPLOYEE **A PILOT**

DATE OF RETIREMENT FROM NWA DELTA AS:

AN EMPLOYEE **A PILOT**

IF CURRENTLY EMPLOYED BY DELTA INDICATE:

BASE **POSITION**

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

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

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF HOURS LOGGED

AIRLINE AIRCRAFT TYPES FLOWN AS PILOT

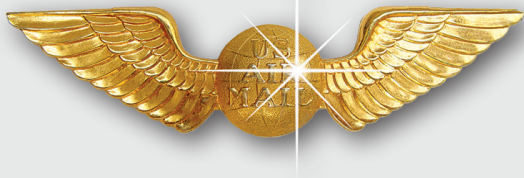
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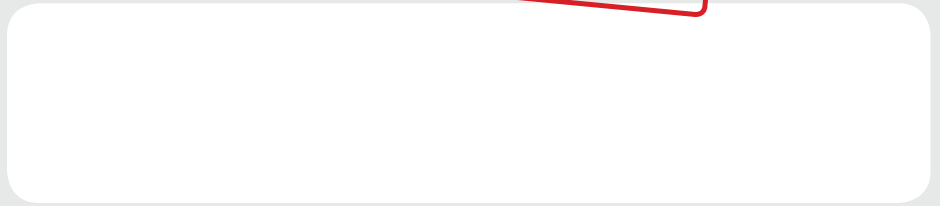
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FIRST CLASS



len•tic•u•lar |len'tikyələr|

adjective

1 shaped like a lentil, esp. by being biconvex : *lenticular lenses*.