

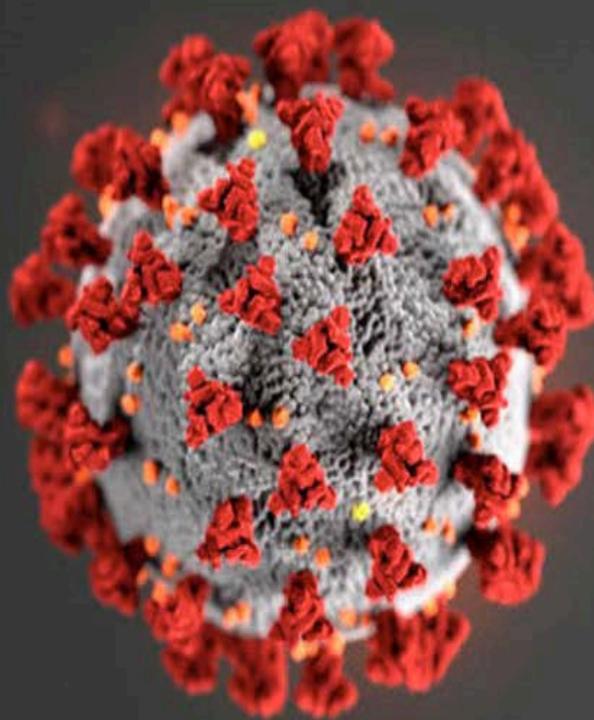
e-CONTRAILS

ISSUE 2011

JUNE 2020



[Click here to kill the Virus...the Italian way](#)



RNPA Members that have succumbed to COVID 19

Dale Nadon

Dorothy Schroeder

Tom Adams

Will Update Regularly

RETIRED NORTHWEST AIRLINES PILOTS' ASSOCIATION



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:



Table of Contents	1
Notams	2
Admin Reports	3-4-5
Covid19 Experience	
Flying the Line with Covid19	
Paul Soderlind Scholarship Winners	
North Country	
Don King	
Atkins	
Stratocruiser	
Contributing Stories from the Members	
Bits and Pieces-June	
Gars' Stories	

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RNPA



NOTAMS



From here on out the most critical thing is *NOT* to

FLY THE AIRPLANE.

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

The only way we will have to communicate directly with you as a group is through emails.

Change yours here ONLY:

NEW

RNPAnews@gmail.com



If you use and depend on the

RNPA Directory

you must keep your mailing address(es) up to date. The ONLY place that can be done is to send it to:

The Keeper Of The Data Base:

Howie Leland

howieleland@gmail.com

(239) 839-6198

Howie Leland 14541

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Ft. Myers, FL 33912

PSSST...!

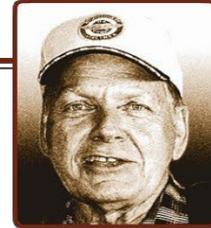


"Heard about the RNPA FORUM?"

Click the "NEWS" drop down menu, then click "RNPA Forum":

Posted comments will go out to over 840 RNPA members the same day.

President Reports



Gary Pisel

HAPPY LOCKDOWN GREETINGS TO ALL MEMBERS

Well the past few weeks and months have been a rude awakening for our past lifestyles. Vacations and cruises cancelled, all the major league sports cancelled, the airline industry reduced to the bare minimum. Luckily, I have not heard of many pilots or flight attendants contracting COVID19.

Hopefully as we start to reopen the USA things will bounce back. The airlines at present are running at full capacity but with several restrictions.

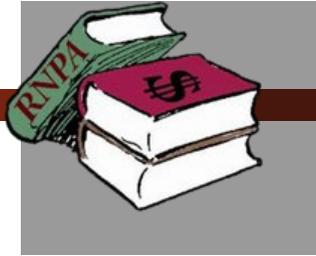
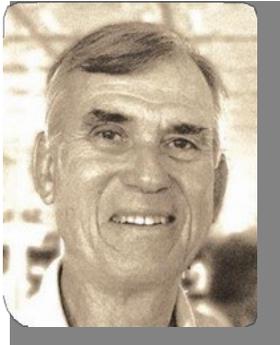
Now is the time to plan ahead. We have a RNPA cruise on Norwegian Cruise Lines next April. Things will be back to the new normal. Only \$100 is required to reserve a cabin. There is no RNPA charge, only ship charges. The total cost approximates the real cost of a land reunion. Full details are available on E-Contraails. At present we have 26 people signed up. **SIGN UP NOW AND GET THE ROOM OF YOUR CHOICE.** Only \$100 secures your reservation, balance due on Jan 5, 2021.

Contact me if you have further questions.

In the meantime, stay healthy, follow the CDC rules, stay 6ft apart and wear your mask.

Gary Pisel

President



Treasurer's Report: *Howie* **LELAND**

A reminder, there will be no dues assessments for 2020 because our reserve funds remain adequate to meet our expenses. Our expenses are less since we've gone to "E-Contrails".

As always, we are looking to recruit new members. Applications are available at "RNPA.ORG" under RNPA APPLICATION. When completed, send the application along with a check payable to RNPA to:

RNPA Howie Leland 14541 Eagle Ridge Drive, Ft. Myers, FL 33912

New member dues are \$25 for regular members or \$20 for affiliate members.

If you have a change of address or phone number, please notify me at the above address, or call my phone, 239-768-3789 or cell phone 239-839-6198 or by email at: howieleland@gmail.com We want to stay in touch with everyone.

I hope you are planning to join us on the 2021 RNPA Reunion Norwegian Cruise next April 10 – 14 out of Cape Canaveral.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to RNPA.

This is a special editionT



Editor

Jay Sakas



Suggestion are Welcome

This is a special edition of eContraails. We are in the midst of a pandemic and as of this date we have lost 3 RNPA members to the virus. We dedicate this issue to those we lost to COVID19 but also to those who have flown West since the last issue.

We have include two articles related to the virus; one that deals with surviving COVID 19, and another from the son of Dick Dodge, a pilot with Delta on his return from medical leave to flying. Both articles have appeared on RNPA.ORG/notams but are worth repeating on eContraails.

We have the winners of the Paul Soderlind Scholarship with pictures and their comments.

In this issue we conclude articles from "Voices from the Sky" with "North Country" and a tribute to Don King, who was instrumental in developing the flying through Alaska to the Orient.

A tribute to the Grand Old Dame....The Boeing Stratocruiser.

We could not have a magazine without the stories from Gar Bensen. He just submitted another three stories today as we put eContraails to bed. So we included them...Don't want to p---- off a Marine.

Finally, we can no longer ignore the contributions to the pilots wellbeing... the Flight Attendants. I have included the June Edition of " Bits and Pieces"

On a serious note; I am looking for volunteers to continue eContraails. I think I have three more issues left in me. I can use those issues to instruct on the simplicity of putting this magazine on the web. As our ranks continue to diminish, it is hard to see some of our best friends fly west. As of now I am in good health, out side the normal complaints of getting old. I would like to accomplish some of my bucket list and do it before the fates cut the cord. If eContraails sinks to the west, you will still have rnpa the forum to rely on.

Still kicking.....J--

You need to read person's experience with CV-19 & how bad it is. From reading this it's easy to see why people die from it & what a grueling death it is. This will make me double my efforts to exercise social distancing.

Now that it's been 15 days and my wife and kids remain asymptomatic, I can now tell my coronavirus story.

I was wrong. I had seen it before. Media had sensationalized the news. SARS was coming, MERS was coming, Swine flu was coming, Ebola was coming. Small groups of people panicked, small groups were affected. The viruses that were to be the next plague faded away and the media shifted attention to some other news to get ratings- one week it was 24/7 discussion about Hilliary and her private server, the next week maybe something about a Kardashian, or members of the US Women's Soccer Team declining an invite to The White House.

With that history of news hysteria, I discounted the admonitions and went on my planned vacation. A week on the 80s cruise. We had received information regarding the travel restrictions for guests who would be on the cruise. We were told of the enhanced embarkation screening and the increased on-boat cleaning and sanitization that staff would be completing during our trip. To my knowledge no staff or guest had any symptoms of the coronavirus during the cruise.

What a great cruise (except for the fact that the cruise cost twice the price for most cruises and the major headline performers cancelled either the day before or day after the cruise set sail. Yeah The B52s, Loverboy, and Brett Michaels- I'm talking about you guys.)

I don't know when I had contracted the virus that week. Amusingly my wife and kids have remained asymptomatic despite being in close quarters with me that week. I wore an N95 mask on the flights to and from Miami, (my family didn't). Only I had used the spa for a massage. I rode shotgun to and

from the Port of Miami while my family rode in the back of the taxis we used. I washed my hands many more times than I usually do a day. Mind you, I'm a general surgeon- I wash my hands a lot. I wiped down door knobs and my cell phone with antibacterial wipes I had all the time in back pocket. I did all of that to make me feel better about catching a virus I thought was surely being sensationalized by the media. It was small risk and it wouldn't be so bad even if I caught it.

Let me state this again. I was wrong.

Though we had minimal internet service on the cruise, we were able to get news updates whenever we came into dock. It looked like things were getting REAL. People are hoarding toilet paper? Banning flights from Italy? Disney World is closing? Tom Hanks has the virus? When we got home that Sunday I convinced my wife to go shop for some non-perishables and marvel at the empty shelves where the toilet paper should be. We came home and hunkered down. I had already received a text from my hospital's infectious disease specialist. She knew I was on vacation and wanted me to stay low and surveil for the development of any coronavirus symptoms.

I didn't have to wait long. The next morning, my Day 1 of living with coronavirus, I woke with one of those irritating coughs that tickle the back of your throat. Then a mild headache. Then muscle and joint pain. All of these were allergy symptoms I have every year when the yellow pollen snow coats my home's lawn and driveway. Still cautious, I cancelled my week's scheduled cases and office visits. I isolated from my family and moved into our walkout basement. I got back with our hospital's ID specialist who told me to stay at home but not to be too worried because I had no fevers.

The fevers started on Day 2. These weren't high spiking 102.0 fevers (those would come later), but low grade fevers that made me feel flushed and irritated. They were easily controlled with Tylenol. I drove over to the hospital's new drive thru viral testing center. I knew the staff working there; they laughed at me thinking I was pulling a prank on them. "You don't look sick," they said. Our ID MD came out and shoved the longest cotton swab

I've ever seen into my left nostril and told me results would take 48hrs to come back. I know now how wrong I was during my surgical residency to place all those nasogastric tubes at bedside without remorse.

Day 3 and most of Day 4 was a continuation of the same. I was obviously sick but not too bad if I could keep my temperature down.

Then things began to progress quickly. I received a text from our administrator for physician affairs just as I had my first fever above 101.5. 'This is *** ****.

Can I give u a quick call?' Damn. I knew what he was to tell me. So 10 minutes later I have to holler upstairs to my wife and let her know I have coronavirus and we are all in quarantine. She decides since it's late in the evening, she'll sit tight and find a way to break it to the kids in the morning. 2 hours later the fever is worse. Then the breathing problems started. I felt I was trying to breathe through the cardboard tube that holds towel paper- able to be done, but uncomfortable after a few minutes. At midnight I called my wife and told her I was driving myself to the hospital. I called the ER MD that was on call and told him to expect me. My lab work, vitals, chest xray, and ekg were all fine and I was told I could go home or be admitted for observation. I had been sick for 4 days and was now much, much worse with shortness of breath- why was I even given an option to go home? I chose admission.

I spent the next 8 days in the hospital. I was not well. Fortunately I never was hypoxemic where I required oxygen supplementation, though I used a oxygen venturi mask for breathing comfort. The first 6 days of my hospitalization could be summarized easily. My day involved lying under blankets help with my chills and body aches. The blankets would soon be torn off the bed and I'd strip down to my underwear because I'd become feverish and sweat profusely. It was during these sweat fests that my breathing worsened considerably and I prayed to God for a miracle. I always thought, "is this the one where my breathing gets so bad the nurses say, 'he's spiralling, take him to the ICU.'" The cycle of blankets and stripping and

sweating and gasping would happen 4 to 6 times a day. Usually the worse episode occurred at night. I'd always get some sleep between 23:00-1:00. Then each night I'd be up for the remaining early morning hours fighting another fever.

There are a limited number of Forensic File episodes. They are played one after another on the HLN channel from Midnight to 6AM. I have quickly approached to seeing almost all of them. I would maybe get another 1-2 hours of sleep during the day.

For those who have never 'sweated a bed' it is a very uncomfortable thing. The breathing difficulty became much more pronounced when I sweated the bed. Moreover it was embarrassing to do it in front of the nursing staff you see daily at work. First time in my life I really took to heart the tale about mothers saying to always wear clean underwear because you'll never know when you get into an accident. Thank you to Dr. Bakhtazde for having the compassion to run over to Target and buy me a fresh 6-pack of briefs on Day 4.

Tylenol is a wonderful drug. It was the only thing that helped break the fevers. Every patient on my ward was needing Tylenol around the clock. On Day 4 the hospital had run out of 325mg tylenol tablets and were using 500mg tablets at six hour intervals to conserve resources until the pharmacy could be restocked. Let that sink in. "Could they run out of Tylenol?" I called our PA and had her buy and smuggle Tylenol into my room. She said she bought the last 2 bottles on the shelf at Walgreen's. If I make it, years from now I'll die and my wife will find a bottle of Tylenol hidden between my bed mattress and boxspring.

I never lost my sense of smell. My room still smelled like a hospital. I lost my appetite. I never lost my sense of taste but it changed. I ate a cookie and it tasted like a stick of butter dipped in cinnamon. Italian dressing on salad tasted like vomit. On hospital day 6 I finally was feeling hungry enough to order out for pizza. I thought I was eating a salt lick.

On Day 6 my MDs were contemplating starting me on the

plaquenil/azithromycin regimen because of my persistent fevers. Also I was beginning to experience pleuritic chest pain. I couldn't start the meds due to the fact that the plaquenil would put me at risk for long QT/arrhythmias- I'm already on a risky anti-arrhythmic medication to treat/prevent my atrial fibrillation.

Then something good finally happened. My fevers became less severe and only 1 or 2 times per day. I was still short of breath but it was less severe thanks to the break in the fevers. But now I had to deal with the chest pain and a nonproductive cough that could be set off from simply turning in the bed. The coughing fits would last for a minute, but seem forever.

I have nothing but praise for the nurses who took care of me. They knew how food was tasting funny. One of them smuggled in a doughnut and Hershey kisses for me one morning when I said I missed sweets. It was the best cotton ball flavored doughnut I ever ate. Though I didn't feel it, I knew the ward was full and I was likely one of their healthiest patients. Sorry about all the sweaty underwear.

They all have kids and families and recognize the figurative crud is quickly about to hit the fan. They still come to work. God, they all must be scared and stressed. Pray for them.

I was still sick but felt well enough to be discharged to home on hospital Day 8, that's 12 days after I developed symptoms.

I drove home 20 miles per hour with my hazard flashers on and huffing for air. Along the way I saw cars everywhere and people out walking. "Don't they know how bad it is? Don't they know how bad it will get?" I thought to myself. I entered my development and saw a group of 6 older men in their golfcarts ready to tee off at the club's 4th hole. How I wanted to drive up to the tee box and reprimand them. I pulled into my garage and broke down. Nothing is more gut wrenching than spending a week in anxiety wondering if I was going to be a patient who needs mechanical ventilation or worse one of the 1.3%, and having to be welcomed home through a glass window. I've known Angie since I was fifteen (35 years). We celebrated our 25th wedding anniversary last year. God knows what she was thinking while I was in the

hospital. God knows I held information from her so she wouldn't think the worst. Here I come to home. 2 best friends back together hands separated by a window pane and all emotions coming out at once. When will we finally be able to get a hug?

So now I'm in my 15th day with coronavirus symptoms. I have no more fevers. The coughing is terrible, uncontrollable. I remain very weak. I can stand for no more than 3-5 minutes. I'm able to walk from from my basement door to my front porch though it takes some time and I need to sit down for 20-30 minutes once I get there. I got exhausted organizing puzzle pieces.

Angie brings breakfast down to the basement door and we talk each morning through the basement windows via our cell phones. I've become a good listener. I can't talk for very long- too tiring. My family come down and sit on the back porch for lunch and dinner. Angie knows how my appetite and taste had changed. She has changed her cooking and meals appropriately. She doesn't know that the taste thing is back to normal. Let's keep it all a secret for now. I am certain she is perplexed why grilled ham and cheese with brown mustard is extremely palatable, but cooked vegetables make me nauseous.

I've regressed into being a teenager. I spend my time on the couch- minimal activity. Netflix is my closest friend. I've not watched any more episodes of Forensic Files, but I've saw enough episodes last week to see the patterns of spousal homicide. There is no doubt in my mind. CAROLE BASKIN KILLED HER SECOND HUSBAND AND FED HIM TO THE TIGERS.

I have become more spiritual. I have spent 25 years in the Catholic church and never officially converted. It's now on my to do list. I've prayed every night I've been sick and sometimes during the day. I've thanked The Lord for keeping me alive and helping me recover. I thanked him for keeping my family healthy without symptoms where surely they should have been sick. I asked to keep them protected. I asked for this craziness to end. I went to mass via the tv twice. I am surprised that I know the entire Nicene Creed- I always thought I was repeating what the lady 2 rows behind me was

saying a little faster than what our priest was saying. Sometimes it takes bad times to help us recognize the good things.

I did a drastic thing and shaved my head and beard. I was many weeks due for a haircut, and no chance of a cut for the next few weeks. The continuous sweats left my hair knotted and unmanageable. I washed my hair 5 times in the last 2 weeks and I still couldn't keep it clean. Interesting how literally and figuratively a bald head can make one feel cooler.

This is the longest I've ever been away from work. I have no idea when I will not be considered a risk to patients. I have no idea when I will feel better. I have no idea when I will be back to work. My only prediction- not soon.

So let me give you the take home points.

1) This virus is bad. I have never felt this sick before in my life. I'm nearing fifty and I have controlled hypertension, 25 pounds overweight, and controlled atrial fibrillation. I exercise almost daily. That's pretty much healthy. Trust me, I am a doctor and I see patients 15 years younger than me who are much worse off medically. I got thrown for a loop. If you get it, you will too. You could die.

2) Age isn't as big of a factor as we were lead to believe. Young people get sick. Young people can die. Telling youth that they should practice social distancing so their grandparents don't get sick is the wrong message. Tell the kids the truth. You can likely get sick too. There is a chance you could die. You can spread it to your friends and they could die, too.

3) Social distancing is necessary. I'm the example of what happens when you don't distance yourself from infection risk. No one was 'sick' on that cruise ship. Truth in the matter is people were likely infectious and passing the virus unknowingly. Until proven otherwise, everyone has the cheese touch and they just need to stay away.

4) Spread the message. It's okay to be deemed the crazy one and lose some

social status and friends over the next few weeks. How close does this virus have to affect you before you say, "wow, this is real."? Don't be me. Don't be lying in a hospital riddled with guilt. Don't be afraid that when the phone rings from your wife she's not calling to see how you are doing. Don't be in the position where you're afraid she's going to tell you that one of your kids are going to the ER with symptoms.

I called my 81 year-old father. I told him that this is real. He had his girlfriend over. She needed to go home. Role reversal. I told him my brothers could drop off supplies but not enter the house. I told him that the weekly cleaning ladies stay away for the rest of the month. I called my brothers and told them to stay out of the house. Call people out when they are going to do something stupid. Infuriate your kids. Deny playdates and girlfriend visits and planned 'look who I bumped into' visits at the grocery store. No one died from missing one too many get togethers. There's a method of logical decision making where the best decision is based on the worst of all outcome possibilities if your logical assumptions are wrong. Though they could likely weather the storm, it's the reasoning method for why commercial planes and cargo ships change their travel paths far from rather than staying close to projected hurricane paths. I failed to use this logic and I was dealt the consequence.

5) Tylenol. It was the only thing that helped me. Look in your cabinet see how much you have in stock. You don't need to stockpile tylenol, but you should have enough on hand to treat everyone in your home. Maximum dosage of Tylenol (acetaminophen) is 4 grams/day for an average adult. I (as well it seemed for all of the other inpatients) were taking 2-325mg tablets every 4-6 hours for several days. I had fevers for 13 days (today is my first day without a recorded fever). I would recommend having a supply of tylenol for everyone in your house that would be equivalent to taking 500-650mg every 4-6 hours for 14 days (again, I was on a similar regimen for 13 days.) Add that up, and you have quite a few tylenol tablets. 14 days = 164 - 325mg tablets. I'm relaying dosing not as medical advice, though I am a physician. Overdosing and prolonged dosing of tylenol is toxic to the liver. Follow bottle dosing recommendations. I am only telling you how much Tylenol I was given as an inpatient, and advocating that people have reasonable amounts available if they should get sick and need to manage

their fever symptoms at home. This febrile phase of the illness lasted longer than any flu or cold I had encountered in my past.

6) Things will get better, but only after they will get worse. A lot more people are going to get sick. You may even know someone who is going to die. Do whatever we can to lower the chances. Our president is polarizing. Some people can't stand him. Now is not the time to be partisan. His ego is not going to change. He will never be referred to as "The Great Communicator." Trump will always say what he wants to say without filter and be cringeworthy. Roll your eyes and move on. Accept that the US people, government, and economies have been dealt a very disabling blow and the executive branch is working hard and fast to remedy the situation. They are doing a good job. Take the \$1200 and donate it to the Red Cross or some other relief fund if you disagree with the president. Don't toss the bones back at the person that served you a Thanksgiving turkey leg.

7) Practice thanksgiving. Appreciate what you have. Appreciate those around you and be nicer to people. Appreciate your faults, search for some internal reconciliation and move on. Rekindle relationships- safely. Rekindle the relationship with your God. Don't sweat the small stuff. Pray you don't sweat the bed.

8) Stay healthy.

Share this where you want. This came from David Helton. Long read. Very real and scary from a General Surgeon

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Recent Experience Flying the Line by David Dodge



I'm writing this letter to all the old hats out there. These are some of my observations as an active airline pilot flying during the Covid 19 pandemic. All airline pilots will sometime in their career weather a storm or rather storms that they can tell their grandkids about. This particular storm is like no other. Just to put it into perspective, if an airline the size of United or Delta airlines was to become the only one remaining, that airline could cover all of the travel in the United States, and still have to downsize under the current conditions. It is an ugly situation at best.

Unfortunately the airlines are a reflection of our economy and the hardships that the average American is going through. This is not a pandemic of the rich, poor or of the middle class. This is a far reaching event that will somehow and someday touch every human on the planet. Eventually if left unchecked this will *adversely* affect every American and every global citizen out there.

I recently returned to flying after two and a half months of medical leave due to a hip replacement. My last trip prior to surgery was the first three days in February. The last leg was an oversold red eye from Portland Oregon. That was the world that I left. I followed the initial outbreak of the pandemic from the comfort of my house, hearing reports of very bleak tales from friends who were actively flying. When I walked back into the airline environment last week, the changes I had been warned about were very hard to comprehend. It felt like I had walked into a sci-fi/horror movie in which most of the population had been plucked from the earth.



The changes started at the employee parking lot. Normally when pulling into the checkpoint at the parking lot, you hand your ID to a security guard who swipes it across a reader to allow you access. Now due to social distancing, the employee must stop the car, get out and swipe their own badge.

While this is not a

big task or a painful one, it is just reflective of social changes that this pandemic is causing. Finding a parking spot can be difficult, especially around a shift change. Due to voluntary leaves of absence, over a third of our workforce of ninety thousand, for the first time in my six years in the Atlanta base, finding a parking space was not a problem. The next noticeable difference was at the employee bus stop. Our employee bus stops happen to be a place where security screening of employees is conducted. This includes an x-ray machine and a metal detector. Now in addition to this screening, employees must also have their temperature taken via a thermal scanner. If an employee has a fever, they are denied access to the bus and sent home. Their supervisor is notified as well. Once you are cleared to continue, you head out to the bus. Due to social distancing, only nineteen employees are allowed on the bus at one time, so if you are unfortunate to have a check in during a shift change, extra time is required to get to operations.

As the bus left the parking lot and pulled onto airport property, the sheer downsizing of our operations became evident. All of our T gates in ATL were empty and the jet bridges had been pulled flush with the building. Atlanta operations have been consolidated to concourse A and B with a handful of international flights departing out of the E concourse. For those who haven't been through Atlanta in recent times, Delta operated out of T, A, B, C, half of D, E and half of F concourses.

As I walked into ops, I was stunned by the lack of pilots that are normally there. The black chair recliners that normally are full of tired commuting pilots were empty. There were a few pilots working on the company computers. Normally, you have to wait for a computer station to open up but that is no longer the case. The tables that usually have company propaganda and news letters have all been re-designated with containers of hand sanitizer and surgical mask. After signing in for my trip, I ventured upstairs to the gate level. On any given day, the terminal is usually packed so navigating to your gate is a human obstacle course. Buying a cup of coffee, or a sandwich to go would normally be abandoned due to long lines of passengers. Those lines don't exist anymore and have been replaced mostly by crew members. The only refreshments on the aircraft is water and little bags of Cheezits. Coffee and soda are unavailable on the airplane so now crew members are forced to buy their own before boarding the aircraft. There are very few food venues open but the ones that are open are more than adequate due to the few people in the terminal.

As I walked to my gate, it was straight and steady, absent of the zig zaging due to the normal overcrowding of outgrown concourses. The few passengers in the terminal are generally wearing protective mask and rubber gloves. You can sense the fear of our society by what little of the public is actually

traveling. Almost all of the gate agents are wearing mask, and at the time of this writing, all employees have been directed to wear mask as the six foot social distancing can't always be maintained. I assume that this is a legal requirement so that neither employees or passengers can sue the airline should they become infected.

When you board the airplane and head to the flight deck, the first visual check is to see if the cockpit sanitation kit is on the center console. If it isn't, it is usually in one of the galley carts. The kit consist of rubber gloves , a heavy duty disinfectant cloth and several little Purell hand wipe packets.



Before you start building your nest in your appropriate seat, you need to put the rubber gloves on, open a sanitizer wipe, and start wiping off anything you might touch when you sit down, such as armrest, headrest and the yoke. Once in your seat, you have to use the heavy duty sanitizer cloth and go over each and every switch



and it's associated panel. It is a tedious exercise and generally after you are done, the realization occurs that you have missed one or two items as you operationally reach for the missed item.

As your fellow crew member joins you on the flight deck, pleasantries and greetings are exchanged but with the absence of a traditional hand shake. You take notice of anything that looks out of place with your new best friend. Do they look well? Any sniffles? Coughing? The

one obvious symptom of this virus, is that everyone either needs a haircut or they are sporting a hideous self or spousal administered cut.

Once the operation begins, things kind of get down to a normal flow. With CRM, we try to brief all contingencies including all known threats. Normally, this would include issues with the aircraft, airport, weather and any personal limitations that may effect the safety of flight. The one thing has to be noted and briefed is mental distractions due to personal concerns regarding the airline. Our crew resources just published their anticipated headcount for November. Needless to say, there will be furloughs and downgrades. I am flying with copilot's who likely will not be flying for Delta next year. It is very likely that I will not be a Captain next year. All of these things weigh on any normal individual, but the importance of staying in the moment cannot be over emphasized.

Boarding is much quicker as you are only boarding 20 to 30 people on an 180 passenger jet. Also boarding the aircraft is reversed now with the back of the aircraft boarded first, working up to the front of the plane. There is no longer a struggle to find overhead space so everyone just plops down in an expedited manner.

Everything works pretty much the way it has in the past as far as completing checklist and coordinating with the ground crew for push back. On taxi out, things are quicker due to the lack of traffic so you have to make sure you get your second engine started with adequate warm up time if you are doing a single engine taxi.

Launch is quick, and usually you can do a rolling take off as there is not the usual "traffic down field" holding requirement. The other thing that has to be considered is doing a reduced climb thrust setting in addition to a reduced take off thrust due to the light aircraft weight especially if you have a low altitude level off. With the climb rates of these empty airplanes, it would be easy to blow through an assigned altitude. I love having 757 performance on the 737 but unfortunately, good aircraft performance is now directly proportional to poor economic performance.

Climb out and cruise are the same with the exception of climbing directly to your altitude. There isn't a lot of traffic so those interim level offs are not required. ATC is also giving a lot of direct routing as well. The absence of radio chatter can be a little unnerving as well. There are random calls from aircraft asking if ATC is still there. Descent is more or less the same except for the fact that often you are taken off the arrival much earlier and farther from the airport. Without the previous traffic levels, the spacing requirements are pretty much null and void so flights are cleared from a hundred miles out to a close in fix on the approach. Landing clearance is generally given much sooner, usually upon check in with the tower. After landing, taxi clearance is given from the tower bypassing the ground controller. At airports that are dominated by competitors many of their airplanes are in semi storage. Those aircraft have their engines, ports, vents and windows taped over. Delta has moved most of their airplanes to storage facilities, so Atlanta airport and Delta hubs are different than the other airports I have seen.



Once parked and shutdown, the walk to the curb begins. During these times, it is a lonely walk, devoid of people. The following picture was taken at Detroit. It was taken at 6 pm. Three months ago, the airport would have been packed. Now it is a ghost town.

Shuttle pick ups are now at the curbside where there is little or non-existent traffic. No longer is the usual honking or trilling of police whistles to move cars on. The automated public announcements advising traffic of loading and unloading only, echo like stadium speakers as there aren't any objects to either block or absorb the sound.

Due to social distancing requirements, only four passengers/crew members are allowed to ride on a shuttle. Everyone is wearing a mask, and some crew members are opting to wear gloves. In my opinion, this is our highest exposure to the virus. Personally, I am using hand sanitizer wipes to disinfect my seating area. The ride to and from the hotels, especially a downtown layover, is much faster due to the absence of traffic.

Once you arrive at the hotel, the noticeable absence of guests strikes you. Most hotels are closed and the few that are open are housing multiple airline crews from different airlines. All restaurants, bars and sundry shops are closed. Like our gate agents and the rest of the general public, hotel staff are donning masks. As you are given your key, you are given a sheet of paper that lists the limited items available from room service. Generally there is also a list of the local restaurants that are open for take out only.

Once you are in your room, you will notice the absence of personal amenities. There is not a coffee maker, microwave or hair dryer. The first step that I personally do when I enter my room is to take a hand sanitizer and wipe off all the things I might touch. This includes the TV remote, the night stand, bathroom counter, light switches, door knob, phone handset and lamps. The process takes several minutes and wipes to do it correctly. The other important thing that is now closed in the hotel is the gym. Any exercise has to be either walking, running or calisthenics. For obvious reasons, I can no longer run for exercise so walking is now my "thing". The most noticeable difference when walking outside of the hotel is the absence of pedestrian and auto traffic. As you walk, any oncoming pedestrians will often steer clear of you sometimes crossing the street to avoid potential human contact. It is as if the whole human race has become infectious lepers.

When it comes to meal time, if you don't want to indulge in the overpriced, limited room service menu the other option is takeout. The local restaurants usually have a website to place an order along with the requirement to pay via credit card. Cash is now frowned upon and often not accepted. When you go to pick up your order, generally you are not allowed inside the establishment so an employee meets you at the front door and hands you your order. Dinner is now a solo event that is conducted in the privacy of your hotel room. There is no comradery over a beer and a burger at the end of the day. Basically, all the enjoyable social aspects of the job have been shelved for the time being.

We had an early departure the next morning. There wasn't a lot of choices for breakfast. Certainly not at the hotel and limited at the airport. We know the old saying, "nothing is for certain except death and taxes". I think that you could probably add to that " somewhere there is a Starbucks that is open". So breakfast was a Pikes Place coffee along with a blueberry muffin. Again, the concourse was a ghost town. We had a whopping 22 paying passengers and about 6 dead heading crew members. Again, an uneventful flight full of unrestricted climbs and descents with a whole lot of directs.

Once again, this is just but a brief description of my observations. I sincerely hope the world wakes up from this pandemic and that public fear dissipates soon. If people are too afraid of dying, they will stop living. If that happens, the failure of the airlines will be the least of our worries. Ultimately, if you choose to believe, our fate is tied to the will and the plan that God has for us things seem easier. If you choose not to believe that, then all fate would be is the consequences of a random universe. Either way you believe, it still comes down to one thing. We have absolutely no control over the current events or the impact of them.

When I got home this morning, it was glorious. Clear skies, light winds and a perfectly comfortable temperature. The birds were singing loudly. I sat outside on the back deck and took it all in. Praise God for such a beautiful day. At least we can still enjoy the little things. I dedicate this to all you old hats and the trials and tribulations that you experienced in your careers. In a relatively short time, I too will be an old hat. God bless you all. And God bless all people worldwide.

PAUL SODERLIND SCHOLARSHIP SELECTEES FOR 2020

This year the Paul Soderlind Memorial Scholarship Fund had a total of 72 applicants for the seven scholarships that were available. The winners were selected by the scholarship team at Wings FCU, with final approval by the PSMSF Board of Directors. All evaluations are done in the blind (names and contact information redacted). Our thanks to the Wings staff for all their hard work in this endeavor.

It had been planned to award six scholarships in 2020, but then one of our retired pilots offered to provide another scholarship for a deserving student, giving us the ability to award a total of seven for the year. Once they accept the scholarship each selectee was asked to provide a picture and a short note to be published in Contrails.

As you can see from the results, this was another extraordinarily successful year for the scholarship fund. Thanks to those few who continue to contribute to the fund and a special thanks to our incredibly special benefactor. Anyone else who might be interested in contributing would be welcome and you can be assured that your contribution will be acknowledged for tax purposes and given to a most deserving student. If you are a former NWA employee, be sure to encourage your relatives (you, your children and stepchildren, grand children, and great grandchildren) to apply for the 2021 scholarships. Applications will open in October on the Wings FCU website.

Thomas P. Schellinger, Secretary/ Treasurer, Paul Soderlind Memorial Scholarship Fund.

PAUL SODERLIND SCHOLARSHIP SELECTEES FOR 2020

AMY WONG



My name is Anne Wong and I just completed my sophomore year at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. I am majoring in biomedical engineering on the pre-med track. I always put academics first but have also found time to get involved on campus. I am involved in MEDLIFE, an organization that aids low income communities in their access to medicine, education, and community development. I am excited to serve on the executive board as the outreach and expansion director in the upcoming school year! I also volunteer with

Centro Hispano as a tutor and mentor to Latino students at Madison West High School. Lastly, I also work as an unpaid student researcher in a pediatric cancer immunology lab working on finding new treatments for osteosarcoma.

My mom, who spent 14 years with Northwest Airlines in the revenue management area, said that Mr. Soderlind embodied the collaborative and innovative spirit of Northwest Airlines which is why I am truly honored to receive this scholarship. Without it, I would not be able to volunteer and get involved in research like I have because I would've had to spend a lot of my time outside of class working. I would like to thank everyone at Wings Financial and the Paul Soderlind Foundation for awarding me this scholarship and allowing me to pursue my passion for research and keeping my dream of attending medical school alive. I am extremely grateful to receive this generous scholarship and will put it towards my school tuition immediately!

PAUL SODERLIND SCHOLARSHIP SELECTEES FOR 2020

Molly Westerberg



I am incredibly honored and thankful to have been chosen as one of this year's recipients of the Paul Soderlind Memorial Scholarship. I want to thank all of the people involved in my selection, and I promise to represent this scholarship with the upmost respect and gratitude. This scholarship was awarded to me at the perfect time, as I have just completed my first year of graduate schooling. I have received my bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire in kinesiology with a minor in psychology. I am currently a graduate student at the College of Saint Scholastica pursuing my master's degree in occupational therapy. As an occupational therapist I plan to work with adult stroke survivors as well as the elderly affected by dementia or Alzheimer's. I hope to work with these populations to improve their quality of life and abilities to engage in the activities that are most meaningful within their daily lives. I will be utilizing this scholarship to help pay for part of my tuition at Saint Scholastica. I would also like to extend a huge thank you to my grandparents Don and Jane Chadwick. They have both been such positive and supportive figures in my life and in pursuing higher education. My grandfather worked for Northwest Airlines for over thirty years and flew many different types of aircraft, completing his career as a 747 Captain. Although he is not here now to hear the news of my selection, I know that he would be extremely proud to know that I was chosen for this honor.

PAUL SODERLIND SCHOLARSHIP SELECTEES FOR 2020

Logan Westgard



My name is Logan Westgard and I am a Chemical Engineering student at Miami University of Ohio. I would like to thank the Paul Soderlind Memorial Scholarship Fund for the generous scholarship allowing me to continue with my education. I am going to use this money to help pay for my tuition so that I can graduate next May 2021. Also, I would like to thank my Dad, Rich Westgard, a Delta Airlines pilot, for all the support that he has given as I work toward graduation. This means a lot to me so thank you to everyone who has helped to make this happen!

Sarah Ellingson



My name is Sarah Ellingson and I attend Bethel University. I will be a sophomore this fall studying business with an emphasis in human resource management. I am so humbled to have been selected as the recipient for this scholarship. It has significantly alleviated my stress in paying for college. Thank you so much for your generosity! Both of my parents, Kristin Ellingson (Larsen) and Michael Ellingson, worked at Northwest Airlines along with five extended family members for a combined 130 years of service. I am beyond grateful for the opportunities that Northwest Airlines has given me and my family. Thank you!

PAUL SODERLIND SCHOLARSHIP SELECTEES FOR 2020

Robert Turner



I am extremely honored to be a recipient of the 2020 Paul Soderlind Wings Financial Scholarship. The check provided by Wings Financial will aid me with my future at the University of North Dakota where I will be studying commercial aviation and playing lacrosse. The cost of tuition and flight school together is unbelievably expensive. I am truly blessed that the Paul Soderlind Scholarship committee has recognized the hard work I've put in throughout my high school career, and working towards my private pilot license. Aviation has been a significant part of my life since childhood which is why I would like to

make a career out of it. I had the honor of growing up in a family of pilots, starting off with both of my grandfathers, Pat Watson, and Bob Turner. Both of my grandfathers had the opportunity to fly alongside Paul Soderlind back in their days with Northwest Airlines. Between my grandfathers, my dad, and my uncles, I am looking forward to joining the role models that have introduced me to aviation as I continue my adventure with flying in North Dakota. Thanks to the Paul Soderlind Scholarship, I feel more comfortable financially going into college and fulfilling my dream of becoming a commercial airline pilot.

PAUL SODERLIND SCHOLARSHIP SELECTEES FOR 2020

Skyler Doebber



I am honored to receive the Paul Soderlind Memorial Scholarship. This scholarship will completely change my financial situation and allow me to focus more on my academics and goals rather than worrying about how I am going to pay for college. Which is why I am incredibly grateful for all of the generous donors that make this scholarship possible. I am also grateful for my mother, Mary Doebber. She is a former flight attendant at Northwest Airlines and is currently flying for Delta, and she always encourages me to try new things and to do my best.

This has led me to pursue my degree in Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology at the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities. I will be a junior in the fall of 2020, and when I graduate I plan on using my degree to become a wildlife biologist in order to save wildlife and their habitats. I am currently volunteering at the Minnesota Zoo and I hope to get an internship there in the future. I still have a lot to do before I graduate and I know that it will be a lot of work, but also a lot of fun. This scholarship will make a huge difference towards getting my degree, and I can't wait to see where it will take me.

PAUL SODERLIND SCHOLARSHIP SELECTEES FOR 2020

John Enga



I am very excited to have received the Paul Soderlind Memorial Scholarship. I am from Mitchell, South Dakota and will be graduating from Mitchell Christian High School this spring. This scholarship will help me attend South Dakota State University, where I will be studying Electrical Engineering and joining the Air Force ROTC program. My grandfather, Wallace Enga, also graduated from SDSU in Electrical Engineering and was a pilot for Northwest

Airlines from 1966 to 2003. He now enjoys building model airplanes, hunting, and gardening. With his encouragement, I earned my private pilot's license last summer and fly every chance I get. After college, I plan to pursue a career as a pilot like my grandfather.

Minnesota Aviation Hall of Fame



Paul A. Soderlind 1923 - 2001

Montana native Paul Soderlind received his private license on his 18th birthday. At age 19 he went to work for Northwest Airlines as an instrument instructor and flew in the Northern Region during World War II. He joined the Navy in 1944 and flew with Naval Air Transport Command.

Soderlind returned to Northwest after the war and developed many safety procedures. He eventually became director of technical flight operations, a unit that plans cockpit procedures. He and Don Sowa produced Northwest's Turbulence Plot Program to detect wind shear and other high altitude turbulence.

Inducted 1996

TALES FROM THE NORTHERN REGION

Little Remembered Now, It Was A Great Chapter In Aviation History

Load'em heavy,

Gas'em light.

Send'em out

In the Yukon night.



- Attributed to Walt Beeler,
Edmonton dispatcher and Northwest's long-time Bismarck, N. D., station
manager.

IT WAS ONE OF AVIATION'S most brilliant chapters. Little was known of it
then. Virtually nothing is remembered of it now. It was Northwest Airlines'
World War II Northern Division, later Northern Region, operation.

In January, 1942 the U. S. Military approached Northwest, then a modest
regional airline with unexcelled experience in bad-weather and cold-weather
flying, and said "we have a job for you."

That job was to establish an airline, virtually overnight, that eventually
stretched 4,000 miles over some of the most forbidding terrain on earth.

Its nerve center was in Minneapolis-St. Paul. Edmonton, Alberta, 1,100 miles
away, was its operations base. It then extended through the largely-uncharted
wilds of northwestern Canada, through Alaska and eventually another 1,500
miles to Attu, the barren, westernmost rock in the Aleutian Island chain.

Like a song from long ago, names of the remote waystations still have magical
appeal, they linger on: Grand Prairie, Alberta, Dawson Creek, Fort St. John and
Fort Nelson, British Columbia, Watson Lake und Whitehorse in the Yukon,
Norman Wells near the Arctic Circle in fur-off Northwest Territories, then
Northway, Alaska and more familiar Aluskan names and finally the

Aleutian Islands. Anchorage was an important point, the jump-off spot for Fairbanks, Nome and the Aleutians.

Northwest and the Air Transport Command signed a contract Feb. 26, 1942. There were hasty preparations and a quick survey flight of sorts. Actually, there were two survey flights, designed to check out the country and look for things such as good range station locations.

The first one got only as far as Edmonton. The folks, there, weren't expecting a Northwest plane. Northwest had moved so fast the Canadian government hadn't yet been told what was going on. There was a friendly confrontation and a return to St. Paul. Overnight communications straightened things out and the second arrival was welcomed with open arms.

Captain Frank Judd flew new No. 9 on that one. Northwest had just received its ninth DC-3 (with one more coming)-it was a neat job with flush rivets instead of the protruding-head type. It was a couple of knots faster than the others.

Northwest had 10 DC-3s and four Lockheed 10As about now plus a few miscellaneous high-wing single engine jobs including a gull-wing Stinson and a Cessna "bamboo bomber" used for pilot training. The military took six of Northwest's DC-3s and all four of its 10-As for its own use, leaving the airline with four DC-3s for its domestic schedules.

The first northbound cargo flight left the Twin Cities 17 days later, March 15. Captains Judd, Joe Ohrbeck and Don King successively headed the Northern Region. Overall responsibility was held by Ken Ferguson, Northwest's Operations vice president in St. Paul.

Specifically Northwest was directed to "lay out routes, prepare range maps, establish and provide radio communication, erect facilities and fly military personnel and supplies." It also shouldered major maintenance responsibility; was in charge of briefing crews, fueling, and taught navigation with instrument flying to military and Air Transport Command pilots. Almost forgotten is the fact Northwest trained many ATC pilots from scratch at its flight training facility in Billings, Montana.

Northwest worked closely and successfully with the Air Transport Command and with about 10 other commercial airlines involved in airlifting supplies north. Northwest trained their flight crews, handled flight plans, weather matters and dispatch and aircraft servicing. Make no mistake about it- Northwest was in charge.

The Northern Region airline was established for three major reasons: To help expedite construction of the Alaskan Highway, to provide a swift "back door" route over which planes and materials could flow to the Soviet Union, then fighting for its life, across Siberia, and to support the U. S. military in countering Japanese thrusts in the North Pacific region.

("Back door" planes sent to the Soviet Union helped turn the battle tide in Stalingrad. In the Pacific, the Japanese bombed Dutch Harbor on Unalaska Island June 3, 1942, and invaded Attu, Agattu, and Kiska and sent some engineers temporarily ashore on Shemya. Our military cleaned them out, however, killing 2,350 Japanese in retaking Attu May 11, 1943).

Workhorse C-46s and C-47s did most of the heavy hauling. Cargos came in many forms including but not limited to aircraft engines and parts, ammunition, dynamite, lumber, steel, runway matting, aircraft fuel tanks, food, mail, heavy road building equipment, 55-gallon fuel drums, power units, road graders, radio equipment, trucks-anything and everything for which there was a vital need.

Items too large to be put aboard in one piece were dismantled or cut apart and reconstituted at their destinations. A 1,200-gallon gas truck got this treatment as did several 10,000-gallon gas storage tanks. Elements of a complete sawmill were sent to one station. Cargos of this type were accompanied by welding crews.

It was no picnic. Winter darkness virtually around the clock brought with it blizzards and brutally painful temperatures that stayed far below zero for days and weeks. Spring brought quagmires of sticky mud. In the summer they came in droves, in clouds, in buzzing billions-swarms of mosquitoes, flies, and other annoying critters.

Living was Neanderthalish at first. Men slept in sleeping bags, under planes, tents and drafty makeshift buildings. Fresh fruits and vegetables were virtually unavailable. There was no treated water and drinking snow brought on dysentery. Water from a well at Watson Lake was flown to other points. There was no place to go, nothing to do but work. Twelve hours or more a day, seven days a week. Besides Edmonton and Anchorage Northwest had mechanical personnel at Fort St. John, Fort Nelson, Watson Lake, Whitehorse and Fairbanks.

Pilots flew heavily-loaded, overworked planes night and day over tedious, unknown expanses of snow, water, forest and mountain with only basic instruments to guide them-and only the rhythmic cadence of their tough, tired old engines for company. In the darkness they were guided onto makeshift runways by kerosene lanterns or the casual flicker of oil-soaked rags.

For mechanics, dedicated to keeping these planes and pilots safety in the air, frostbite was part of the day's (night's) work. Outside duties could only be endured for minutes in the winter cold. Changing a sparkplug was a major chore. Frosted plugs, ruptured oil coolers and broken brake lines were routine. A canvas nose hangar was a luxury, indeed.

C-46s and C-47s weren't the only planes. There were B-18s, B-24s, B-25s, B-26s, A-20s, Condors, P-38s, P-39s, P-40s and several miscellaneous types such as "1927, single engine, type unknown" to contend with. On one occasion there were 35 P-39s on the Watson Lake ramp for servicing-destined for Nome and the Soviet Union. The military started flying in late 1942 and by early 1943 was generally servicing its own planes. This eased Northwest's workload

considerably. Northwest had done most everything, the line maintenance and much of the flying, the first six or seven months.

One man who saw it all-he was there and lived it-is retired Northwest Airlines pilot John (universally known as "Red") Kennedy, now living comfortably in St. Paul. He sat down, recently with the editors of "Contrails," the excellent Retired Northwest Pilots Association quarterly magazine, and with the folks at the Northwest Airlines History Centre, to talk about his Northern Region experiences.

I started walking towards the only large building I could see. It was made of logs. A very large man came out to meet me. I introduced myself as "Red" Kennedy of Northwest Airlines and told him I'd like to get to town or to the hotel.

My new friend was Vic Johnson, a Swede from Minnesota working for Yukon Southern Airways (more about YSA in a minute). Vic had come up to Watson Lake and had begun cutting down trees by hand to make the runway.

Vic laughed and told me to forget about a town or hotel-that my new living quarters was a tent down by the lake. This would have been fine in the summer but it was still cold and more than 40 inches of ice was still on the lake. The temperatures would still go below zero at night, April or not.

Vic Johnson was an interesting man. After the war he married a schoolteacher from Fort St. John. They stayed at Watson Lake, nailing together three old wartime shacks for a home. They had one child of their own but as part of their life's work they raised 35 homeless Indian children. Later, when I flew the "inside" route from the Twin Cities to Edmonton and Anchorage, I'd often talk with Vic on the radio.

Summer and the all-too-brief autumn went swiftly by and on Nov. 2, 1942, I was transferred to Fort Nelson as mechanic-in-charge. As a 19-year-old kid I had a lot to learn about cold weather operations.

Fort Nelson was the most undesirable station in the whole Northern Region. We lived in Army Stout houses made of fiberboard. They were 10-by-10 feet or 10-by-12 and slept four. They were heated with kerosene stoves. The Army produced them by the millions. The "town" of Fort Nelson was five miles away on the Nelson River and the only thing going there was the Hudson Bay Trading Post. We worked 12 hours a day, seven days a week. There was no running water or inside toilets. And the Army took over the mess hall (need I say more?). I was there a year-and-a-half.

Soon came the deadening darkness of continuous winter. Temperatures often stayed at 40 below or more and minus 50 was not unusual. The winter of 1942-43 was extremely cold. We had much to learn about living and maintaining planes under these circumstances, and we did it, thanks in part to those wonderful Herman-Nelson heaters.

The Herman-Nelsons were maybe a little bigger than a cedar chest, on wheels. They burned aviation fuel, regular gas or white gas and were a blow torch inside. Heat was distributed by a blower through a 20-foot, 12-to-16 inch diameter flexible hose. They took extensions, too, but if you used one you lost heat. You'd fix up a nose hangar with tarps and bring the hose inside. Now and then it helped and we couldn't have gotten along without them.

They were strictly for outside use although you could bring the hose inside a building. If you brought the heater in you'd be dead in no time. That reminds me, those Stout houses weren't fireproof, we found that out. I was bunking with Steve Hanto, Pat Greene and Bill Oury when ours caught fire. We got out but our clothes didn't, we lost them all. We grabbed the big wheel-mounted fire extinguisher outside and pointed its hose and all it said was "swoosh." The boys had been using its CO-2 to cool their beer all summer.

Oil cooler plugs: They were pieces of wood with handles on them matching the parameters of the oil cooler. When a plane came in you attached one to the front of each of its oil coolers after shutdown.

You started the engines with plugs in place. Taxiing out and runup would get the engines to acceptable temperature. A mechanic would accompany the plane, then jump out and sneak between the props and the oil coolers (not easy) and remove the plugs. I guess some of you northern oldtimers can identify with this, when you put a piece of cardboard in front of the radiator in your 1938 Ford, or whatever, to **give** you more heat inside the car.

And there were the wing and tail covers. If it was snowing out, especially wet snow, or if heavy frost was possible, we covered the wings and horizontal tail surfaces of incoming planes destined to be on the ground for a while with form-fitting fabric covers. Even with hose hangars, of course, the wings and tail were exposed.

These form-fitting covers were some sort of a light "sailcloth" material. Slip-ons for the tail surfaces. For the wings, one man worked atop the wing and another underneath tying down with cord-through-grommets. Later bungee cord and hooks, which eased the job considerably. This could be a mess, really fun in the wind. The wing man might actually take off himself.

And the next morning you had these cold, stiff, almost unmanageable wing covers to contend with. They had to be shaken out and folded. Sometimes they were put back aboard the plane. Luckily, we often had spare sets on hand and we would part with a new, dry one.

This might seem like a lot of detail but very few remember.

On a through flight in extreme cold we would rarely shut down the engine unless the plane needed fuel. We would shut down one at a time on the wing being fueled.

Another problem at Nelson was snow but the Canadian D.O.T. had an answer. Rather than plow it they rolled it with large corrugated rollers and packed snow worked great. Until the spring thaw and nighttime freezing. The runways got awfully rough as many of you with that sort of experience can well imagine.

Coming back, Mel had our C-47 smoothing along above an overcast, there was some rough terrain down there. We had four Army officers aboard, two majors and two light colonels. For some reason **they** wanted Mel to go lower, I think they were surveyors and maybe **they** wanted to look around. One of the colonels more or less ordered Mel down.

Mel acted like he didn't hear. He had his four ATC bars on his collar, of course, designating him as a pilot. "What do those bars mean?" the colonel demanded. "I don't know," Mel replied, "but I get a general's pay so go back and sit down."

As mechanic-in-charge I was making \$800 a month, a princely sum. Northwest was agreeable because everything was cost-plus.

BOMBS AWAY

On another occasion Mel had his C-47 on course from Whitehorse to Watson Lake to Fort Nelson when we blew a cylinder about 150 miles out of Nelson. I recall Earl Lunde and George Teslovick were along. They needed 10,000 feet and couldn't maintain it on one engine, they had a heavy load.

Mel relayed the message-everything loose goes out. There were a bunch of GIs on board and their duffle bags went out, too.

They made it. The GIs got off the plane sans everything and here comes Mel Swanson with that big, friendly smile, carrying his duffle bag.

If looks could kill .. !

GAS HER UP

Bob Reeve came into Watson Lake one day. He needed gas but he didn't have any money. He approached Vic Johnson at Yukon Southern. Vic said no money, no gas. This was way before the day of common credit cards (if you

young people can believe that) and they probably wouldn't have cut any ice at Watson Lake, anyway.

Bob brought his problem to me. Northwest was very strict about keeping records about gas and the pilots had to sign for it. I did not know quite what to do.

Mel Swanson was nearby. He said "give Bob his gas, I'll sign it." That was okay with me, just so a Northwest pilot signed for it. Bob got his gas and Mel helped a friend. Reeve was a famous Alaska bush pilot and established Reeve Aleutian Airways. That was one of the biggest jobs a Northern Regions chief mechanic and station managers had; to keep track of the fuel

NORMAN WELLS

If you look at a map of northwestern Canada you'll find Norman Wells—a couple of mountain ranges and about 400 miles from Fort Nelson in Canada's remote Northwest Territories not far below the Arctic Circle.

This wasn't our main line but at times we made three or four trips a day up there from Nelson. Why? There were oil wells there and a refinery. We'd fly up equipment, supplies and personnel and occasionally bring back a few barrels of gas. A mechanic always went out on the first flight and on the last one back.

There were a couple of settlements with emergency airstrips along the way and we once landed at one of them, at Fort Wrigley. (Almost every name in this part of the world starts with "Fort"). A prop governor failed and the prop feathered. I'd never taken a prop apart before but I did now. The oil screen was full of sand, sand underneath the pilot valve. We figured out why. When you put down the oil can covers they picked up a lot of sand which got transferred into the oil. The fix took all day.

It was 74 degrees below at Norman Wells, once. The coldest I've ever seen.

THE C-46s



The C-46s, which came along a little after the C-47s, were hot airplanes and they were mostly used for hauling cargo. Few airlines ever used them for passenger service. We worked on our share of them. They were bigger than the C-47s, carried larger loads and most of them had more powerful Curtiss-

Wright engines. The Wrights had nine big cylinders in one row where the C-47s commonly had Pratt and Whitney with 14 smaller cylinders in two rows. The Wrights were good engines, but they leaked a lot of oil. The 46s were also prone to hydraulic and other cold-weather problems, such as frosted plugs, a little more than the 47s were.

At first, we'd never worked on them before. No one who flew them in knew much about them. Each one came with a repair manual and things worked out all right. I don't think the pilots cared much whether they flew a '46 or a '47. We liked the 47s, though, because we were familiar with Pratt and Whitney engines and they sounded nicer.

CHOW TIME

The first Army inspection of Fort Nelson was rumored to be coming very soon. All the GIs and officers were preparing for the big event. We even got better food in the mess hall.

Word finally came over the radio (in code) that a "bird colonel" was on the way via a Northwest C-47. You know how word gets around. That meant we would park the aircraft and service it. Little did I know we were to be inspected but our hangar was in good shape as we had a stock clerk by

the name of Milt Thompson who had put in time in a CCC camp (Civilian Conservation Corps, 1930s) and operated in a military manner. He also had been a cook so we had a lot of our meals in the hangar instead of the Army mess. Milt did a wonderful job on the ptarmigan. Whatever we hunted he would have in the oven that day. Little did we realize what was about to happen.

As the aircraft taxied to the ramp, I directed it to the spot where all the officers were in line (in full uniform) waiting for the colonel. And he turned out to be our very own Colonel George Gardner, vice president of Northwest Airlines, who had been called back into the Army Air Corps.

Col. Gardner extended his inspection to our hangar and when the aroma of our roasting ptarmigan reached his nostrils he looked at me and asked what are you cooking here? Against my better judgment I opened the furnace door and pulled out this tray of ten roasted ptarmigans which looked wonderful to all of us. He then took me off to the side and said what time do we eat? I'll be over for dinner, be sure to save me one. I still don't know how he got away from the officer's mess but he joined us for dinner and enjoyed every bite.

Col. Gardner had been Northwest's Operations vice president before going into the military. His executive officer was a young Nebraskan named Donald W. Nyrop who he called "the greatest man at getting things done I've ever known." Both were destined to become airline presidents-Gardner at Northeast, Nyrop at Northwest.

BUNDLES FOR RUSSIA



We sent I don't know how many hundreds, maybe thousands, of planes to the Soviet Union. The fighters had limited range, of course, and stopped at Fort St. John, Fort Nelson and Watson Lake enroute to Fairbanks or Nome where the Soviets picked them up. We did the maintenance on them for quite a while.

All the Russian pilots were women. They were flown into Nome or Fairbanks in rickety-looking transports that had a vague resemblance to C-47s. One thing was very different. Each one had a wood stove in its main cabin and a stovepipe sticking out the top of its fuselage.

There was no socializing with these Russian woman pilots. They were all business and so were we.

Big red stars were painted on each side of each plane's tail destined for the Soviet Union in Great Falls, Montana. The military Ferry Command pilots who flew them to Alaska were young and not too experienced and knew next to nothing about navigation. Literally and figuratively they had a long way to go. They were usually led to Alaska by a B-25 or A-20 mother plane with an experienced navigator.

It usually worked out okay but one of the first bunches, six planes, P-40s, and the mother plane, got lost and bellied in a place we called "Million Dollar Valley" past Fort Nelson and northeast of Watson Lake. They all survived. It's easy to get lost up there because the magnetic compass is 56 degrees off and there was no VOR navigation, all dead- reckoning.

I took pictures of the fuselage pieces of these broken planes that were recovered and brought to Watson Lake. Just recently I looked at these photographs again and I realized something that had escaped me all these years. There weren't any Russian red stars. The markings were round red-white-and-blue bullseye targets.

The Canadians used the same "bullseye" marking on their military planes as the Brits did before they went to the maple leaf. Were these Lend-Lease fighter planes to be flown across the Soviet Union and handed off to British or Canadian pilots at the other end? The Brits had their own great fighters in the Spitfire and the Hurricane but there's safety in numbers. Does anybody know?

PAY-BACK TIME

Northwest's Northern Region achievements did not go unnoticed by our government. They were instrumental in helping the airline gain its next objectives. In June, 1945, Northwest became the nation's fourth transcontinental airline. In 1946 it received government approval to challenge mighty Pan American World Airways across Pan American's private lake-the Pacific Ocean.

Northwest's position today as a world-class international airline has many of its roots in its spectacular Northern Region effort, thanks to the people who made it all happen.

GREETINGS

During Red's Northern Region service the draft board in St. Paul favored him with six deferments. Then one day he received a summons which said, in effect, "what do you possibly know somebody else couldn't learn in eight hours?" (Ouch).

"To avoid those folks I joined the Navy V-5 flying cadet program," Red says, "but I flunked the physical because of a ruptured eardrum. So they assigned me to an air division job working on catapults and arresting gear on an escort aircraft carrier named the Kula Gulf after an early battle in the Pacific war. We mainly accompanied merchant ship convoys, protecting them."

Red went in service in 1944 and got out in 1946. He returned to Northwest's systemwide overhaul base at Holman field, St. Paul. He passed muster as a flight engineer in 1952 and gained a pilot's seat in 1960. He retired in 1983 after an illustrious 41-year NWA career.

"I was at Holman field in the late 1940s during the era of our Martin 202 tragedies," Red recalls. "We came down on Saturdays and worked for nothing. Nothing. No pay. We wanted to help get those Martins back in the air and help Northwest get going again. That was all a long time ago. Things were different then."



A TRIBUTE TO DON KING

Visionary Northwest Pilot and Executive Helped Put Anchorage on the World Transportation Map

A pilot at heart, Capt. Don King held several executive positions with Northwest Airlines including that of vice president of NWA's Orient region. He was killed in a light plane crash near Shakopee, Minnesota, in 1955. His death prompted the following editorial which appeared in

the Anchorage Daily Times, Oct. 12, 1955. It was reprinted by NWA with the permission of Times publisher Robert Atwood.

AN AIRPLANE ACCIDENT has taken the life of the man whose vision and enthusiasm loomed large in making Anchorage a city of national prominence. He was Donald King, one of the senior pilots and former vice president of Northwest Airlines. King was one of the four persons killed in a small plane when it crashed during a hunting trip in Northern Minnesota.

King envisioned the North Pacific air route between the Occident and the Orient long before it was recognized as a feasible commercial operation. While Anchorage was a small city with no direct air service beyond points in Alaska, King discovered its strategic location and forecast its growth into the position it now enjoys in the global transportation pattern.

During the war, King pioneered air routes to and through Alaska that never had been flown on a scheduled basis. This was a spectacular accomplishment. It went unheralded because of the need for military secrecy. It was spectacular because the routes penetrated miles of uncharted wilderness through Canada and miles of swamp-infested islands before today's navigation aids and emergency airports were available.

It was largely because of King's vision and enthusiasm that local civic leaders were inspired to think of their community as the center of the world instead of a small town on the perimeter of civilization.

Today's air routes through Anchorage are everything that Don King predicted. The inland route from Minneapolis to Anchorage was certificated as he said it would be. The Orient air route, with Anchorage the only Alaska stop, came into being as he said it would. Direct air service between Seattle and Anchorage has become the backbone of travel between the states and the territory. King's enthusiasm for these developments was such that his airline expanded quickly from a small stateside operation to one of the world's greatest carriers.



He was named vice president to pioneer the routes in the Orient. He lived in Tokyo for years and arranged for the company's operations in many cities. When Shanghai fell to the Reds, King refused to leave. He was "lost" in Red China for months as he attempted to salvage his company's interests. His subsequent escape was a story that went around the free world.

Upon returning to the United States, King resumed residence in Minneapolis. He was so appreciative of his nation that he erected a large flagpole on his front lawn and every day, personally, raised and lowered the American flag.

Don King is dead, but his work has been indelibly impressed on the world maps of air commerce. His spirit and enthusiasm have been implanted in the people of Anchorage and are reflected in the constant and appreciative interest of this community in present and future air developments.

King was a great man for the world, for the nation and for his airline. He was also a great man in Anchorage. Any study of the influences that made this city blossom as a transportation center of world prominence must give him a position of top importance.

His greatness is even more impressive and enduring because of the love, affection and utmost confidence that he inspired in the hearts of all who had the privilege of knowing him.

NEW PATTERNS IN THE NIGHT SKY

Capt. Bill Atkins' Relative Danger Light, Now Used Worldwide, Was a Major Step Forward in Aviation Safety

A NEW-TYPE AIRPLANE ANTI-COLLISION LIGHT that may revolutionize industry thinking on the subject has been invented by Bill Atkins, a Northwest Orient Airlines pilot.

Atkins calls his invention a "relative danger light" rather than an anti-collision light and it is a completely new approach to this airplane safety feature. Although Atkins' light has barely reached the production stage, seven companies have already asked for units to service test on their airplanes.

The major feature of the relative danger light is that such a light, mounted on a plane's fuselage, gives directional indication (i.e.-tells which way the plane is going) to other planes in the area. Conventional anti-collision lights do not give directional indication.

The Atkins light utilizes a blue-white "xenon" light flash, commonly known in the photographic trade as "strobelight," instead of the conventional red hue of the present anti-collision light. Xenon light has snow, fog, haze and smoke penetration qualities far superior to those of the color red. The directional feature and the departure from red as a warning color are two radical innovations Atkins has worked into his relative danger light.

Atkins made the initial presentation of his relative danger light to a recent Air Line Pilots Association safety forum meeting in Chicago. It met with overwhelming acceptance from commercial and military pilots and government agency and private company representatives who were there. Everything operates on electronic timing. There are no moving parts and no switch points. It weighs three and a half pounds.

Production models of the Atkins relative danger light will be manufactured by Research, Incorporated, a Minneapolis engineering firm specializing in aviation electronics. The light is protected by a US. patent and six foreign patents.

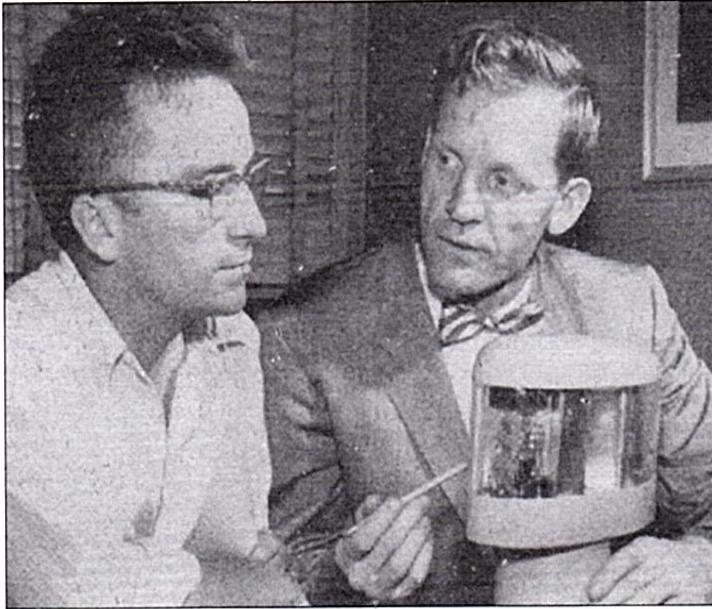
Atkins got the idea for his relative danger light while flying his Navion from the Twin Cities to Florida in 1952. An expert photographer, he took a flash picture out of his airplane window over New Orleans. The camera flash was so distinctive that Bill got to thinking about an anti-collision light with the same qualities.

Atkins, who owns an ice cream parlor in Pensacola, Fla., has invented two other items: An automatic malted milk making machine with which it is possible to manufacture 400 malted milks an hour, and an ice cream flavoring valve that injects any of a number of flavors into a vanilla base. He currently has many of these units leased out to ice cream houses in different parts of the United States.

Bill is a native of the Albert Lea, Minnesota area. He attended the University of Minnesota, where he majored in aeronautical engineering. As a sophomore, he was a letterman on Bernie Bierman's 1939 Minnesota football squad, The team that went on to win national championship honors under Bierman in 1940 and 1941. He discontinued football in 1940 to concentrate on his aeronautical engineering studies and to continue the development of his flying career.

During World War II, Bill was an Air Force instructor with the rank of Captain. He has been flying for Northwest for 10 years. He's 35 years old. Northwest was the first airline to service test Bill's relative danger light. It was installed on Ship 656, a DC-6B, by Seattle mechanics Ed Sironen and Charles Topinka.

Mohawk, Piedmont and Capital Airlines, Pan American World Airways, New York Airways and General Mills and 3M Company all planned early service tests. The light underwent several modifications before being adopted in its final form.



Capt. Bill Atkins, right, explains the workings of his "Relative Danger Light" to Minneapolis Star aviation editor John Nyberg, who wrote the first story about Bill's invention. The original unit, pictured, underwent several modifications.

Jim Sugimura, Robert R. Blanch Photography.



"I've...invented...the...strobe...light."

Stories from the GAR Bensen "Hymnal"

Naval Aviators War Story

Was having my Monday Morning "Bubba Breakfast" at Amelia Island this morning; when Mike Collins mentioned something he'd just read about a Navy Captain, Intel Officer, who happened to be on a Navy Submarine on a secret mission that was attacked and forced to surface by a Japanese Destroyer near the Philippines. As the ship's Captain ordered everyone to abandon ship and scuttle the boat... the Intel Captain looked up and said... "I can't, I know too much and if they break me, many will die" or words to that effect. He said he would stay and go down with the ship. As the Skipper closed the hatch on the tower... he looks down and sees the Captain, sitting down and staring at a picture of his wife and kids. I believe he was later awarded the Medal of Honor. He knew of the "Enigma" machine and that we'd broken the Japanese codes and were reading the German codes as well... this man had sacrificed his life to prevent his being tortured to the point of breaking.

Incredible story.

The reason I bring this up is, as Naval Aviators... we... on occasion were exposed to incredible human beings, who triumphed over overwhelming odds and adversity... to accomplish and do things almost beyond belief. Their stories were both inspiring, motivating and sometimes even told in a humorous fashion... and sometimes so lugubrious and painful they... brought us to tears.

I have often told people that the greatest gift aviation has given to me... was not all the neat airplanes I got to fly along the way... but the extraordinary people that I was able to meet instead. They cover

the spectrum. From fellow pilots...to mechanics, maintainers... genius and brilliant designers and engineers... artists, photographers, historians... all the way down to good ole boy shade tree doers. I've always wanted to write a series of stories about men and women I've met along the way who shared their lives with me... who inspired me, who counseled me... who made my life fuller and more importantly educated me and brought perspective to life. There were so many... most of them I met through aviation. A lot of them are well known public figures... most of them are men and women most have never heard of. The proverbial... "Ordinary men and women who had done extraordinary things". I'd like to share a few with you over the next few weeks. Y'all don't have to read them... I'll headline each one with the word "People" stop when you see that and you can delete it and move on.... But if they move you and you have questions' I'll try my best to answer them.

Gonna start with a guy hardly anybody ever heard of. I met him when I was assigned to the A-4 training squadron at MCAS Yuma. His name was Fred Turnbull. Fred was our squadron Tech Rep for Douglas Aircraft... our personal A-4 expert. But oh Lord... he was so much more. He was a retired Navy Captain who retired as the Commander of the Navy's Aircraft Overhaul and Repair Facility at Alameda. He was also a WW II Fighter Pilot... flying the F6F Hellcat. I met him because I was almost always working in the Maintenance Department as my collateral duty, besides being a pilot. My office in VMA-102 was shared with Fred. For some reason, he took me under his wing and shared more knowledge with me than I could ever have imagined in a very short period of time. Within weeks, it was like a graduate course level of NAMTRADET classes. I could go on, but I'm gonna shift to one of those extraordinary events in Fred's life.

While Strafing a Japanese airfield on Formosa, Fred's Hellcat took a devastating hit from Japanese ground fire. As he struggled to make it

offshore, his plane caught on fire and he was forced to bail out. He had made it past the beach, but prevailing winds blew his parachute back and he came down just a few yards from the water on the sand. He was immediately accosted by a Japanese Army foot patrol and they proceeded to use Fred's body for bayonet practice. He was stabbed deeply, multiple times. Finally, as Fred passed out, they left him for dead, right where he'd come down on the beach. Fred had no idea how long he lay there, slowly bleeding to death.

In my life... I have often used the phrase "Divine Intervention" ... my simple way of acknowledging the "Big Guy" up above, as an explanation for some event that defies any other adequate or suitable description in my mind. Laying there... on his last breaths... Fred was about to experience one of those events that fit that description in my mind... He was happened upon by a second Japanese patrol.

Fred was barely lucid by this time and knew this group intended to finish what the first patrol had started... but then something strange happened. Instead of piercing his body again with bayonets... he was carefully lifted and the next memory he had was waking up in a Japanese Field Hospital. Hovering near his bed was a young Japanese Officer. He had been the patrol leader that had rescued him from certain death. As Fred became fully conscious, the young officer leaned over and told him in acceptable English... that he was a Christian... had studied in Nebraska and had ordered that he be treated for his wounds and would stay nearby to make sure he was treated well until he recovered. He kept his word and dropped by every day to check on Fred; even acted as an interpreter for the doctors treating Fred's wounds to facilitate his treatment.

As Fred approached full recovery... the young officer came by one day and informed Fred that he, along with other POW's were going

to be placed aboard a ship and moved to mainland Japan. He wished Fred well and that was the last he saw of him. The next day, Fred was placed on a Japanese cargo ship along with over a hundred other prisoners from various nations. As they left the harbor and went into the open sea... it wasn't long before they started hearing a strange noise. If you've never been in a small boat as a Navy ship leaves a harbor with its' active sonar on... you might not believe it, but you can both hear and feel the sonar waves as they pass through the water. What Fred and the others were hearing, was an American submarine "pinging" their ship in preparation to launch a torpedo! Knowledge of what was happening spread through the prisoners in seconds... they were in the hold of the ship and almost in a panic! Finally someone found a metal object of some type and leaned against the hull and started tapping morse code on the metal hull of the ship... "POWs on board... don't shoot"! He repeated it over and over. Now Fred said he doesn't know if the sub understood, but what he does know, was they were never fired on... while an escort ship was. Maybe the "Big Guy" was looking out for them?

When they arrived in Japan, they were interned in a POW camp. This was in the last years of the war... conditions were harsh and both the prisoners and guards were suffering from malnutrition. Only the Japanese Officers seemed to eat well. Beatings were common and often. Once a day they received a small bowl of soup with scraps of vegetables and some unknown meat in it and a slice of bread. Dysentery was rampant. The Japanese policy was... if you were not in line to eat... you didn't eat. Many of the prisoners were so weak, they could not walk. Some of the men would secrete small morsels in their cheeks like chipmunks and would go back to their quarters to give it to those too weak to walk. It got to be a critical situation and a camp meeting was held by the POW's to try to figure out what to do? By now, Fred was back in fairly good condition. The fields around the POW camp were mostly small "truck farms" with

Vegetables and rice primarily. Now the notion that any American POW could successfully escape and evade in Japan was virtually impossible. After all, their white skin set them apart like a sore thumb. It would be suicidal. The POW's and the Japanese were well aware of it and Fred said security was somewhat lax because of it. At the camp meeting it was decided to let Fred and two others, attempt to escape at night... go out in the fields and pull vegetables and then sneak back in the camp. Each man knew if they were discovered, it would mean an instant execution. They did it anyway... one at a time... they would go out, pick what they could and return under the cover of darkness. Many lives were saved by their bold efforts.

Then it was discovered Fred had one other talent that caused him to be removed from the food gatherers. Fred was one of only three men whom I've known, that possessed what I call, a photographic memory. When this was discovered by the other POW's, the camp leaders decided Fred was to be fed the names of every POW in the camp... and those who had died. He was also told the conditions of their death and when. Every night, he had to recite all the names and facts... it became a nightly ritual.

I should note something here... when the war ended and the camp was liberated... Fred was not allowed to return to America with his fellow POW's... instead he was retained in order to testify at the War Crimes Trials, that were held in Japan after the war. He was a walking encyclopedia of what went on in his camp and others that fellow POW's were transferred from.

He spent days and days, if not weeks, being interrogated by various intelligence officers. One such debriefing led to one of the more humorous events Fred was involved in. A day came when two new Officers came in and they were different than the others who'd questioned him daily. Fred said these two seemed to be uptight and not overtly friendly as all the other debriefers were. The reason was,

they wanted to know who among the POW's had told the Japanese about the new Grumman F7F "Tigercat" Fighter to the Japanese? They had been investigating this disclosure and had nailed it down that the information was passed at Fred's camp... they had a traitor in their midst!

Fred was gobsmacked! He knew immediately what they were talking about... but he doubted they would ever believe his story... after all, the truth was indeed, stranger than fiction. Here's what had happened.

There came a time when Fred and the other Navy pilot POW's were called to interrogation by the Japanese Camp Commander. What he wanted to know was the facts and specs about Grumman's new carrier-based fighter designated the F7F? The truth was, not a one of them had a clue that the airplane even existed. They had been deployed in the Pacific prior to being captured and had never heard of it... to a man, they all said they knew nothing about it.

After the first round of interrogations, the Commander decided to beat the information out of them. The beatings were brutal... some almost died as a result. One night, after a particularly brutal beating, one of the prisoners said... "It was so bad... if I knew what it was, I would have told them". That statement led to a decision by Camp Leaders to come up with something to stop the beatings in order to save lives.

What they decided to do was to conjure up an airplane that was so preposterous... that while plausible to a layman... no way such a carrier based aircraft could exist. This is what they came up with to tell the Japanese in order to stop the beatings...

- 1.) It was a twin engine fighter (everybody knew the Navy didn't

have any twin engine fighters).

2.) It had tricycle landing gear (nobody had ever heard of a carrier based plane that had tricycle landing gear)

3.) It would have two P&W 2800 engines.

4.) It would be huge... over 50 feet long and a similar wingspan. (How ridiculous)

5,) it would weigh over 20,000 pounds (Again, ridiculous)

6.) It was fast... over 400 knots (Are you kidding me)

They went on and on... but in the end... this fantasy... this preposterous...lie. Turned out to be a nearly concise description of what the F7F really was! A POW lie... was thought to be a major intelligence breach. Fred said they 'didn't' believe him at first and suspected he may have been the source? But when they contacted other camp leaders back in the states, they confirmed the story. Yes, sometimes truth is stranger than fiction.

BTW... I told Corkey Meyer the story years ago and we contacted Fred, who once again confirmed it. Corkey said it was one of the neatest stories he'd ever been told... and since Corkey was a top test pilot for Grumman in those days... he got a great laugh out of it. Who'd a thunk it?

As I got to know Fred better, we became friends and I eagerly looked forward to picking his brain. I'm a firm believer in learning from others...especially those who had so much more life experience than I had. One day, two of VMA-214's taxied by and I just casually mentioned that 214 was Boyington's old squadron. Fred looked at me

and said... "Boyington... one of the world's true great assholes". I looked at him in surprise and before I could say anything, Fred said, "You Marines know the legend, I knew the miserable bastard that he really is. He was in our POW camp". Holy shit I thought; there's got to be a story behind that comment and I couldn't wait to hear it. I looked at Fred and said... "I'm all ears". Fred said, "Why don't you and Wendy come over for dinner Saturday night and I'll tell you all about it then". I nodded in agreement and looked forward to what Fred had to say. It wasn't pretty.

Boyington arrived after Fred had already been there a while... and from the start it was obvious that even the Japanese looked on him as some kind of celebrity POW. Boyington had been shipped in from some other camp... while thin, he was not emaciated like Fred and the others in his camp. Boyington was aloof and not very talkative when he first arrived. Fred said that wasn't too un-normal... others had been quiet when they first arrived also. But almost immediately they were surprised when Boyington was assigned to work in the Japanese "Officer's Kitchen". No other POW had ever worked there. A nice elderly lady was the Chief cook and one thing became very apparent... while all the other POW's were starving to death... Greg Boyington was gaining weight!

Now this was at the time when Fred (before his memory was discovered) and others had actually risked their lives to escape at night and steal vegetables from nearby fields to try and keep those too weak to walk, alive. As it became obvious that Boyington was getting extra rations while working in the kitchen... the Camp seniors had a meeting to decide what to do about it. It was decided to confront Boyington and encourage him to try to steal some food for the very weak since he obviously had special access; some meat here, rice or vegetables there... anything to help the starving. When approached... Boyington flat out refused! Too risky... he had a good

deal and wasn't going to do anything to screw it up. Over time, he was approached by many to please help... each time he refused. While Boyington was being hailed as a hero in the United States... he was being shunned by his fellow POW's, with utter contempt. There were other instances that made things even worse. By the time they were released Fred said Boyington probably had just one friend left in the whole camp and he was no jewel himself. Bird's of a feather.

I had no reason to doubt anything Fred said. And there came a time when something happened that erased any doubt I may have had. Harry Gann called down and invited Fred and I to go to the Reno Air Races with him. Since neither of us had been to one, we decided to meet Harry in Reno and attend the event. Fred and I drove up from Yuma and Harry drove up from Orange County. We all stayed at Bally's. Harry had acquired ramp passes for us and we set out early in order to take as many pictures as possible before the big crowd arrived. We'd been there a couple of hours... taken a bunch of pictures until the crowd swelled so much it was too difficult to get a good picture in the pits... so we decided to do a walk around. In less than five minutes, we came near the fence line separating the pits from the general public, when I saw Fred stop dead in his tracks... and he was looking right at one, Gregory (Pappy) Boyington! Holy chit! I grabbed Harry's elbow and he stopped too. Boyington was sitting at a table selling autographed copies of "Baa, Baa, Black Sheep". Fred only hesitated for a few seconds and then started for Boyington's table... Harry and I followed somewhat behind. Fred walked right up to Boyington... when Boyington saw him he had a surprised look on his face... it was obvious he recognized Fred. He quietly said, "Hello Fred... how have you been"? From where I was standing I could see Fred's neck turning red... he was almost shaking. He looked down and said (never forget this)... "You're here signing

books and all these idiots think you're a hero. But I know the truth, you're one of the most despicable human beings I've even known"! Boyington never said another word... he sheepishly slid back in his chair and turned and walked into the RV parked behind him. Fred then muttered something and turned and walked away also. Harry and I caught up to him and he turned and said, "I'm sorry guys, but I hate that son of a bitch more than anyone else in this world".

Later that night he told Harry and me other reasons he felt the way he did...and I think I finally understood the length, depth and breadth of his hatred. But that day wasn't the end of it.

Over a decade later... Harry Gann was retiring from McDonnell Douglas. The Blue Angels were to honor Harry with a special presentation for his years of service to both McD and The Blue Angels as well. Harry invited Fred and me as guests of honor to the presentation at "Trader's" after the Blues final show of the season in Pensacola. Fred was really there to represent the company... I was there as a friend. The presentation was actually anti-climatic and after it was over, we went back to our hotel. It had been a long day and we all went right away to our rooms for a well needed rest. I was just getting undressed when my hotel phone rang... it was Fred. "Meet me in the hotel bar ASAP... Harry is already on his way down". With that, he hung up!

I really didn't want to go... I was tired... and I knew Harry was tired as well. But if he was going, I'd get dressed and go down too. When I got there... Harry and Fred were sitting at the corner of the bar. I walked up and then Fred stood and announced... "My friends, I have called you here to make a toast... my life is complete, I outlived the son of a bitch"! He then points to the TV behind the bar that was silent... it was on CNN and the crawl that rolled across the screen

said the following; "World War Two Marine Hero Gregory "Pappy" Boyington dies". It went on to say he was a Medal of Honor winner and leader of the famed Black Sheep Squadron. Fred then handed us each a glass and we toasted. Not much else was said about Boyington that night... we all retired to our rooms for the journey home the next day. It was the last time I saw Fred. We talked over the years... but never got to see each other again.

Fred Turnbull... Naval Aviator... Real American Hero... I was blessed to know him.

Shadow



Testimony of Pilot: The Little Things

Posted on February 10, 2020 by Ed

Testimony of Pilot# 21

No matter what they might tell you, people do not enter into aviation by chance. Some may leave, but those that stay have dreamed and they come to comprehend the gift that came out of the dream. Boris

The purpose of the *Testimony of Pilot* series is to provide an anthology of stories of aviation, particularly those often referred to as TINS (“*this is no shit*”) – a term of endearment for true events or at least those with only minor *aviator-can't-help-it* embellishment as contrasted with *fairy tales* and “*once upon a time.*” The focus mostly is on finding good stories from aviators in their own words with a major consideration of preventing some really good TINS from being lost within the vastness of Google or lost forever through the passage of time.

This piece is from a current naval aviator and squadron commanding officer flying EA-18G Growlers from USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN -69). His extraordinary insight is in perfect alignment with *testimony* and I’m honored to have his permission to re-post from his own site on **Medium**.

The Little Things

CDR Jack ‘*Farva*’ Curtis

I’ve been away from home for a little bit now — on a ship at sea. It hasn’t been that long, quite short really, we’re just at the beginning of this deployment. Friends on another ship recently returned home after 10 months away, and depending on how you measure, that was a new record for an aircraft carrier — and not the kind of record anyone is anxious to beat. What lies ahead for us on this deployment is uncertain, and depending on who you ask around here you’re likely to hear some wildly entertaining rumors. What is fact though is that our ultimate destination(s) are currently as unknowable as our return

date. That can be hard to deal with, especially for our younger teammates who are doing this deployment thing for the first time.

In the midst of that uncertainty and the emotional roller coaster that is guaranteed to accompany it, it's important to look around and find little pleasures in the day. Maybe it's the fact that we can mark one more Taco Tuesday off the calendar. Maybe it's hot water after a week of cold showers. Maybe it's getting off shift in time to see your favorite team play, or your favorite movie on ship's TV. The aviators are fortunate enough to have an entirely different venue to go looking for simple pleasures — flight.

The hour or two we get off the ship almost every day is, in a word, therapeutic. Of course it involves significant planning, study, briefing, and focused execution — but with that work complete we're provided an opportunity to see and experience things that most can only dream of. And, when viewed through the right lens, those opportunities can help reframe how we view all the other “stuff” going on around us.

Yesterday I had the good fortune to get scheduled for a day launch and early evening landing. The catapult shot off the front of a carrier is a rush — yesterday was no different. I flew with one of our newest backseaters so we spent most of the flight working through a lot of the basics with me doing a lot of showing and teaching. When it came time to land back aboard the ship, the sun had slipped low on the horizon and a fairly solid overcast layer had formed around nine-thousand feet. It was still quite bright on top of the clouds, but darkening underneath. As I worked my holding pattern to begin the approach to landing from exactly the right spot in space and time I noticed the brilliant glow ahead. The ship was steaming almost due west for the recovery and the view we'd have for the next few minutes was going to be something.



We began our approach to the ship and I was talking to my new backseater, explaining what I was looking at, where we were going, and what was coming next, but as we flew further and further on the approach I began to speak less. I still accomplished all the important cockpit tasks, but my attention became split between what was required of me as a pilot, and what lay ahead — the most beautiful sunset I'd ever seen. It was the kind of sunset that causes Florida Gator or Denver Bronco fans to proclaim that God must be one of them — the blur of orange and blue into black was breathtaking.

A radio call from the air traffic controllers snapped me out of my admiring gaze and reminded me it was time to do some of the pilot stuff... With a few more tasks accomplished I went back to the horizon and the display Mother Earth was putting on — she was showing off and it would've been rude not to watch...

"503, on and on, three quarters of a mile, call the ball." Back to that pilot stuff. Some flicks of my wrist to make small but precise control inputs, a blur of lights, and then the familiar yet satisfying collision of an arrested landing. Thrown forward in my harness, with my engines still at full power I stole another glance forward to the horizon and couldn't believe that, somehow, the show had gotten even better during the twenty seconds I'd been preoccupied with cheating death. Some flashing light wands from my peripheral vision refocused me to where I was; throttle back, tailhook up, fold the wings, and follow the signals to taxi out of the landing area. Another quick glance west — gorgeous.

For those who've not experienced a so-called "night bow dance," it's not a desirable experience, in fact, it just sucks. A bow dance is when, after landing, you're taxied up forward on the flight deck (usually way too close to the edge), and then turned around very near the forward edge of the flight deck.

Because the pilot's cockpit is situated forward of the nosewheel, it's not uncommon to look down and see water instead of steel. It's nerve racking. I quickly worked through an all too familiar bargain where I promised God I'd go to church more and swear less if He kept us safe.

Taxi slowly. Turn deliberately. Don't look over the edge. A few more turns and a little more taxiing, and finally parked. I set the brake and waited for more deck personnel to chain my jet securely to the flight deck. While I sat there waiting for that to be done I took another look to the west. She was done. The show was over, and it was now dark — really dark. I shut down the engines, opened the canopy, climbed out and shook hands with all the teammates there waiting to refuel and fix any small "gripes" I had with the jet.

I wondered if they'd seen the same thing I had. I wondered if it stopped them mid-sentence as it did me. I hoped so. I hoped it was a show we all had tickets to — even if my seat was maybe just a little better.

Walking back across the flight deck I got lost in thought: was that truly the most beautiful sunset I'd ever seen? I've flown over the Pacific, the Atlantic, the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, the Gulf of Mexico, the Gulf of Alaska, the Persian Gulf, the Sea of Japan and untold number of other places around the world. Surely She'd shown me something of equal splendor?

Back downstairs taking off my gear and filling out the post-flight paperwork it occurred to me — it didn't matter if this was the most beautiful sunset I'd ever seen. What mattered was that it was incredible in that moment, and I got to experience it. It was the not-so-little little thing that made my Monday. There won't ever be another sunset like it. I'll never be in that moment, at that altitude, on that heading, with those clouds, at that latitude ever again — and that has

a weird finality to it. But tomorrow it will be something else. There's no telling what "it" will be, but there will be something else amazing, or unbelievable, or ridiculous — I just have to be open to seeing it. And, I believe that applies broadly, whether you're deployed on a ship at sea, or sitting in traffic during your commute home from the office. Look for the little things. Look for the simple little pleasures that make this thing called life so beautiful.

Farva



CDR Jack *Farva* Curtis is the Commanding Officer of the "Zappers" of Electronic Attack Squadron VAQ -130, the EA-18G squadron in CVW-3 aboard USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN-69), recently deployed.



I got these three stories from a Marine friend.

Subject: USAF / USMC Tall Tales from a friend who's been there and done that.

#1. It was a time when flying every day was different!!!

I've added another two stories that happened at Chu Lai in the summer of 1966. When there was only the expeditionary field of 4,000 feet.

All takeoffs were with JATO bottles (lots of things went wrong with these - especially at night) and all landings were arrested.

One day we taxied in to VMA-223 from a mission and noticed an Air Force C-123 parked at the main ramp. It had made an emergency landing at Chu Lai.

At the club that night, the only passenger from the C-123 was there. He was an F-100F pilot in his flight suit on crutches and with two broken legs. Of course, we wanted to know how he broke his legs. He told us that he was an F-100F (two seater) Misty Fast FAC. They took turns flying front and back seat. He said that it was his day to go up North in the back seat.

They found the target for the F-105s and marked it with 5" WP rockets. Then, after the 105s were done, they were supposed to fly low and fast and take an after-action picture of the target. He was the guy with the hand-held camera. Of course, the NVA knew the routine and began shooting the shit out of them. The front seat guy did a lot of jinking and somehow, the lens came off the camera and disappeared.

They safely got "feet wet" and in-flight refueled for their return trip home down south to Tui Hua (or wherever). Our guy said that he kept looking for the lens but the front seater said to forget it. They would find it after landing. Upon landing and taxi back, the front seater called "Canopy Clear" and raised the canopy. The lens had landed near one of the actuators for the ejection seat. He said that he heard this tremendous explosion and realized what had happened when he got seat separation about 250 feet up at the top of the arc and saw a miniature F-100F below him missing a canopy. He said that it was like a "Wily Coyote" cartoon. There was a point where you stop going up, a pause, and then

a rapid going down thing. The F-100F didn't have a zero/zero seat . It had neither (and needed 100 kts and 100 feet). He also said that he had always heard that in a long fall, one dies of a heart attack before one hits the ground.

So he said he kept shouting: "Come on heart attack."

The drogue chute had deployed and that kept his feet straight down. It was real steep near the taxiway, they had been doing a lot of excavating and it had rained. He hit feet first. The undeployed chute saved his back and kept it straight. He skidded down the embankment into a large pool of water. He had two simple fractures.

Needless to say, he couldn't buy another drink that night.

#2. This second story is the single funniest thing that I have ever seen. It was around September 1966 and they had just completed the installation of the land catapult (Oh good- no more JATO). We had operated out of there for about 3 weeks with the land cat and it worked great. Anyway, there was to be a change of command for Marine Air Group 12.

Col. Les Brown was about to hand over MAG-12 to the great, one and only, Jay Hubbard.

The change of command ceremony was to coincide with the official inauguration of the first combat tactical SATS (Short Airfield Tactical and I can't remember the S) field in the history of the Marine Corps.

A real dog and pony show. The guests of honor were the Secretary of the Navy, FMFPAC Lt. General Krulak, 1st Marine Air Wing Commander, MGEN Robinshaw (a great guy by the way - he always flew with 223 and was the world's best wingman because he could hardly see).

All pilots not flying were to put on their dungarees for formation in the sand for the change of command. The program then called for all troops to fall out and observe four A-4s to be launched from the land cat.

That was the planned program. Someone (no one would admit who) suggested the day before that two Marine F-4 Phantoms be brought in the night before to be launched after the A-4s. Wouldn't that be a great idea. Well, of course, with a

4 thousand foot strip and 50' wide taxiways, no F-4s had ever been to Chu Lai But, in the late afternoon the day before the ceremony, two F-4s landed and took the arresting gear. They folded their wings and proceeded to (very carefully) taxi into the biggest two revetments.

And, of course, the familiar F-4 engine wailing sound followed them everywhere.

That night there was much harassment of the F-4 crews in the club about flying an aircraft that needed a committee to perform (2 seats instead of 1). Furthermore, we took to calling the RIO 's (backseat guys) "hair-lipped dogs" because their only job was to shout "MARK MARK" when the pilot reached bomb release altitude. Anyway, the next day those of us not on the flight schedule put on our dungarees and fell in for the ceremony.

VMA-123 was led by the world's greatest Squadron Commander and my personal hero to this day, Lt. Col. Bob Sinclair (I was the world's saltiest 2nd Lt. at the time with 125 combat missions and Col. Bob's assigned wingman).

(How is this possible? It takes only 18 months to make 1st Lt) Buck

The ceremony went off without a hitch and Jay Hubbard was now our new Group skipper. The dignitaries lined up on the high ground (read sand dune here) with the SECNAV on the right then FMFPAC "The Brute" General Krulak, then General Robinshaw, then the old Group CO, Les Brown and finally Jay Hubbard. Sure enough, they launched four bomb laden A-4's off the land cat. This was ho - hum stuff for us because we had been doing it for three weeks already Next the first F-4 taxied up with folded wings.

Tremendous noise from 4 jet engines, dust and smoke.

The two distinctive F-4 engines were doing a lot of wailing.

Up went the F-4's nose wheel on the dolly. The wings were extended and locked. The nose wheel was attached to the dolly with the frangible metal breakaways. The hold-back for the tail was installed. All was ready for the run-up. The two J-57 engines powering the land cat were run-up. The two F-4 engines were run-up to 100%. Then BOOM BOOM both F-4 engines went into afterburner.

Man, there was something in this show for everyone.

Nothing could go wrong now. The CAT Officer received the salute from the F-4 pilot and he dropped his hand. BOOM the CAT fired. Now about 60,000 pounds of F-4 and bombs are hurtling down the 1,500 foot CAT. At this point I must interject a minor technical point...

About the frangible metal devices holding the F-4's nosewheel to the dolly: Well, you see, they break away at the end of the 1,500' CAT ride. This, of course is not a problem for an A-4 because it has a long nosewheel and sits up at a pronounced angle. Unfortunately, the F-4 sits parallel to the ground. In order to not make this too technical, both nosewheel frangible devices did what they were supposed to and broke off. One went into the left intake and one went into the right intake. This was problematic for the Phantom. BOOM, the left engine exploded. BOOM, the right engine exploded. The show got much better. Flaming metal parts and discs slicing through the side of the F-4.

Then total involvement of flames of the aircraft from the intakes back. BOOM went the ejection seat of the backseater. BOOM went the ejection seat of the frontseater. And KABOOM went the F-4 into the sand southeast of the runway.

Then the **Three Stooges** part: The SECNAV looks to his left at FMFPAC who looks to his left to 1st MAW CO, who looks at the old MAG-12 CO, Colonel Brown, and finally they are all looking at Jay Hubbard. We laughed so hard that some of us fell down.

The Good News is... Both F-4 crewmembers lived.

By the way, the second F-4 refolded his wings and slowly taxied back to the revetments. They down loaded the bombs and defueled him and he flew back to Danang the next day with a very short takeoff roll. Now, I don't know if this helps you, but it's what I remember. And, to quote Anthony Swofford author of "Jarhead" about the first Gulf War when asked whether his book was fact or fiction, he responded: "I don't know.

It's what I remember."

Semper Fi.....

#3. This true story is from a pilot who was in VMFA 314 at Chu Lai in '69...Just another day at the office!

You Vietnam F4 guys will appreciate this amazing story...

Here's another 'bad day' @ Chu Lai:

I was one of a half-dozen replacements who checked-in with MAG-13 on August 2. We were not all assigned to VMFA-314 though. There were two other combat squadrons in the Air Group: VMFA-115, the Able Eagles, and VMFA-323, the Death Rattlers. All three squadrons flew the McDonnell Douglas F4B Phantom II and shared common living areas.

Although we may have been in different squadrons, eventually we all got to know each other very well.

The first thing we six rookies did was attend an Air Group briefing in an underground bunker protected by a thick layer of sandbags. This bunker served as our group intelligence center.

Suddenly, an urgent radio call interrupted our briefing. We listened as one of VMFA-115s aircraft radioed-in to report a problem. The aircraft had been hit by enemy ground fire and could not lower its landing gear. The pilot was going to attempt a belly landing on the runway. At that news, we all raced outside near the runway to grab a good spot from which to watch the crash landing.

Crash crews raced to cover the runway with a layer of fire retardant foam while the damaged F4 circled overhead, burning down its load of fuel. Two arresting cables were strung across the middle of the runway. The cables were anchored on each end by a chain made with heavy, 40-pound links. The plan was for the F4 to lower his tail hook, to belly-land in the foam, to catch one of the arresting wires, and to come to a screeching halt. It did not quite happen that way.

After burning off most of his fuel, the pilot gingerly lowered the airplane onto the foamed runway. A spark set off the fumes in the jet's empty wing tanks and they erupted into flames. All one could see racing down the runway were two wingtips protruding from an orange and black ball of fire heading toward the arresting cables.

The F4 hit the first arresting cable. We watched the cable snap and hurl its 40-pound chain links skyward. Then the plane hit the second arresting cable. It also parted and flung its chain links. The aircraft was now just a ball of fire heading toward the end of the runway.

Then we heard, Boom! Boom! The pilot had lit his afterburners. He was attempting to take-off without wheels! As the aircraft roared toward the end of the runway, it slowly struggled skyward. It got airborne and began to climb nearly vertically. Then, both the pilot and his backseater, the radar intercept officer (RIO), ejected.

We stared in wonder as the aircraft crashed into the nearby ocean. The two crewmen slowly floated down in their parachutes. The wind carried them over the ocean and they too soon splashed down.

A Navy rescue helicopter was on the scene immediately. Both of the F4 crewmen, treading water, raised their right hand. This was a signal to the chopper that they were unharmed. The helicopter slowly lowered itself and plucked the pilot out of the water and into the safety of the helicopter. The helicopter then turned its attention to the RIO. As the helicopter slowly lowered itself over the RIO, the helicopter pilot suddenly lost control of his chopper, and he crashed into the water atop the RIO. As soon as the chopper hit the water, its pilot regained control, got airborne again, and yanked the RIO from the water. Although the RIO was rescued safely, his leg was broken when the helicopter crashed atop him.

That night at the Officers Club, the RIO sat with his leg elevated and encased in a full-leg cast. As he imbibed a few, he related his story:

"First, we got the daylights shot out of us. But, hey, that okay. We weren't hurt. Then, we survived a belly landing. But, that was okay too. We weren't hurt. Then the pilot decided he'd take off without wheels, but that worked out well too. Then we survived an ejection and a water landing, but that was also okay. We weren't hurt.

Then the damn rescue helo crashed on me and broke my leg!"

NORTHWEST'S STRATOCRUISERS WERE "SIMPLY THEBEST"

**They Could Fly Faster, Farther and Higher Than Any of Their Peers.
Their Comfort Was Unexcelled**

This story originally appeared in the MSP Airport News, April 20, 1989. Bill Farmer, Publisher; 1-J. R. "Bud" Meier, Editor; Sue Sweeney, Production Manager. The time element in the story's first paragraph reflects the time of initial publication.

WHAT IF SOMEBODY TOLD YOU the most luxurious commercial airliner ever built hasn't been around for almost 30 years ?

In today's jet terms, of course, we are not talking about speed. (Although it was fast for its day). Or range. (Although it had that, too). Or size. (Although it dwarfed some of its contemporaries).



Northwest Airlines Stratocruisers — Finest . . . Largest

What we're talking about is "Comfort." Comfort with a capital "C". Many veteran air travelers and commercial aviation buffs will hark back to the Douglas DC-6B and DC-7C. Or perhaps the Lockheed Super Constellation. Not at all. We are talking about the all-time champ, the one-and-only. That roly-poly flying machine, the Boeing B-377 Stratocruiser. Truly, the double-decked Stratocruiser ushered in the era of luxury air transportation.

Count yourself lucky if you ever flew on one. Boeing made only 56 of them. Northwest Airlines had 10. United and Pan Am had modest fleets as did some overseas carriers .

Northwest, however, was the only airline to sustain domestic schedules with them across the "Lower 48." Appropriately, the Boeing Stratocruiser spanned that great, golden decade of our nation, the 1950s. The Boeing Stratocruiser was the largest piston-engineered commercial airliner ever built. It could fly faster, farther and higher than any of its peers. It was 110 feet, 4 inches long and its 141-foot, 3-inch wingspan was longer than the Wright Brothers' first flight. It grossed out at an unbelievable 145,800 pounds.

Four Pratt and Whitney R-4360s powered it along at 340 mph maximum cruise. It was pressurized. It could operate at more than 30,000 feet. According to Boeing press releases, it had a 2,500-mile range with a 19,000 pound-plus payload or up to 4,200 miles with less weight. Its lineage goes back to 1932 when Boeing went to work on an aerial dreadnaught called the B-17.

Northwest Airlines flew Boeing Stratocruisers from 1949 into 1960. And Northwest's management, along, I'm sure, with the managements of other carriers that operated it, viewed their voracious monster with mixed feelings. It was lush and plush, all right. But man, it had an enormous appetite for fuel and for all kinds of expensive operational goodies.

One Northwest executive of that period accurately characterized the Boeing as "a stockholder's nightmare but a passenger's dream." And it's no secret that, in the beginning, the Stratocruiser needed liberal dollops of maintenance although after several years of tinkering it became an extremely reliable plane.



The Stratocruiser's spacious, quiet 75 (later 83) passenger cabin combined the comforts of a chair car, a sleeper, and a club car all in one swift, gleaming package. Passengers loved its big, square windows, wide aisle, high well-lighted ceiling, deep, plush two-abreast seats and, of course, its downstairs lounge

(bar). Believe it or not, it had 24 berths, eight uppers and 16 lowers. And each one was larger and softer than a standard Pullman berth.

The lower deck lounge was reached via a spiral staircase just aft of the main cabin door. It was an honest-to-goodness bar, too. It had a small serving counter with whisky bottles stacked behind it and a live flight attendant to pour the booze. Fourteen people could relax in the area in horseshoe configuration with forward bulkhead mirrors creating an illusion of lavish space.

The Stratocruiser bar was a great place for fellowship and a great port in a storm, to wit: It took some doing. Two seats were removed two rows forward of the main cabin door and the organ was modified to fit into the vacant seat tracks. An electrical converter was installed to supply 115-volt current



needed to operate the organ from the Stratocruiser's 28-volt system. Music was piped through the plane's six PA speakers that were modified from five to eight inches in size.

Entrepreneur Swanson rounded up a blue-ribbon group of organists who took turns flying aboard Ship 709 wherever it went. Besides himself, it included his son, C. R. Swanson Jr., Nan Bergin, an employee, Leonard Leigh, KSTP radio and TV, Roger Sonnichsen, Heidelberg Lounge, Len Resig, Leamington Hotel, and Richard Clausen of St. Paul's famed Criterion Restaurant.

Ship 709's passengers were serenaded by "pop" and classical selections. Songs requested on the first organ flight from Minneapolis- St. Paul to New York included "Autumn Leaves," "Broken Down Merry-Go-Round," "My Funny Valentine," "Stardust," "Apple Blossom Time," "What'll I do?" (when you are far away) and, inevitably, "Nearer My God to Thee."

"That's one thing I'll say about you people at Northwest, you're not asleep at the switch," wrote passenger L. B. Lattin, Hevi-Duty Electric Company, Milwaukee. "You make traveling a pleasure. You're willing to try new things."

The Wall St. Journal and other assorted publications recently carried a story about the "first" air-to-ground telephone system in a commercial airliner.

Actually, the "first" such system in a commercial airliner existed more than 30 years ago. It was installed in 1957 in Stratocruiser 704 by AT&T engineers and Northwest Airlines communication people. AT&T farmed out six test systems. One went to Northwest; the other five went aboard business and other private planes.

A special phone was mounted in the rear of Ship 704's main cabin. Calls could be placed or received from anyplace in the world providing the plane was within a 175-mile range of two special ground stations in Chicago and

Detroit. The air-ground connection cost \$1.50 after which regular land-line rates prevailed. "Our flying telephone booth works as well as or better than ground phones," chortled Northwest's upbeat houseorgan, the Northwest Airlines "NEWS."



"Possibilities are unlimited. Vacationers can notify friends of arrival times. Businessmen can confirm with customers. Earth-bound wives can call airborne husbands with shopping lists. (It was still a man's world, then). Hotel reservations can be verified

...

"The limited test area may even be a boon in some cases," the NEWS enthused. "An air traveler caught by a long-winded caller can just bide his time until the plane flies out of range."

During the 11 years, one month and two weeks that Northwest flew the Boeing Stratocruiser, they logged 282,083:24 flying hours. More colorfully, Northwest's Stratocruiser fleet flew the equivalent of almost 147 round trips to the moon. And only one person - Dave Razey, a flight attendant - ever lost his life during Northwest's Stratocruiser operations.



Northwest operated the world's last scheduled commercial Stratocruiser flight from New York City to Minneapolis-St. Paul, Sept. 16, 1960. Extra section Flight 2209 lifted off the Idlewild International Airport runway in late afternoon with a "full load of 83 passengers, a bin full of cargo, two dogs and a cat." Capt. Ely Salyards was in command.

To experienced air travelers of the 1950s, and to the hardworking and dedicated Northwest people of that lean era in the airline's history, the Stratocruiser is fondly remembered. It was, very simply (with apologies to stockholders), "The Best."



BITS AND PIECES

NWA Flight Attendant Newsletter, June 1, 2020

Table of Contents

BITS AND PIECES From

Our Friends

.....Marion Doheny

 Caring Bridge

.....Tom Schellinger

 Scholarships

.....Bob DuBert

 Travel Tidbits'

.....Shannon Hedren

 Phishing and Scams

Upcoming Events Ongoing

Updated for
June

.....MSP FA Coffee

.....SEA ROMEO Lunch

.....SEA FA Purser's Lunch

.....MSP FA 2nd Tues; Crown Pl

.....SW Florida FA Luncheon

.....MSP Girls Night Out

.....MSP FA 3rd Tues; Crown Pla

.....MSP Northside Coffee

Save The Date Events

.....St. Croix River Cruise

New date, Aug.
27th

.....RNPA 2021 NCL Cru

Happy Birthday List

In Closing

Marion Doheny From Dan Doheny on April 20th

Hello Friends, I have some unfortunate news.



Marion has cancer in her liver. A spot on her liver was detected when she had her three month scan. She went in two weeks ago for a liver biopsy. We found out from her oncologist that it was cancer

associated with her pancreatic cancer. She will begin treatments similar to

those she underwent last time.

She will be going to Abbot hospital in Mpls on Friday morning (24th) to have a port inserted into her chest. This is the same procedure (operation) she underwent last time. This is the alternative to getting “stuck” for blood draws and IVs. She starts her Chemo treatment on Tuesday (28th). Unfortunately I will not be allowed to accompany her into the treatment room. I will drop her off and pick her up. These treatments will be once a week for three weeks and then she will have a week off to recover somewhat. She will repeat this procedure for 6 months.

Her progress will be accessed at that time by doing a scan to look at the tumor. She may have to undergo surgery at this point.

I will post her updates on Caring Bridge
<https://www.caringbridge.org/visit/mariondoheny4/journal>

Travel Tid 'bits' from Bob

Robert DuBert Airline Historian and Travel Explorer
"TRAVELING – IT LEAVES YOU SPEECHLESS, THEN TURNS YOU INTO A STORYTELLER."

– Ibn Battuta

Reuters' article on May 18th

Delta will add flights to keep planes no more than 60% full as demand rises:

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-delta-strategy-exc/exclusive-delta-will-add-flights-to-keep-planes-no-more-than-60-full-as-demand-rises-sources-idUSKBN22V08T>

May 19th

Information for FA retirees who might be wondering just how empty the flights really are.

This involves the "Go Anywhere" function of TravelNet, which was introduced before the Covid-19 pandemic as an aid for non-revs looking for flights that had the most empty seats. But now it offers a shocking look at the reality confronting Delta management as they struggle with saving the airline as a profitable business.

Here's how to access Go Anywhere:

1. Log into Deltanet, and then Travelnet.
2. Enter your departure city, then select "Go Anywhere."
3. Select "Domestic," "International," or "Both."
4. Select criteria for Flights Departing Within. I suggest "Now" to "24 hours."
5. The flights with the most empty seats from your city will appear, in descending order

For example, today's A350 DTW-ICN flight has 3 passengers. 😨 Domestic flights from MSP to such popular destinations as MCO, LAS, PHX and RSW all have 100 or more open seats! It's a non-rev dream, or nightmare, depending on your risk tolerances for flying and what might await you at the destination! 🤪

May 20th

Newly posted by KLM today is this video which shows all the steps the airline is taking to safeguard the health of passengers and crew. It's beautifully done

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1-2OOj9DyPE>

Tom Schellinger: on May 12th

This year the Paul Soderlind Memorial Scholarship Fund had a total of 72 applicants for the seven scholarships that were available. The winners were selected by the scholarship team at Wings FCU, with final approval by the PSMSF Board of Directors. All evaluations are done in the blind (names and contact information redacted). Our thanks to the Wings staff for all of their hard work in this endeavor.

It had been planned to award six scholarships in 2020, but then one of our retired pilots offered to provide another scholarship for a deserving student, giving us the ability to award a total of seven for the year. Once they accept the scholarship each selectee was asked to provide a picture and a short note to be published in Contrails.

As you can see from the results, this was another very successful year for the scholarship fund. Thanks to those few who continue to contribute to the fund and a special thanks to our very special benefactor. Anyone else who might be interested in contributing would be welcome and you can be assured that your contribution will be acknowledged for tax purposes and given to a most deserving student. If you are a former NWA employee, be sure to encourage your relatives (you, your children and step children, grand children, and great grandchildren) to apply for the 2021 scholarships. Applications will open in October on the Wings FCU website.

Thomas P. Schellinger,

Any questions call me at 952-953-4378 or email:
tpschellinger@prodigy.net

Scholarship Recipients:

Anne Wong, Jens Enga, Robert
Turner



Logan
Westgard, Molly
Westberg,
Sarah
Ellingson
, Skyler
Doebberf



From Shannon Hedren

I thought this was worth passing along. I can see how easy this would be to fall for since we are hearing so much about contact tracing now.

14
23, 28
29
35

cer moms are cheering on Based on data compiled by Stay Connected.” “COVID-19 began affecting » See Con

CRIME

Keep eye out for new virus scam

By Matt Loeschman
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Even in our most difficult times, criminals never let up. And during the worst economic crisis of the past half-century, cybercriminals are leveraging the COVID-19 pandemic to their advantage.

“Even as our nation is faced with a national health crisis, cybercriminals have

proven time and time again that they will show no mercy,” said Gavin Smith of PC Matic, a cybersecurity firm who released a new cyber-crime study on Wednesday.

One of the latest trends involves scammers sending fake text messages regarding coronavirus contact tracing to the phones of unsuspecting victims.

Fraudsters are posing as contact tracers, tricking people into giving up their personal information and breaking the trust in real contact tracers hoping to keep the country safe and healthy.

The Federal Trade Commission has taken notice, issuing a consumer warning in the blog section at www.consumer.ftc.gov.

“This is absolutely despicable,” said Peoria resident Alan Manning on Wednesday evening. “As if there isn’t enough to worry about with the virus, this sort of stuff is going on. These people are unbelievable.”

Scammers are sending text messages with a generic boilerplate message about how “you were exposed to some-

one who tes COVID-19.” T includes a link supposedly sign up for Experts v never, ever According com, these contain m can install

Also from Shannon Hedren

This may seem long but it has good information on Phishing emails!

Protect yourself from scam emails and more
Don't click on that email!

Phishing is one of the easiest forms of cyber attack for a criminal to carry out, but one which can provide these crooks with everything they need to infiltrate every aspect of their targets' personal and working lives.

Usually carried out over email - although the scam has now spread to social media, messaging services and apps

- a basic phishing attack attempts to trick the target into doing what the scammer wants. That might be handing over passwords to make it easier to hack a company, or altering bank details so that payments go to fraudsters instead of the correct account.

The aim and the precise mechanics of the scams vary: victims might be tricked into clicking a link through to a fake webpage with the aim of persuading them user to enter personal information - [it's estimated that an average of 1.4 million of these websites are created every month](#). Other campaigns involve tricking users into downloading and installing malware - for stealthy approach to theft - or inadvertently installing ransomware, providing the attacker with much more immediate profit.

[More complex phishing schemes](#) can involve a long game, with [hackers using fake social media profiles, emails and more to build up a rapport with the victim over months or even years](#) in cases where specific individuals are targeted for specific data which they would only ever hand over to people they trusted.

That data can be as simple as an email address and password, to financial data such as credit card details or online banking credentials or even personal data such as date of birth, address and a social security number.

In the hands of hackers, all of that can be used to carry out fraud, be it identity theft or using stolen data to buy things or [even selling people's private information on the dark web](#). In some cases, it's done for blackmail or [to embarrass the victim](#).

In other cases, phishing is one of the tools used for espionage or by state-backed hacking groups [to spy on opponents and organisations of interest](#).

And anyone can be a victim, ranging from the [Democratic National Committee](#), to [critical infrastructure](#), to commercial businesses and even individuals.

How does a phishing attack work?

A basic phishing attack attempts to trick a user into entering personal details or other confidential information, and email is the most common method of performing these attacks.

The sheer number of emails sent every single day means that it's an obvious attack vector for cyber criminals. It's estimated that 3.7 billion people send around 269 billion emails every single day.

[Researchers at Symantec suggest](#) that almost one in every 2,000 of these emails is a phishing email, meaning around 135 million phishing attacks are attempted every day.

Most people simply don't have the time to carefully analyse every message which lands in their inbox - and it's this which phishers look to exploit in a number of ways.

In many cases the file will unleash malicious software onto the system - in many cases it will harvest personal data,

but it in many cases it's [also used to deploy ransomware](#) or rope systems [into a botnet](#).

What is spear phishing?

Spear phishing is more advanced than a regular phishing message and aims at specific groups or even particular individuals. Instead of vague messages being sent, criminals design them to target anything from a specific organisation, to a department within that organisation or even an individual in order to ensure the greatest chance that the email is read and the scam is fallen for.

It's these sorts of specially crafted messages which have often been the entry point for a number of high profile cyber attacks and hacking incidents and [nation-state backed attackers](#) continue to use this as means of beginning espionage campaigns

At a consumer level, it can be designed to look like an update from your bank, it could say you've ordered something online, it could relate to any one of your online accounts. Hackers have even been known to seek out victims of data breaches and pose as security professionals warning victims of compromise - and that targets should ensure their account is still secure by entering their account details into this handy link.

While spear phishing does target consumers and individual internet users, it's much more effective for cyber criminals to use it as a means of infiltrating the network of a target organisation.

This particular type of phishing message can come in a number of forms including a false customer query, [a false](#)

[invoice from a contractor or partner company](#), a false request to look at a document from a colleague, or even in some cases, a message which looks as if it comes directly from the CEO or another executive.

Rather than being a random message, the idea is to make it look as if it has come from a trusted source, and coax the target into either installing malware or handing over confidential credentials or information. These scams take more effort but there's a bigger potential payback for crooks too.

Social media phishing

With billions of people around the world using social media services such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter, attackers are no longer restricted to use one means of sending messages to potential victims.

Some attacks are simple and easy to spot: a Twitter bot might send you a private message containing a shortened URL which leads to something bad such as malware or maybe even a fake request for payment details.

But there are other attacks which play a longer game. A common tactic used by phishers is to pose as a person - often an attractive woman - using photos ripped from the internet, be it stock imagery or someone's public profile. Often these are just harvesting Facebook 'friends' for some future nefarious means and don't actually interact with the target.

However, sometimes plain old catfishing comes into play, with the attacker establishing a dialogue with the (often male) target - all while posing as a fake persona.

SMS and mobile phishing

The rise of mobile messaging services - Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp in particular - has provided phishers with a new method of attack, with the fact that smartphones are now in the pocket of the victims making them almost immediately accessible.

Attackers don't even need to use emails or instant messaging apps in order to meet the end goal of distributing malware or stealing credentials - the internet connected nature of the modern way phone means text messages are also an effective attack vector.

A SMS phishing - or Smishing - attack works in much the same way as an email attack, presenting the victim with a fraudulent offer or fake warning as a malicious incentive to click through to a malicious URL.

The nature of text messaging means the smishing message is short and designed to grab the attention of the victim, often with the aim of panicking them into clicking on the phishing URL within. A common attack by smishers is to pose as a bank and fraudulently warn that the victim's account has been closed, had finances from it withdrawn or is otherwise compromised.

The truncated nature of the message often doesn't provide the victim with enough information to realise the message is fraudulent, especially when text messages don't contain tell-tale signs such as a sender address.

Once the victim has clicked on the link, the attack works in the same way as a regular phishing attack, with the victim duped into handing over their information and credentials to the perpetrator.

A strange or mismatched sender address

You receive a message that looks to be from an official company account. The message warns you that there's been some strange activity using your account and urges you to click the link provided to verify your login details and the actions which have taken place.

The message looks legitimate, with good spelling and grammar, the correct formatting and the right company logo, address and even contact email address in the body of the message. But what about the sender address?

In many instances, the phisher can't fake a real address and just hope that readers don't check. Often the sender address will just be listed as a string of characters rather than as sent from an official source.

Another trick is to make the sender address almost look exactly like the company - for example, one campaign claiming to be from 'Microsoft's Security Team' urged customers to reply with personal details to ensure they weren't hacked. However, there isn't a division of Microsoft with that name - and it probably wouldn't be based in Uzbekistan, where the email was sent from.

Keep an eye on the sender address to ensure that the message is legitimately from who it says it is.

Upcoming Events

June updates included

MSPFA Coffee The first Friday of each month 9:00-?

Please contact Karen Blalock for a June update

WOODY'S GRILLE 6399 City West Parkway Eden Prairie
Mn. 55344

They are seating us in the back room so be sure to
ask at the door for our seating location.

Karen Blalock for details karenblalock@gmail.com

ROMEO (Retired Old Men/Women Eating Out)

Sadly we will remain cancelled until further notice

Wayland Johe aka ROMEO

SEAFALunch

The First Friday of each month. 11:00am

Pacific Rim Buffet at Emerald Queen Casino

5700 Pacific Hwy E., Fife 98424, 253-594-7777

Pacific Rim Buffet is located on the main floor next to the South Parking Garage B/#2 entrance (closest to the freeway side)..

They offer a choice of a meats, a fish entree along with an extensive salad bar, sushi bar, cook to order pasta bar, Chinese section, and a large assortment of cakes, pies, and desserts.

Wayland wbnjj_8@msn.com

SEAFAs and Purser's Lunch

Hi all. As of today May, 21st this event is cancelled.
We're in stay at home thru the 31st
Dani

The first Monday of each month at 12 p.m.

(with the exception of inclement weather&summer months)

SouthCenter Mall, Tukwila ,WA in the Food Court which is located on the second level closet to the Container Store. We usually get a long table(s) close to IVARS.

Dani

danikelly@att.net

MSPFAs 2nd Tuesday Gathering at Crown Plaza I

think it's safe to say we will CANCEL our luncheon for June. Hopefully we can gather in July. Mary

Directions to Crown Plaza:

Only a couple blocks off 494 located right on 34th Ave.

Just enter the hotel parking ramp and go to the TOP floor of the ramp. You will see the AWNING to the hotel's 2nd floor entrance. Walk straight down the hall to the elevators (or stairs if you prefer) down to the main floor and restaurant. Parking is FREE and convenient.

Call or email if you have questions:

Mary Brainard 952-451-0012 marybrainard@hotmail.com

The New Wings NWADELTA luncheon, SW Florida

This gathering will take place in June outdoors

At De Roma's Italian Restaurant at the Promenade in Bonita Springs on **Wednesday, June 17th at 12:00.**

We will be seated outdoors.

Please RSVP to Rose Ann at dashodette@msn.com or 239-992-2360.

Rose Ann 

MSP Girl's Night Out

Please contact Verna May for a June update.

We are primarily 20 year gals who meet the 3rd Thursday of each month and would welcome anyone looking for a social group each month. We sometimes meet at restaurants and sometimes at home, but all are welcome.

Contact Verna May for information
vernamayfly@comcast.net

MSP FAs 3rd Tuesday Gathering at Crown Plaza

A note from Shannon on May 21st

I think we will not gather for another few months at least. This virus is now hitting closer to home than before and I don't see things letting up very soon.

This is also to remind people that the only computer work that I will be doing will be done remotely and not on site. And this is for the foreseeable future.

Stay well my friends,

Shannon shedren@gmail.com

Msp North-Side Coffee

Thanks for checking up on this!!

Yes- probably not going to gather in June- but maybe back to coffee in July. Maggie

The 3rd Wed. of each month at 10:00a.m.

Paneras, Maple Grove. Address: 7778 Main St. Maple Grove

Phone: 763-416-0436

Directions:

494 W. to 169 No. to 694 W. to Hemlock Ln. -- exit on Hemlock--turn R. (North) onto Hemlock-- turn L. on Elm Creek Blvd.(stoplight) --then R. on Main St. (stoplight) (Bucca's is on the corner) -- Paneras is 1 block on

R. side and on the corner. If you see Joann

Fabric you are close!! Maggie O'Leary

maggie.a.oleary@gmail.com 763-232-2554

Save The Date Events (2)

Summer Cruise on the St. Croix

From David Griffiths dgriffiths1@comcast.net

Please note date change from June 18th to Aug. 27th

Summer Cruise on the St Croix

Thursday, August 27th

11:30 am – 2:30 pm

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

11:30 am: Boat sails **PROMPTLY**



CASH BAR
on-board

\$30 per person

Price includes a delicious lunch and a 3 hour boat ride on the beautiful St. Croix River.

NAME(S)

CHECKS PAYABLE TO: NWA MSP CRUISE

MAIL TO: David Griffiths
8701 Pine Hill Road,
Bloomington, MN 55438

EMAIL TO: dgriffiths1@comcast.net

MAIL RESERVATION DEADLINE: Thursday, August 13th
After Thursday, August 13th call David @ 612-799-91

RNPA CRUISE on Norwegian Cruise Line
April 10th-14th, 2021

From Gary Pisel:

*Make your reservations NOW for the RNPA
Cruise on Norwegian Cruise Line out of Cape
Canaveral.*

*We will visit Nassau, Grand
Bahama & Great Stirrup Cay.*

*A deposit of \$100 secures your stateroom. No further
payments until Jan 10, 2021. By that time we will all be
out of lockdown.*

*Contact NCL Sara
Kloor 954-514-4284
(0900-1800)
GROUP # a-
1051600*

*Contact me for
questions: Gary
Pisel
gpisel@aol.com*

June

Herb Moran 6-1

herbmoran@gmail.com

Sharon Gayle 6-3

primrosecottage@access4less.net

Debbie Cowler 6-9

dyc0609@gmail.com Margie

Jacob 6-13

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Irene Cline 6-16

icline51@hotmail.com Julie

Toomey 6-19

julie.toomey@yahoo.com

Veresa (Resa) Stewart Phillips

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Eishen 6-19

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Bautista 6-25

jonnybs@aol.com Gloria

Funk Adell 6-25

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Gail Joseph 6-27

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Foote 6-30

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Spohn 7-4 srspohn

Gabriele Pihlaja

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Sandy Helgesen 7-5

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Sandi 7-23
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MeriKay
Wisely 7-26
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Gay Glover 7-30
glovrag@bhi.com
Anka Cole 7-30
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Connie Christie 7-31
crc0731@gmail.com
Kay Kurtz 7-31 kaykurtz@cox.net

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Barb Allison Boldenow 8-10
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Sandra Kittelson 8-19
sckittleson@yahoo.com
Virgil

Sagness 8-21
vsagness@gmail.com
m Karen Kehoe 8-24
blonday747mom@yahoo.com
Leslie Cary (Parsons) 8-26
lgpcary@hotmail.com
Sharyn Harvey 8-26
sharyn1145@aol.com
Julie McNamee 8-27
juliemcnamee@comcast.net
Linda Eidem 8-29
LCEides@aol.com
Kathy Nelson 8-30
knbnelson@aol.com
Marilyn Wallberg 8-31
mewallberg@tds.net

In Closing

Every hand that we don't shake must become a phone call that we place. Every embrace that we avoid must become a verbal expression of warmth and concern.

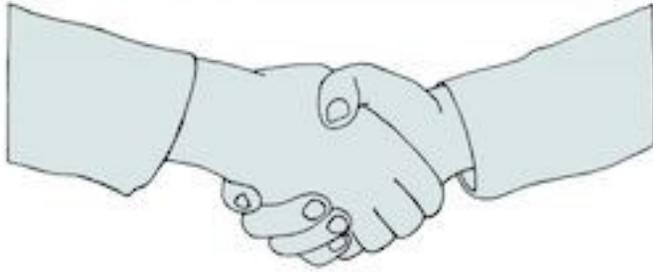
Every inch and every foot that we physically place between ourselves and another must become a thought as to how we might be of help to that other, should the need arise.

These are unusual times. While a natural disaster or terrorist attack becomes an occasion for all of us to draw together, the coronavirus pandemic requires us to isolate and stay apart. It is important to exercise maximum caution to protect ourselves and others, but it's also important to remember that human connection is indispensable for our collective resilience.

" Our social lives are filled with ritualistic touching: from hugs to high fives to pinky-swears. These acts of interpersonal contact create feelings of connection between people—both literally and psychologically—but they also give pathogens an efficient way to move from person to person.

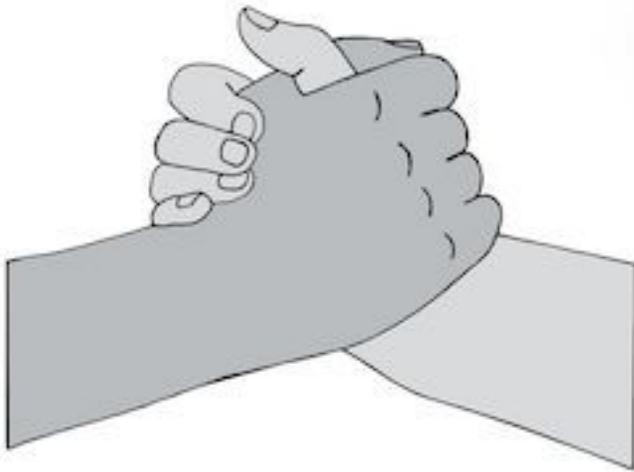
In this time of social distancing, what kinds of greetings should we use? What makes one kind of greeting more infectious than another? What actions can we take to feel close, even when we must keep our distance? Let's take a quick tour of our choices.

_Rabbi Yosef Kanefsky



The Basic Handshake (DON'T DO IT!) This is the main culprit.

*The virus moves from someone's hand to your hand.
You touch your face. You become infected.
We must break this habit.*

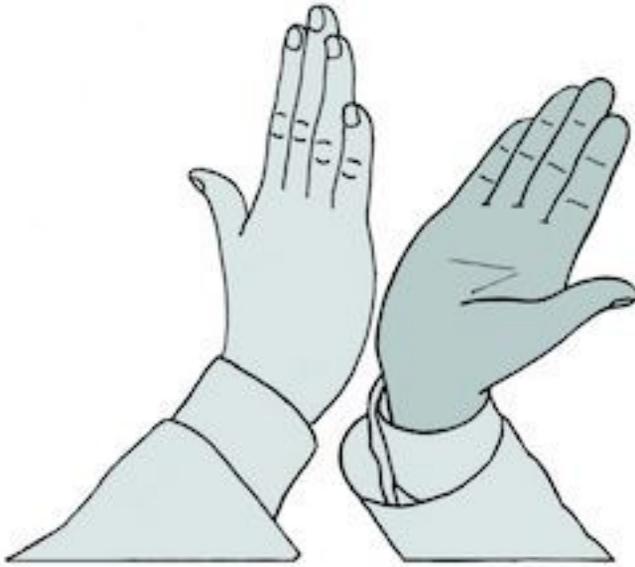


The Botswana Handshake

Many countries in Africa have elaborate local handshakes such as the Liberian Snap Handshake (in which the participants snap each other's fingers!) or the Botswana Handshake, partially pictured here, where the hands meet in a high-contact grip. Is a stronger handshake any worse than a regular one?

The answer is yes: A strong-gripped handshake transfers about twice as much bacteria per area of contact as a moderate handshake.

*(You can read about this research [here](#). They literally gave people gloves coated in *E. coli* bacteria and had them shake hands with people wearing sterile gloves, and measured the amount of transmission.)*



The High Five

The same research shows that a high five transfers only half as many germs as a normal handshake. That's a big improvement!

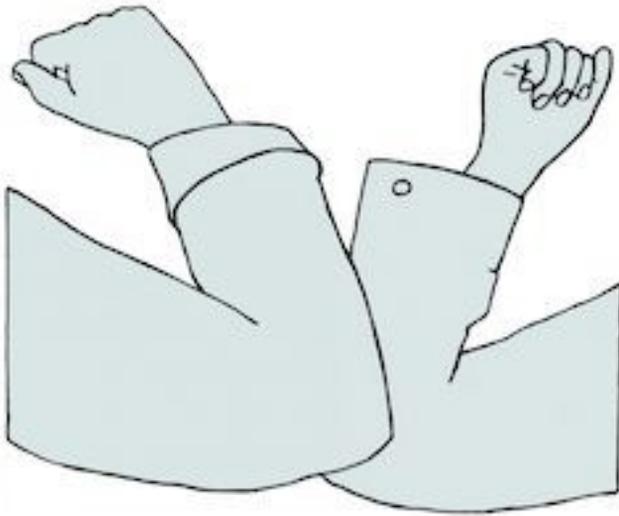
It may feel like high fives has been around forever, but in fact they only appeared in the late '70s or early '80s. The practice seems to have evolved from the more conventional torso-level five, which has been a part of African American culture since at least the 1920s.



The Fist Bump

This greeting has a variety of origin stories. Some say it evolved from the way boxers touch gloves before a match. Others say it emerged from the world of professional darts, where players want to avoid shaking hands with someone holding a bunch of pointy projectiles.

The study mentioned above found that a fist bump is the most hygienic contact hand greeting of all, transferring only about 10% of the germs you'd get from a standard handshake. As the authors conclude, ". . .we encourage further adoption of the fist bump as a simple, free, and more hygienic alternative to the handshake."

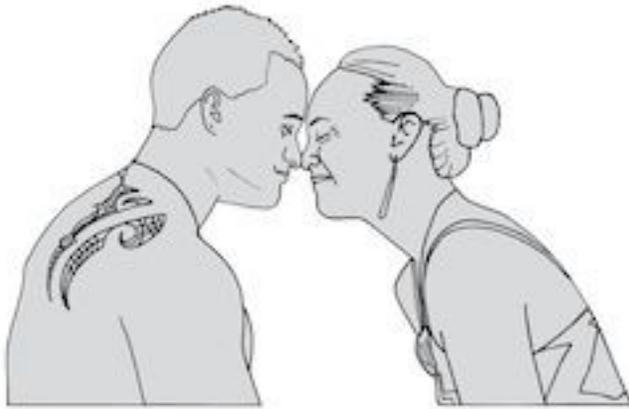


The Elbow Bump

United States Surgeon General Jerome Adams is recommending the elbow bump as a handshake alternative.

The elbow bump had an initial rise in popularity in the 60s at the Kalaupapa Leprosy Settlement on the Hawaiian island of Moloka'i. To avoid contagion, elbow bumps became the preferred way for greeting settlers with leprosy.

The elbow bump certainly cuts down on infection from pathogens, given that your elbows don't get anywhere near your face. But then again, aren't we supposed to coughing into our elbows?



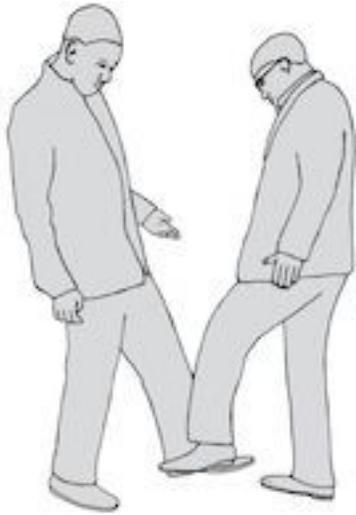
Hongi

Face-to-face contact greetings are common around the world. One example is hongi, the touching of noses and foreheads by the Māori people of New Zealand. This is similar to the Inuit kunik (or "Eskimo kiss") and the touching of noses common in Gulf Arab states.

Throughout Europe, it is customary to greet another person with some number of air kisses on their cheeks (la bise in French).

It may seem that such close contact is the worst thing you could do right now. But scientific studies indicate that even passionate kissing transfers fewer germs than a handshake. Your hands come in contact with many more surfaces than your face does, and lack the antibacterial effects of saliva.

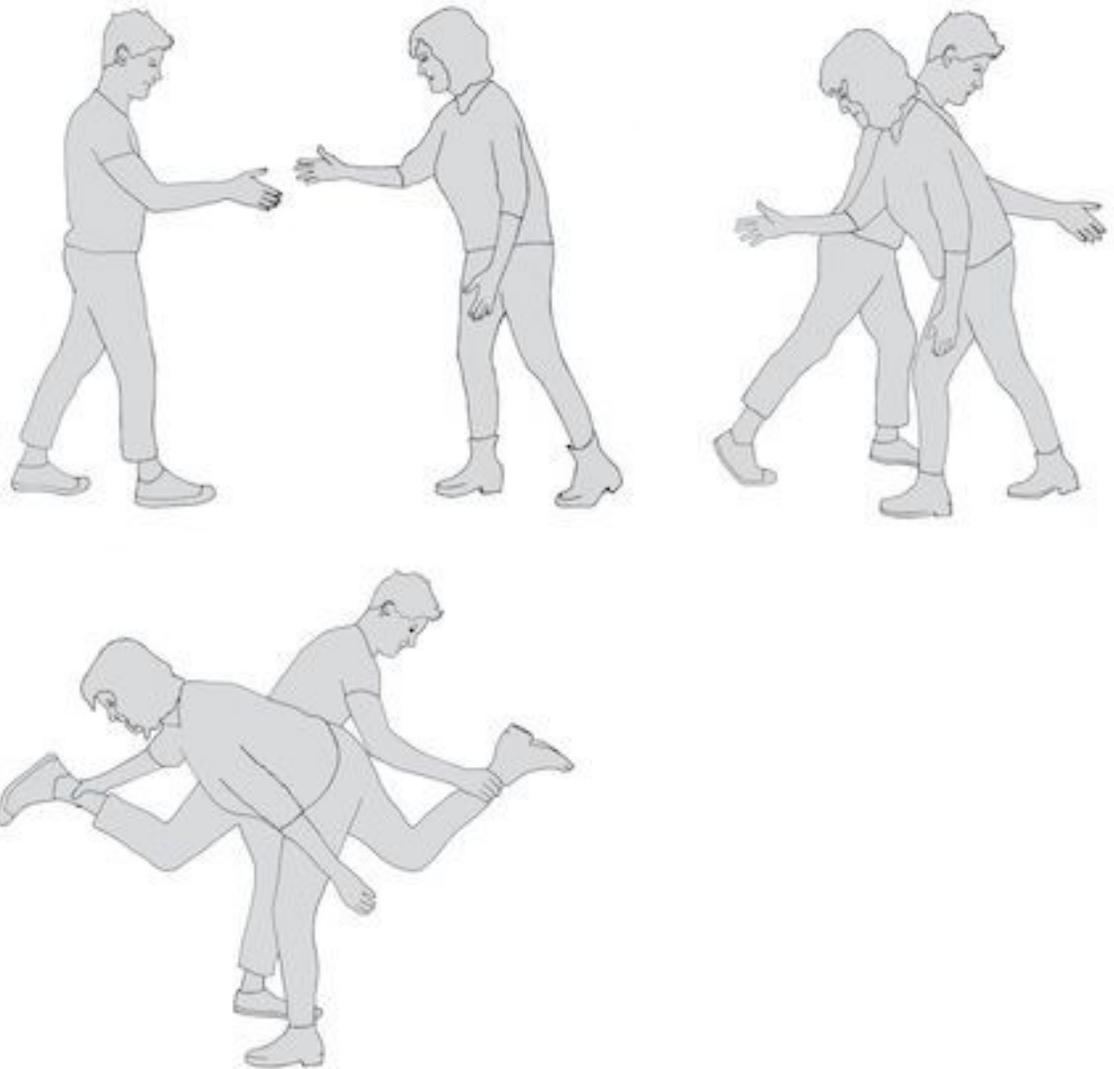
Such close contact is still to be avoided, but the fact that it's safer than a handshake should at least alert us to the fact that our hands really are pretty gross.



The Wuhan Shake

Viral videos from China, Iran, and Lebanon show people touching feet (sometimes while making kissing noises), now known as the "Wuhan shake."

Like the elbow bump, this greeting moves the point of contact away from the hands and face, lowering the risk of contamination. It also presents rich opportunities for embellishment.



The Klutz® Ankle Shake

For a somewhat more whimsical podiatric greeting, you can attempt the famous Klutz® Ankle Shake:

- 1. Approach as if for a normal handshake.*
- 2. Reach for the hand . . . but miss on the outside.*
- 3. Lean over, grab the person's ankle, and shake vigorously. Simultaneously, lift your own ankle up so that they may do the same.*

A bit overly performative, perhaps, but the Klutz® Ankle Shake provides the gratification of shaking part of another

person's body while limiting transmission (you're unlikely to touch your face with your ankle).

Air Hug

Noncontact greetings are probably the way to go for a while. Six feet is a safe distance from airborne nasal droplets from an infected person. Performed from this distance, the air hug is expressed with wide, curving arms that squeeze inward abruptly once or twice, and is



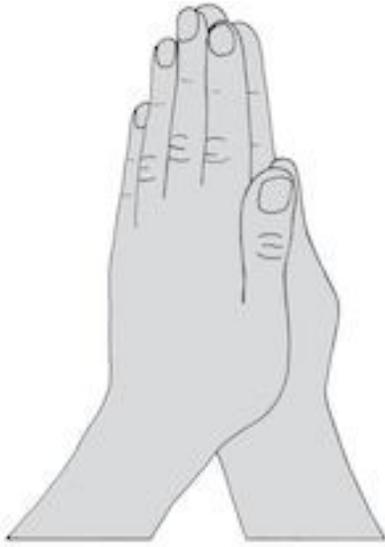
perhaps accompanied by the exclamation, "air hug!" This greeting is also sometimes called the "fish hug" or the "salmon hug," as the two parties end up looking like two fish affectionately waving their flippers at one another.



V for Victory

Flashing hand signs is a safe and highly customizable form of greeting.

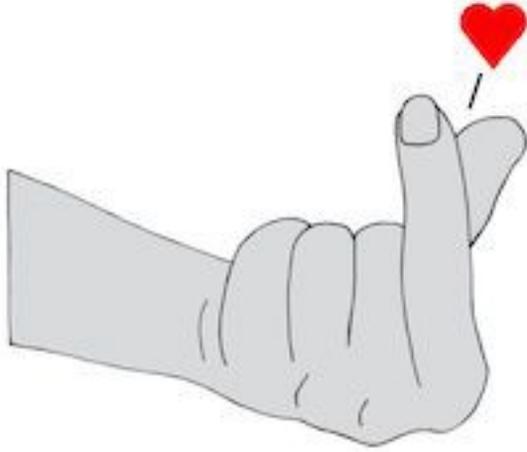
The "V for Victory" sign has a long history, possibly originating as a hand sign made by English archers in the 15th century to show their battle-readiness (you only need those two fingers to shoot an arrow). The sign was used extensively in America during World War II and was then co-opted by the antiwar movement in the 1960s to signify peace. Now it's a popular way to signal levity when taking a selfie.



Namaste

An almost universally recognized gesture of polite salutation is to place your hands at chest level, with palms together and fingers pointing up.

This sign goes by many names. It's most commonly referred to as the Hindu Namaste gesture, or more formally as the Anjali mudra. In Thailand it is called wai, in Cambodia, sampeah, and in Japanese Zen Buddhism, gassho.



Finger Heart

This gesture, in which the tips of the thumb and forefinger form the bumps of a tiny heart, comes from South Korea, where it was first popularized by K-pop stars.

The heart is supposedly small enough to not carry any overt romantic connotations. This sign is appropriate even between casual friends.



Shaka

From Hawaiian surf culture we get the shaka, or "hang loose" sign. Extend your thumb and pinky and rotate your hand back and forth for emphasis.

This sign carries strong positive connotations of friendship, solidarity, and a laid-back attitude.