

CONTRAILS

ISSUE NO. 176

NOVEMBER 2010



© Gary Ferguson

BUFFALO ROUNDUP AT CUSTER STATE PARK
The day after the Rapid City Reunion.

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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16 SW Florida Spring Luncheon

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FUTURE REUNIONS

OMAHA:

SEPT. 25-27, 2011

ATLANTA:

SEPT. 28-30, 2012

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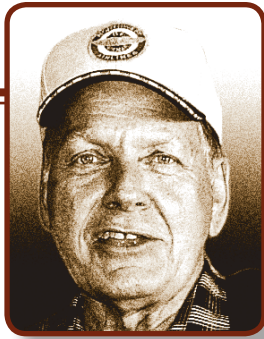
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President's Report: Gary PISEL

PHX PICNIC
Tuesday, February 22nd
Same Place, Same Deal



Well RNPA has done it again, a FANASTIC Reunion in Rapid City. Under the guidance of Phil and Eileen Hallin, we experienced the Black Hills and the fellowship of fellow members. Some 256 people registered for the event, but because of medical problems we only had 243 in attendance. The hotel was uniquely appropriate for the occasion. One of the highlights of the banquet was the presentation of several hundred Teddy Bears to the Rapid City Fire Department. Calen Maningas accepted them on behalf of the department. The Teddy Bears filled 3 playpens and 2 cribs. This event WILL be again featured at the Omaha Reunion next year.

If you need a DELTA ID badge, you can now go online to secure it. Go to IDprocessing@delta.com. You will need a copy of your driver's license and the NEW Delta clock or employment number. Once this information is emailed to Delta, they will send you an ID badge.

As a side note, if you still have your NWA ID badge or the NWA Travel Card, you can still use FEDEX to send items. You need to go to a main FEDEX office or KINKO's for this feature.

At the Rapid City Reunion elections were held for the RNPA Board. A couple minor changes took place. Phil Hallin is now a Vice President; Tom Ebner is now the Secretary. KC Kohlbrand and Walt Mills have been appointed as Advisors.

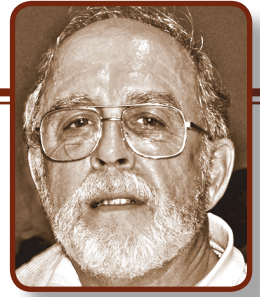
Dick Duxbury chose not to run after serving on the Board for 10 years. Our thanks go to him for his services, especially the reunions of Hartford and Colorado Springs. THANKS DUX.



Treasurer's Report: Dino OLIVA

Just returned from one of the best conventions ever. Thanks to Phil Hallin for a job well done. Getting close to dues time. You will be receiving your dues notice in early January. **Please do not send in your dues until you receive the notice**, and then only pay the amount shown as dues owed. Doing so will make my life much easier.

So far this year we have had a net gain of 13 members. We need to keep our membership up in order to survive. Each of you can do your part by encouraging some one that you know who is not a member to join. You will be doing them a favor by getting them to participate in our fine organization.



WAS THE FIX IN?

At every recent reunion we have given two chances for a free reunion to everyone registering early. Anyone registering after that got one chance.

These drawings are held at the banquet, along with a drawing, in this case, for two positive space domestic passes courtesy of Delta. Each attendee gets a numbered ticket when they check in.

So... President Pisel had a ticket drawn for the free Rapid City Reunion. Winner: Bruce Armstrong.

He next had a ticket drawn for a free Omaha Reunion. Winner: Bruce Armstrong.

Unbelievable luck, right? It's starting to look a little suspicious to some of us.

The next drawing was for the two free passes. Gary then read all the numbers except for the last and asked those who had those numbers to stand, which meant that there were ten people standing. You guessed it. Bruce was one of the ten standing.

When Gary called, "Four," Bruce raised his fist in celebration and the house erupted—whether in congratulation or outrage could not be determined. Now it's getting *real* suspicious and downright smelly.

As one who never wins anything at these reunions, I think it's time to name an Independent Prosecutor to investigate the obvious corruption within this organization. Such shenanigans simply cannot go unpunished.

What can you do to help clean this mess up? Be sure to register early for Omaha. We're certain to have the culprits ousted by then and you will surely win at least one of the prizes.

A NEW MINI REUNION

At the suggestion of Board Member Tom Ebner, the RNPA Board has decided to initiate an addition to our annual events.

This one will be held in Branson, Missouri. Complete details can be found on page 13. If this one is successful it's a safe bet more will be on the way.

ABOUT THE COVER

I got lucky. Not knowing what to expect when we got there, I decided to take my most-used lens (Canon EF 24-105mm f/4L, for you camera buffs) and leave the others in the bag in my room. By the time our caravan of three cars got parked, the fence line high in the north lot was several people deep. I decided to walk down the hill searching for a better vantage point and found a spot about ten feet from a cattle-guard gate behind a six foot high wooden fence. Someone had built a rickety little pile of rocks to stand on, probably from a previous roundup, which I claimed, and was able to get a clear shot of everything.

A pro photographer arrived next to me shortly thereafter, which provided some conversational relief during the hours we got to wait for the buffalo to be driven down the far hill behind the other group of spectators in the south lot then back between the two groups. (It was reported that there were 14,000 in attendance.)

When the buffalo finally appeared it seemed apparent that we were not going to be very close at all—the best we could expect it seemed was something like you saw on the Table of Contents page. They were being driven into a corral through a gate which was midway between the two throngs of spectators—probably 100 yards away. It was not the lens I needed at that distance.

But then my luck turned! A big part of the herd broke and headed for the gate that I was next to. A pickup truck came roaring up to block them, followed by the cowboy in the photo. Luckily I was able to get a series of about ten good shots of the cowboy without the pickup as he turned the herd back toward the intended corral gate. This is my favorite of the series.

Was it worth getting up at 4:30 in the morning to get this shot at 10:24AM? It was to me. Photographers can sometimes be strange that way—always trying to get that shot that tells a little story.

As always,
Whatchabeenupto?

Letters

DAVE BOWEN

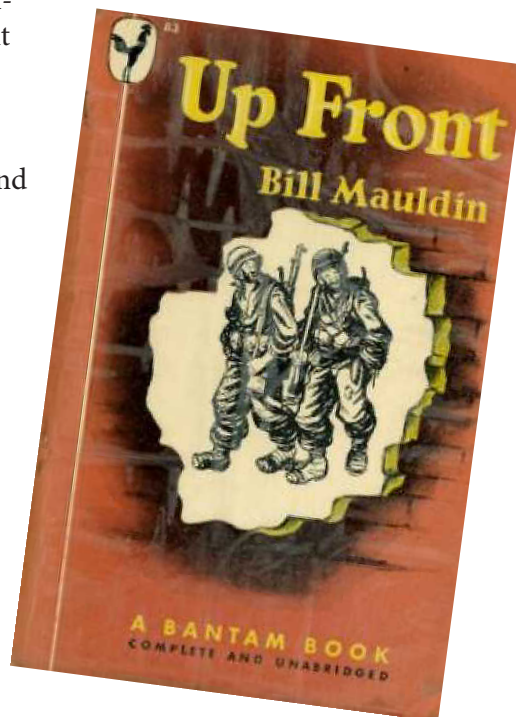
Okay Gary, I'm part of the 99.991% who blissfully go through our retirement days without a whole lot of thought about writing up a note or article for the Contrails. That is until that VERY fine magazine shows up in my mailbox and then I feel, briefly, remorse. I think to myself, "I should drop Gary a line," but then something comes up and I'm off to eastern Washington or Montana (or more likely, make a dump run or work on the broken lawnmower or tractor). No excuses!

With that said, GREAT magazine. Not too sure how you produce such a quality product with limited input, but you do and I'm sure that we all thank you for all your effort.

This latest issue really was intriguing, but the Bill Mauldin article really got me going. After reading it I went to my shelves and shelves of books, knowing that somewhere amongst them was an old copy of Bill's "Up Front" (CR1945 Holt). After several minutes, sure enough, I found it right next to all my Ernie Pyle books. Well, there went the morning. I think I read every cartoon and most of the text (again). Willie and Joe, what a pair. All I can say is that we sure have it good thanks to those guys. I don't think that we will ever really fully appreciate what those men and women went through. Fantastic book and a wonderful article.

With your permission I would like to quote a little of Mr. Mauldin's words from "Up Front." He says,

"Often soldiers who are going home say they are going to tell the people how fortunate we were to stop the enemy before he was able to come and tear up our country. They are also going to tell the people that it is a pretty rough life over here. I've tried to do that in my drawings and I know that many thousands of guys who have gone back have tried to do it, too. But no matter how much we try we can never give the folks at home any idea of what war really is. I guess you have to go through it to understand its horror. You can't understand it by reading magazines or newspapers or by looking at pictures or going to newsreels. You have to smell it and feel it all around you until you can't imagine what it used to be like when you walked on a sidewalk or tossed clubs up into horse chestnut trees or fished for perch or when you did anything at all without a pack, a rifle, and a bunch of grenades."



Letters

Letters

I think these words are just as appropriate today as they were back then. Regardless of where our servicemen and women are today we owe them a deep debt of gratitude.

I can't believe that I've been retired for 17 years now, but so be it. Still on Whidbey Island, still on West Beach (kind of like an oil painting, it never changes). I keep up with the "news" via the Thursday AM coffee group at one of Oak Harbor's Starbucks (ref. Bill Barrott's letter. I must be one of those "old farts" that he refers to) and the monthly luncheon at LaConnor thanks to Bill Day.

Our recent picnic was a grand success, hosted by Turid and Claus Dassel. If you have never attended any of these "functions," please join us. We don't bite. Actually I think most have mellowed with age like fine wines (that may be stretching it a bit, but you get the idea).

Best to all,
Dave Bowen

GIL BAKER

Well, Gary you really got to me this time—I for one really do enjoy reading the letters—so before I do here is my update:

Yikes, eleven years as a retiree is coming up this month. And they keep on sending me the monthly notice that there is a deposit to my account! My thanks to all who made that first class retirement income possible; Stan Baumwald, Roger Bruggemeyer, Dino and all the rest of the retirement negotiators, and then the Guardian group who kept it whole the last time they tried to take it away.

We just enjoyed a wonderful

North Sound RNPA picnic hosted by Herr Dassel and Turid. A beautiful day at Shelter Bay in La Conner with a grand view of my mountain across the water. Thanks Claus, I hope it becomes an annual event.

We are in the midst of an addition to our home. Adding a studio above our garage so Ginny will have a nice space to pursue her water color artwork. Three big guys with hammers and nail guns can sure make a lot of noise. We got the new roof on just in time as it rained the afternoon the roofing crew was finishing.

Here in Bellingham we have had a cool and wet summer. The only place in the country that has not been hot. We would really enjoy some warm weather now if you all could spare some. Gee do you think that global warming talk is really true?

No major trips planned for this year but we are planning a trip to Singapore in January to visit neighbors who are teaching there for two years. It's my first trip across the pond since retiring. We'll probably stop in Narita and Hong Kong to see the changes that a decade can bring.

Thanks for all the work you do to keep us in touch, I always read it cover to cover. Now I can go see what the Root Cellar has in store.

Gil Baker

JIM MORELL

Well Gary, you asked for it.

The reason I haven't written before is because my life is pretty boring down here in Arkansas and that is exactly how I like it!

Jo and I moved to Hot Springs Village in 2001 because it is remote and quiet. It is a 26,000 acre gated community of about 15,000 elderly but active people nestled in the

Ouachita Mountains. We have eight golf courses and eight lakes. We are 20 miles from town, 30 miles from the nearest freeway and fifty miles from the airport. I didn't have it much more remote when I lived in Wyoming.

After 32 years of staying in hotels and living out of a suitcase, I am always amazed by the number of our members who still like to travel. Whenever I get the urge to see some new place, I just go to Google Earth.

We have a BassTracker boat and four sets of golf clubs (estate sales are great here), so if anyone would show up at the gate with a case of Leinenkugels or a bottle of Cutty Sark; I'm pretty sure I can get them in.

Jim Morell

GIFFORD JONES

Thanks, Gary;

I needed that. You had chastisingly noted that, "...You just can't expect others to write if you aren't willing to take a few minutes to do the same." I suddenly realized it's a lot like voting: If you don't do it, you have no right to complain about the results. With this, you can count me in; apologies for not helping to share the load earlier.

There are two magazines, of all those that come through our portal, that I devour cover-to-cover, every single edition: PRACTICAL SAILOR and CONTRAILS. Both cover topics dear to my heart. (We don't get any magazines about my wife.) From the cover photo through "WATCHABEENUPTO?" and great articles by budding pilot authors to the sobering final flights west pages, the CONTRAILS crew turns out a top-notch publication; probably among the best. You have my admiration and my continued thanks.

Cheers,
Giff Jones

JOEL LONG

Dino,

As I write out the check, I see where you are having a cold snap that threatens the crops. 29 seems great to me, as we are at minus 29 and that is without the wind factor.

Thanks for all the work you do.

Joel Long

Joel obviously wrote this when he mailed his dues last January. Dino mails 'em to me. I found this one behind my desk. - Ed.

POLLY VIERTEL

Gary, Staff, Membership,

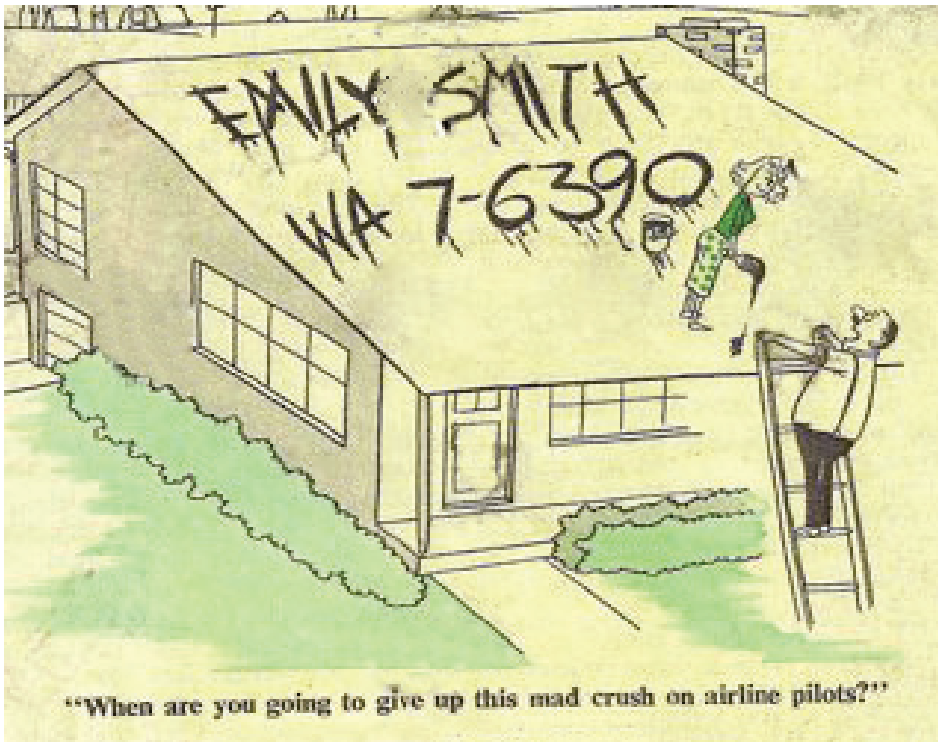
Not sure if I'm in the minority or not, but I for one did not realize you needed letters for publication.

Guess I figured you just automatically received more than you had time to go through. I do hope that "Letters" section of the Contrails publication continues and that other members such as myself will realize the need to contribute. Updates, items and photos are treasures, as are letters, and I'm sure I speak for all the Northwest family, as well as the families and friends when I say thanks for all your efforts.

My husband, Lee Viertel, was in the same 1959 NWA pilot training class as Fred Pack who wrote in the last issue of Contrails. I am so sorry to hear of his wife's ill health and also of Orville Hilden's medical problems. They will be in my prayers.

Finally, thanks for the lovely photo and brief obit on my dear, late friend, Rita Dummer. I'm sure her husband, Tom, and all her family and friends appreciate the tribute you extended her.

Sincerely,
Polly Viertel



ANNE KERR

Hi Gary:

A fellow 1950's NWA stewardess sent me this cartoon she found in an old scrapbook. Ruby Ostrom, (now Ruby Thomas) of Superior Wisconsin, is going through her "stuff" and sends me things from time to time.

Regards,
Anne Kerr

AL SOVEREIGN

Dear Gary,

Sorry to be so remiss and not write, we do enjoy the letters and what and how everyone is doing.

We spent five months last winter in Mexico. Lake Chapala, down near Guadalajara. It was a wonderful time. We had the very best camping spot right on the lake. Good food, nice people, great weather.

We returned home in March then resumed work on our garden. We came home to asparagus, then got busy planting the other veggies. Right now we are enjoying some

fantastic tomatoes, zucchini, cucumbers and corn, but I'm working my butt off. Ina is working on her book while I keep the garden.

We traveled to Wyoming in May for an RV rally, then went to visit Steve Luckey and his wife, Jeannie in Kalispell. They have a beautiful home there. Then on to Idaho to visit family and friends. It was a nice trip, but not long enough.

In July we flew (on a pass) to Portland to visit family and friends. This was the first we have used a Delta pass. It was great. We took our dog with us for no extra charge, and, though overbooked, we got on every plane. We didn't get on first class, but we got on with no delays. Hooray! We might try this when we go to Rapid City. Hope it works as well.

We are both healthy and enjoying life. We have such a great life, we are so blessed.

We're planning on traveling to Florida this January to visit friends there. It's been a long time since we've done that.

We'll try and write more often. We do love your magazine.

Thanks for all the work you do.
Al & Ina Sovereign

FRED PACK

Hi Gary,

In the letter that was just published [Aug.], I have the last name of the retired pilot (who owns the adjacent stone quarry) wrong.

I ran into Chuck at the post office and was admonished that his last name is NELSON.

Marylyn, his lovely wife, is a former NWA Flight Attendant by the way. Great folks.

We were blessed with a new addition up here on Pack's Peak. A beautiful Norwegian Fjord filly was born VERY early the morning of the 4th of June. The mare went into labor at 9:00 PM and had a textbook delivery just after midnight.

My wife was able to watch the whole operation on the CCTV. The mare laid down directly under one of the cameras.

She is a "daddy's girl" and is training ME properly.

Although Lois (my wife) is bedridden... she can watch baby's antics on the CCTV.

The wife rode her electric scooter right into the stall the other day and was able to love the new baby. It was a little comical coaxing the new baby to this strange looking lady, sporting a nightgown and mounted atop this scary vehicle. I pulled in a chair next to Lois and put my smell on Lois's hands. That did the trick as baby recognized her as a friend.

Not much time to sit down and write. I keep a "little" busy around here...

All the best,
Fred Pack

DICK SCHLADER

Gary:

Just a line to touch base with you and the troops.

Enjoyed the August issue of Contrails. Another gem from the worlds greatest editor. You seem to be getting a higher quality of stories and letters lately.

Must be the influence of the newer pilots with more literary skills. You did a nice job with the layout for the Spring luncheon. We already received the first reservation, and the unnamed party will receive a nice bottle of wine or some such gift Doni Jo will provide. We hope for a nice crowd again.

We had a nice vacation in August. Flew to New York on Aug. 7th to meet our grandson Cameron Bentrott, 13, who was staying with another grandson, Paul Schlader. The next day we three boarded the Queen Mary II and set sail for Southhampton, England. The voyage, which took 6 days, fulfilled a long-standing wish from our "bucket list." The trip on the North Atlantic was smooth as glass. The Captain said it was about the smoothest trip he had in 15 years, and he didn't have to turn on the "fasten seat belt" sign during the entire voyage.

The reputation of the Cunard line is legendary, and we were not disappointed. The food and the dining experience were nonpariel as was the service from the ubiquitous ships company. The ship itself is huge. Overall length is 1150 ft or so and the beam is 137 ft which precludes it from using the Panama canal, although the sister Queens, Elizabeth and Victoria, have a narrower beam which will allow transit through the canal. I remember when the original Queen Elizabeth was removed from passenger service and sold to a group

in Hong Kong for purposes of using it for a school or some other venture. However it caught fire (arson?) and capsized in the harbor and was scrapped. I still have a photo of her laying on her side in Hong Kong.

We arrived in Southhampton on August 14th and were met by Anne and David Bray, our old and dear friends from the Monarch Airline days and were driven to their home in Wing, northwest of London where we camped for 10 days. Lots of story telling and reminiscing with our daughter Katy, her husband Brent and their daughter Lauren who flew into London on the 15th, now joined by Cameron.

After 3 or 4 days with the Brays and ourselves, the four of them set off for a week's tour of Ireland. Doni Jo and I remained with the Brays and visited with their sons Simon and Jim and families. Just before our departure Anne arranged a great dinner party with several old Monarch friends which capped off the trip splendidly. A trip to the UK is a great holiday.

Till next time,

Dick and Doni Jo Schlader

RAY DOLNY

Hi Gary:

Just a note of thanks to Phil & Eileen Hallin for all the work they put in on the Rapid City convention. Everything was great. Hotel, food, tours and the social parties.

Looking thru all my pins from previous gatherings Dee and I have been to 15 or more conventions and have enjoyed them all.

Thanks to our President Pisel and all the officers and board members for all the time you give to RNPA.

Neal Henderson's story about Woody Herman's DC 3 Ferry flight was very funny and well told. ([He] should have been an actor.) Special thanks to Dick Duxbury for your years of service.

Gary Ferguson keep up the good work on Contrails.

Ray and Dee Dolny

? Aircraft Quiz ?

This should be an easy quiz to answer for those of you who have an interest and knowledge of aircraft.

You may enjoy this quiz, even if you don't know a lot about aircraft. The answer may surprise you.

What is the biggest advantage of rotary-winged aircraft over fixed-winged aircraft?

(Answer next page.)

Contributed by Old Bob



No, we didn't get it right either!

DONNA PAULY-CHETLAIN

Dear Gary,

Huge Thank Yous to you for all of your hard work at the RNPA Convention. We had a ball.

Donna Pauly-Chetlain
SEA base & still flying

PATTI LYNCH

Dear RNPA Editor;

I am enclosing some information on both of my parents: Ron and Pat Stelzig. My father was employee # 70. Ron passed away in 1995. I do not know if my mother ever sent an obituary to RNPA. (*Editors note: Ron and Pat Stelzig were longtime associate members of RNPA.*) My mother was one of the very early stewardesses. At that time, one had to be a nurse in order to be a stewardess. My parents were friends with a variety of people mentioned in the RNPA Contrails. They were very close friends with Rosie Stein and Don King. I was quite small

when Rosie died and when Don and his wife were killed in a small plane, but I do remember them. My mother lived with us the last years of her life, and she has some interesting airline memorabilia. She and Helen Richardson (another early stewardess) stayed in touch over the years.

I don't know if this is of any great interest to anyone, but it certainly represents some of the early days of Northwest Airlines. I hope you will keep me on the mailing list, as I have enjoyed reading the Contrails magazine.

Thank you,
Patti (Stelzig) Lynch
Please see the Flown West section. - Ed.

TOM SCHELLINGER

Hi Gary...

I just wanted to say "THANKS" to all of those who attended the RNPA convention in Rapid City and donated to the raffle that supported the Paul Soderlind Memorial Scholarship Fund and Delta Care. The proceeds were split between these two very worthy causes and resulted in \$1810 being added to the coffers of the PSMS Fund. Those who attended the convention had an opportunity to meet Merideth Willems (this year's recipient), her husband Eric and their two children.

It was great to see many of our old friends and get a chance to reunite with them over a cool one (ice tea of course) and find out what's new in their lives. Many of us are experiencing 50 year reunions of either high school, college or military flight training but none of them compare to the annual RNPA gatherings. The fellowship was great and it is always fun to gather with so many with common interests. If you haven't been to one of these conventions, you are missing out on a real opportunity to reunite with good friends from one of our past lives. Omaha will be another great experience. Come and join us.

I would also like to encourage all of our readers to look into the scholarships offered through Wings Financial Credit Union. Besides offering the PSMS to former NWA employee families, they also offer their own scholarships, open to all members of the CU.

Again, RAP was a great time, thanks for supporting the Fund and hope to see ya in Omaha.

Tom & Judy
Schellinger



Dear Gary,

Your shameless begging for newsletter contributions prompted this spur of the moment entry.

Hopefully it made you chuckle, and perhaps some other members can relate. It is all true, sadly.

We both enjoy Contrails, and look forward to many more issues.

Sincerely,
Sheila Moran-Campbell
Reluctantly,
Jerry Campbell



**HOW TO
START AN
AIRLINE
CAREER
(circa 1976)**

It all begins with orange paint.

Say you are engaged to be married, and it is 1976. You paint your bathroom orange. Your intended comes in with a can of white paint, and wipes out the orange. It hits you—this could become my life, my orange-paint-view-of-life will always be erased by the guy with the can of white paint. It's 1976, the bicentennial year, Greyhound Bus Lines offers a heck of a deal. Anywhere in the US, 7 days for \$76.00.

So, seven days later, with 2 big green duffel bags full of your most precious possessions (dungarees, halter tops, platform shoes, tie-dye tee shirts..) you arrive in Miami. What better place to begin your career in aviation.

You start at the ticket counter, Concourse H, home of the lowly commuter airlines, charter outfits and a couple of small freight operators. In addition to checking folks in, you load the bags, and on a bad day, hand crank the prop of the Aero Commander, while wide eyed passengers, watching from their seats, start to shed a tear or two. But hey, the fare was cheap, and after a five hour maintenance delay, they are on their way to Bimini, or Eleuthera, or Marsh Harbor, or yes, even Havana. Don't know how this outfit got the OK to fly there when no one else could. But we did. Had plenty of rum to show for it.

You show up everyday, you work hard, you learn to work around the FAA regs here and there, and you are promoted!

You work for three more airlines, actually two more

because one outfit changed their name and signage overnight. Was supposed to fool the vendors coming to collect debts. You celebrate the good fortune of making the big time when the old DC-3 arrives. Biggest plane in the fleet.

Next gig, working crew sked and dispatch for an international freight carrier, named after the owner... starts with an F. You learn to get really really creative with regulations, so long as no one gets killed.

Here is how the interview process for prospective pilots went.

FIA: "EVER BEEN ARRESTED?"

Applicant: "No Sir."

FIA: "DO YOU CARRY A GUN?"

Applicant: "No Sir."

FIA: "EVER BEEN IN PRISON?"

Applicant: "NO SIR."

Welllll, you may not like it here.

I loved it there. But on occasion the crew did carry guns, or knives, and there was that time a takeoff was aborted in Boston, so the crew could return to the ramp for a little fisticuffs with another crew to address some slander over the radio. O well.

They did foot the bill for Sheffield School of Aeronautics so I could get my FAA Flight Dispatcher ticket. Three months of classes 5 days a week. Voila! Now I could officially jeopardize my own career, not just the supervisor's.

And a bonus, met my future husband there, at Sheffield, now retired NWA 747 Capt. Jerry Campbell. He doesn't like orange paint either, but wouldn't come near me with a can of white paint.

Took my license and went to work for Pan Am in Flight Following. Most boring job ever. Headsets. Spewing out weather updates now and again. And learned how to use a teletype machine! Yes, 1984 and they were still using a teletype machine. JMJ.

Jerry paid his dues flying C-130s in the Air Force, spent a couple of years crop dusting in Illinois, then flew for some non-skeds in Miami before he was hired by NWA in 1984. I applied for a Dispatch position but was hired as a Flight Attendant. Go figure. Off we went to Minneapolis. (Note: 74 degrees in Miami, arrived MSP -26 with wind chill factor.) Winter coats would have taken up all space of two green duffel bags, thankfully I had moved on to luggage.

Flew just a few years, but his career lasted 24 years. Now we are both retired, he likes to ski and hike and fly and tow gliders at a club here in Bend Oregon. I am thinking of painting again...

to be continued.

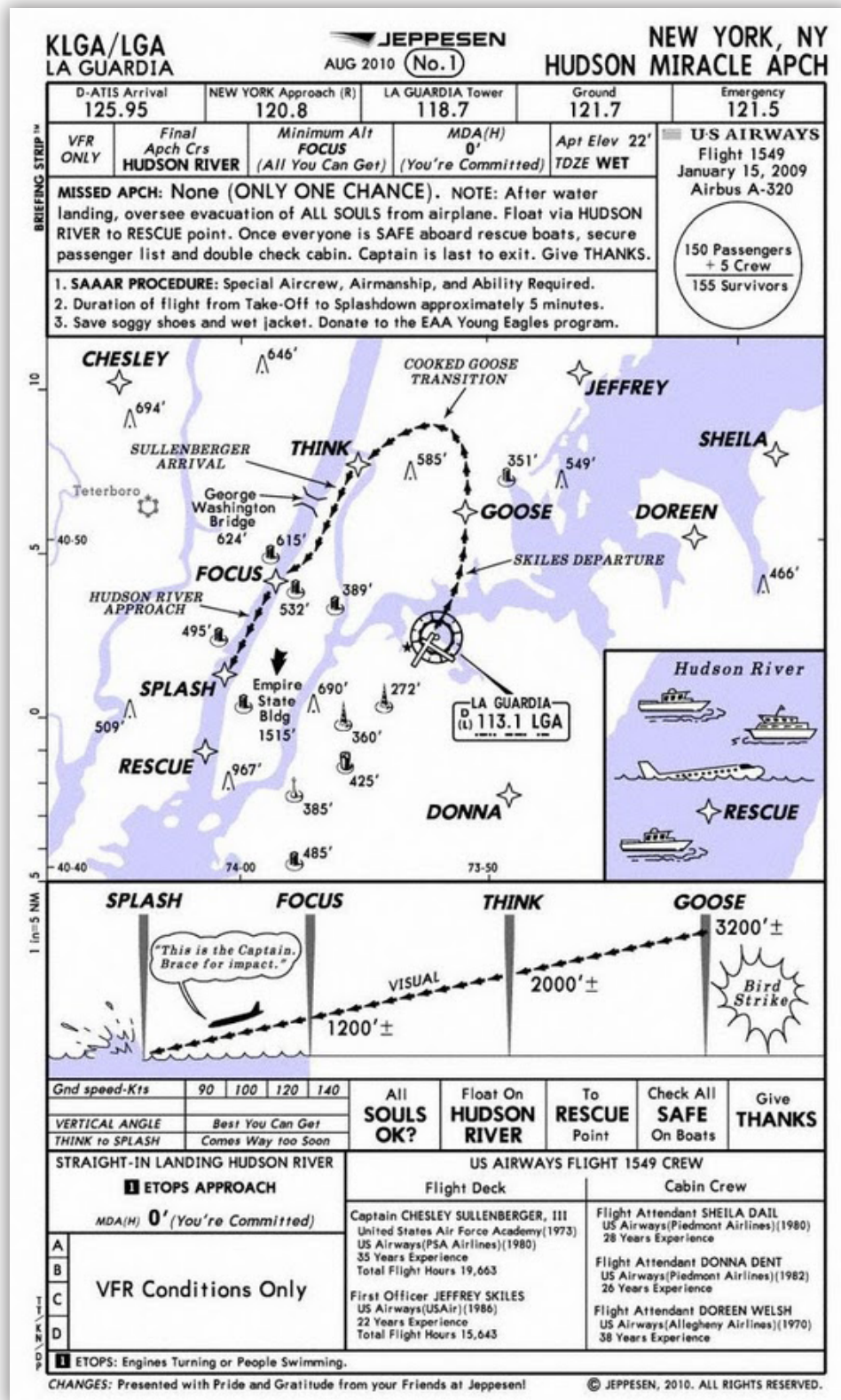
Sheila Moran-Campbell

Englewood, Colo. | 27 Aug 2010

Jeppesen, known in the aviation industry as the world-wide leader in navigation and charting services, recently presented “Miracle on the Hudson” pilots captain Chesley Sullenberger and first-officer Jeffrey Skiles with a specially designed approach chart and engraved Jeppesen chart binders to commemorate the remarkable ditching of US Airways flight 1549 in the Hudson River in New York in January 2009.

...The chart documents the historic five minute flight with a unique graphic, beginning with departure from LaGuardia Airport, followed by a “Cooked Goose Transition” point and “Hudson River Approach,” which is then followed by “Splash” and “Rescue” points on the water. The humorous chart also salutes the career achievements of the crew of flight 1549, including Sullenberger, Skiles, and veteran flight attendants Sheila Dail, Donna Dent and Doreen Welsh.

Along with the commemorative chart, the pilots were presented with a special Jeppesen chart binder, engraved with the famous fortune cookie advice kept in Sullenberger’s flight bag: “A delay is better than a disaster.” The items were presented by Mark Van Tine, Jeppesen president and CEO, during the 2010 Gathering of Eagles fundraiser dinner and auction held during the EAA AirVenture fly-in and air show in Oshkosh, Wisc. The EAA Young Eagles event raises funds and awareness for youth involvement in aviation.



Editor's comment: Several of you have emailed this to me and I can only assume that most of you with email have seen it. Not to diminish the fine job "Sully" and his crew did, but the note "Special Aircrew, Airmanship, and Ability Required" does somehow diminish and demean all the rest of us whom I have no doubt would have accomplished the same result under the exact same set of circumstances. Am I just being overly grumpy in my old age?



NEW **MINI REUNION**
Branson, MO
May 11,12,13 & 14

HOTEL: Branson Grand Plaza, 245 N Wildwood Dr, Branson, MO 65616 Phone 417.336.6646
 Rates: Standard room \$75, Mini suite \$95, King feature \$115, and, although none are blocked out for us, family and honeymoon suites are available for \$135. All plus 11.6% room tax. The group rate is extended three days prior and three days after our event, based on availability. **Reservations:** Call 1-800- 850-6646 and mention group code RNPA. **Complimentary hot breakfast buffet from 7am to 10am is included.** We will also have a meeting/hospitality room available to us. It will be cleaned and stocked with ice each day, but will not include any beverages,snacks, etc.
Reserve early. There are 75 rooms blocked but we MAY be able to add more.

TRAVEL: Branson airport is currently served by four airlines; Air Tran, Sun Country, Express Jet, and Frontier. Springfield Airport is 43 miles away and is served by Allegiant, American, **Delta**, and United.

ITINERARY:

WEDNESDAY: Hotel check in; 12:00 p.m. - Hospitality Room open and stays open through Saturday night;
 5:30 p.m. - "Welcome Aboard" Reception in Hospitality Room.
 THURSDAY: Daytime free to enjoy the sights and sounds of Branson; 5:30 p.m. - Dinner at PLAZA VIEW RESTAURANT
 7:30 pm. - THE SHOJI TABUCHI EVENING PERFORMANCE.
 FRIDAY: Morning free; Lunch on your own; 6:00 p.m. - SIX REAL BROTHERS dinner/show at Hughes Celebrity Theatre.
 SATURDAY: Morning and afternoon free; 6:00 p.m. - THE CLAY COOPER dinner and show at Clay Cooper Theatre.

Daytime free time could include more shows, boat tours, golfing, shopping, old town, etc. "Gatherings Plus" will be sending a packet out to all registrants containing info on our package as well as other activities that are available in Branson.

ACTIVITY PACKAGE: \$240 per person includes: All of the above, all taxes and most gratuities, transportation to group activities and a reunion website.

RNPA MINI REUNION MAY11-14, 2011 · DEADLINE APRIL 1ST, 2011

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY, ST, ZIP _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____
 Number in party: ____ x \$240 = _____

Checks payable to and mail to:
"Gatherings Plus"
 P.O. Box 1023
 Branson West MO 65737

Gatherings Plus
 direct info:
417.338.4048

More info from Tom Ebner:
 Home:
952.496.1780
 Cell:
612.269.1919



ASK YOUR DOCTOR



Many of us have reasons to see our doctor. Many of us, myself included, have reasons to see many doctors. Not long ago I called my “primary care physician” to make an appointment.

“He doesn’t work here any more,” said the lady who answered the phone while smacking her gum.

“What do you mean? Doctors don’t quit.”

“This one did.”

“Why?”

“I don’t know, I just work here. But we have other doctors in our clinic, I can get you one.”

“No thanks, I’ll get my own.”

My wife recommended her doctor. My son-in-law recommended the same guy. I made an appointment. Before I went, I watched some television news. Big mistake! At the direction of his nurse, I met him wearing only my skivvies.

“I am not used to meeting people for the first time wearing only skivvies,” said I.

“Don’t worry about it,” said he. “I see you have an implanted defibrillator. So do I.”

I liked the guy right away. After a very thorough physical, we sat down to talk.

“So, Doc, do I want Advair or Singulair?”

“Why do you ask? Do you suffer from asthma?”

“Well, on the TV news they say I should ask my doctor about Advair and Singulair. Not too excited about the side effects—confusion, hallucination, mood changes, suicidal thoughts, cough, dizziness, drowsiness, headache.”

ADVAIR DISKUS[®]
(fluticasone propionate and salmeterol inhalation powder)

ONCE-A-DAY
SINGULAIR[®]
(MONTELUKAST SODIUM)

“That wasn’t the news. That was an advertisement.”

“Don’t see why someone would put all that in an advertisement. Aren’t they trying to sell the stuff?”

“It’s the law.”

TriCor[®] 145 mg
fenofibrate tablets & **48 mg**

“Yeah, but, what about Tricor? Do I need Tricor? You know, for high cholesterol. “Maybe we should wait for the lab tests before we use Tricor,” he replied.

The
Root
Cellar



“On the news they said I should ask you about Plavix. Do I need Plavix?”



“And Nasonex?”

Maybe I need some of that nasal spray for my seasonal allergies.

And some Actos or Aricept, some Namenda?”



“You already take Coumadin.”

“Oh, yeah, that’s why I have a rash, vision problems and bruising. So, do I need Nexium?”



Oh, and do I need Amiodorone, Cozaar, Lasix, Digoxin?”

“Anything else?” He seemed to be getting a little tired of the subject.

“Well yeah, there is one more,” I replied. “Do I want Cialis or Viagra?”

How about Nexium? I hear it gives you diarrhea, chest pain, breathing problems and gas.”

“Yes, it does. Do you have heartburn? If you do, I can prescribe Nexium. Once you get the diarrhea, chest pain, breathing problems and gas, you won’t worry about the heartburn.”



“What about Celebrex for my arthritis? Maybe I need some Celebrex. Lots of my friends take Celebrex. All they complain about is the rash.”

“You have some arthritis, but it is not bad yet.”

“How about Cosopt? Maybe I need that.”



“Okay, Mr. Root, I am going to prescribe several of these medications you have asked about. Once you take them, you will have very thin blood, several bruises, a rash and a bitter taste in your mouth. You will have a headache, a nosebleed, a sore throat and possibly a viral infection. Your heartburn will be gone, but you will have diarrhea, breathing problems, chest pain and gas. Your vision will be blurred and you will be tired, with yellow eyes and skin. Your heartbeat will be irregular. You will be confused, hallucinating, coughing, dizzy, drowsy and completely unable to find anyone wanting to share side-by-side bathtubs with you for the next four hours. Now get dressed, get out of here and don’t come back!”

“You do not have glaucoma. Cosopt is for glaucoma. Besides that, it leaves a bitter taste in your mouth and can cause an irregular heartbeat, which you already have.”

Did I mention that I need a new doctor? ✖

More Root Cellar

WORDS

word |wɜːrd|

noun

a single distinct meaningful element of speech or writing, used with others (or sometimes alone) to form a sentence and typically shown with a space on either side when written or printed.

This is not easy you know. For every issue of this remarkable magazine/newsletter, I have to come up with some words—preferably readable words. In the past, I have lobbied here for a Pulitzer Prize in trivia. I think I just figured out why I have not been rewarded—there is no such thing and even if one existed, a person needs to enter to win, just like the lottery.

As there is no prize for trivia, it would seem that I am qualified in one or more of the following areas: Explanatory journalism, Feature writing, Commentary, and Investigative reporting. Unhappy with having been ignored for so long, I called Oslo, and explained that I write like Andy Rooney. Oslo explained to me that it was the Nobel Prize that came from Oslo, not the Pulitzer, and the only thing I had in common with Andy Rooney was my looks. So, as I mentioned, this is not easy.

Today, in my depressed state, I shall write about words. I begin with the word “have.”

Many eons ago I obtained, after four years of intense, diligent and brilliant work, a college degree in journalism. My plan was to become a newspaper guy so I would write about police blotters and court proceedings on my way to becoming a well-known sports columnist. Then, I flew my first airplane and my initial plan for life went up in a cloud of kerosene mist.

Lately, my wife and I have been attempting to reduce our possessions somewhat in hopes of obtaining a smaller home. One of the things as yet to be found is my college degree. The question then becomes, do I still “have” a college degree? I do not still “have” the 1959 Pontiac I owned when I obtained my degree. I hope I still “have” a degree but remain concerned that I may not.

Words. Recognize these?

Part of the afternoon had waned, but much of it was left, and what was left was of the finest and rarest quality. Real dusk would not arrive for many hours; but the flood of summer light had begun to ebb, the air had grown mellow, the shadows were long upon the smooth, dense turf. They lengthened slowly, however, and the scene expressed that sense of leisure still to come which is perhaps the chief source of one's enjoyment . . .

I was pretty sure you didn't. Gary Ferguson has offered a reward from his son's catering truck for anyone who recognizes those words as being from the first paragraph of Henry James' novel, *Portrait of a Lady*. Which brings me back to my original point—this is not easy, you know.

I would have written: “It was a nice, late afternoon.” If I needed to embellish it a bit, I would have written “It was a really nice late afternoon.”

More words. From the Minneapolis Star Tribune, August 29, 2010.

The Minnesota Orchestra's performance of Beethoven's Ninth consumed the lion's share of Royal Albert Hall's psychic energy Saturday—appropriately—but not lost in the din was the evening's poignant first half, in which celebrated violinist Gil Shaham and the band put forward a passionate argument for 12-tone music.

Say what?

That degree I mentioned above which I no longer “have” came with an admonition to avoid clichés when writing for a newspaper. “Consumed the lion's share. . .” and “lost in the din,” etc. And, pray tell, what is the “psychic energy” found in Royal Albert Hall? How about . . . “put forward a passionate argument for 12-tone music.”

Above, I mentioned that this is about words. I report here that all 126 classical musicians comprising the Minnesota Orchestra cancelled their subscriptions to the Star Tribune after having read that they are a “band.”

The guy or gal who wrote that piece ain't gonna win no Pulitzer. I would have written: “Da Minnesota Orchestra played real good over dare in England de udder day an Mr. Batoven would be pleased.”

This isn't easy, you know. One must write words which can be understood by the reader. ✨



Minneapolis Christmas Party Sunday, Dec. 12

Chart House Restaurant
11287 Klamath Trail
Lakeville MN
952.435.7156

Social Hour: 5:00
Dinner: 6:30

\$39 per person

ENTRÉE CHOICES

1. Champagne Chicken
2. Baked Salmon Filet
3. Prime Rib

RSVP by Friday, Dec. 1st

Please make check payable to **Doug Wenborg** and mail to:
4300 Hickory Hills Trail, Prior Lake MN 55372

Amount enclosed: \$39 X _____ = _____

NAME: _____ ENTRÉE: _____

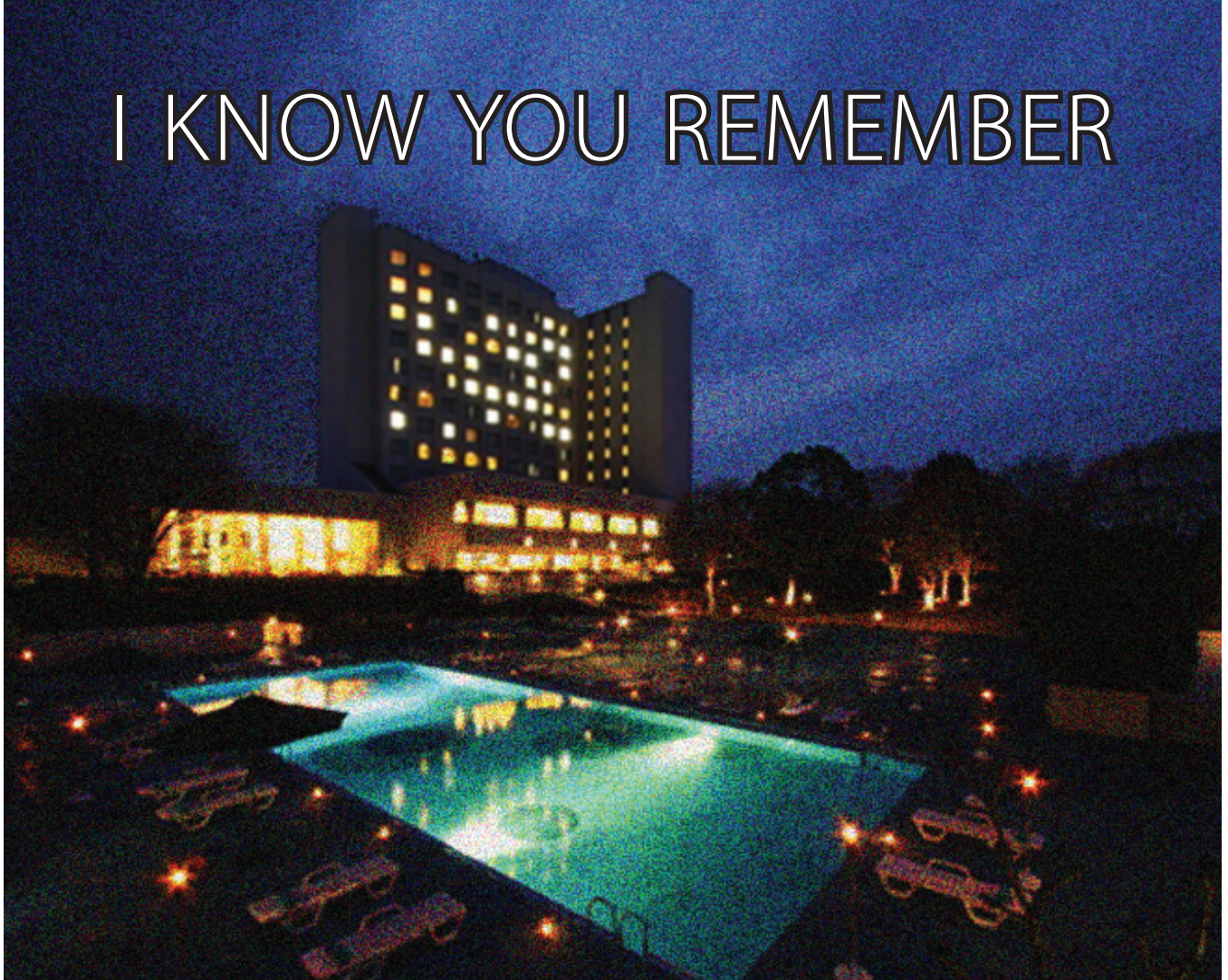
SPOUSE/GUEST: _____ ENTRÉE: _____





Contributing Columnist **James Baldwin**

I KNOW YOU REMEMBER



It's not quite three in the morning, local time. It's dark, I mean really dark. Dark like I'm not really convinced the sun will ever glance this way again. I lay in my bed; the only audible conversation is the ambiguous and discordant language of the air rushing out of the vents as it spills and tumbles onto the textured walls. I think I hear voices. I would like to learn this language; I would like to study this language; I would use this language and have it speak to me, telling me all of what these walls have seen. Then I think again and maybe it's better I don't understand this language. It might be better if I don't know all or maybe even any of what these walls have

seen. It's too early to laugh out loud but the thoughts that somehow surface in a thoroughly trashed mind that has endured five crossings of that water so vast sometimes warrant at least a silent chuckle. That mind is mine right now. I couldn't come close to telling you the number of the room I'm in or maybe even what floor.

It's way too early to get up. It's too early to even think about it, even though I know they are trading something I own part of somewhere in a distant land. I need to get up and check on it but it really is too early to get up, or even think, especially about that stuff. I guess I'll lay here in this semi-lucid state,

staring though my eyelids at the nothing, contemplating the dark. I remind myself of the luxury this really is. At least I have an option. After all, the domestic guys have to get up when they reach this state and from the looks of some of them in the various terminals I've been in, they're still in this state as they board their respective airborne vehicles ready to guide their passengers safely to their destinations. If they only knew.

Besides that, I haven't even considered the next step in opening my eyelids. If I actually get up I will be forced to attend to the aftermath of the debriefing last night with the boys in the sports bar, while stumbling in the dark, tripping lightly over the path learned long ago to a plastic version of where I sometimes do my best thinking. Or at least I think I do. Well, at least they've installed heaters in the seats now, so that's startlingly welcome. It's a good thing, for navigating in the dark, that these rooms are mostly identical but the mirrored feature of rooms back to back sometimes fool me. I have, at least once, found myself peering out the window ready to, well, at least I haven't—yet.

It's almost too bad the rooms I prefer tower over the adjacent road leading to the hotel campus. I guess that's how they fit the needed number of rooms into the footprint available, but during the day and into the evening the noises from the constant flow of traffic below betray any notion of the lost economic decade so often reported. Gasoline is being burned, noise is being made and the local rice farmers still grow things and harvest them. Yakisoba, gyoza and teppan-yaki are still being washed down with rivers of Sapporo and sake. The commerce is here, right here, right in front of us, up close and apparent. How does all of this talk about a lost decade translate into the daily reality before me? Maybe I'll remember to think more about that later. Right now it's way too early.

This is a farming community. I have been coming here, right here, not down the street, not to a different hotel but right here for 26 years. And I'm sure some of the guys have been doing it a lot longer than that, but this is a fort. Most of us know it as "The Camp." Some of us hate it. Or so they say. Some of us love it, but we keep that to ourselves. Obviously, when Richard finally reveals "Survey says..." you know my answer, because this is my home, the home I have away from my other home. This is where the ladies downstairs do my laundry. They don't just do laundry either. They do personal counseling when they smile and greet me—every

single time, rain or shine—"Ahhhhhh, Baldwin-san." And after she has giggled the location of my neatly wrapped package to her partner, and she scurries back with my laundry to ask if it is OK, they wait until the elevator comes down to retrieve me. And as I look back they wave their smiling goodbyes, as if we will never have this pleasure again. Yes, I'm home, finally to my home away from home and I get more than laundry from them. They're like my dog that way. I learn from them in ways I never found in school. You can be told about the theory or you can watch it manifest. I'll take the latter knowing that a cheery smile, a positive approach and a warm greeting works every single time. It rubs off of them in a welcome flow of how it could be, how it should be. I listen and I learn, and I apply what I learn from them every day. People smile more, people can't seem to resist being happier. And we call them only "laundry ladies." Hmmmm.

The aliens apparently visited this location just before I started coming here because the hotel they plopped right in the middle of this farming community was already here the first time I arrived. Oh, some things are the same or pretty much so. The entrance sign is different, but the driveway isn't the same. The spot where I parked my Suzuki six speed is gone, but then, elegiacally, so is the Suzuki. Mitch is still here, sternly efficient yet as pleasantly inscrutable as ever. And the same restaurant is still here and funny enough, or as you might expect, the food hasn't changed in 26 years. Oh, there is a buffet everyday for all the meals but the food tastes pretty much the same here too. There's a glass case for the takeout people; I don't remember that in the really old days but the slam clickers probably like it if it gets them their daily dose of gyoza a little quicker.

And of course there have been the architectural additions. The old lobby used to be over there—you can see where they got the stones to pretty much match—but the pool outside is the same and so is the patio. Well, except for the basketball hoop—I think it was in the other corner. The new wing over there is because the hotel needed a workout facility and an indoor pool and in the old days I guess we didn't. Maybe that's because in the old days we didn't have to work out and now we do. What's up with that anyway?

Now the traffic, well, the traffic is about the same. More or less with flat economic growth over a decade or two why would it be any different? The noise is the same; it's relentlessly constant until today turns into tomorrow and the local farmers,



I might have seen on some list somewhere but have never met? Well, I've never met the chief pilot either. In fact what is that guy's name?

Well, if I had the energy to get up and look out my eighth floor window, well maybe it's the fifth floor, I could probably still see the small Christmas lights sparkling, even though it's not really Christmas, adorning the roofed wedding octagon in the grassy courtyard. But you

with their homes built right up against the road, gain finally some peace. A lot of the noise earlier in the evening was the uber Japanese youth in their fast Japanese cars. They had found their intended mates, at least for this evening, had apparently impressed them with their practiced wiles and had long since headed for the reward they sought. I know they'll be back tomorrow as I once again churn across the Pacific, the last crossing in this thirteen day pattern—oops, oh yeah, now we call them “rotations”—headed for my own reward of another trip completed, another month for the books.

But it's still early, at least here. Not at my other home, not at the one a third of a world away. It's late morning there or, if I'm lucky, early afternoon before the body realizes it's been tricked. In the end, even though the body finally figures it out, it's still too early to get up. If I push and get up it will be twelve hours, maybe thirteen before pickup. I might not be senior; I might not get to choose to go first or rest first. At this point it matters because unlike the old days when the crew stayed together and we had a pretty good idea of who was going to do what, now we don't. Two or three legs and you find yourself working against someone different, maybe even someone new. You start all over; he might not know you, your preferences or your idiosyncrasies and for sure you don't know his. How come after 17 years on the same airplane I still run into people whose name

gotta be kidding though, it's still way too early to want to think about looking.

No, I'm going to ignore what I think might be happening. It's beginning to look like the day is threatening to begin anew. I always joke to my friends back in the U.S. when I tell them there really is good news: tomorrow is going to happen even after they have heard so much from the talking heads who say it might not. Most of them don't get my joke involving that international dateline thing because the concept of some line somewhere is as nebulous to them as the thought of arriving somewhere earlier than the time you left. Explain that again?

The first rays of light are just beginning to seek refuge now, apparently inside my room after finding their way through my curtains. I guess the sun will visit us once again after all. Denial isn't necessarily a destination and I'm holding on now for as long as I can, running through the events of the day as I know they will unfold. After all, that's the way they have been happening for at least half of the time I've been coming here. I almost dread the first steps as I finally get up, look in the mirror, and wonder, silently: “What on earth have you done to yourself? I don't think I looked like this when I started coming here.” Well, it's kinda like The Camp, some things have changed, and others seem to be pretty much the same. ✈

JBB



2010 Seattle Summer Picnic

The picnic was held at "Genesis Farm and Gardens" near Enumclaw on August 19th. The grounds were beautiful with exotic deer and fowl around the area. We had 100 in attendance at the picnic. Joe Kimm turned 99 the day before and Montie Leffel's mother Rae turned 100 years old a few months before. Both were in good spirits and moving around quite nicely. Raffles were held for 30 plus gifts. – Doug Peterson



Nancy Youngdahl,
Sandy Bryan,
Barbara Peterson

Photos: Doug Peterson



Dave Pethia,
Nancy Bates,
Gayla Bredahl,
Joe Kimm



Bill & Joan Fields



Francine Elliot
Looks like a step above
a real picnic.



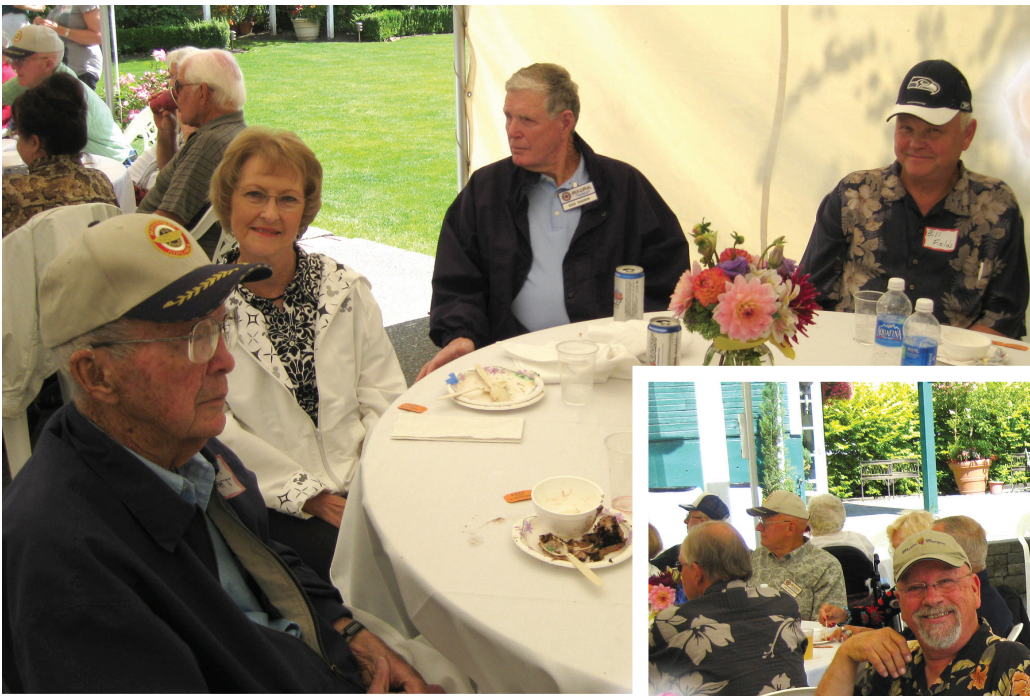
John Starkey,
Dave & Holly Nelson,
June



Abby Lanman,
Alice McCabe



Joan Fields,
Kathee Nelick,
Harry Bedrossian,
Rex Nelick



Hal Thorson,
Marjorie & Dick Haddon,
Bill Fields



Dave Rolczynski,
Becky Harris



Ivars & Bev Skuja,
Charlie Welsh



John & Nancy Bates,
Dave Pethia



Joan & Bill Fields,
Darl McAllister



Cheryl & John Starkey



Richard Whitcomb's Triple Play

By Richard P. Hallion

The most gifted and influential aeronautical researcher of his time knew a thing, or two, or three.

In 1953, the Air Force had a problem: Its new jet-powered interceptor, Convair's F-102, was a dud.

Unlike earlier airplanes that relied on brute strength to push past the speed of sound, the dart-shaped F-102 had a "delta" wing and an afterburning engine that was supposed to allow it to slip across the sonic frontier. Dubbed the "1954 Interceptor" (a reference to its planned in-service date), the new F-102 was to scramble from US bases, climb to high altitude, and intercept incoming Soviet bombers, dashing if necessary to Mach 1.25 before blasting them from the sky.

On paper, it seemed a winner. High over the Mojave, flight tests were starting to show otherwise.

As the prototype YF-102 approached the speed of sound, it would begin to slow down, like a marathon runner hitting the 20 Mile wall. Even with its afterburner blasting away, the aircraft would top out at only Mach 0.98 before returning to Earth. It was clear that something was very wrong with Convair's new delta. Could it be salvaged?



Whitcomb, with an early wind tunnel model featuring the "wasp-waist." His flash of genius led to the Area Rule, which made it possible to increase the speed of the experimental YF-102 25 percent by the time it became the operational F-102A interceptor. (NACA photo)

The answer was yes. The F-102 would require extensive redesign, delaying its introduction into service by two years, but it would become a Cold War mainstay, with approximately 1,000 serving from 1956 through 1976 in Air Force and Air National Guard interceptor squadrons (and in the militaries of Greece and Turkey as well).

That the F-102 didn't remain an embarrassing failure was thanks to the genius of a young government engineer, Richard T. Whitcomb. Whitcomb, who died last October in Hampton, Va., at age 88, has been rightly acclaimed as the most gifted and influential aeronautical researcher of his time.

Incredible Insight

An aerodynamicist with the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA, the predecessor of NASA), Whitcomb was a standout even in an agency known for the extraordinary quality of its scientific personnel.

"Dick Whitcomb wasn't just another brilliant aerodynamicist," notes former Air Force Chief Scientist and University of Maryland professor Mark J. Lewis, who knew him. "He had incredible intuition, giving him special insight into the physics of fluid flow. He initially used that intuition, not just quantitative analysis, when he derived his Area Rule theory. His intuition thus directly led to one of the most important design innovations in aviation history."

Born in Illinois in 1921, Whitcomb came from a family attuned to technology and invention. His father, a mechanical engineer, had been a balloon pilot, and his grandfather was an inventor who had known Thomas Edison.

Like many boys of his generation, Whitcomb was fascinated with flight and earned an engineering scholarship to Massachusetts' Worcester Polytechnic Institute. Most engineering students aspired to work in industry, but Whitcomb was different: "I knew," he said later, "that I wanted to go into research."

As he approached graduation, he read a Fortune magazine article extolling NACA's Langley Memorial Aeronautical Laboratory at Langley Field, Va. (now the NASA Langley Research Center at Langley Air Force Base). The article convinced him it "was the place to come for applied research." Accordingly, when a NACA recruiter visited Worcester Poly, Whitcomb recalled, "I was just waiting for the guy to hand me the papers."

Whitcomb joined NACA in 1943, the year when America's aeronautical community began planning its assault upon the then-fearsome "sound barrier."

The rocket and the jet now made supersonic flight a possibility. Perhaps an airplane could fly faster than sound, if it could first survive the intermediate transonic region with its much-feared sound barrier.

The transonic region was between Mach 0.75 and Mach 1.25. In that band, airplanes encountered compressible flow, shock waves streaming from their wings and bodies, loss of lift and rising drag, dangerous buffeting, and sometimes loss of control and even structural failure.

Whitcomb would prove his mastery over this treacherous and daunting arena but almost missed the chance. When he arrived at Langley, personnel staffers initially assigned him to the instrumentation branch.

With a surprising outspokenness for someone so young, he refused.

"I said, 'I don't want to work in instruments,'" he recalled. "I want to work on aerodynamics.'" So they assigned him to the Langley eight-foot high-speed tunnel, run by John Stack. NACA's most forceful high-speed research enthusiast, Stack was energetic, insightful, charismatic, and destined to twice share the Robert J. Collier Trophy—the most prestigious of all American aviation accolades.

A Flash of Light

Chief among his many accomplishments was conceptualizing and developing the slotted throat wind tunnel, the most significant tunnel advance over the previous 25 years. Conventional wind tunnels "choked" near the speed of sound when shock waves streaming from models reflected back and forth across their test sections, producing misleading or incomprehensible results. The slotted throat tunnel removed this transonic "blind spot" via a ring of carefully placed longitudinal slots that dissipated flow-disturbing shock waves, enabling much more accurate measurements as airflows neared

and exceeded the speed of sound.

Whitcomb made the slotted throat tunnel his personal laboratory. In the early years of the postwar era, NACA aerodynamicists focused on the behavior of the swept wing. Whitcomb looked beyond its singular purity, studying instead the aerodynamic interaction of the wing and fuselage. He discovered their combined drag was greater than the sum of their individual drags measured separately.

Using photographic imaging, Whitcomb noted strong shock waves emanating where the leading and trailing edges of wings joined the fuselage, producing a performance-robbing "bunching" of air. It was as if the wave patterns of two boats intersected, becoming just one large pattern.

"The theoreticians," he later told one interviewer, "were at a loss as to how to handle this problem." All except one—Adolf Busemann, a scientist who had invented the high-speed swept wing in Germany before World War II, and who came to Langley with Project Paperclip afterward. At a staff seminar, Busemann joked that transonic flows were so constricted that aerodynamicists were like pipe fitters, finding how to fit flows around the vehicle.

One day in 1951, while Whitcomb contemplated his tunnel results and pondered Busemann's analogy, he had an insight like a flash of light: If a designer gave the bunching air a place to go, the flow would smooth out, and the drag would decrease. He later recalled the moment, saying, "I sat there at my desk, feet propped up, and suddenly it dawned on me, the basic idea of the Area Rule: Transonic drag is a function of the longitudinal development of the cross-sectional areas of the entire plane."

It was the latter insight—that drag was a function of the length of the entire airplane and not just the fuselage diameter at the wing-fuselage juncture—which separated Whitcomb's work from others who focused their research more narrowly.

The ideal supersonic shape was long and slender, with its cross-sectional area expanding gradually, reaching a maximum diameter and then contracting equally smoothly. Designers would have to pinch the fuselage at the wing roots, and lengthen the fuselage before and behind the wing as well, increasing its fineness ratio—the ratio of its length to its width.

Whitcomb broached this "rule of thumb" at the next NACA Langley technical seminar. After he finished, Busemann rose to his feet. "Some people come up with half-baked ideas and call them theo-

ries,” he said. “Whitcomb comes up with a brilliant idea and calls it a rule of thumb.”

A landmark, confidential NACA research memorandum issued in September 1952 was the result of comprehensive wind tunnel testing that followed. The memo’s prosaic title—“A Study of the Zero-Lift Drag-Rise Characteristics of Wing-Body Combinations Near the Speed of Sound”—belied its revolutionary implications.

At just over 30, using a mix of intuition, experimentation, and borrowed theoretical analogy, Whitcomb had reshaped the airplane. Area Rule was—next to the swept and delta wings themselves—the most significant and most visible manifestation of transonic design.

Nicknamed “Coke Bottle” and “Wasp Waist,” Area Rule came just in time for the F-102. Weeks before its first flight, Convair engineers had learned from NACA tunnel tests that the F-102 likely would not exceed the speed of sound.

Whitcomb’s confidential memorandum came afterward, followed shortly by the first F-102’s disastrous performance in the skies over Edwards.

For Convair it was, literally, back to the drawing board. The F-102, redesigned to conform to Area Rule principles with a lengthened fuselage and also modified wing leading edges, returned to Edwards in 1954, handily accelerating through the speed of sound.

Whitcomb’s Area Rule had added 25 percent more speed to the design.

Area ruling also reshaped the Navy’s F9F-9, which became the supersonic F11F-1 Tiger, and Vought’s F8U-1 Crusader. It added sinuous curves to Republic’s F-105 Thunderchief, McDonnell’s F4H-1 Phantom II, and Northrop’s tiny N-156, which spawned the T-38 Talon trainer and the F-5A Freedom Fighter.

Uncorking No. 2

Whitcomb received the 1954 Collier Trophy “for discovery and experimental verification of the Area Rule, a contribution to base knowledge yielding significantly higher airplane speed and greater range with same power.”

He had also redeemed the reputation of the NACA with the Air Force. Since 1941, when Gen. Henry H. “Hap” Arnold had been surprised to learn that Britain was more advanced in the field of jet propulsion, the agency had faced criticism for technological complacency. The appearance of German jets, the V-2 missile, and discovery of advanced German high-speed research by Theodore von Karman’s technical study team in 1945 had added to such beliefs.

Whitcomb’s discovery enabled the Air Force’s transonic force structure that was subsequently deployed for the Cold War and beyond. Proof that Area Rule also restored NACA to the service’s good graces was evident in Whitcomb’s receiving of the Air Force Exceptional Service Medal.

Whitcomb was not content to rest on this single laurel. Called into the early design conferences for a proposed supersonic civil air transport, he returned to transonics when SCAT studies grew ever more complex and improbable.



Whitcomb with a wind tunnel model of a TF-8 configured with his supercritical wing, and NASA’s flying version. His innovation has saved billions of dollars in fuel costs. (NASA photo)

“I said, ‘I’m going to quit the field,’” he recalled in 1973. “‘I’m going back where I know I can make things pay off,’ and I went back to the region right near the speed of sound.” Shortly after, he uncorked his second great idea, the “supercritical wing.”

The supercritical wing had a largely flattop airfoil cross-section with its camber (curvature) well aft. It raised the wing’s critical Mach number—the point where the accelerated airflow over the wing creates a shock wave. A jetliner cruising at Mach 0.82 with a conventional wing might, with a supercritical one, cruise at Mach 0.86 or even higher for the same expenditure of fuel. While this idea was exciting enough, it became one of vital strategic significance for both military and airline operators in the oil crises of the 1970s.

Early tests on a modified trainer encouraged NASA to move to higher-Mach trials using an ex-Navy Vought TF-8A Crusader jet fighter. Flight tests began in 1971, and quickly demonstrated that the anticipated benefits of the wing were correct. The modified F-8 had 15 percent better transonic performance than a standard Crusader.

Tests indicated commercial airliners with supercritical wings would be more profitable than ones with conventional wings, saving the airline industry \$78 million per year in 1974 dollars—equivalent to \$342 million today.

In 1969, Whitcomb received NASA’s Exceptional Scientific Achievement Medal. Four years later, President Nixon awarded him the National Medal of Science. In 1974, Whitcomb received a \$25,000 cash award for inventing the supercritical wing, and later that year, the National Aeronautic Association awarded him the 1974 Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy.

The supercritical wing was very quickly applied to a range of commercial aircraft, beginning with the Rockwell Sabreliner 65, the Canadair Challenger, and the French Falcon 50 business jet aircraft.

It had clear military value, and so was incorporated on the Boeing and McDonnell Douglas YC-14 and YC-15 Advanced Medium Short Takeoff and Landing Transport test beds. It was evaluated for fighter and attack aircraft applications on a modified F-111A as part of the joint NASA-Air Force Transonic Aircraft Technology (TACT) program, as was a supercritical spin-off, the Mission Adaptive Wing.

The TACT F-111A had 50 percent more lift during maneuvering than a standard F-111A.



The winglet (seen here in testing on a KC-135) later became crucial to the C-17’s performance. Seemingly simple, the winglet adds lift far beyond its cost in weight, and has been adopted on many airliners. (NASA photo)

Building upon the earlier flight-test experience of the YC-15 program, and continued and lengthy wind tunnel studies at NASA and elsewhere, the McDonnell Douglas C-17A Globemaster III transport went a step further. It featured not only a supercritical wing, but another Whitcomb innovation—the wingtip winglet.

“I Shock People”

The winglet constituted the third of his innovations and was even more readily visible than area ruling. Aerodynamicists had long recognized that swirling wingtip vortices, a byproduct of the airflow’s circulation around the wing, constituted a source of performance-robbing turbulence and drag. While not the first to experiment with some sort of endplates located on wingtips, Whitcomb employed greater insight and intuition than his predecessors.

He developed a deceptively simple-looking fin that could reduce a transport’s drag by a fifth. But would it work?

Tests in 1979 using a Boeing KC-135 Stratotanker loaned to NASA proved that winglets functioned better at reducing drag and increasing lift than merely extending an airplane’s wingspan. The winglets increased its range by seven percent and revealed the power of the invisible vortices:



A swing-wing Transonic Aircraft Technology (TACT) F-111A configured with Whitcomb's supercritical wing. It delivered 50 percent better lift than the standard F-111A. (NASA photo)

The KC-135 returned from one flight with a winglet bent in a half-circle, a testimony of the strength and energy contained within the small horizontal tornadoes.

Since the late 1980s, winglets have become ubiquitous, visible to anyone living near an airport offering commercial and business jet aircraft service.

The general aviation and business airplane communities were the first to incorporate winglets, just as they were the first to adopt his supercritical wing. In 1979, Learjet introduced the Longhorn, a winglet-equipped series of its famed business jet aircraft. Gulfstream added them to its own line of business aircraft, and later Boeing and McDonnell

Douglas adapted them for the 747-400 series jumbo jet and the MD-11.

Winglets were incorporated on the C-17 airlifter, together with a supercritical wing. The combination gives the C-17 better range and speed than would have been possible had it used a larger, conventional planform.

Whitcomb retired from NASA in 1980, convinced that no large challenges in aviation remained. Thereafter, he turned his interests toward broader questions in the physical sciences.

Asked in 2003 whether he advised young people to follow his footsteps, he replied, "I shock people. I say if you want to make an impact or have an effect, don't go into aeronautics. It's pretty well stabilized. No big things have come up in aeronautics since my inventions, and it has been 20 years since I left."

If many might disagree, most would concur that it will take an extraordinary breakthrough to match any one of his remarkable trio of transonic accomplishments.

The author, Richard P. Hallion is an aerospace historian who served 11 years as the Air Force Historian and has written widely on aerospace technology and airpower topics. This is his first article for Air Force Magazine.

Reprinted by permission from Air Force Magazine, published by the Air Force Association.

Forwarded to Contrails by Col. M. J. Foster, Jr., USAF retired, aka — as he's known to us — "Skip."



RNPA member Captain Steve Luckey, (NWA, ret.), was awarded the **Dave Behncke Lifetime Achievement Award** as the third ever recipient at the recent ALPA Board of Directors meeting in Miami.

Contrails learned of this achievement just as we were going to press. The full text documenting Steve's award will appear in the February, 2011 issue.

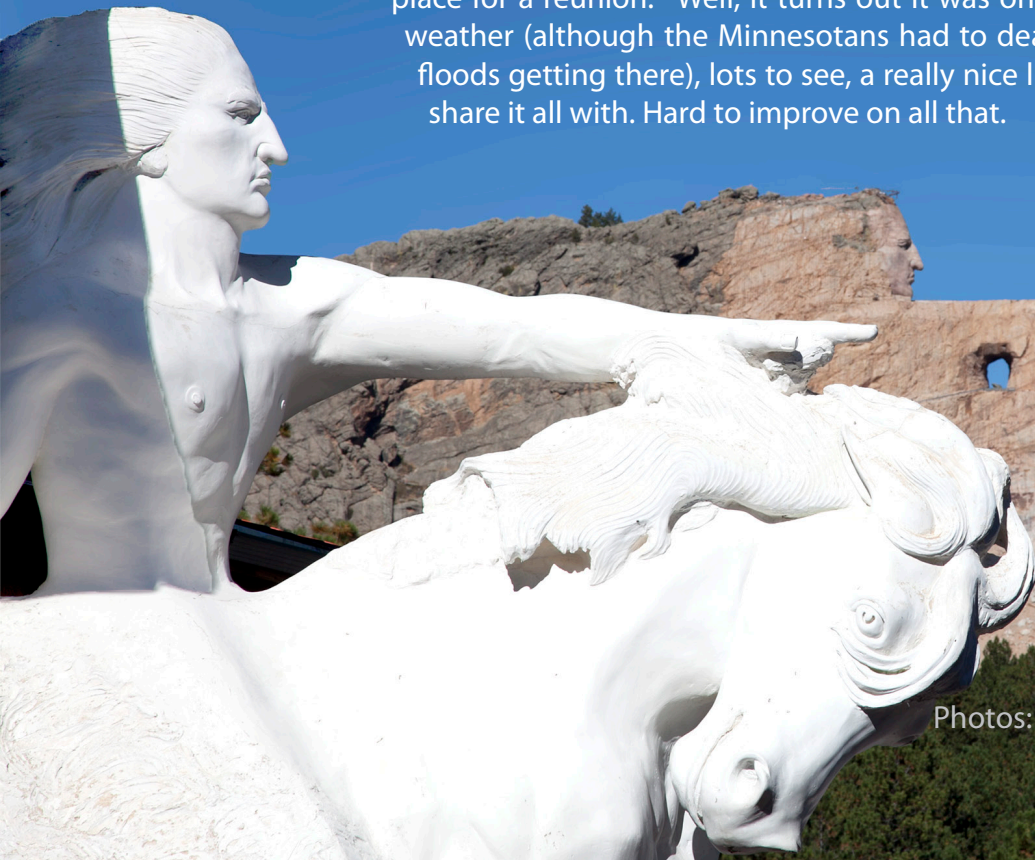
Congratulations from all of us at RNPA, Steve.

Rapid City Reunion



September 24, 25 & 26

Remember when you thought, "Rapid City? That doesn't sound like a great place for a reunion." Well, it turns out it was one of the better ones. Perfect weather (although the Minnesotans had to deal with some heavy rain and floods getting there), lots to see, a really nice little city and good friends to share it all with. Hard to improve on all that.



Photos: Gary Ferguson except where noted



First Day Reception

(Top left) Barb Pisel, Bob Root

(Top) Kathy Stark, Joanne Aitken,
Kathee Nelick, Doug Parrott, Mel
Suggett, Shirley Parrott

(Left) Sue Horning, Bob & Judy Royer

(Bottom left) Bruce Armstrong,
Bob Johnson, Chuck Carlson, Gayla
Bredahl, Gary Pisel,

(Bottom) Rita Ward, Helen Frank





Day two began with an hour long train ride from Hill City to Keystone through the Black Hills. From there we bussed to Mt. Rushmore and then to the Crazy Horse monument.





ABOVE (l-r)
Sue Horning,
Sheri Ball,
Eileen Halverson,
Bob Horning,
Marianne McAlpin,
Myron & Gayla Bredahl,
John McAlpin



BELOW (l-r)
Bob & Judy Royer,
Dick Dodge,
Jim Mancini,
Pat Rieman & Dave McLeod



Northbound on US 16 toward Keystone is a scenic road obviously built by the WPA which seems to intentionally traverse the highest points with corkscrew ascents and descents and three of these tunnels, each oriented so as to see the Presidents in the distance.





Sheri Ball, Laurie McCauley, Pat Rieman



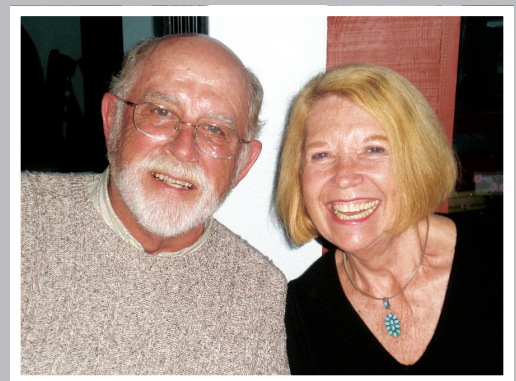
Some of the ladies met the owner of Delmonico Grill while shopping Saturday afternoon. That evening we enjoyed a most enjoyable meal there with custom napkins printed just for us. Gotta like Rapid City.



John & Marianne McAlpin



Barbara Pisel, Calen Maningas



Your Editor, Laurie McCauley



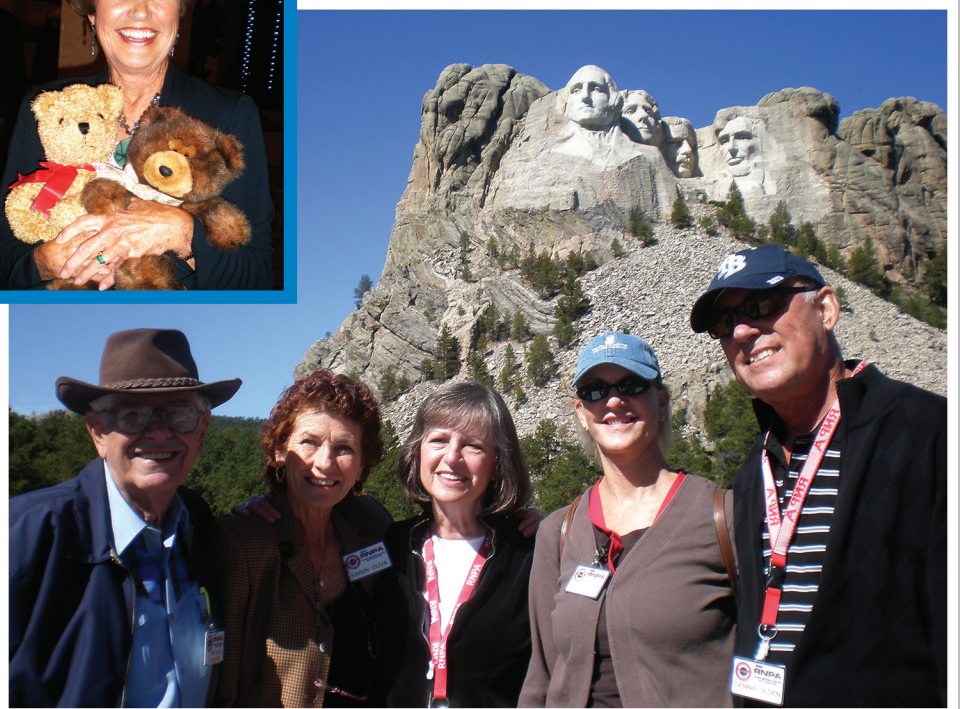
Carolyn & Neal Henderson,
Karen Oliva



All the photos on this page
are courtesy of Sheri Ball



Lynne & Terry Confer



Dino & Karen Oliva, Barb Boldenow, Boki & Dennis Olden



**Dave & Katie Pethia, Dino & Karen Oliva, Bruce Armstrong, Bobbi & George Lachinski
Jim O'Reilly, John Badger, Myron Bredahl, Bob Horning, Phil Hallin, Gary Pisel
Jackie O'Reilly, Candy Badger, Gayla Bredahl, Sue Horning, Eileen Hallin, Barbara Pisel**



**Jim & Vikki Hancock, Don & Jeanne Wiedner, Judy & Tom Schellinger
Dean Sunde, Wayne Stark, Skip Eglet, Rex Nelick, Hal Newton, Larry Daudt
Meredith Sunde, Kathy Stark, Kathy Eglet, Kathee Nelick, Shirley Newton, Lenice Daudt**



**John & Claire Lackey, Stan Baumwald, Kathy Palmen, Margie & John Lienemann
Gene Frank, John Andres, Ned Stephens, Don Shrope, Arnie Calvert, Chuck Carlson
Helen Frank, Dianne Andres, Ellen Stephens, Edith Schrope, Linda Calvert, Joanne Aitken**



**Howie & Marilyn Leland, Hal Hockett, Connie Thompson, Lynne & Terry Confer
Dick Haglund, Wayne Ward, Gordon Wotherspoon, Arlo Johnson, Chet White, Ivars Skuja
Lois Haglund, Rita Ward, Mary Ann Wotherspoon, Susan Johnson, Sharon White, Bev Skuja**



**Lois Abbott, Elaine Mielke, Sheri Ball, Laurie McCauley, Prim Hamilton
Lynn Hall, Gary Webb, Bob Royer, John Pennington, Ray Dolny, Pete Schenck
Joan Hall, Cortney Webb, Judy Royer, Karen Pennington, Dee Dolny, Mlndy Schenck**



**Bob & Kathy Lowenthal, Betty & Jack Cornforth, Joyce & Bill Barrott
Jim Bestul, Earle & Dottie Scott, Dick Haddon, Roger Grotbo, Bruce Burkhard
Nancy Bestul, Eileen Halverson, Barbara Boldenow, Marge Haddon, Rosie Grotbo, Susan Burkhard**



**Doug Nelson & Marcia Mayer, Andrea & Dutch Wellman, Barbara & Dan Lindsey
Tom Ebner, George Bond, Dick Glover, Lee Bradshaw, Jerry Burton, Doug Parrott
Sue Ebner, Joan Bond, Gay Glover, Darlene Conway, Barbara Burton, Shirley Parrott**



**Dennis & Eunie Guentzel, Linda & Jerry Wortman, Marilyn & Carl Simmons
Chris Hanks, Dick Duxbury, Dennis Olden, Dave Lundin, Al Sovereign, Pete Johnson
Jan Hanks, Sue Duxbury, Jim Mancini, Angie Lundin, Ina Sovereign, Claudia Waters**



**Bill & Chris Iams, Dayle Yates, Woody Herman, Keith & Verna Finneseth
Bob Root, Al Teasley, Mel Suggett, Ken Finney, Neal Henderson, John McAlpin
Lee Root, Jean Teasley, Evelyn Suggett, Jayne Finney, Carolyn Henderson, Marianne McAlpin**



**Larry Hacker, Don & Nancy Aulick, Nadine & Sterling Bentsen
Ken Kreutzmann, Maureen Hacker, Jack Hudspeth, Bob Johnson, Steve Lillyblad, Ed Thomas
Sharon Kreutzmann, Ronald Hudspeth, Alayne Hudspeth, Georgeia Johnson, Janet Lillyblad, Sandra Thomas**



**Barbara & Lyle Prouse, Clint Viebrock, NanSea & Charlie Welsh
Bill Plehall, Art Chetlain, Wayne Camp, K. C. Kohlbrand, Bill Dolny, Rex Smith
Chyree Plehall, Donna Pauly-Chetlain, Winona Camp, Martha Kohlbrand, Donna Dolny, Jeanine Smith**



**Vic Kleinsteuber, John Bates, Dave McLeod, Chuck Rogers
Judy Summers, Nancy Bates, Pat Rieman, Polly Rogers, Gary Ferguson**



Calen Maningas accepting all those teddy bears on behalf of the Rapid City Fire Department from President Gary Pisel.



Meredith Willems accepting the Paul Soderlind Memorial Scholarship from Gary.



As wildly improbable as it may seem, Bruce Armstrong won not only this free reunion, and not only the next free reunion, but the free domestic positive space passes from Delta. A clean sweep! Unreal.



Eileen Halverson watches Barb Boldenow win a door prize.



Tons o' bears. Well, not tons, but a whole bunch. I have forgotten the exact count, but Angie & Dave Lundin brought more than fifty bears to the party and Jackie & Jim O'Rielly brought something like a hundred and fifty! The drive was so successful that we intend to do it again in Omaha.



Neal Henderson recounting a hilarious story about one of Woody Herman's early "I learned about not locking myself out of the cockpit from that" episodes. You can tell Barb Pisel is enjoying it.



Woody, the senior member present, is shown at left flanked by Rex Nelick (on the left) and Stan Baumwald.



Tom and Judy Schellinger with Calen Maningas and a sampling of all those teddy bears (above) and below with Scholarship winner Meredith Willems and her husband Eric Willems.



SW Florida Spring Luncheon Colony Golf & Country Club Bonita Springs



**March 16th, 2011
11:00 to 3:00**

MENU

Traditional Caesar Salad
with rolls and butter

CHOICES

Salmon with Tarragon Bernaise Sauce,
roasted potatoes and julienne vegetables

OR

Medallions of Pork with Madeira Sauce,
roasted potatoes and julienne vegetables

DESSERT

Chocolate Madness Cake

Coffee, Tea and Soft Drinks
complimentary

\$30 per person

Reservation

NAME _____

Salmon ___ Pork ___

SPOUSE/GUEST _____

Salmon ___ Pork ___

Send check for \$30 X ___ = ___

payable to: **Doni Jo Schlader**

3520 Cassia Ct.

Bonita Springs FL 34134

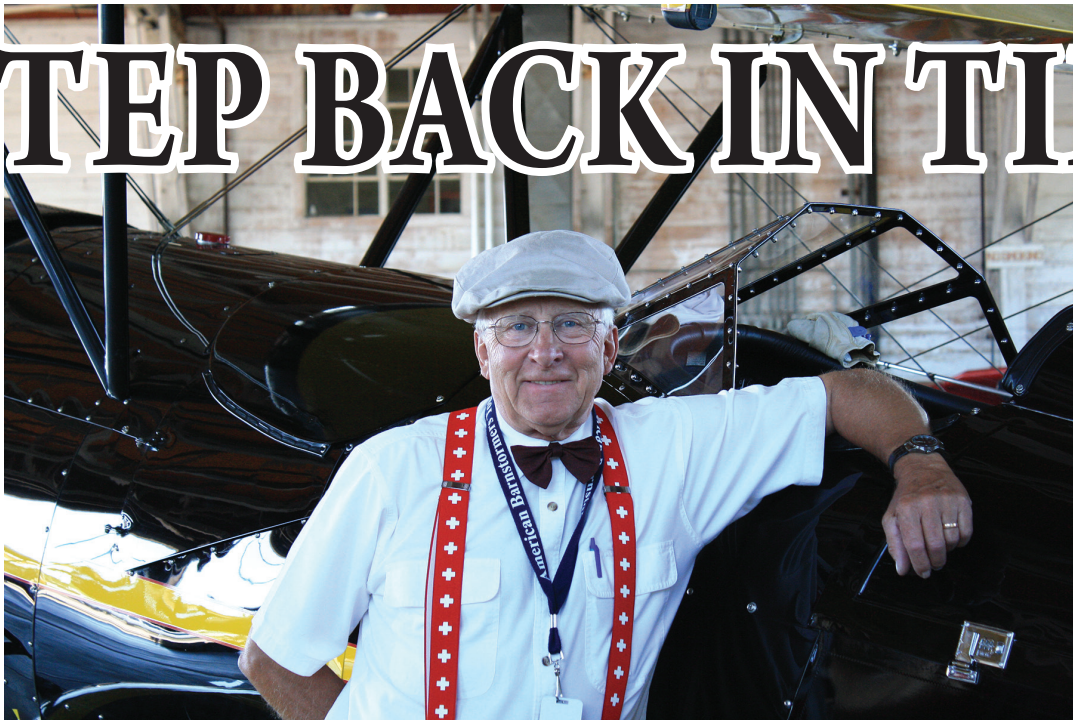
DIRECTIONS:

Take **I-75** to **EXIT 123**, go **West** on Corkscrew Road to **Hwy 41** (Tamiami Trail),
then **South 2.6 miles** to Pelican Landing/Colony entrance.

Directions to the **Colony Club** will be given by gatehouse.

Valet Parking available.

A STEP BACK IN TIME



By Dennis Guentzel

It was not until I had contracted with Roy Redman for the restoration of my Waco Taperwing that I finally became interested in any aviation history of that period. Until that time I had, regrettably, ignored the earliest days of Northwest airlines and the barnstormers and aircraft that gave roots to our careers.

Naturally, I jumped at the chance to relive some of those early days of aviation and share the experience of flight in the 20's and 30's with 20 other antique owners by joining the "American Barnstormers Tour."

The American Barnstormers Tour was co-founded by Clay Adams a Northwest/Delta 757 Captain and Sarah Wilson, owner/pilot of "Stearman Flights Inc." and is conducted every two years, visiting a different group of cities each year. The Tour for 2010 covered a span of 19 days and seven cities in the Midwest; Mason City, Tea, S.D. (right next to Sioux Falls), Watertown, Aberdeen, Bismarck, Jamestown and Alexandria.

Having been properly vetted by the organizers (I'm sure they were more interested in the airplane than the pilot), I joined up with a Travel Air 6000 restored and flown by Hank Galpin of Kalispell, Mt. We departed Bozeman on a four leg, eight hour flight to Mason City, to begin the tour.

On the afternoon that we arrived, a total of 17 aircraft assembled for the start of operations the next day. The group included five Travel Air 4000's plus a Model 4-D, four Wacos, two Fairchild 22's, Hank's Travel Air 6000, a Stinson JR-S, a New Standard D-25 with four

passenger seats in the front cockpit, a '43 Stearman and a 1909 Bleriot Monoplane, the only replica in the group. The Bleriot actually flew, but for transport from town to town it was loaded onto a trailer because it simply got there faster that way. Aircraft came from literally all directions, as we had birds from Maine, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Florida, California, Montana, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

The aircraft and their pilots were divided into two groups: the "ride haulers" and the "display" aircraft. The rider haulers were the six aircraft that had a "Letter of Authority" with the FAA to give rides for pay. The rest of the aircraft had another purpose in that we were basically display aircraft for most of the day, but took to the air each afternoon to "ballyhoo" for business. Ten of us would parade around the city in typical Barnstormer fashion (at today's legal altitudes however) to attract attention and draw the local folks to the field where they could sign up for a biplane ride. It worked quite well in most localities – we were scheduled to be on the ramp from 10:00 AM until 6:00 PM, but some days the ride haulers still had folks lined up well past that time. While they continued to fly, we put our airplanes away and then hit the bar to await their arrival for dinner.

The uniform of the day was pilot's choice as long as it fit the period, i.e. knickers, knee high socks and bow tie or perhaps mail pilot garb with boots, breeches, khaki shirt and tie.

Almost every pilot had a nickname or handle, a tra-

dition that as you know continues on today with our fighter jocks. Because I was the newbie in the group I can't be sure of the origin of most, but a few were fairly logical: Northwest's Clay Adams became "Pork Chop" Adams when he hastily ate his lunch, "pork chop on a stick" in the rear cockpit, while the passengers were being loaded in the front. "Spook" Roth spent 30 years in the CIA. Another Northwest pilot on the Tour was Bernie "Wrong Way" Harrigan. Now, I'm not sure if it was the similarity of the name or some incident that evoked that handle—someone who knows him better than me will have to ask him about it. "Speed" Hornbeck was late for everything.

Two of the guys had a cute routine at the end of the parade flight where "Speed" Hornbeck would dress up as "Madame Lunde" who was to take a ride in the Waco ASO. After considerable effort "she" was finally stuffed into the cockpit of the Waco, but before the "pilot" could



"In Aberdeen I drew Abby, a little 12 year old with long red hair who had never before been in an airplane of any type."



**1930 Indian
and my
1929 Waco**

Clay "Pork Chop" Adams and his Travel Air



climb aboard, she hit the throttle and was off the ground without him. After several gyrations over the field she was finally talked down to a rather bouncy landing in front of a delighted crowd.

For me, one of the many highlights of the Tour was EAA's Young Eagle program that we incorporated into the daily parade flight in each of the three South Dakota cities. For those of you who are not acquainted with the program, the Experimental Aircraft Association has an introduction to flight program for kids between the ages of 8 and 17. It's free to those who sign up and have parental consent.

Several of these young people were taken aloft each day during our parade flight.

In Aberdeen I drew Abby, a little 12 year old with long red hair who had never before been in an airplane of any type. She was actually going to buy a ride with her own money until she was steered to one of the EAA reps who signed her up for the free ride. I was concerned that she may have been a little apprehensive since her first airplane ride was in an open cockpit with all that noise and wind, but that concern was quickly dispelled. To describe her as exuberant is an understatement. She hooted and





giggled the whole trip around Aberdeen. At one point she blurted out, “Look at my hair—its blowing all over the place!” It was all over my windscreen. “I know Abby, just try to get it under control before I have to land this thing!” Another loud giggle. She was one of the most delightful passengers I’ve ever had!

While in Watertown, we were treated to breakfast at the Lakes Area Technical School where we spoke to a regular fixture there, Northwest’s Joe Amendt. The school has a 727 behind the hanger and Joe invited us aboard for a little nostalgia. Our airplanes were housed overnight in a hangar built in 1934 and had walls constructed entirely of field stone.

The hangar that housed all our aircraft in BIS was a round roofed structure just north of the old terminal location. It also was built sometime in the 30’s. Out front was a mail box that still had North Central’s Herman on its side.

Also while in BIS, a local vintage car club brought in some cars to add to our vintage aircraft display. It was quite a scene in front of that old hangar – with model A’s and biplanes filling the ramp.

The only incident on the tour occurred while departing BIS for JMS. The Travel Air 4-D ate an exhaust valve during the climb out, but pilot Burce McElhoe did a nice job of putting it down in a hayfield just east of the airport. It was towed to the shelter of a nearby barn and repaired on the spot with a new cylinder and piston shipped in the next day by Fed EX.

Half the fun of the Tour had to be just getting

Eunie and myself behind my Waco



All photos by the author



Steve “Spook” Roth and his Fairchild 22



Eric Preston and
his 1909 Bleriot

to the next airport. We would leave fairly early so as to be set up and ready to go by 10:00 AM at the next city. We didn't exactly fly in formation, it was more like a gaggle, with airplanes in groups of three or four that were compatible in speed. We did tighten it up some as we came overhead the field, well, you know, just for show.

The last stop on the tour was Alexandria, Minnesota, where we spent the three day 4th of July weekend. The weather was warm and humid but the wind that had plagued us for much of the last week in N.D. had subsided. The winds and bumpy rides however, hadn't detracted from the thrill people must have experienced on their flights, judging by all the big smiles we saw.

With the Tour over, old "Handlebar" Hank and I departed AXN for Montana early the next day. Hank headed his Travel Air 6000 west with me at his four o'clock. We pressed on the entire day, making BZN by dinner time. Again we split the eight hours of flight time into four legs, but exceeded a 12 hour duty day by just a little due in part to an early

and lengthy lunch in Mobridge, waiting for some weather to pass.

I have to say that putting in eight hours of flight in that old open cockpit gives one a renewed appreciation for the challenges facing the guys that really had to do this for a living in the early days. Pilots like Charles Holman that flew the night mail from St. Paul to Chicago summer and winter, in the old Northwest Airways JYM's (same as the Taperwing, but 13" longer) deserve a lot of respect.

Would I do the Tour again? Well, thinking back now about joining up, I have to say it was fun, but it was a really long trip with lot of nights in a hotel room again and long days baking in the sun on a hot ramp and then there was all that windy weather and hmmm... we met a great bunch of people and did some really fun flying and... gee, I can't help thinking that if they decided to do another one of these Tours... like maybe to BZN or HLN would be fun, then up to Kalispell would be really neat... then on to Coeur d'Alene... and maybe even Pasco Washington... and, well, you get the idea. ✈



ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND HIS PLANE

Waco Taperwing s/n A-83 was born 4/49/29 and delivered to its first owner, famous race pilot Johnny Livingston. Its original registration was NC8568. Records are sketchy, at best, but they show a transfer to a gentleman in Illinois a few years later. It was so registered until acquisition by Russ Gage, Canton, MA in 1981. By that time the registration had been changed to N9012F.

The original number, NC8568 was traced to a crop duster in Bakersfield, CA. The FAA reported that the aircraft had been heavily damaged in an accident. However, the business is no longer operating and it is presumed that the owner is deceased.

The color scheme was not an attempt to duplicate a specific livery, but rather an attempt to duplicate the design used by the Waco Aircraft Company when producing their “racing” and “sport” versions of the already famous Taperwing.

It is a 1929 Waco ATO Taperwing, NC8565, s.n. A-83, standard airworthiness certificate, restored in 2002 by Rare Aircraft of Owatonna, MN. Power is from a Jacobs 755B2 engine with 275 HP. The aircraft has a total of 376 hours, of which he has flown 275 since restoration. The plane and pilot are based in Bozeman, MT. (BZN). It has some of the “modern” electronics down on the side panel, but the panel instruments are all restored Waco “steam gauge.” When acquired by Dennis the registration was changed to NC8565. The original was not available, and NC8565 was as close as possible, and from an original Waco series.

Dennis flew for Northwest Airlines for 30 years and retired in 1998 with about 21,200 hours. Prior to his NWA career, he spent some time as an instructor mostly in Pipers, most every model from Tri-pacer to Aztec’s, as well as some Cessna products. Since then Dennis has been happily flying his Waco.



Chet Swenson
1922 ~ 2010

Chester H. “Chet” Swenson, age 88, a retired Northwest Airlines Captain “Flew West” for a final check on August 21, 2010. Chet was born March 15, 1922 in La Crosse, Wisconsin to Archie and Florence Swenson. He grew up in Wisconsin and Minnesota, and attended the University of Minnesota for one year. The winds of war changed his focus from college to aviation, and he traveled to Luke Air Force Base in Glendale, Arizona, planning to become an aircraft mechanic. But the attack on Pearl Harbor altered his training from repairing planes to flying them, and he completed his flight school training in 1943.

After flight school Chet was sent to the Pacific Theater and became part of the famed “Green Dragons,” the 405th squadron of the 38th Bomb Group. The 405th had deployed to Australia with Martin B-26 Marauders in early 1942 to reinforce Fifth Air Force after it’s withdrawal to Australia, and in 1943 was re-equipped with B-25 Mitchell medium bombers and moved to forward airfields in New Guinea.

The 405th followed MacArthur’s advance along the northern coast of the islands into the Netherlands East Indies, flying tactical bombardment missions against Japanese strong points and airfields. They moved to Luzon, Philippines as part of the United

States liberation forces in 1945. Chet saw action in the Northern Solomon Islands, New Guinea, the Bismark Archipelago, and the Philippine Islands.

The 405th B-25s had tremendous strafing firepower. They carried eight forward firing .50 caliber machine guns, four in the nose and two on each side just aft of the pilots in a “blister” on the lower forward fuselage. There were also two “fifties” in a top turret and two in the tail turret.

All of the B-25s in the 405th sported a large green dragon with dragon teeth covering the nose of the aircraft. Chet’s B-25 also had the cartoon character Donald Duck carrying a bomb under his arm on the side of the aircraft behind the nose, and its name “Minnesoter Bomb Toter.” He flew 74 missions as a Captain with the “Green Dragons” in the B-25 Mitchell bomber, and was awarded the Air Medal.

After his honorable discharge in 1945, he returned to Minnesota where he met the love of his life, Bette Darlene Jerlow, and they were married later that year on October 17, 1945. Chet joined Northwest Airlines as a pilot shortly after their marriage, and his career took the family from St. Paul, to Seattle, to Spokane, and finally in 1961 Tacoma, Washington. During the early years of their marriage Chet and Bette’s family grew as three sons, Gary, Craig and Dave were added to the family.





Chet's career with Northwest Airlines spanned 37 years and he piloted just about every aircraft in their inventory: the DC-3, DC-6 and DC7; Lockheed L-188 Electra and L-1049 Constellation; and the Boeing 707, 727 and 747. He retired as a senior Boeing 747 Captain in 1982, highly respected by his peers. He was a member of the Fircrest Golf Club and volunteered for the Fircrest and Tacoma Swim Clubs.

Moving from Captain of the sky to Captain of the water, Chet purchased a 38 foot trawler and he and Bette, and the family roamed Puget Sound, the San Juan Islands, and Canadian waters in the beloved "Option B." They also enjoyed traveling to Arizona in the winter and had many friends in Mesa and Scottsdale.

Chet is survived by: Bette, his wife of 65 years; sister Sylvia Nelson; sons Gary, Craig and Dave; six grandchildren and two great-granddaughters. His remains were interred at Tahoma National Cemetery in Kent, Washington on September 13, 2010. Following a moving military ceremony with the sun peeking through

the clouds, friends and family were treated to a final fly-over by a restored B-25 Mitchell bomber, just like Captain Swenson flew in WWII.

Chet Swenson had a generous spirit and was a friend to many. He lived his life with grace, honor, and dignity. Although Chet never considered himself a hero, to his family he was. We will miss him every day, and he will live in our hearts forever. ✈





Ron, c. 1929

Ron Stelzig October, 1909 ~ November, 1995

Ronald Eugene Stelzig always had an interest in airplanes and flight. He became employee number 70 when Northwest Airways, later Northwest Airlines, was in its infancy. Ron started working at Northwest Airways in 1930 and he recalled that, “Tom Hillis was hired as employee #69, clock #08-013 on September 2, 1929. Ron followed on February 1, 1930 as employee #70, clock #19-014. By July 1931, the number of employees on the payroll had more than doubled from 68 to a new total of 137.”

Ron recalled, “Many spectacular surges of growth and development of Northwest Airlines over the past years.” The many route extensions, expansions of service, and acquisitions of new and more modern equipment brought back many exciting and cherished memories. Ron remembered when, during the period September 1929–July 1932, “Northwest Airways extended its routes from Chicago and the Twin Cities to as far west as Bismarck, N.D. and north to Pembina N.D. and Duluth, with intermediate stops at Fargo, Grand Forks, Valley City, and Jamestown.”

Ron’s first job at Northwest was as a mail boy. He continued learning and working to move up, and soon became a passenger agent. He kept working to advance in the company, and later qualified as a Flight Dispatcher. Still working and learning to get ahead, he was promoted to Chief Flight Superintendent. Eventu-

ally Ron Stelzig was in charge of Flight Dispatch, Meteorology, and Flight planning and Control. His job in management was later defined as Director of Flight Operations. At the time of his retirement in 1976, Ron Stelzig held the distinction of being U.S. Commercial Aviation’s senior employee in length of service. Two of the murals that were painted on the walls in the Northwest wing of the Minneapolis-St. Paul airport terminal included Ron Stelzig, as a young passenger agent.



Pat Stelzig (98th birthday) August, 1911~ August, 2010

Gladys “Pat” Stelzig was born August 7, 1911 in Dawson, North Dakota to Edward & Elizabeth Baumann, the sixth of seven children. The Baumann family soon moved to Edgeley, North Dakota where Pat finished high school. After graduation Pat attended Trinity Hospital Nursing School in Jamestown, North Dakota, where she received her Nursing degree. The family moved to St. Paul, Minnesota when Pat’s mother became terminally ill, and Pat worked as a nurse at St. Luke’s Hospital, while caring for her ill mother, Elizabeth, for seven years.

To be hired as a stewardess in the early days, applicants had to have a nursing degree. That she had,

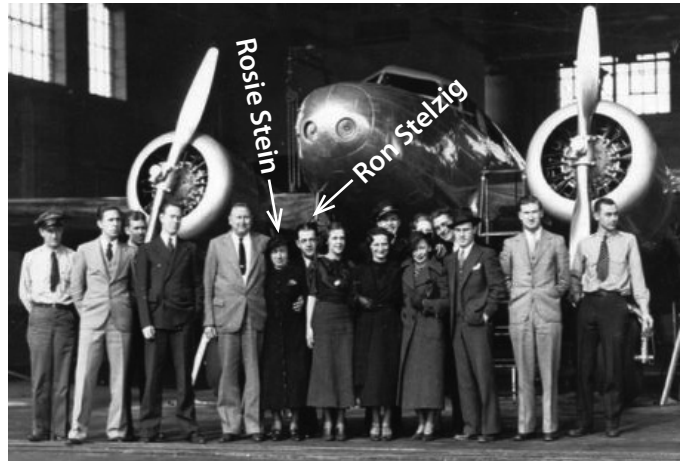


Pat's first year portrait as NWA stewardess

and after the death of her mother, Pat applied for her "dream job" as a stewardess for Northwest Airlines, and was hired as one of the original Northwest Airlines stewardesses. Pat enjoyed traveling and caring for people so the airline stewardess job was a perfect fit.

Pat met Ron Stelzig, a young flight dispatcher for Northwest Airlines after she finished stewardess training. They were married in 1940 and soon moved to Spokane, Washington where Ron had been transferred. The family grew when son Jim was born, and several years later transferred back to Minneapolis where their daughter, Patti, was born.

Ron eventually became Director of Flight Operations for Northwest, and their family traveled extensively. Pat returned to nursing at Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Center in Minneapolis. She gave great care to her spinal cord injury patients. Pat had so much love and empathy for the patients she attended that their friendships continued for many years after their treatments were completed. Ron and Pat had many interests in life, and after retiring continued to lead tours to Europe and Asia. Ron and Pat attended Wooddale Christian Church where Pat loved her Bible Study Fellowship class, and volunteered nursing care and taught nutrition.



Ron and Pat loved their family and traveled often to visit their children and grandchildren. When Ron Stelzig died in 1995, Pat moved to Bellevue, Washington to live with her daughter, Patti and husband, Ron. She continued to enjoy life with her gardening, reading, and Bible study. She developed many new friendships, and became a very special friend to all who knew her. Pat also gained some furry friends, the family shelties. Heidi, the sheltie, was by her side from the moment she arrived. As Pat's health declined, Heidi watched her day and night, never leaving her side.

Pat is survived by: Sister Eva Thwing; Brother-in-law, Robert Stelzig; Son, Jim Stelzig; Daughter, Patti Lynch; Five grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. She will be missed by all of her friends and family. Pat and Ron reside in the peace and love of our Heavenly Father. ✈





Stan Kegel
1934 ~ 2010

Stanley Howard “Stan” Kegel, age 76, a retired Northwest Airlines Captain, flew west peacefully in Hospice for a final check after a long and difficult struggle on Saturday, March 27, 2010, at North Memorial Hospital in Robinsdale, Minnesota. Stan was born in Fargo, North Dakota on January 19, 1934 and graduated from Fargo’s Central HS, Class of 1951. He attended North Dakota State University and Morehead State University before joining the Naval Aviation Cadet (NAVCAD) program, and reported to NAS Pensacola, Florida for Pre-flight Training in 1954. After Pre-flight Stan received primary flight training in North American’s SNJ and soloed on September 27, 1954. In advanced training he flew the T-28B Trojan and completed initial carrier qualification on the USS Monterey in 1955. Stan completed flight training and was designated a Naval Aviator in 1956, and received a commission as a second Lieuten-

ant in the U.S. Marines. During his military flying career he also flew the Beechcraft SNB (Secret Navy Bomber), Lockheed TV-2 Shooting Star, Grumman F9F-5 Panther, Douglas AD-5 and AD-6 Skyraider, and the Douglas R6D the Navy version of the DC-6.

After receiving his wings Stan reported to MCAF Opa-Locka, Florida near Miami, Florida for transition training in the Douglas AD-5 “Skyraider,” a large single engine carrier aircraft which could carry a larger bomb load than a WW II Boeing B-17 “Flying Fortress.” After transition training he joined Marine Attack Squadron 332 (VMA-332) and flew off the carriers USS Princeton and USS Phillipine Sea. Later assignment to the Pacific brought him to the Philipines and Okinawa, and finally to the US Naval Air Station, Iwakuni, Japan where he was designated a flight leader. Stan completed active duty with the Marines in 1958, and he served in the Marine reserves until 1961.

After leaving active duty with the Marines Stan was hired by Northwest Airlines and was in the new hire class of October 1958. Stan and his classmates received their first qualification at Northwest as co-pilots on the DC-4. During his career at Northwest Airlines Stan flew domestic and international routes on the DC-6 & 7, Lockheed L-188 Electra, Boeing 707, 727 & 747 Classic, and the Douglass DC-10. Stan reluctantly retired early due to health reasons in 1986.

Stan Kegel’s many friends around the world will miss him very much. He was active in Shriner’s for 33 years and was a member of Lake Harriet Lodge #277, Scottish Rite, York Rite, Royal Arch, Zion Commander, and Knights Templar. Among many other offices held, he was past president of: Zuhrah Shrine Horsemen, Zuhrah Shrine Flyers, and International Shrine Horse Patrol.

He was preceded in death by his parents; brothers Fred and David; stepdaughter, Lori Lilja; and step-granddaughter, Heather Kelsey. Stan is survived by his wife of 35 years, Donna; son, Stan Jr.; brother, Paul Kegel; stepdaughter, Linda Kelsey; step-grandson, Sean Kelsey; and step-great-grandson, Garrett Kelsey.



From the Guest Book

Stan Kegel, Jr.: “Dad loved flying, and Northwest Airlines was a big part of his life. He retired early because he “lost” his medical, and this denied him several years of flying. When he turned 60, his wife (Donna) and I, as a surprise birthday gift, purchased for him an hour in Northwest’s Boeing 747-400 simulator. The 747-400 is a “glass cockpit” version of the 747s that he flew on the line. Losing his medical and retiring early meant that he never had a chance to fly the -400s for Northwest. The simulator time included a Northwest flight instructor who gave Dad a quick introduction to the -400. I was a student solo pilot at the time, and I flew co-pilot for Dad. During the all-too-brief hour, we flew several visual approaches. (I even took the controls for a bit.) At one point, Dad asked the instructor to set up the simulator for the Hong Kong approach (that’s to the “old” Hong Kong Airport). Dad demonstrated the famously challenging approach, which he had last flown more than eight years earlier. It was something to see. He had not lost his touch and did a beautiful job. It was a



memory for a lifetime for him, and I’m glad that I was able to be there and share it.”

Fred & Mary Raiche: Stan is one who will long be remembered. We were fortunate to have been a part of his crew, on many flights to Europe. After retirement, we always looked forward to seeing Stan & Donna at many of the RNPA activities. Stan is missed, and will remain in our memories. Stan... rest in peace. We’ll “see you later.”

Steve Luckey: Stan was a great friend for many years and we enjoyed many good conversations about horses, fishing, and the countless other topics that we had in common. He was a genuine “real” individual full of passion and enthusiasm for life. I will miss him.

Larry Potton: My condolences to the Kegel family. Captain Stan was congenial, competent, and a fun guy to work with. I enjoyed his stories about his horses and Shriner experiences. After he retired, I ran into Stan at our crew hotel in Narita. Stan had been to Korea to order shirts for his Shriner Horsemen. He would go out of his way to do one a favor. ✈

“When once you have tasted flight, you will forever walk the earth with your eyes turned skyward, for there you have been, and there you will always long to return.”
- Leonardo da Vinci

RECENTLY FLOWN WEST:

- Erling Madsen**
- Cal McDonald**
- Rich Drzal**
- Chuck Nichols**
- Creighton “Stretch” Trapp**
- Al Kurtzahn**
- Earle Lunde**

Obituaries will be published once the information has been obtained. If you know the families or have useful information please contact Vic Britt, the Obituary Editor.

Seattle Christmas Party



December 9, 2010
10am to 2pm

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CHANGE: This is a change of address or status only

PERMANENT MAILING ADDRESS

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CITY

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

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MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:
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Dino Oliva
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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**

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

***EMAIL NOTE:** To protect email addresses they are published only on the RNPA website (www.rnpa.org), which is password protected. You must send any future change to Phil Hallin:
RNPAnews (at) bhi.com

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

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

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF HOURS LOGGED

AIRLINE AIRCRAFT TYPES FLOWN AS PILOT

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

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FIRST CLASS



Dennis Guentzel and his Waco Taperwing on the American Barnstormers Tour