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AviationforWomen®

MAY/JUNE 2010

The official publication of Women in Aviation, International®

SOARING ON BOTH SIDES OF THE POND

***The WASP Gold
Medal Ceremony
WAI WAS THERE***

**After the Fall:
THRIVING
POST-FURLOUGH**

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MAY/JUNE 2010

AviationforWomen®

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AIR FORCE 4TH COMBAT CAMERA

Stinson Award winners Lieutenant Colonel Jean E. Havens, USAF, and Lieutenant Colonel Jeannie Leavitt, USAF, with Colonel Peggy Phillips and Dr. Peggy Chabrian.

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COVER PHOTO

Soaring the ridges of Tennessee is airport and flight school owner Sarah Kelly. Photo by David L. Smith.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

JERRY CHABRIAN



DR. PEGGY
CHABRIAN

Chabrian with WASP and WAI Member Vi Cowden at the WASP Congressional Gold Medal ceremony in March.

long remember the parade of individuals from around the world carrying their nation's flags, some of them in native dress.

The FAA Administrator was impressed by WAI and said during his General Session speech, "I was delighted to hear an earlier speaker talk about mentoring. I am particularly encouraged to hear how well the mentoring process works. Every one of you learned to fly or in maintenance—no matter where you are... you have an obligation to pass those on. Seasoned professionals always have that obligation to teach the less experienced how to invent yourselves and move forward and pass on those thoughts."

Administrator Babbitt and I co-signed a new Memorandum of Understanding during Friday morning's General Session. The MOU confirms the continued agreement between the FAA and WAI to support each other's efforts in the aviation industry. The FAA provides WAI with resources for aviation education and employment while WAI helps to promote the FAA messages of safety and regulation enforcement throughout the membership

He also met several members of the WASP who were in attendance during the Opening Night Reception. As a result he

Dear WAI Members:

Wow! What an exciting spring this has been! In late February our 21st annual WAI Conference ended with one of our highest attendance records ever. With 110 international members and guests from 18 countries there, it certainly embodied the theme "Aviation—It's a Small World." Those in the audience on the morning of the Saturday General Session will

was invited to attend the Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony in Washington, D.C. the next week and was there during the ceremony in the U.S. Capitol building.

In March, my husband Jerry and I had the honor of attending the ceremony honoring the WASP, and were amazed by the number of WASP and family members of WASP present. The event grew so large the venue was changed from the Capitol Rotunda to the Visitor Center beneath the Rotunda. An estimated 2,700 people were in attendance that day.

We in the crowd shared stories and inter-connections. One particular story touched me. A young woman attended the Dayton Air Show in July 2003 and met some of the WASP in the WAI Pavilion. She had always wanted to learn to fly and Vi Cowden encouraged her to follow up on her dreams. Not long after that she began taking flying lessons, attended her first WAI Conference, and soon joined the Navy. The two of them found each other, and then me at the ceremony in the capitol and both shared their "WAI story" and friendship with me. It is these types of life changing moments that make what WAI does through its conferences, chapters, educational outreach programs and other venues, worthwhile. Do you have a story about how WAI and its mentors changed your aspirations and your life? Let us know!

We are making plans now for Oshkosh and the third WomenVenture, which we co-sponsor with EAA. For those inquiring minds who want to know—this year's shirt color will be yellow. Be sure to join us for the annual WAI Celebrity Breakfast and the Aero-Shell Square photo on Friday, July 30. More on that to come.

Sincerely,

Dr. Peggy Baty Chabrian

Dr. Peggy Chabrian, President

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



KRISTINE VOLK

Anna Mracek Dietrich, Dawn Seymour and Lucy Young, all together at the WASP ceremony. **Page 6**



FedEx Express donated an entire Boeing 727 to St. Cloud University, a first at the WAI Conference. **Page 14**



PATRICIA VALDATA

Check out the sailplane pilot's view of the tow plane as they head for the ridge where the lift is. **Page 30**

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I noticed that the January/February issue of *Aviation for Women* feels thinner. Looks like you've made a change in the paper. Smart move, and it is certainly preferable to cutting the number of pages or number of issues (as has happened with another organization I belong to).

I appreciate the hard work that goes into the publication. From my perspective, some of the things that are listed under "Careers" are not career achievements. Perhaps it is time to come up with a more appropriate description—milestones, achievements, Yippees, or whatever?

In this last issue, there is reference to the "International Ninety-Nines Forest of Friendship." For clarification, one of the charter Ninety-Nines, Fay Gillis Wells, was instrumental in establishing the International Forest of Friendship, but The Ninety-Nines do not have ownership of the The International Forest of Friendship. Here is a helpful clarification from the web site (www.ifof.org): "The International Forest of Friendship is a living, growing memorial to the world history of aviation and aerospace. The Forest was a gift to America on her 200th birthday in 1976 from the City of Atchison, Kansas (the birthplace of Amelia Earhart); The Ninety-Nines (International Organization of Women Pilots), and the University of Kansas Forestry Extension."

The International Forest of Friendship is well worth a visit, providing inspiration for all of us who are passionate about aviation.

Laura Smith (WAI #2610)
Alameda, California

Congratulations to you, the WAI Staff and Volunteers on another successful International Women in Aviation Conference! This year was one of the best. From the opening tours and seminars to the General and Educational Sessions, Scholarships, Luncheon, Banquet, Speakers, Receptions, Gatherings, Exhibit Hall, Pioneer Hall of Fame and finally the special Disney Minnie (Pilot) and Daisy (Mechanic) Conference logo—all were professional, educational and fun, reflecting the connections and major roles that each attendee plays. "It's a Small World" was an appropriate theme. The Conference variety reaches every aspect of our aviation world allowing experienced as well as students or just interested to meet up and connect. General, Corporate, Commercial, Business, Education and Military aviation are all represented.

AWAM enjoys organizing and sponsoring the FAA Maintenance Recurrent Training sessions for WAI and bringing aviation technical topics of interest to the Conference attendees. It is a pleasure to work with the WAI staff who are all helpful, pleasant and professional. I know they work tirelessly behind the scenes to make everything run smoothly. Their energy carries over and is fueled by the numerous volunteers and then in turn by the attendees who carry it out-bound throughout this small world.

AWAM plans its annual meetings, in conjunction with the WAI Conference, to network with those in the technical fields and beyond. Our planning has begun for next year. We look forward to working with you and seeing everyone in Reno 2011.

Denise Waters (WAI #221)
President AWAM
Brewerton, New York

The article "Heart of a Teacher" by Patricia Luebke (March/April 2010) is one of the best that I have seen published in *Aviation for Women*. I had a ground instructor's words come back to save my life ten years after I heard them, on a scary takeoff into IFR conditions. Aside from the very human recall of an instructor's words, it is Patricia's words about teaching "something we know to someone else," and the reward you reap by

giving "something of yourself to another person" that resonates so true. This is the essence of Women in Aviation.

Marcia K. Gitelman (WAI #307)
Port Orange, Florida

Just a note to tell you I think this current issue of AFW (March/April 2010) is the best ever! I loved it all, and especially Jenny Beatty's article and Jo Damato's column (I just returned to flying after having a son, and it's so helpful to have other mom's input). And even after hearing her speak, I still got a lot out of Denise Wilson's story. Overall, the whole magazine was just great.

Cindy Rucker (WAI #10277)
JetBlue Airways
Jekyll Island, Georgia

I just finished reading the excellent article on emergency preparedness by Jenny Beatty (WAI *Connect* newsletter December 2009). I compliment Beatty on her writing, both style and subject. Having been a private pilot only since 2002, and a Ninety-Nines member since 2001, I've read many of her articles, and always enjoy them, but this one somehow caught my attention as no other. Maybe my future involves something that will require the advice found in this article, maybe not, but it will be something I DEFINITELY will pass along to my future flight students. Preparation is just that...prepping for something that could happen. I've been a skydiving instructor since 1996 and realize the responsibility I have to secure the lives of my students. Thinking, and walking, through emergency procedures BEFORE getting in the plane is mandatory. Lately I'm finding myself much more complacent in my own airplane. This article will make me a better thinker...or shall I say, return me to the good habits I've let lapse somewhat. I thank you.

Victoria (Vickie) Croston (WAI #14291)
Conroe, Texas

.....
We encourage you to submit letters to the editor. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. Send mail to: 18735 Baseleg Avenue, North Fort Myers, FL 33917. You can fax your letter to (239) 567-2271, or send via E-mail: alaboda@wai.org. ✈



An Open Letter About the WAI Endowment Fund From Its Chair

I am pleased to serve as Chair of the WAI Endowment Committee and see exciting opportunities ahead as our endowment grows and matures. Dr. Peggy Chabrian, Debra McFarland, and Ruth Maestre are dedicated members of this committee and freely give of their time to ensure we remain on track to continue to build on our past successes.

The endowment was established in 1995 to support programs and initiatives, including scholarships, research, grants, and educational agendas that are consistent with the goals and mission of our organization. One of the first contributors to the Fund, and also one of its tireless champions, is retired Northwest Airlines Captain Sandy Anderson.

In terms of endowment history, 15 years is a relatively short time and we should all be proud that we find our program healthy and strong. Many good people made that happen over the past dozen years and for their efforts we are thankful.

Today, following our 21st annual Conference, we had grown the endowment to over \$663,000 and enjoy a bright future of giving and growth.

As you may recall, we fund the endowment in three ways. One is through direct contributions received throughout the year. Approximately 600 members have made some form of contribution to the endowment. Many members contribute each year and others join for the first time. Every gift is important and greatly appreciated.

A second way to grow the fund is through fund raisers. The silent auction at the International Women in Aviation Conference is an example of a successful fund raiser. The silent auction grows the fund by \$15,000 to \$20,000 each year.

A third source of income is through wills, trust and estate planning. This past January Arlene Elliott, a 1999 inductee into the WAI Pioneer Hall of Fame, passed away, and WAI was named in her Will as one of four beneficiaries. What a wonderful way to give back to the industry after a successful career in aviation. We are deeply appreciative to Arlene and Herbert Elliot and the Elliott family for remembering our organization and we value their confidence that this contribution will be put to good use.

In the months ahead you will see an increased emphasis on the Endowment fund. We have exciting plans to better recognize contributors and focus on the fund as we close in on the one million dollar mark.

We will also increase our efforts extolling the benefits of contributing to the Endowment fund to corporate members who have been a big part of our organizational success thus far.

In closing, please remember that the Endowment fund is critical to the future success of Women in Aviation, International, and your support and encouragement are appreciated.

Best regards,

Ted F. Mallory III

Ted F. Mallory III
Chair, Endowment Committee

WASP AWARDED THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL



*“Women Airforce
Service Pilots,
we are all your
daughters.
You taught us
how to fly.”*



Dawn Seymour



Vi Cowden

Bev
Beesmyer





Deanie Parrish

Nicole Malachowski



Jan Goodrum



Maggie Gee

ANNA MRACEK DIETRICH

Early on the mostly cloudy morning of March 10, 2010, a line was forming at the security check point for Emancipation Hall at the Nation's Capital. Inside, cameras were being positioned and seats were being reserved. Four generations were gathering to honor the women of the Greatest Generation who literally and figuratively taught their daughters to fly.

The Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) were the first female military aviators to fly America's warbirds. Flying everything from AT-6 trainers to B-17's and B-29's Stateside, the WASP ferried planes, were flight instructors, and towed targets during WWII. More

by Anna Mracek Dietrich
photography by Kristine Volk

than 1,000 of them volunteered for this challenging and dangerous duty; 38 were killed in service; just over 200 were in attendance as they were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal. Many of those 200 were in their original WWII Santiago Blue uniforms. Their courage and grace shone even more brightly than their polished silver wings, featuring the unique diamond in the center, undimmed by the 65 years between their casual dismissal and this recognition.

Before the ceremony, Bernice (Bee) Falk Haydu, class 44-W-7, who was the president of the WASP during their hard fought but eventually successful fight for veteran status in the 1970s, was particularly happy about the media attention that the event was receiving: "I was excited in 1977 when we finally got our veterans' status, but this is truly... this is unbelievable. I am most happy that the world, even though we got left out of a lot of history books, is finally recognizing that women flew military aircraft under military orders in World War II. I'm delighted that the word is getting out." Deanie Parrish, class 44-W-4, who accepted the Gold Medal on behalf of the WASP, echoed a similar sentiment in her remarks, thanking the media and saying "That is all we ever asked for, that our overlooked history would someday no longer be a missing chapter in the history of WWII, the history of the Air Force, and most especially the history of America."

As more Americans, both men and women, young and not so young, learn about the grace and courage of the WASP, the legacy of the values they embodied will continue to inspire each of us. Speaking for today's military aviators, Lt. Col. Nicole Malachowski, USAF, said in her remarks that the WASP "remind us to step back and remember why we serve. We serve because we love our country. We do it because we know that freedom comes at a cost, and that it is worth defending. And we do it for one another." For all of us, military or civilian, aviators or not, the advice given before the ceremony by Maureen Rogers, class 44-W-2, rings true and makes it clear just why the WASP were able to accomplish so much: "Just stick to it! Determination! You can do it! You can do it!"

Nancy Pelosi had it right: "Women Airforce Service Pilots, we are all your daughters. You taught us how to fly. We thank you for that and for what you did with your flying to make us the home of the brave and the land of the free." A grateful nation extends its heartfelt congratulations to the WASP. ✈

YANKEE LADIES

The 10th Annual Great Lakes Aviation Conference in Novi, Michigan, (www.greatlakesaviationconference.com) presented numerous breakout sessions for pilots, mechanics, balloonists, students, and aviation enthusiasts. Highlights were **Tony Kern** speaking on “Empowered Accountability: The Next Generation of Human Factors” and **Rod Machado** (WAI #2471) presenting “Thinking Small to Avoid Big Mistakes.” Yankee Ladies Chapter President, **Amy Kienast Linderman** (WAI #8267) spoke on “Behind the Scenes Aviation Careers” and “How to Convince HR to Hire You.” There was also the debut of the Flying Feud Game hosted by **Todd Trainor**. The Yankee Ladies team challenged the FAA Safety Team. The FAA Safety team took home a trophy and bragging rights until next year. ➔



ST LOUIS WOMEN WITH WINGS

In February the WWW chapter ended the month on a very happy note—welcoming home the sponsored 3rd Platoon from their tour in Iraq! Extra happiness abounded as all deployed members returned home safely!



Four Box D Chapter members visited the Department of Defense Dependents School on RAF Lakenheath to teach an 8th grade science class and talk about careers in aviation, highlighting Women's History Month. Chapter members explained principles of flight and aerodynamics and the history of aviation. Chapter President **Sarina Houston** represented and provided information about general aviation along with military members Chapter Outreach Chair and KC-135 Pilot 1st Lt. **Natalie Winkels** (WAI #42969), Maintainer Master Sgt. **Barb Stephens** (WAI #42766), and KC-135 Navigator Capt. **Catherine Tabb** (WAI #45402). ➔

CENTRAL FLORIDA

Central Florida Chapter members and friends attended the movie premiere “Up in the Air” starring Academy Award Nominee George Clooney in December. Paramount Pictures invited the chapter members for cocktails and a private screening at Universal's City Walk Movie Studio in Orlando—standing room only. The Central Florida Chapter gave the movie an overwhelming thumbs up. ➔

SOUTHERN ENGLAND

The Southern England Chapter held a very successful conference centered on the theme “Dealing with the Unexpected” at the Gatwick Airport Hilton at which 37 people attended. There were four excellent speakers, **Susan Michaelis**, who spoke about her research on toxic fumes in the cockpit; **Deanna Amos** (WAI #17890), whose wealth of engineering experience (now on Boeing 777) was entertaining and well-illustrated; **Anni Ridsdill-Smith** (WAI #30715), who works with airlines dealing with the problems of disruptive passengers and **Justyn Gorman**, an aerobatic pilot who spoke about his personal experience of dealing with an aircraft crash.

As a result of this event, some of the chapter members got together in Orlando at the Women in Aviation, International Conference. They held a chapter committee meeting and also showcased the chapter. The chapter members paraded their Union Jack at the General Session when the international members were recognized. ➔

WASHINGTON STATE CHAPTER

The Washington State Chapter provided nine volunteers for the Northwest Aviation Conference and Trade Show in February. Volunteers included **Sheree Vanberg** (WAI #17867), **Linda Russell** (WAI #52), **Daphne Boston** (WAI #44588) and **Kellie Knauss** (WAI #11648). ➔

Thank you to all of those who contributed to the Women in Aviation, International Annual Fund Drive, which raised a grand total of \$10,551.31.

We could not continue to provide the outstanding resources that we have without your support.

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KUDOS

CAREERS

Marie Connelly (WAI #41998) of Berwyn, Illinois, is the recipient of two scholarships: The Women in Aviation Travel Scholarship and The Dassault Falcon Jet Scholarship. A sophomore at Lewis University, Marie is in the final stages of training for her

Private Pilot Certificate and will earn it this semester.

Box D Chapter President **Sarina Houston** (WAI #16553) presented at a poster session during the 51st Annual Transporta-



Sarina Houston at the Transportation Research Forum

tion Research Forum with a paper titled "Improving General Aviation Flight Training Practices: An analysis of instructional loss of control accidents." This was a paper she did toward her Master of Aeronautical Science degree with ERAU, and it was picked up for publication by the TRF. **Bob Walton** (ERAU faculty) co-authored this with Sarina.

Martha (WAI #642) and **John** (WAI #2450) **King**, owners of King Schools, proclaimed **Rhonda Doyle** of Ridgway, Colorado, the lucky winner of King Schools' *Future Of Flight* airplane sweepstakes. The Cessna 172S Skyhawk she won includes a G1000 WAAS panel and features the GFC700 autopilot. Doyle is an enthusiastic Commercial Pilot and supervises the Snowboard School at Telluride Ski Resort in Colorado. She is working toward her goal of becoming a tour pilot.

WAI Corporate member Martha King commented, "It gets more fun every time we give away a Cessna Skyhawk."



Rhonda Doyle wins Skyhawk

John King added, "Rhonda is a wonderful winner and we are thrilled that this airplane will help her to realize her flying dreams." To view a fun video of Rhonda picking up her new airplane, visit www.kingschools.com/winner.

Rachel Lynch (WAI #41591) is the recipient of the 2010 Women in Corporate Aviation Career Dassault Falcon Scholarship. Rachel believes that the lessons she has learned and support she has received from some of the really dedicated professors will be the key to her future success.

Cindy Pilling (WAI #12545), of Wildwood, Missouri, received the Future of Aviation Initial CFI Scholarship from Greater St. Louis Flight Instructor Association.

PASSAGES

Arlene Elliott (WAI #4750), 91, passed away in Naples, Florida. She and her husband Herbert began Elliott Aviation, which has been a steady promoter of general aviation for more than 60 years, and has more than 250 employees in seven states. Arlene was inducted into the WAI Pioneer Hall of Fame at the 10th Annual International Women in Aviation Conference, held in 1999. She will be missed.

WAI Pioneer Hall of Fame Recipient Major General **Jeanne Holm** USAF (Ret) has died. MGen Holm was born in Portland, Oregon, in 1921. She served in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC), the Women's Army Corps (WAC), and the Air Force. Positions held included: Assistant Director of Plans and Operations for the 7200th Air Force Depot Wing and War Plans Officer for the 85th Air Depot Wing at Erding Air Depot,



MGen Jeanne Holm

Germany during the Berlin airlift; personnel plans and programs officer in the office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel, Washington, DC; Chief of Manpower in Allied Air Forces Southern Europe (AIRSOUTH); congressional staff officer for the Director of Manpower and Organization at Air Force Headquarters; Director of Women in the Air Force (WAF), 1965-1971, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel; and Director of the Secretary of the Air Force Personnel Council. She was the first woman in the U.S. military to be promoted to Major General in 1971.

We will surely miss her counsel and presence at events, especially those associated with the Women's Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery.

Nita Rochel (WAI #5411) passed away on December 18, 2009, at the age of 80. She had been a pilot since the early 1950s and a member of WAI since 1999. ✈



DENISE WATERS

FAA Aircraft Mechanics with Inspection Authorization renew privileges annually, per the regulations, by completing at least one annual inspection for each 90 days. Must one inspection be completed each quarter? Or does anytime within the year meet the requirements?

There are five ways to renew an Inspection Authorization certificate per 14 CFR Part 65.93 of the Federal Aviation Regulations in the United States. Performing at least one annual inspection for each 90 days that the applicant held the current authority is one way to guarantee renewal. You can find additional guidance on this track in FAA Order 8900.1, Volume 5, Chapter 5, Paragraph 5-1309. It states that applicants "must show evidence of having performed four annual inspections during each 365-day period prior to March 31 of each year." This order and guidance for FAA Inspectors does not state that one inspection per quarter must be performed.

Attending eight hours of FAA approved IA Renewal training is another method that will satisfy renewal requirements. Free training, sponsored by AWAM (Association for Women in Aviation Maintenance), is offered annually at the WAI Conference. Inspection authorization expires on March 31 of each

odd-numbered year. Next year is a FAA sign-off year. Plan now to attend WAI 2011 in Reno to renew your authorization.

How do I obtain official copies of aircraft records?

The FAA Aircraft Registration Branch maintains records on individual aircraft and is a repository for airworthiness documents received from FAA Field Offices. Request electronic (CD-ROM) or paper copies, including Aircraft Registration, STCs and 337s, in person at Sun 'n Fun or AirVenture (FAA Information area – usually no charge) or through the FAA web site (media prices are listed) http://www.faa.gov/licenses_certificates/aircraft_certification/aircraft_registry/copies_aircraft_records/.

Eliminate surprises at annual inspections or when selling aircraft by regularly comparing what the FAA has on file to your records. Include with aircraft records carried onboard to have available for venues like the upcoming Air Race Classic Inspections to save time if questions arise.

If I have a U.S.A. FAA Mechanic Certificate and I am outside the United States, can I perform aircraft maintenance?

Your certificate allows you to work on aircraft that have a U.S. Airworthiness Certificate. So basically, if you are qualified according to the U.S. FAA and the aircraft has an "N" registration number, you can perform the maintenance work. ✈

.....
Denise Waters (WAI #221) is an FAA-certified A&P mechanic and pilot. She enjoys air racing as a passion.



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WINGS OF EAGLES DISCOVERY CENTER

The Wings of Eagles Discovery Center is a major aviation and educational center in upstate New York. Using aerospace as a platform, Wings of Eagles strives to educate visitors of all ages about Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). They provide innovative programs specifically for youth including LEGO robotics competitions, summer Science and Soaring

Academies, and their Safe Landing after school program. Through their association with NASA's Virtual Space Community they are able to provide STEM education using aerospace themed interactive distance learning programs to classrooms throughout the state of New York and beyond. Wings of Eagles believes that teachers need to be well prepared in order to provide the best educational environment for today's students and provides frequent STEM Institutes for interested educators.

WEDC's newest venture provides local middle school students with simulation-based activities during which they solve problems aboard the International Space Station. During their visit, the students work together in teams performing tasks and relaying data to their mission commander based at a Challenger Learning Center in West Virginia or Alaska through video conferencing. After successfully completing their mission, students move on to participate in other hands-on activities including a flight in a 727 simulator and a hunt to answer questions about the principles of flight through the Discovery Center's historic aircraft collection. The lessons students are taught during the Day of

Discovery are based on New York state and national learning standards.

In addition to the programs already listed, Wings of Eagles continues the traditions of the "Soaring Capital of the World" by operating the Elmira Soar-

gan providing an Emergency Landing course providing a safe setting for powered airplane pilots to gain experience in the principles of powerless flight in the case of an emergency. The Elmira Soaring School also offers special



Wings of Eagles Discovery Center provides frequent STEM Institutes.

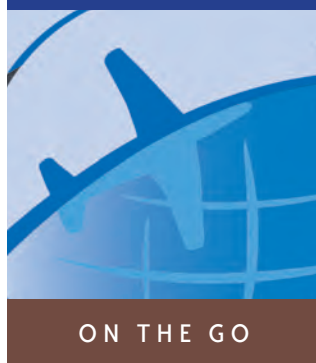
**Women in Aviation, International
Welcomes New Corporate Members**

Aviation Institute
of Maintenance
Elizabeth City State
University

ing School. The Elmira Soaring School offers a variety of "complete package" courses for the adult who wants to learn to soar or the powered pilot who wishes to take up soaring and add a private sailplane rating to her or his present certificate. After Captain Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger, a glider pilot, successfully landed US Airways Flight 1549 in the Hudson River last year, they be-

youth training programs to teach middle school and high school students to pilot gliders and offers Day Camps for ages 12-18.

To find out more information about the Wings of Eagles Discovery Center's educational programs or if you are interested in visiting in person, visit them first online at www.wingsofeagles.com. Imagine the possibilities... ➔



BOOK REVIEW

Plane Jane
by Robert Lloyd Fischer

What would you do if you were a highly-qualified elite Air Force pilot recently out of a job because of your political beliefs, and someone offered you the chance to go into the repo business—that's repossessing high end business jets all over the world? Adrenaline junkie that you probably are, and with money that good, you might be tempted to say yes. Fictional character Mary Jane does just that. And you can only imagine where the story goes from there.

Fischer, a Marine pilot himself, has penned a rollicking novel that will keep you turning the pages to the end. There's enough authenticity to the flying scenes to keep the nit-pickers happy, and the spirit of the story, which delves into the lives of women living in the Middle East, is uplifting, too.

Don't worry—I won't spill the beans on the plot. Go read it and you'll understand why! —A.L.

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June 2010

Softcover; 271 pages; \$14.00
www.martinpearl.com



SMOOTH ROLLING From a Stand-Up Set

The second flight to Africa last year killed my carry-on—it disintegrated, leaving me dragging it by the broken pull-handle through U.S. Customs. I swore my next bag would be tougher.

At the AOPA Conference just a week later, Jeff Herold, President and CEO of West Coast Trends, Inc., was showing off his latest gear, a “train-reaction” luggage set that hooks together and perfectly balances, for effortless rolling through airports. It was cool, but that's not what sold me

on his bags. It was their workmanship, the unusual shape (the carry-on is a little narrower, and just a smidgen taller, so it rolls down aircraft aisles without catching the armrests), their variety, in colors and especially in the designs built just for flight crews, and frankly, his warranty.

Herold honors a five-year “no questions” warranty. The company will repair any damage that occurs during the warranty period, regardless of cause, so long as you can return to them (at your cost) at least 51 percent of your bag. If they can't repair it, they will replace your product. For more information on Herold's huge bag selection, go to www.clubglove.com. —A.L.



Join the revolution in Colonial Williamsburg, our nation's first capital. The authentically restored town casts its spell on everyone who lives its history. Fly into Williamsburg/Jamestown airport as American presidents, Jordan's Queen Noor or numerous celebrities do—three miles from the action. A complimentary lift or inexpensive cab ride is readily available to town. Snooze in one of 28 European provinces at Wedmore Place at the Williamsburg Winery or savor the Williamsburg experience at the Williamsburg Inn, Lodge or Woodlands. To rejuvenate after rabblousing, enjoy authentic 18th century treatments at the Spa of Colonial Williamsburg.

—Nancy Spraker



21ST ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL WOMEN IN AVIATION CONFERENCE

It didn't take much looking around at the 21st Annual International Women in Aviation Conference this past February to figure out that indeed, the aviation industry is a global endeavor. And it was thrilling to discover that in this global enterprise in which we engage, women are more and more a presence across every discipline.

Wandering the halls of *Disney's Coronado Springs* Resort and conference center was more interesting than a day at Disney's Epcot. For here were the real workers from more than 16 countries, some delighted to be wearing typical ethnic clothing to celebrate their diversity.

But don't fool yourself. Behind the lovely pink-patterned dresses these women are capable technicians, managers, and electronics engineers, many of whom have a hands-on part in keeping the airways and airwaves of their country functioning on a 24/7 basis.

"The increased participation of individuals from all over the world added to the impact of this Conference," said WAI President Dr. Peggy Chabrian. "The diversity of participants, career paths and interests is what makes this international Conference so special."

**photos by Paula Grubb
and John Riedel**

Other international attendees may not have been clad in native dress, but they were equally happy to have trekked the distance for this year's Conference. Rockwell Collins U.K. Finance Director Jane Middleton was welcomed in as Women in Aviation's first internationally domiciled executive board member. There were WAI members who traveled from Russia, Australia, India and Japan. Meeting and exchanging experiences was what they came for, and face-to-face networking of the highest quality was their reward.

Women in Aviation, International is a multifaceted organization with many great venues for interacting, but its Annual International Women in Aviation Conference has become the place to be if you want the kind of intellectual and emotional sustenance that only conversation with eye-contact and the touch of an empathetic hand can bring. That's why we gather from near and far each year. So, are you ready to be a part of it? The 22nd Annual International Women in Aviation Conference is only nine months away!



Margarita Poromarova, Russia



ERAU students Andrew Nicholson from Jamaica and Megha Bhatia from Dubai, UAE, are part of the NBAA Official Student Group.





Dorothy Pooley,
England



Fifth grade students sing at
the International Member
recognition ceremony
during the Saturday
General Session



Sandrine Rohrer,
Switzerland



(left to right) Onyena Benigna
Ajuogu, Nafisat Ahmed-Amin,
and Iwinose Gold of Nigeria
join up in the International
Reception room, to mark
their country on the map.



Bhakti Borkute,
India



Aviation – It's a Small World

WHAT WE SHARE AT WAI

From the volunteers who form up the WAI band, to Education Session speakers, to the more than 200 members and friends who staff the Coordination Center, Exhibit Hall doors and Registration computers, all of us are committed to making sure every WAI Conference is an inspiration.

The 2010 Women In Aviation Conference was an event filled with sharing and caring. Aviation professionals of all genres and generations swapped stories of the good old days, details of present events and visions of the future of aviation. People in every group were mentoring down and getting guidance from above. The annual Conference is a celebration of journeys, both airborne and on the ground. We honor the heroes who fought the battles of physics and mechanics to make modern day aviation possible. We learn about engineers, mechanics, and aviators who have perfected this science. And then we realize that it's all far from perfect and far from modern and we see that our work today, in whatever field we're in, is so important to influencing the art and science of aviation in the future.

We share with each other techniques on aviation, leadership, careers, networking and education. We share information about opportunities, products, companies and daily life in our fields. We share contact information and ideas. But perhaps most importantly, we share our time. These things all make us richer for the experience, enable us to push through the hard days in our jobs and remind us why we're involved in aviation. A shared moment of bonding and a good laugh or hug is often the catalyst to propel us into the next big thing we want to accomplish. One small piece of information we share with someone might be the big break they were looking for. You never know how you affect people, and your energy is often a valuable mechanism of support and enthusiasm for someone.

by Bethany Miller, Maj, USAFR

We care for each other by the support we show, the helping hand we lend or the encouragement we give. The Women in Aviation Conference is so important to so many people. The young aviators find strength in the bright future they see for themselves as reflected in the significant accomplishments others have achieved. Mentors care for these young enthusiasts by networking with them, offering advice and cheering on their progress. Mature aviators rediscover the fulfillment of their lifelong journey by reflecting on their aviation accomplishments and those life accomplishments that lead up to them. We care about our careers and our personal lives and see these same sentiments reflected in the enthusiastic spirits of a Conference hall full of aviation enthusiasts who have made, are making, or will make our same journey.

You are important because you can help other people succeed, often without ever knowing it. You can also validate the life lessons others have garnered by caring about their story. It's the sharing and caring that make us feel so proud of our fellow aviation industry professionals and our personal aviation journey.

**We share information
and ideas. But perhaps
most importantly,
we share our time.**

PHOTO BY JOHN SLEMP



Mary Feik and students from the Women in Aviation, York College/CUNY Chapter on Wednesday's Fantasy of Flight tour



Education sessions



Volunteers



Scholarships



Navy generations

TWO-FOR-ONE

We get a lot out of the WAI Conference each year—free tote bags, great giveaways, photos and memories, and a chance to network with some of the finest professionals and enthusiasts in the industry. Those making the most of the conference knew to get two for one.

Two-for-one is just what it sounds like: doubling the experience for any situation you're in. It focuses us on not only getting, but giving back as well. Just picture it—when you meet someone for the first time, you want to offer two pieces of information: who you are and something about yourself. That way the person has a bit of information from which to get to know you better. Then you should ask the person two questions about themselves such as: "Where are you from?" or "Is this your first conference? How does it compare to last time?" And from here you can jump into a really great conversation.

Likewise, when you meet someone, make sure they're getting a two-for-one as well. Find out a little about the person and offer to introduce them to someone else. They should be meeting you AND your network. Be sure to ask everyone you meet for their email address and if they know anyone in your area of interest. And follow up! Just connect on LinkedIn or Facebook, follow their blog, check out their web site or give them a quick phone call, text or email. Five minutes of "Hello- it was so nice to meet you" can be a turning point in your/their career or start a new friendship.

I saw a lot of two-for-one going on, even in the opening hours of the conference. Speakers tended to start a presentation and then pass on the microphone with a hearty "...and let me introduce you to SO-AND-SO!" Volunteers were filled with "...be sure to talk to SO-AND-SO." Attendees made new friends and included "...and this is my friend SO-AND-SO." And so the learning and networking began.

It's hard to meet a new person or attend a new event, so when you do, make sure to get your two-for-one!—*Bethany Miller*



KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

WAI General Sessions are some of the best attended of any conference. Our strong line up of speakers for 2010 was no exception, with the heads of the FAA and NTSB, as well as record-setters and women exuding entrepreneurial spirit sharing wit and wisdom from the dais.



Suzanna Darcy-Hennemann



Anna Mracek Dietrich



Carol Foy



CarolAnn Garratt



Deborah Hersman



Denise Wilson

FAA NETWORKING

The WAI Conference presents a unique opportunity for industry professionals to reach out and communicate. The FAA networking session occurs annually at the Conference, and although the FAA Administrator is not always present, the employees were excited about the opportunities this year's session presented. The sixteenth FAA Administrator Randy Babbitt and seven FAA executives from various lines of business, as well as two WAI Board members (also FAA employees) were present at the FAA networking session.

Administrator Babbitt's intent for the session was clear, "The more we know about each other internally, the better we can explain it outside the FAA." He wanted to hear dialogue from the employees as well as afford them an opportunity to share obstacles and how they were overcome by someone else. Babbitt responded to inquiries from several employees without hesitation, and with a sincere desire to be there for the employees as a leader and mentor. Babbitt made the FAA's mission seem very simple, "To make sure that every passenger in this country has a safe flight."

He then asked Where do you fit in? Every employee at the FAA has a safety role, and there is no room for error. The FAA is interested in what its employees have to say; it will be releasing an idea hub, where any employee with an idea can send it forward, unfiltered. If the idea is vetted and accepted, policies and/or practices may be changing. This session and the direction the FAA is headed allow for open communication both laterally and horizontally within the FAA and the various lines of business.

The strong presence from the FAA at the Conference is due in large part to a sincere desire to attract and retain many of the motivated women and men who attend this event. Gina Razel, the representative for Human Resources, spoke briefly about how HR is continuing to move forward and identify a new profile for the future FAA employees out there.

—Laura MacAllister



FAA Administrator Randy Babbitt with WASP Helen W. Snapp, Bee Falk Haydu, Jean T. McCreery, and WAI Board member Trish Beckman



Honoring those who opened doors is part of WAI tradition. Pioneers inducted into the 2010 WAI Hall of Fame were: (Left to Right) Trish Beckman, Vice Admiral Vivien Crea, Suzanna Darcy-Hennemann, Kathryn Sullivan

CHANGING LIVES: YOU CAN, TOO

We gathered to share our love of aviation, to network and to learn. We have a common background of overcoming obstacles in the way of our dreams. Our experiences are all slightly different, but we enjoy meeting people who can offer suggestions and encouragement as we go off again to conquer new skies.

Speaking to a couple of Boeing professionals, one of them described her apprehension at being interviewed. She described the things that made her nervous and asked questions about how to be prepared. I shared with her some of my stories about interviewing for different jobs. And I told her about times I interviewed candidates myself. The whole table joined in with suggestions and lessons they had learned. Collectively, we were amateur experts at interviewing!

That conversation led into a great discussion about lifestyle and balance. One woman asked about nutrition, I asked about sleep cycles and a third inquired about family. I listened and took away some life-changing advice. These professionals had worked through some adversity and achieved milestones that worked for them. I definitely learned from their capabilities. These topics were not part of their professional titles, but they are definitely experts in life management and self-balance.

That's how the International Women in Aviation Conference works. Everyone you meet has the potential to change your life with just a hint of encouragement, the smallest suggestion or the briefest encounter. If you were lucky enough to experience the event, remember to reach out to those who could not be there. The WAI Conference changes lives. You, with your experiences from the Conference, can change someone's life. —Bethany Miller



This year's WAI Conference Exhibit Hall was one of the largest, with representatives from schools, manufacturers, airlines and the military all reaching out to WAI members and Conference attendees.

EXHIBITOR PHOTOS BY KRISTINE "SPILL" VOLK





Moderator:

PEGGY CHABRIAN

Panelists:

PAULA DERKS

President, Aircraft
Electronics Association

KAREN GEBHART

President,
AOPA Foundation

ELISSA LINES

Vice President, EAA

PETE BUNCE

President, GAMA

ED BOLEN

President, NBAA

GENERAL AVIATION LEADERS PANEL

Here's just a taste of the dialogue that went on with a panel of industry leaders that convened during the luncheon at the 21st Annual International Women in Aviation Conference.

KAREN GEBHART:



There is an interesting statistic we were just talking about at our table with the FAA Administrator. Seventy per cent of the people who start learning to fly drop out. That's a significant number. We need to get below the surface to find out why they do not complete their license. When asked why they did not complete their training the typical answers are lack of time and money. But they have time and money to do other things.

What can we do as individuals? Start talking about flying! We are ambassadors for aviation but not doing a very good job. We need to take it upon ourselves to mentor someone. Take them for a flight. Encourage them.

ELISSA LINES:

At EAA our vision and our goal is geared toward growing aviation through participation. We want to move individuals from being an observer of aviation to a participant.

The new Light Sport Pilot certificate helps address the issue of time and money. The hope is after they complete this certificate they will be encouraged to go on to the next step. Programs like EAA's Young Eagles provides a spark. Last year we announced all Young Eagles over the age of 13 will be able to sign up for on-line ground school as part of the next step they can take. More than 2,200 young people are taking advantage of this opportunity.



PEGGY CHABRIAN:

We have seen a lot of negative publicity about general aviation recently, particularly in articles published in *USA Today*. NBAA has responded to these articles. What can WAI members do to promote a positive image for General Aviation?



ED BOLEN:



There is a saying "In a democracy people get the kind of government they deserve." In a democ-

racy you have an opportunity to elect your representatives, to communicate with them—by phone, e-mails, Town Hall meetings. The aviation community needs to express itself to our representatives. All of us have a real opportunity to tell a very positive story.

General aviation provides good jobs, productivity to the nation, economic development. It is a safe industry. We need to be aggressive about making these statements. They should recognize it's

a fundamental part of our economy and our transportation system.

PETE BUNCE:

We ought to be proud that we are involved in the safest transportation industry in the world. Aircraft do not kill people, it's people using them for bad purposes.



Our associations, working together, tell them the best corporations use business aviation. Programs like *No Plane No*

Gain and *GA Serves America* are established to help promote General Aviation. The more we work together the better off we will all be.

KAREN GEBHART:

AOPA took on a major initiative last year called "Collaboration." We have established new increased relationships with WAI and EAA, in addition to increasing relationships that already existed like those with NBAA and GAMA. We are too small to be divided.

This year we go to "Engagement." It's one thing to say "let's be friends." It's

another to get down to the meat of it. Let's work toward bringing more people into flying. You want to talk about engagement? Take your local reporter for a flight. Work with helping your local airport by attending commission meetings or organizing events to encourage the local community to come out to the airport. Speak boldly and proudly. This is the year of engagement. So let's engage!

ELISSA LINES:

A couple of things we would like to engage you in:

International Learn to Fly Day—May 15—take someone up for a flight.

WomenVenture—a partnership between EAA and WAI. This is an inspirational time at AirVenture. The purpose is to create that spirit, that engagement Karen is talking about. There is no better way to engage people than inviting them to join our community of aviation.

ED BOLEN:

Over the course of the past year there has been an increase in the amount of collaboration within the GA community. For too long we saw ourselves as homebuilders or corporate flight departments, etc. It was easy to see what separated or divided us. We have worked very hard to recognize what unites us. We need to extend this to all areas of aviation—not just General Aviation.

PAULA DERKS:



I challenge each one of us to go back home to our communities and share our passion for aviation with

at least one other individual. One other person who is not involved in the aviation industry. Simply tell them what you do, how you feel about it. We can't keep preaching to each other. We have to spread the word.

On behalf of all of the panelists here today representing their organizations, thank you, Peggy Chabrian. We all stand in awe of what this organization does for women and men in aviation.





Aviation – It's a Small World

The total amount for scholarships awarded in 2010 was \$688,000. Congratulations to all of those deserving winners for 2010. We expect great things from you—go change aviation for the better!

2010 WAI SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

FLIGHT TRAINING

Airbus A320 Type Rating Certificate

Joline Ellen Tardiff
Nathalie Hacken

Anne Bridge Baddour
Aviation Scholarship
Tracy Alicia Baker

AOPA Student Pilot
Camila Roy

Betsy Goldbach Aviation Scholarship
Claudia Retter

Women in Aviation, International would also like to thank ASTAR Air Cargo, American Airlines and American Eagle Airlines for their numerous travel awards that allowed many of these scholarship recipients to attend the 2010 International Women in Aviation Conference to receive their awards.

Bombardier Business Aircraft Service Lear Jet 31A Pilot Type Rating
Katherine G. Allen-Weber

CAE SimuFlite Corporate Aircraft Training
Erin Elizabeth Conley

Continental Airlines 737 Flight Training
Keelyn Brown
Anna Robertson
Laura Harper
Marjorie Melchreit
Jenna Halsey
Christine Bungo
Nathalie Hacken
Mary Lou Johnson

Dare to Dream Scholarship
Stephanie Luongo

Delta Connection Academy
Drew Rozhon

Delta Air Lines Boeing B737-800 Type Rating Certificate
Sarah Anne Preedy
Amanda Leigh Browne

Pioneers of Aviation WASP Memorial Scholarship
Christine Calderon
Morgan Jones
Kara Clifford
Sally Woodrum

Dassault Falcon Jet Corporation Scholarship
Marie Lynne Connelly

Elisha Hall Memorial Scholarship–Wright Chapter
Cindy Hasselbring

Express Jet Airlines Regional Jet Transition Course
Bailey Ziemanski
Ana Maria Beltran

Flo Irwin/Aircraft Spruce
Linda Kay Schumm

American Airlines and American Eagle Engineering scholarship went to Abhizna Butchibabu



ICAO awarded five training scholarships this year, totaling \$90,000. ICAO Air Transport Bureau selected Susanne Edwards, and the Air Navigation Bureau chose Jennifer Dianne Iversen, Nida Malik, Felicia Nnenna Agubata, and Samantha Dee Scharff.



From Rose to Rise
Megan Bohn

If You Can Dream It, You
Can Do It Scholarship
Joanna Chaplow

Janet Clark Memorial
Scholarship-Washington
State Chapter
Natalie Spencer

Kathy K. Hodgkins Memorial
Roberta Lee Hughes
Kelly Nelson

Keep Flying Scholarship 2010
Lindsey Gail Nelson

R-W Foundation Award
Shannon Roth

Ride the Sun Scholarship
Linda Moody

Telex Communications
Flight Training Scholarship
Erin Hambrick

Women Military Aviators-
Dream of Flight Scholarship
Elizabeth Brothers

Women in Corporate
Aviation Career Scholarship
Katrina Avery

DISPATCHER

Airline Dispatcher's
Federation Scholarships
Samantha Dee Scharff

Airline Ground Schools, Inc.
Christine Desmoulin
Emmaculate Muambo
Rahab Muiruri (Waithera)

MANAGEMENT

Airbus Leadership Grant
Alaina Brinley
Phanitsuda Atipan
Leja Noe

Boeing Company Career
Enhancement Scholarship
Hilda Ombatta
Jennifer Treese

Delta Air Lines Aviation
Maintenance Management/
Business Management
Miyukiko Kostelny

Desert Jet Corporate Aviation
Management Scholarship
Stacey Kotrla

GAT Wings to the Future
Management Scholarship
Lauren N. Bohnert

ICAO Training Scholarships
Air Transport Bureau
Susanne Edwards
Air Navigation Bureau
Jennifer Dianne Iversen
Nida Malik
Felicia Nnenna Agubata
Samantha Dee Scharff

PAI Consulting
Aviation Safety Scholarship
Kristine Kiernan
Ava Shubat

Women in Aviation, Interna-
tional Achievement Award
Sarah Byrn Rickman

Women in Aviation,
International Achievement
Award-Student
Laura Lee Cox
Amber Laree Sulzner

Women in Aviation
Management Scholarship
Lynne Marie Atkinson

Chuck Yeager Foundation
Award
Caroline d'Otreppe

ENGINEERING

American Airlines and
American Eagle Engineering
Abhizna Butchibabu

Delta Air Lines Engineering
B.J. Marie Sharnez Perera

FedEx Express B727
Airplane Donation
St Cloud University,
Minnesota

MAINTENANCE

Delta Air Lines Maintenance
Technology Scholarship
Hilda Ombatta

Pratt & Whitney
Maintenance Scholarships
Rebekah Laurel Bennett
Nellita Brown
Anna Romer
Leslie Quist-Adinyira
Stephanie Higa
Gina Wesley

2010 AWAM SCHOLARSHIPS

Abaris Training Scholarships
Laura Stephens
Inez Bonneville
Katy Tounge

American Eurocopter
Chris Larson

Aircraft Electronics Associa-
tion Scholarship
Allen Richardson

Aviation Student Entrepre-
neur Scholarships
Wendy Kellett

Beyond All Odds Award
Corrie Ambrose

FlightSafety International
Lauren Kemerer

"Helping Hand"
Melissa McInnelly
Gayathri Duddupudi

Horizon Air Scholarships
Kierre Whitty
Stephanie Higa

Jet Blue Maintenance
Yoshino Sugita
Angeline Capriotti

Pratt & Whitney Scholarships
Carrie Ferguson
Lauren Kemerer
Yoshino Sugita
Inez Bonneville
Chris Larson
Travis Geist

Southwest Airlines
Angeline Capriotti
Carrie Ferguson
Annemarie Korzon

Student of the Year Award
Felicia Kaylor

"Taking It to the Sky"
Rachel Morris

"Tools Beneath Your Wings"
Angeline Capriotti
Lydia Daniels

Dassault Falcon Jet Corporation
Scholarship winner
Marie Lynne Connolly





SOARING

Say the words “it can’t be done” to Sarah Kelly and she’ll prove you otherwise. At age 29, she’s the owner/operator of Chilhowee Gliderport in Benton, Tennessee, a commercial glider operation near the Cherokee National Forest. Chilhowee’s major draw is a beautiful mountain ridge whose lift enables soaring pilots to make hours-long flights of more than 300 miles. Kelly runs the show there, and what needs doing, she does.

“I just buckle down and get the job done,” Kelly says, while reminiscing about unexpected towplane repairs and other problems associated with her operation, the sort found in any aviation business. Greasy hands and tools are no stranger to her because she’s an FAA certificated airframe and powerplant (A&P) mechanic with Inspection Authorization (IA) credentials, and she does her own maintenance.

“I love working on aircraft and find it enormously satisfying fixing planes,” she admits. She talks freely about major overhauls of her Pawnee and Callair towplanes, as well as the frustrations stemming from a propeller strike requiring an engine teardown.

But Kelly is also a certified flight instructor in airplanes and gliders, and is instrument rated. She’s a tow pilot too, and during her precious spare time you might find her racing a sleek, high-performance glider in soaring competitions.

Kelly does not hail from a flying family, or a wealthy one. She funded most of her aviation training on her own dime, foregoing a college education to work and save money, although a flight scholarship and grant were of immense help. “It frustrates me to hear people fuss about how ‘they were never given anything’ or ‘weren’t given the same opportunities.’ If you want something badly enough then you’ll set your priorities accordingly, and you’ll be amazed at the opportunities that open to you,” she affirms. “The definition of the word ‘necessity’ would make a great study,” she continues, “since I now live without many of the things most folks would consider necessities, yet I do have much more than others less fortunate in the world.”

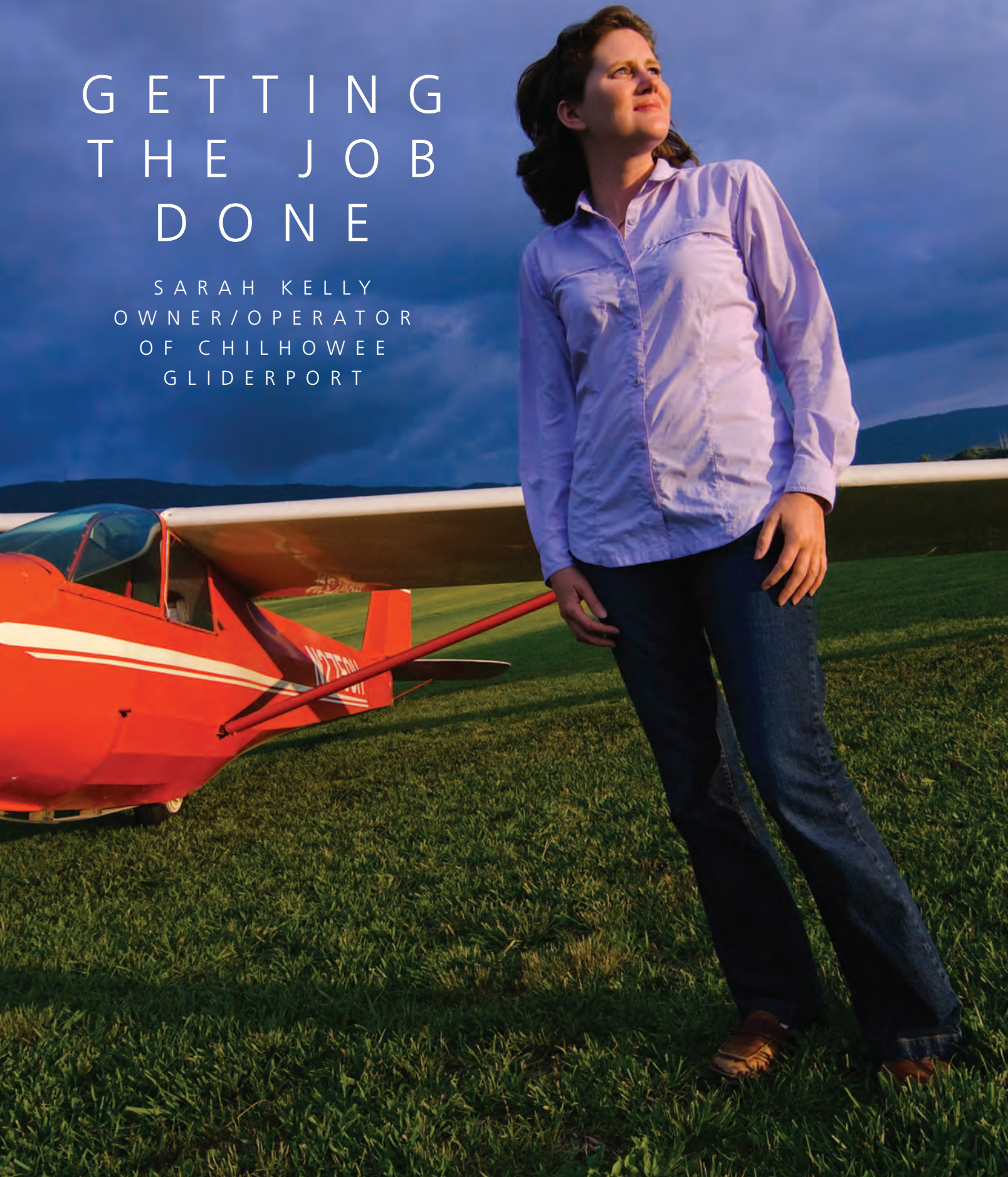
Though born in Wisconsin, she was raised in rural British Columbia, Canada, where she was bit by the flying bug after seeing a neighbor fly his Piper J-3 Cub from a short grass strip in the valley below her house at the foothills of the Monashee Mountains. Every time she and her younger brother, Ike, saw the Cub nose out of the hangar, they raced down the hill and begged the owner for rides. Her persistent brother got more rides, but Kelly won out in the end: he’s now working for her at

by Kathleen Winters
photography by David L. Smith



GETTING THE JOB DONE

SARAH KELLY
OWNER/OPERATOR
OF CHILHOWEE
GLIDERPORT



Chilhowee, following in her footsteps. “I can’t wait till he becomes a tow pilot; he has a lot of favors to return!” she says.

She learned self-reliance growing up on a farm surrounded by horses, dogs, cats, and other critters, and she attended a one-room school comprised of only 10 students. Her mother worked at the local bakery, and it was there that nine-year-old Kelly started her first job, saving every penny. She soloed in a QuickSilver MX single-seat ultralight plane owned by her mentor and family friend known as “Uncle Leroy.” Away from school, work, flying, and piano practice, she delved into aerodynamics, stories of famous aviators, and studied aviation technical books, including homebuilding manuals running some 1,000 pages.

By age 17, Kelly was a certificated private pilot and had gone halves with Leroy on a yellow Piper PA-17 Vagabond, us-

ing her wages earned at the bakery. She still owns the plane and calls it her “baby.” Upon its return to Chilhowee in 2005, after a lengthy hiatus for repainting, she “promised to keep it nearby forever.” Love runs deep for aircraft owners. “I kissed it on the spinner—when nobody was looking,” she recalls.

Few people take their personal plane to school, but Kelly’s beloved Vagabond was by her side during her two-year stint at Portland Community College in Portland, Oregon, where she earned an A&P certificate. She jumped another hurdle to get into the school, not having a high school diploma, with Canadian officials proclaiming she had to be 19 before earning a GED certificate. Kelly rose to the challenge. She decided to obtain the certificate in Washington, a decision that “threw the Canadian adult learning instructors in an uproar,” she states. “They told me I would never amount to anything if I took such

Few people take their personal plane to school, but Sarah’s beloved Vagabond was by her side during her two-year stint at Portland Community College in Portland, Oregon, where she earned an A&P certificate.



Sarah Kelly prepares a student with a briefing before his solo flight in the SGS 2-33A trainer.



Photographer David L. Smith trips the shutter on a remote-mounted camera to capture the perfect image of the Schweizer 2-33A sailplane in flight.

shortcuts and that I best buckle down and earn my diploma the slow way.” She proved them wrong, of course, gaining admittance to the community college and later earning a GED.

In Portland she worked 20 hours a week at a boarding academy, cooking in its cafeteria and playing piano for the choir, and received room and board and a \$100 stipend. While there she added a commercial certificate in airplanes and an instrument rating, using the Vagabond as much as possible during her training. With those in hand, she set to a new task, starting to overhaul her plane’s Continental A-65-8 four-cylinder engine.

What she found during the overhaul devastated her. “We saw one of the exhaust ports was cracked, and I didn’t know where I’d find another cylinder,” she says. Then all the cylinders were sent out for dye penetrant testing, and technicians determined that the other three were also cracked. Hearing this, Kelly cried. She expected a month-and-a-half overhaul but her plane was grounded a year for repairs.

After she graduated with her A&P certificate, Columbia Helicopters employed her in its shop overhauling accessories for the Boeing Vertol T58, Hughes 500, and the Allison 250 and Chinook’s Lycoming engines. Kelly explains, “I especially enjoyed the trouble-shooting aspects of the job. One type of lube pump gave us problems because sometimes it wouldn’t

pass the bench test even after a perfect overhaul, but finally I figured out that the head casting was different on those particular pumps.” At Columbia Helicopters she also won an employee suggestion award by designing a storage cabinet for fuel nozzles.

In 2001 she moved to Tennessee to work at Advent Home Youth Services, a group home for troubled teenage boys, employment that repaid a partial grant given her for flight training. Before relocating she flew the Vagabond back to Canada, and two years transpired before she retrieved it in 2003 on a cold, blustery March day. She swung the propeller and began her long solo flight south from Canada and across the States, navigating with sectional charts only, without the use of a GPS. She carried a handheld radio in the little plane that held a mere 12 gallons of fuel and had no electrical system. Seven days later, she swooped in to land at Dayton, Tennessee, having flown 34.5 hours and burning a total of \$341.69 of fuel.

You could say that serendipity played a large role in Kelly’s aviation career. After discovering the gliderport at Chilhowee and offering to tow, she became a glider instructor and worked full-time there. Soon she was also certified to instruct in airplanes. In 2005 she added the IA credentials. One thing led to another, and when the owners decided to sell and

She hosts numerous contests and seminars, including regional and national soaring meets, along with an annual week-long Oktoberfest drawing about 65 glider pilots for fun flying and camaraderie.

offered attractive terms, Kelly leaped at the chance to purchase the outfit and became the owner on September 1, 2004.

She's quick to credit others, however, in providing moral support and volunteer help around the field. About running the operation, she says, "I am not indispensable and neither is anybody who works for me. Many people would not be the same without Chilhowee, and I firmly believe that if I were incapacitated in some way, those people out of love would make it go on."

Kelly jokingly says, "I'm married to my work." Ten-hour days, six days a week, are the norm except in winter, and like other business owners she takes her job home every night to catch up on paperwork and myriad chores. And when she

travels to other soaring sites to tow in contests, her mobile office goes along in the towplane. If not in the air, she might be seen with a wrench in hand inside a hangar, or in the office, or mowing the grass.

Kelly benefited enormously from folks willing to extend a helping hand at various stages of her training, and she firmly believes in giving back. Working with the young is her passion, and her enthusiasm shines through when you hear her talk about two young boys, Joey, 14, and Dakota, 13, whom she's now instructing, preparing for solo. (A person can solo in gliders at age 14.) Joey showed up first, then along came his friend Dakota a few weeks later, and although Kelly informed them Chilhowee didn't have a formal work-trade program, she couldn't resist bringing them on. "It's sort of like taking in stray animals!" she says, laughing.

The hardworking boys run the flight line in return for lessons. "I don't want to give away what isn't earned, but I believe in rewarding honest, sincere effort and desire," Kelly states, "because soloing is an experience that comes only once in a lifetime. Nothing compares to that very first time alone in an aircraft. Every time I send a person up on his or her first solo, I feel the thrill of my own first solo."

Besides instructing and her other duties, she's constantly evaluating opportunities to enlarge her business. She hosts numerous contests and seminars, including regional and national soaring meets, along with an annual week-long Oktoberfest drawing about 65 glider pilots for fun flying and camaraderie. On good ridge lift days she also runs a satellite operation from the Sequatchie Valley, where several flights over 1,000 kilometers (or 621 miles) have originated in recent years.


Kelly compares her business and personal growth to opening new chapters in her life, saying opportunities "just fit" when presented to her. "Owning a successful soaring operation at age 24 wasn't in my plans, and I might have laughed at the idea had someone suggested it. As I reflect on my endeavors, I feel that each 'chapter' was exactly where I was meant to be."

Working toward goals keeps Kelly passionate and inspired. She strives to improve her operation at Chilhowee Gliderport and to enhance its reputation as a premier sailplane training facility. Her other objectives include attracting more tourists from nearby Chattanooga to her site and furthering rapport in the local community. Knowing Sarah, I believe she'll continue to achieve what others might consider unattainable goals. She's inspired me, and my thoughts echo with her words, "I just buckle down and get the job done." ✈

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Kathleen Winters (WAI #8922), is a pilot and the author of Anne Morrow Lindbergh: First Lady of the Air. Her new book, a biography of Amelia Earhart, will be published in 2010. For more information visit www.kathleenwinters.com.



Departing Chilhowee on tow
in the SGS 2-33A.

A woman with brown hair tied back, wearing a blue jumpsuit and light blue jeans, is kneeling on the yellow fuselage of a Piper Pawnee towplane. She is looking down at a small object in her hands, possibly a screwdriver or a small tool. The plane is yellow with a green canopy. The background shows the interior of a hangar with wooden beams and other aircraft parts.

A hands-on owner/operator, Kelly is right there when the rough-and-ready Piper Pawnee towplane sees its day in the shop for progressive maintenance.



S O A R I N G

The Thrill of Alpine Soaring

The towplane lifts off the grass runway and pulls the sailplane into the air, turning north as we depart the pattern. At home in Maryland, I would be seeing the towplane surrounded by either the crisp blue sky that follows a cold front or the milky haze of a summer afternoon. Here in Slovenia, all I see in front of the tug is a solid wall of very green, very big trees. The trees climb the face of a mountain that tops out at 2,000 meters (6,561 feet). Just when it looks as though we're about to smash into the mountainside—I swear I can see individual pine needles on those trees—the towplane turns left again to fly parallel to the ridge.

by Patricia Valdata

The wings of our sailplane are longer than those of the Pawnee pulling us aloft. Unconsciously, I begin to ease away from the trees. Miha's voice from the other cockpit is reassuring.

"Don't worry," he says, and I can hear the smile in his voice. "The towpilot knows exactly how long our wings are." I center the ASH-25, which at 80 feet has twice the wingspan of a Pawnee, and pretend all this is normal.

For Slovenian pilots, it is normal. The Julian Alps in the northwestern corner of this tiny country (about the size of Massa-

SLOVENIAN STYLE



Mary Rust (from California) and local instructor Miha Avbelj, taken during Mary's checkride.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF PATRICIA VALDATA

chusetts) make not only a spectacular setting for a soaring flight, they also provide powerful lift that allows expert glider pilots in the area to make 500-km or even 750-km flights.

Although the 15 women and five men who have come from the U.S. to soar here aren't undertaking any flights that ambitious, we are having as much fun soaring as anyone could possibly have. We've joined women soaring pilots from Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Belgium, and our host country Slovenia for the annual Women's Soaring Seminar, the first held outside the U.S. All of the European pilots, and some of the Americans, are experienced with mountain soaring conditions. Most of them are flying solo, which required securing a Slovenian medical certificate. Most of the flatlanders opt for dual flights with the excellent instructors of the ALC Lesce Aeroclub.

The annual women's seminar takes place over five days, with morning lectures followed by afternoons of soaring. On our first day, we are given two extensive safety briefings. Radar controller Boštjan Pristavec covers Slovenian airspace and radio frequencies. Soaring instructor Miha Avbelj explains field procedures, including aircraft preparation and staging, takeoffs, emergency rope breaks, radio monitoring, outland-

ings, and patterns. After our briefing we are required to take the same one-page, fill-in-the-blank safety test that all of their regular club members must take at the start of every season. Miha makes sure we have the correct answers, and then we turn the page to fill in a chart of performance information for each of the sailplanes we plan to fly, including maximum weight, best L/D (the speed that gives the most efficient glide), minimum sink speed (used in thermals), maneuvering and never exceed speeds, stall speed, pattern speed and pattern height.

Following the safety lectures we are welcomed to Slovenia by the Vice Mayor of the town of Lesce and by the president of the ALC. This official opening ceremony was to be followed by our first day of flying, but a cold front brings our only day of rain. The seminar organizers, prepared for everything, offer us a bus trip to the Postojna Cave, a 20-km-long limestone marvel not far from the Italian border. The trip gives us the opportunity to see not only the caverns but also the charming countryside. Every small town has an ornate church steeple at the center of town, an Austrian influence like the strudels and other pastries you can get at any restaurant, even at rest stops along the highway. Surrounding every church are chalet-style

homes with window boxes and steeply-pitched roofs. Some rooftops have a rooster decorating the front gable; all have short vertical projections covering the surface to break up ice. Slovenia is not only a soaring paradise in summer, it is a skiing paradise in winter.

The second day brings sunny weather that stays with us for the rest of the seminar. Two towplanes make Lesce a busy airport for the next four days. The small control tower hasn't been used in decades, so we are impressed as the soaring club operations director makes sure that sailplanes are staged, ropes are hooked up, takeoffs go on time, and everyone uses the proper entry point for pattern and landing. Sailplanes aren't the only traffic here; the club shares the large grass strip with a parachute school, sightseeing operations, helicopters that resupply mountain huts where hikers can spend the night, even model airplanes.

Those of us unaccustomed to ridge soaring are given instruction in flying a long figure eight across the ridge face, always turning away from the ridge when we want to reverse direction. After several passes of this back-and-forth soaring, we get high enough to wave to hikers on the trail that leads to the summit, and to see flocks of sheep grazing on the mountaintops. When we are lifted above the peak, we have a panoramic view of Austria on the other side. The view is one aspect of this seminar that we recall again and again.

"The memory that will stay in my mind forever was the view from the glider looking down at mountain sheep in the mountain meadows, chapels, cabin homes, and other gliders while up near the top of the Alps!" said Mary Rust, a soaring instructor who flies at Hemet in the San Francisco Bay area. "[On] my first flight, I ridge-soared a steep mountain with pine trees and homes on cliffs, getting to the top of the mountain, then skipped over to the next mountain doing the same, until I could finally fly straight for many miles near cloud base, hopping from mountain to mountain, until we arrived near the corner of Austria, Slovenia, and Italy."

Americans weren't the only ones entranced by those sheep.

"My best flight was in the Twin Astir where I could see at 2200 meters height to the grazing sheep in the mountain plateau," said Martina Beukert of Germany, who came to the seminar with her 11-year-old daughter Julia. Julia, who is too young to fly in the front seat of a glider in Germany, was thrilled to find out she could legally fly front seat in Slovenia.

Our practical experience in the sailplanes is enhanced by morning lectures on mountain soaring. Local meteorologist and glider pilot Boris Žorž explains in eloquent detail why mountains produce such good lift, why conifers are better than deciduous trees, and how the ridge height, angle, and wind direction all affect soaring conditions. Software developer Andrej Kolar used GPS tracks to show us how he and other Slovenian pilots take advantage of these conditions when making cross-country flights that take them into Hungary, Austria, and Italy.

Soaring conditions are so good in Slovenia that this tiny country of about 20,000 square kilometers, with a population of just over two million and only four controlled airports,



boasts 12 soaring sites and two dozen paraglider sites. Compare that with my home state of Maryland: a third larger, with more than twice the population, yet we have only three active soaring sites in the state.

The seminar organizers, all members of Društvo Slovenških Letalk (Slovenian Women Pilots Association), worked with Neita Montague, president of the U.S.-based Women Soaring Pilots Association for more than two years to organize the event. DSL president Irena Gornick, aided by Dani Černe, Nataša Marzidovšek, Jasna Jerman, Ana Klanšek, Boža Martinčič, and a host of other helpers, made sure participants were housed and fed; scheduled sailplanes, instructors, tow-pilots, and speakers; and persuaded more than 20 companies to sponsor the event. They also arranged for a tour of a local sailplane repair service and a sailplane parts manufacturer, as well as a post-seminar trip into Germany to see the famous Wasserkuppe, where the sport of gliding was born, and the Schleicher sailplane factory. During the closing ceremonies, they provided us with souvenir hats, T-shirts, and backpacks.

"To organize a seminar is a formidable task and nobody should underestimate how much planning and work is involved," said Frauke Elber, editor of the WSPA newsletter, *Hangar Soaring*, who had organized the 1999 seminar in Orbit, Virginia. "Not only are we already working on the 2010



Top Left: The town of Lesce with Mt. Triglav in the background, as seen from the airport.
Bottom Left: A flock of sheep high in the Karavanke Alps on the border with Austria.
Above: Seminar participants pulling one of the Blaniks back to the flight line after a landing. Soaring is very much a group effort!
Top Right: Kathleen Taylor stands beside her sailplane, preparing for flight.
Right: DSL President Irena Gornick pauses for a moment to indulge the author a quick smile in an otherwise busy day.

Seminar in Nevada, preliminary work on the 2011 seminar has already begun.”

The U.S. attendees, accustomed to fending for ourselves for breakfast, were touched by the volunteers, especially Jasna and Ana, who had breakfast waiting for us by 8:00 every morning. Volunteers also provided lunch fixings, and arranged not only the annual banquet in the historic district of nearby Radovljica, but catered dinners at the field. We knew we were spoiled when we learned that the son of a club member had gone fishing one morning to provide trout for dinner that night, that a local butcher was called in to grill for us another night, and that Nataša’s mother provided the huge pots of homemade polenta for our goulash. We even had excellent local red table wine every evening. The hard work that produced all this organization was obvious.

“It was a large challenge for us because in Europe many rules and practices are other than in the States,” Irena said. “But with the teamwork we succeeded. Nataša, Dani, Vesna and Jasna [had] already participated in seminars in the States, and they brought many useful ideas how to proceed. It was a good experience which connected the women, both from America and our association. We are very proud that all the women who participated the seminar were pleased with the organization and they enjoyed the seminar in Lesce.”

Leaving a women’s seminar is always sad, because it’s hard to leave old friends we see only once a year, and new friends, like Ana Klanšek, the young Slovenian pilot who won the Briegleb Scholarship, and German pilot Anna-Laura Geusen, whose 170-km flight earlier this year won the Anne Morrow Lindbergh Trophy. Anna-Laura, her parents Sylvia and Heribert, brother Holger, and younger sister Nora—who won the annual seminar limerick contest—all fly sailplanes, and all came to the seminar, staying at the airport campground.

Even though we all have one another’s e-mail addresses, I still regretted saying good bye to all the women pilots (and their supportive spouses). But when Nataša dropped me off at Ljubljana Airport, I was delighted to see a vintage glider hanging in the concourse, a Jastreb 54 built in 1958, and a replica of the Eda-V, a monoplane designed and built by Slovenian aviation pioneer Edvard Rusjan in the early 1900s, whom I had learned about during one of our morning lectures. That was just before I took my area familiarization flight with Dani Černe, who introduced me and other seminar participants to the sublime, spectacular thrill of Alpine soaring, Slovenian style. ➔

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Patricia Valdata (WAI #2094) is a founding member and former president of the WSPA, and a novelist and poet, living in Maryland.

PINK SLIP

THRIVING DESPITE FURLOUGH

As furlough notices circulate like junk mail through the airlines, many pilots are re-evaluating their career goals to come up with an alternate plan. For some, this is the second or third time they have experienced a layoff. Not everyone has a good story to tell about the bloodletting of the past year, but these women have managed to thrive in a bleak economy.

"It was heartbreaking," says Kristina Huffman, 43, of Seattle, a furloughed Alaska Airlines pilot. "It just gets you back to soul searching." Huffman held her dream job for less than a year, commuting to Anchorage to start trips. She rented a "crash pad"—a cheap, shared-rental among airline pilots—and her debt rose. At most major airlines, first-year pay tends to be low. To save money, she took an extended leave of absence two months before her furlough and researched other career options. With an undergraduate degree in physics and a graduate degree in radiation oncology physics, Huffman had 13 years of experience

helping cancer patients with their treatments before she became an airline pilot. "The way the economy was going,



I knew that health care was a stable option." It made sense to return to it, but she wanted to hone her management skills for a future goal of getting an upper-level position at Alaska Airlines.

Taking a risk, she reinvented herself as a healthcare consultant who provides vacation relief for radiation oncology physicists at various hospitals and clinics throughout the country. "It's exciting, it's a challenge. I'm fairly adaptable. I can come in and figure things out fairly quickly." Business is booming and Huffman has paid down much of her debt. To keep current with flying, she uses an Alaska Airlines Boeing 737 simulator—the time is donated by the airline—and she pays for the instructor.

Continental Captain Lynn Rippelmeyer, 58, of Magnolia, Texas, experienced her furloughs many years ago, but her approach to change is useful in today's upheaval: "Look at it as a gift. It's an opportunity...



...to open some other doors that you may have not had the time to pursue before." When she got furloughed from TWA as a flight attendant, she had an introductory flight in a Piper Cub on floats and it inspired her to eventually learn how to fly. Five years later, she worked at TWA as a 727 flight engineer

and got furloughed again. That led her to a job at Seaboard World, where she became the first woman to fly a Boeing 747. A year later, a third furlough notice arrived when Flying Tigers merged with Seaboard World, so Rippelmeyer moved over to People Express, where she upgraded to Boeing 737 captain in just one year. She turned down both re-

by Linda Berlin

call notices and gambled on a startup. Continental eventually merged with People Express and there were many tumultuous years, but Rippelmeyer has essentially had a stable flying position ever since. She lives in base and is home every night. As a single mother with two sons, 15-year-old Scott, who still lives at home, at Lucas, who is 20, it's a perfect schedule. Her advice is to "find some way to use it to your advantage."



Karen Gallisath, 53, of Rockford, Illinois, has done just that. This past December, after losing her flying job for a hedge fund, she landed an ideal job flying executives from McDonald's, the fast food chain: "I felt that I had good job security in the position I was in and I also felt that I had good longevity in corporate aviation. I didn't really anticipate the financial collapse last year." It had been a goal of hers to get to McDonald's after a furlough from United in 2003, but there were no jobs. This time around, she checked the company's web site to find out whether the chief pilot had changed and discovered a newly posted job opening for a captain position.

"The timing was absolutely incredible," Gallisath said. She sent her résumé online, but the formatting didn't look good, so she called the flight department and asked if she could FedEx it as well.

She had lots of experience in both the corporate and airline world so it made her attractive to the hiring committee, plus being a woman helped, she said: "They were very upfront about that." She flies out of a satellite Chicago airport, an easy drive from her house, and does mostly day trips with 12 to 20 days off every month. Soon, she will learn another aircraft, the Global Express, and do more international flying. "What your original career plan is, isn't necessarily what ends up being your career," she added.

Ann Fenlason may never return to the airlines. She lost her job at Mid-



west Airlines last year and applied for an emergency services dispatcher position where she lives in Oak Creek, Wisconsin. "I stepped right out of furlough into the job," said Fenlason, who is fifty years old. "I don't have a lot of time left to climb back up the (aviation) ladder. I'm so blessed and so fortunate that they chose me for this job." Her airline training has given her some confidence as a dispatcher, but she has been told that it takes about two years to feel comfortable. She appreciates the new lifestyle of being home every night and her body feels better—the aches and pains of dragging around a heavy flight kit and roller bag are waning.

Furloughed U.S. Airways pilot Valerie Sutinen, 43, of Phoenix, recently got hired as an auditor for the Internal Revenue Service. "This furlough is going to give me an opportunity to figure out whether I want to go back (to the airline)." Sutinen used to work for United, so this is the second job she's lost at a major airline. After 9/11, she wasn't bitter about the furlough, but this time it's harder: "How many times do you keep moving backwards? How much is it

worth? I still question airlines overall. I just feel beat up."

Sutinen has an undergraduate degree in accounting and has worked in the field for seven years, but her aviation background made her shine. The IRS liked that she had conflict resolution skills and many years of experience setting her own schedule. She believes the airlines have made her tough, capable of managing difficult situations: "You deal with more egos in flying. You have to learn how to brush it off." Even though it takes two years to be a fully qualified revenue agent, Sutinen is excited about her new career.

Even the military is providing a refuge. Lynn Tasker, 48, of Miami, has served seven years of active duty and 16 years as a reservist, so the Navy is a kind of sanctuary for her. A furlough seven years ago from a charter company led Tasker back to the Navy for several years. And when the airline industry imploded again this past year, she happily returned. Tasker currently lives in Stuttgart, Germany, where she does air planning for special operations in Europe. She makes more money than she would as a first officer in the States. "It gives me a peace of mind that no matter what happens that I'll be able to pick up a set of orders." She plans to buy a car and travel around Europe on her days off.

For Frontier pilot Wendy O'Malley, 40, of Alameda, California, who got laid off last fall, a corporate job flying a Citation



Mustang for a local charter company has enhanced her lifestyle. O'Malley is married and has an eight-year-old son, Daniel. Her parents live nearby and often baby-sit, but when O'Malley worked at Frontier, she sat reserve in Denver and got home only 10 days per month. Now, she is on call 24 hours per day, but finds

that she gets an additional five days off per month. "I'm really enjoying it," she said. "The flying is great. I'm home more. It's a 30-minute drive to the airport." Just recently, she had an entire week off because no one needed to fly. And though she misses Frontier, especially the camaraderie of the two-pilot crew, she is thriving: "I get to leave my headset in the airplane."



Sonya Junkins, 34, of Oakland, got furloughed from a regional airline and moved over to a competing regional where the overnights are even better. "I had been dangling at second from the bottom in the whole company, so (the furlough) was no surprise." Junkins got inspired from a Ninety-Nines e-mail message that columnist Jenny Beatty posted about keeping up the career momentum if you are still climbing the airline ladder when a furlough occurs. That night, Junkins resolved to network with pilot friends to find another flying job and created a backup plan to renew her instructor ratings and teach at a local flight school. The first day on furlough, she went to a job interview and got the flying position. Now, Junkins gets paid more and has the potential to fly more (because of the way reserve coverage is determined). "I'm definitely not worse off," she added.

These extraordinary women have transformed a furlough into an opportunity to expand their work experience and enhance their lives. Healthcare consultant Huffman describes her own transformation: "I have new levels of confidence that are spilling over into all parts of my life." ➔

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DR. PHIL
PARKER

VFS IS NOW AVIATION MEDICINE ADVISORY SERVICE (AMAS)

It was great to meet those members fortunate enough to make it to Orlando. As part of your member benefit I answered your aeromedical questions during the Confer-

ence. I had the privilege to meet so many pilots and controllers, including a number who had decided to give up their aviation dreams prematurely based on erroneous advice from some inexperienced, but well-meaning Aviation Medical Examiners.

I hope you attended the first ever joint session by both your Legal and Aeromedical advisors. This session can be directly credited to a concerned WAI member who wrote in to the editorial staff asking for more information on the medical-legal aspects of pregnancy in the aviation workplace. Unfortunately, there is little readily available published guidance for aircrew and ground crew personnel.

Another truly exciting development this Spring is VFS's merger with our sister company that provides services to the Air Line Pilots Association. We have also relocated our home offices closer to Centennial Airport in Denver, Colorado. Our combined professional staffs have been providing

expert aeromedical advice since 1969. The new merged company, Aviation Medicine Advisory Service (AMAS), will continue to serve as the aviation industry's voice for aeromedical issues and the aviation professionals' advocate for health and aviation safety. AMAS continues to offer professional assistance to private and professional airmen and the nation's air traffic professionals. AMAS looks forward to continuing to represent WAI members in addition to representing many corporate flight departments, other professional organizations, and aviation unions. WAI members can still access our online guidance at **www.AviationMedicine.com**, and can submit questions through the editor of *Aviation for Women* magazine. WAI membership also continues to entitle those needing individualized assistance to our services at a discounted rate through either our online confidential questionnaire or contacting our offices directly at 1-866-AEROMED.✈

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*Dr. Phil Parker (WAI #29733) is the Director of Clinical Services for the Aviation Medicine Advisory Service. Dr. Parker is Board Certified in Aerospace & Occupation Medicine and is a private pilot. Additional information on these topics and others can be found at **www.AviationMedicine.com**.*

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JENNY T. BEATTY

LETTER TO A YOUNG PILOT

To the aspiring professional pilot who approached me at the International Women in Aviation Conference or friended me on Facebook:

In meeting you, I was inspired to write this letter with suggestions for taking steps that move you closer to your goal of becoming an airline pilot. This is intended to be helpful encouragement, however it also contains what I call “hard truths”—advice based on

my personal experience and knowledge of the job and industry that might be difficult to hear.

You show a lot of passion for airplanes and flying—that is wonderful! Don't let anyone or anything squelch that passion!

However, it takes more than passion to become an airline pilot. To start, channel that passion into fruitful action, by beginning your flying lessons. You need to find out whether you have an aptitude for flying and an interest in learning. Because *learning* is what professional pilots do; even after thousands of flight hours, we are constantly re-training and learning new techniques.

And there's so much more you need to learn about an airline pilot career beyond flying airplanes. For example, pilots must be open to feedback, corrections, suggestions, and criticism. We get constant feedback and need to evaluate this information, put it into proper context, and take any necessary corrective action. This is essential to learning and to safety.

Take a moment to reflect on how you react to feedback. Is it your tendency to need to win arguments, to always be “right”? Or, do you get defensive, rejecting or shrinking away from anything that seems like criticism? If so, try this next time: Simply listen to the words of the feedback and take them at face value, not reading any additional emotion into it, not taking it personally, and saving any emotional reaction for later. This listening technique can be learned, and, to be an airline pilot, is essential. Because safety of flight requires that we focus on “what's right,” not “who's right.”

A future professional pilot needs to learn self-discipline. Operating complex machinery at nearly the speed of sound, we must thoroughly understand our own limits, the aircraft's limits, all the applicable rules and regulations, and the boundaries of safety and prudent operations. Self-discipline

means operating within these boundaries even when no one is watching. This is not optional. A pattern of seeking freedom from rules and rebelling against authority is not compatible with flying airliners.

I would argue that no one can advance in an airline pilot career alone. Every airline pilot, whether male or female, wealthy or needy, military or civilian, has relied on the support, guidance, and encouragement of mentors.

You'll need the will and determination to persevere towards your goals. This starts when you undertake learning to fly—you will need the “stick-to-it-iveness” to keep studying and learning even through the difficult and confusing technical parts, the boring parts, the subjects you don't particularly like, through all the mistakes and screw-ups that are a normal part of learning something new, and through the frustration and disappointments when you do not progress as fast as you want. And you might have to study on your own, as the trend in training programs is towards computer-based and even online self-study. Don't get discouraged—keep studying and showing up for flight lessons. The perseverance you are learning will serve you well in your pilot career, which, sad to say, might not always advance in the direction or speed you planned on, either.

You professed a desire to succeed in this career all by yourself, without assistance. With the financial wherewithal, you can “go it alone” and don't want to take any advantage. While that might be laudable, it is not always possible or practical. There is no shame in accepting help from others. And remember, every other pilot is using every possible resource and advantage available to her or him.

Moreover, very few aviation careers are solitary activities. It takes a team effort to launch any airline or corporate flight and operate it safely. As an airline pilot, I work with, communicate with, and rely on dozens of other people—the other pilot(s) in the cockpit with me for up to 12 hours a day, the three or six or nine flight attendants we fly with in a day, the

crew schedulers, dispatchers, gate agents, mechanics, ground crew workers, air traffic controllers...

I do not need to be best buddies with these people. I don't have to go out to dinner with them on layovers or invite them home for dinner or friend them on Facebook. I am not compelled to share personal information with them or have them "understand" me. They don't even have to like me and I don't have to like them. But I *must* be able to work with them, and interact with them such that they are encouraged to work cooperatively and efficiently with me. Even when we are of a different gender, race, nationality, have disparate training backgrounds in aviation, are from separate branches of the military, have opposing views on politics, religion, sexuality, health, or whatever, we must be able to work together. If we become friends along the way, all the better.

What I am saying is that the cockpit and the airport are workplaces and we are there to do our jobs. It helps to be a "people person," but many of us are introverts who still must "play well with others." If you have a need to always be right, need to be the center of attention, need to feed off the energy that comes from drama and conflict, or cannot control your emotions or your mouth, then these are areas to improve on before embarking on this career.

I would argue that no one can advance in an airline pilot career alone. Every airline pilot, whether male or female, wealthy or financially needy, military or civilian, has relied on the support, guidance, and encouragement of mentors. Their mentor might have been called something else—parent,

teacher, flight instructor, older friend, commanding officer, or a working professional—but every pilot was helped by someone, and usually, by many people.

The mentor-protégé relationship is similar to that of teacher-student. The mentor has knowledge and experience to share, and the protégé brings a willingness to listen and learn. This is a type of professional relationship, not a friendship, although it can evolve into a friendship later.

Professional relationships require a professional demeanor. On Facebook you may be accustomed to socializing in a chatty style with your "BFFs," but do not treat a professional and potential mentor that same way. Do not pepper them with messages, go on and on about non-relevant topics, or over-share personal information with "TMI." Interact with professionals in a business-like way, with respect and decorum, and you are on your way to being treated like a professional yourself.

I cannot speak for other mentors, but they would probably agree with this: I prefer to spend my valuable time mentoring those who already have or who demonstrate the willingness and ability to acquire the traits outlined in this letter—a desire to keep learning, openness to feedback, self-discipline, perseverance, good relationship skills, and a professional demeanor.

That, and a passion for flying, of course. And you're on your way. ✈

.....
Jenny Beatty (WAI #144) is a first officer for a major U.S. airline and a columnist for Aviation for Women.

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JO DAMATO

PUT YOUR POST-CONFERENCE ENTHUSIASM TO GOOD USE

I missed this year's Conference. I tried to get there, I really did. Every time an obstacle presented itself in the path of my attending I found a way to sidestep it and get back on course. I fought a good fight but in the end this working parent mom married to a flying parent dad was left with no option but to cancel my trip. Life just happened and trust me, you wouldn't believe me if I tried to explain anyway.

So, yes, I missed this year's Conference. I missed connecting with *you* at the Conference! I missed the empowering and inspiring feelings that I get from listening to the general session speakers. I missed the feelings of admiration that I always have for the generous scholarship sponsors. I missed the teary pride that I feel for the scholarship winners when their stories are shared and their awards claimed. I missed the energy of the exhibit floor and the thrill that I catch when working at our exhibit booth anticipating your questions and ready to get you some answers. I missed spending time with friends old and new knowing we would have celebrated some milestones, shared some laughs, and offered each other professional and personal encouragement. I missed the walk down memory lane that I always take thinking back to my first Conference and the difference it made in my life.

My first Women in Aviation Conference was in Memphis in 2000. Kathy, an executive at the company I worked for post-college, gave WAI Conference and membership literature to me and my good friend and colleague, Elisha. We hadn't heard of WAI before but we were immediately convinced that we needed to join this group and be at this event. We both worked for the Director of Ops. He was a gruff-on-the-outside, teddy-bear-on-the-inside DO who always had a fatherly soft spot for the two of us. He read the excitement on our faces and in our proposal and approved our trip. Once we knew what we could spend,

Elisha and I came up with another idea. Kathy, our WAI fairy godmother, was going to let us use her Piper Cherokee to fly ourselves to the Conference. We worked out the numbers comparing

Find some time this month to gather your notes from the Conference. Did you save the business cards you traded in Orlando? Take some time to remember who you talked to and what you wanted to follow-up about with them.

two roundtrip airline flights from Cincinnati International to Memphis versus our flying ourselves from Lunk-en Field to Memphis. We went back to the cranky teddy bear DO and he just couldn't say no to our childlike enthusiasm and good business case. We took off amid quite a fanfare with most of the senior staff waving to us as we took off and with our instructions to call at every stop to let them know we were okay. We were so proud to have flown this

trip together, by ourselves, to an event that celebrated women like us. We had an incredible time and came back dangerously inspired. Every speaker that we heard and every session we attended was better than the last. This was an event that had been custom-made for us. How would we survive waiting an entire year for the Reno 2001 Conference to begin? Did you feel the same way when you were in Orlando and did you bring that enthusiasm home with you? What did you do with it once the buzz wore off?

Seriously, what have you done? By now you have been back from the Conference for a little while. You are back to balancing work, marriage, kids, and other responsibilities and hobbies. The Conference is starting to become a distant memory. You still have that feeling in the back of your mind that reminds you of the pure joy you experienced in Orlando; that feeling about being among so many women like you who walk in shoes like yours every day. Perhaps one speaker or one session inspired you to make a change or to take a risk when you got home. Have you done that yet? That first year when Elisha and I returned we told any female who would listen about WAI and why they should join and help us start a local chapter. Within a year, we had our first chapter meeting. It was a proud moment for all of us and one that cemented a lifelong commitment for me to Women in Aviation, International. After other Conferences I have had similar inspirations and to-do lists to tack-

le. Before I had kids to come home to, it was so easy to get to those things. Find fabulous new job advocating for business aviation? Check. Get Master's degree? Check. Keep CFI current? Check. In fact, after the 2009 Conference I returned home determined to both start flying again for pleasure after 10 months of procrastinating and also to find out how to get more involved with WAI. It was trickier with two little boys running around but I figured out how to make time to fly a Cirrus, propose the Working Parent/Flying Parent session held at this past Conference and to write for this magazine. Your goals can become reality too.

First, find some time this month to gather your notes from the Conference. Did you save the business cards you traded in Orlando? Review them and take some time to remember who you talked to and what you wanted to follow-up about with them. Did you meet other working moms with whom you really connected? Chances are they connected with you too and they are hoping you will call or write or text. Connecting with a mom after a first meeting can be like calling for a second date. No ones wants to call first and get rejected. Give it a try. Set a goal to handwrite a few notes, send a few emails, or even make a few Facebook or Linked-In connections. I may have missed the Conference but I did have a list of women I had planned to meet or reconnect with in Orlando for business and personal reasons. I still took the time to make a plan to accomplish this in the weeks following the event.

Finally, I leave you not with my own practically unbelievable tale of what led to my Conference absence, but with an e-mail I received from one of the moms in my aviation mom support circle, describing one of her own unbelievable days. She survived to laugh about it.

"...Ok so my morning goes like this: put coffee on the roof of the car while buckling my four-year old in her car seat, coffee falls all over my jacket I'm wearing, which I just picked up from the dry cleaners on Friday and all over my car, which I had detailed yesterday. So, I run inside and change my coat and come back into the garage to find my daughter crying because a very small spot of coffee got on her dress. Anyway, on the way to school I calm her down and she proceeds to tell me I'm not wearing makeup today and therefore do not look pretty. I drop her off, run to the cleaners to try and get my new suit that I bought this weekend hemmed so I can have it for my big Thursday meeting, which they tell me I cannot. I go to work late of course, to find out that I forgot to give my brother-in-law a spare car seat for my daughter, since he is picking her up from school today, which also reminds me that I never even told her teacher that he was picking her up or told my daughter that he was coming....I'm gonna call the school in a few minutes... So Super-mom is having a bad morning..."

What are your sur-*thriv*-al tips on keeping it all together and what can other readers learn from your successes and mistakes? Email me at momshavewings@gmail.com. ✈

.....
Joanne M. Damato (WAI #6829) is a mom, pilot and Director, Operations and Educational Development for NBAA.



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PATRICIA LUEBKE

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Check out any bookstore and there are dozens of volumes available about how to get a job—what to wear for your interview, how to prepare your résumé, how to answer questions. Do an Internet search and every aspect of getting a job is covered. What’s not so popular as a topic is how to leave a job. Gone are the days where you got hired and settled in for the next 40

years, awaiting your gold wrist watch at your retirement dinner. Today’s workforce is mobile and changing jobs more than any other generation. Although no hard-and-fast data exists, one estimate is that the average person will change jobs from five to 15 times during their career. That’s a lot of goodbyes.

I learned a great guiding principle from a man who was laid off from a company where I used to work. He was a good guy, hard worker, dependable, charming—all great things. Because of a cutback, tinged with company politics, he was the one who got the axe, and to many people, it just wasn’t fair.

A day or so after his imminent departure was announced, I received a memo from him. (Note to those born after 1980: Memos were the forerunners of emails where you typed your message on a piece of paper and photocopied your memo for all recipients and either handed them out or sent your memo in an envelope in the inter-office mail.) But back to my story: he sent out a gracious memo about how much he had enjoyed working at this company, how he takes good memories with him and wishes everyone well.

He later stopped by my desk to say goodbye in person and I told him I was so impressed with his memo because he had every right to feel bitter and angry about his job loss. He said to me, “I always thought you should leave a company with the same good manners as you arrived at the company.” I’ve never forgotten that, and have passed his wisdom along to colleagues over the years.

But first, before you even think about how to act when you leave a job, you must be prepared to leave. Often times, especially when the choice has not been yours, you have very limited time to do the proverbial “clean out your desk.” Because of security concerns, your computer access may already be

blocked so it’s crucial that you keep personal data off your work computer and your desk and cubicle decluttered so you can leave without the use of a forklift and a dumpster.

Whether you’re leaving by your own choice or not, the most important rule is to remain calm and gracious. Furthermore, whether you’re leaving for greener pastures or just leaving, you must resist the temptation to tell your boss and coworkers a thing or two, even if it’s all valid. Remember the theme of the WAI Conference this past February? It was “Aviation—It’s a Small World”—and that means more than we are united worldwide by our passion for airplanes.

In the workplace, the small world of aviation means that your idiotic coworker today may be the hiring manager at your dream job tomorrow. In this industry, people tend to move from company to company so you never know where your now ex-boss and now ex-coworkers may end up. You can almost bet that these are the folks who will be in a position to help you out somewhere down the road.

If you are leaving under your own free will, it is customary to write a letter of resignation. I’ve drafted a bunch

of these for people, and these letters are simple to write. It’s a two-paragraph deal. The first paragraph announces your resignation and the date it will be effective. Of course, company policy varies and some companies want employees to depart the day they announce their intentions while other companies want their full two weeks’ notice from a departing employee.

The second paragraph of a resignation letter is one of thanks—for the job, for the opportunities you were given, for all the things you learned on the job. Yes, even if you write it through gritted teeth. This is not the time to seek revenge

***He said to me,
“I always thought
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as you arrived at the
company.”
I’ve never forgotten
that, and have
passed his wisdom
along to colleagues
over the years.***

and speak your mind. Remember, once again, that aviation is a small world, and if you intend to stay in the industry, I guarantee you that your boss' and your coworkers' paths will cross again.

Along those same lines, you also must resist the temptation to badmouth your company or organization once you are out. Word *will* get back to them, and whether you want to believe it or not, telling such stories reflects more on you—you look and sound like a disgruntled ex-employee, not a person in search of their next fascinating career opportunity.

If you're lucky enough to be leaving because you've landed a fantastic new job, it's important not to gloat to your soon-to-be ex-coworkers. "They're paying for my instrument rating, and we get four weeks of vacation the first year!" may be something that delights you, but your coworkers may not share in your happiness. You can't blame them for feeling jealous or resentful—that's just human nature.

Before you leave, do your coworkers (and yourself) a favor and leave your desk and work projects organized in a way that the next person who holds your job can jump right in. It would be helpful for you to make a status report of your works in progress so no one has to search for something that may or may not be complete. Leaving an organized work situation will reflect well on you and, whether you believe it or not, you will be the beneficiary of the goodwill this extra effort engenders.

And now for a piece of advice that HR managers won't appreciate, but I stand by it. Some companies and organi-

zations have exit interviews where employees are asked to critique the organization and expand on their reasons for leaving. I have actually heard people brag about unloading all the dirt in their exit interview, and I'm telling you it's a mistake.

If you really feel you must say something negative, it's not difficult to lighten up your comments and have the same effect. For example, instead of saying "My boss is so stupid that she can't walk and chew gum at the same time," you could offer this: "I sensed sometimes that my boss was challenged by the many responsibilities which fell on her shoulders." Sure, it may be phony, but you must look out for yourself and your own career path.

Since we all work in aviation, I'll add that the only exceptions to this are issues involving aviation safety and the lives of others. But if your safety concern is so great and so valid, don't wait for an exit interview to make your opinion known.

Be cheerful. Be grateful. Be dignified. Leave your workplace on your very best manners. That way, when you bump into your ex-boss at the next International Women in Aviation Conference or EAA AirVenture Oshkosh, you can cheerfully hug—okay, let's not get carried away—you can cordially shake hands, knowing that, no matter how painful it may have been at the time, the way in which you left that job enhanced your reputation in the aviation community. ✈

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Patricia Luebke (WAI #1954) is a New York City-based freelance writer, editor and marketing consultant.

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TOOLS FOR YOUR FINANCIAL TOOLBOX

Most of us find that managing our personal finances can be a tedious task and, at times, not very enjoyable. I must admit that I find it to be fun, but I am in the minority! There are many useful tools available to help you with this task, to organize your financial data and to help you make good financial decisions. In the following paragraphs, we will discuss

web-based and Smartphone tools that you can add to your financial toolbox.

Let me warn you up front that if your personal computer is an IBM 386 and your only phone is a rotary dial home phone, then you might want to skip the article this month and move on to many of the other fine articles about the recent Conference. Most of these tools are available on the Internet or are applications for a Smartphone.

First, let me add that I am not promoting any of these tools and have not used all of them. This is simply a list of tools that I have researched in order to give you some ideas on what is available. I have had students in my personal finance courses that have used several of the tools and speak highly of them.

Many of us have a common problem when it comes to our finances—we don't know where our money is going. Tracking what you spend can help you to spot wasteful spending or overspending, highlighting opportunities for you to save. There are several tools that can help you to track you spending and thereby get more control over the spending.

The first tool is **Mint.com** which is a free web-based personal financial management service. Mint lets you safely aggregate your bank account information and can provide detailed bar graphs and expense reports to help you to see exactly where you are spending your money. The spending is categorized into major spending areas such as shopping, gas, food, etc. You can also use Mint to set budgets for yourself and establish daily or weekly e-mail alerts to update you on how you are doing. The spending data is useful to compare your spending with the spending of others to see if you tend to spend more or less in a particular category. It even suggests ways for you to save money such as certain coupons, rebates or alternative service providers.

Mint is also now available on the smaller touchscreen as an iPhone app. Rest assured, there are security measures in

place to deactivate access to your accounts if your iPhone is lost or stolen. The best thing about Mint is it will not break the budget: it is free!

Other personal finance web sites you may want to check are Wesabe and Geezo. Each of the three web sites includes social-networking functions that allow you to share personal stories and offer advice and support.

Another web site that is geared towards financial planning for women is **Womenandco.com** sponsored by Citibank. The web site includes blogs, national studies on personal financial planning issues related to women and resources on insurance, investing, taxes and estate planning.

Just a word of caution, however. While your information is protected by user names and passwords, remember that you are storing vital financial information online so please do safely guard your sign-on names and passwords, much like you would with your online banking information.

Other interesting iPhone apps include ATM Hunter which takes advantage of the iPhone's location awareness technology to help you find the nearest ATM, which can be very handy for those of you who travel frequently.

LoanShark lets you calculate the actual costs of various loans, compare interest rates and repayment terms, and even see full amortization tables for various loan scenarios (which allow you to determine how much of your loan payment is towards principle versus interest). LoanShark can come in handy if you are shopping for a car or mortgage.

Bloomberg Mobile lets you access real-time financial market headlines, stock quotes and more from anywhere. You can even make stock trades directly from your iPhone.

Save Benjis (got to love the name!) allows you to instantly compare prices on whatever you are shopping for, right when you are shopping.

*Tracking what
you spend
can help you to spot
wasteful spending
or overspending,
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you to save.*

For those of you that are USAA members (members of the military, veterans or family members) the USAA app for the iPhone or iPod Touch gives mobile access to USAA Federal Savings Bank members to keep you in control of your finances and includes its own ATM locator. A loan calculator is also packed into the USAA app and helps you estimate monthly payments when shopping for a new home or car. The Rental Car Locator helps you find the nearest Avis, Budget or Hertz location on your iPhone and the Accident Checklist is a handy tool for recording accident details to help you file a claim. You can also make trades in your USAA investment accounts and view your benefits and eligibility.

A recent addition to the USSA iPhone app is the ability to deposit checks via an iPhone. USAA's consumer remote deposit application for the iPhone lets users take a picture of the front and back of each check and submit them electronically to USAA for deposit.

Money for BlackBerry allows you to track your personal finances on the go. You can export transactions to synchronize with your personal finance software. It also offers multiple currency support and can assign different currencies for each account. Upcoming transactions are displayed as a reminder

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Money for BlackBerry

of due dates of bills that have to pay. You can define templates for frequent transactions. You can also create an unlimited number of shopping lists.

These are all very cool and effective uses of technology for financial productivity. Now you have a way to cost-justify the purchase of that new iPhone or BlackBerry!

One final note; I was unable to attend the most recent Conference this year, but was encouraged to see that there were several education sessions with financial themes. I do plan to attend next year in Reno. If there are any financial topics that you would like to see presented at next year's Conference, please let me know and I will prepare a proposal. Also,

I welcome ideas about topics you would like me to discuss in this column—just drop me an e-mail and I'll respond. ✈

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Dr. Sherry Parshley is founder of Sierra Papa Aviation Consulting LLC, which provides a broad range of services for litigation involving General Aviation, Major and Regional Airlines. Parshley is a commercial pilot, certified flight instructor and co-builder of an RV-8 aircraft. She resides in Phoenix, Arizona. Questions for her? She can be reached at sherry@spaviationconsulting.com.



Congratulations to Amanda Steele (above), winner of the Telex Scholarship at the 2008 Women in Aviation Show.



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EAA AirVenture WAI Celebrity Breakfast FRIDAY, JULY 30

8:00 – 9:00 a.m.

Women in Aviation, International
Celebrity Breakfast sponsored by Chevron Global Aviation
at the Nature Center Pavilion

\$20 • Reservations requested by July 23

www.wai.org
or call (937) 839-4647

AVIATION CALENDAR



SUNNY DAYS

The Calendar of Events is a source of information about industry/organization events. *Italicized calendar items are events at which Women in Aviation, International will be an exhibitor.* As dates or locations can change and errors can occur, verify the information before making final plans to attend any of the events. Calendar items should be sent to: Aviation for Women Calendar, 18735 Baseleg Avenue, North Fort Myers, FL 33917; Fax: (239) 567-2271; Email: alaboda@wai.org. Events will be considered on a space available basis. ✈

May 11-13

Flight Safety Foundation
55th Annual Corporate
Aviation Safety Summit
Hilton El Conquistador
Tucson, Arizona
www.nbaa.org/events/cass/2010

June 22-25

Air Race Classic
Fort Myers, Florida to
Frederick, Maryland
www.airraceclassic.org

June 25-27

AeroExpo UK
Wycombe Air Park
London, England
www.expo.aero/london

July 26-August 1

EAA's AirVenture
Air Show and Fly-In
Wittman Field
Oshkosh, Wisconsin
www.airventure.org

July 30

WomenVenture
Wittman Field
Oshkosh, Wisconsin
www.airventure.org/womenventure/

October 19-21

NBAA 63rd Annual
Meeting & Convention
Atlanta, Georgia
www.nbaa.org

November 5-6

AWE European Conference
Brooklands Museum
Surrey, England
www.aweu.org

November 11-13

AOPA Summit
Long Beach, California
www.aopa.org

2011

February 24-26

22nd Annual International
Women in Aviation
Conference
Reno, Nevada
www.wai.org

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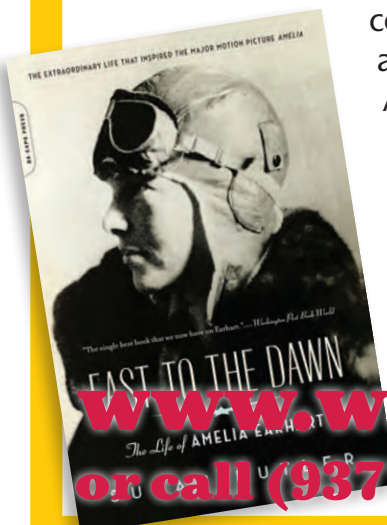
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CONNIE REEVES

IN THE MOMENT

The Congressional Gold Medal ceremony took place on Capitol Hill in the Emancipation Hall Building on March 10, 2010, where 1,074 Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) were honored for their military flying service during WWII. These were our nation's first female military pilots. They served when the call came, and flew every type of military aircraft to free male

pilots for combat. Disbanded after the war, when the men wanted those jobs, they only received veteran status in 1977, and were finally honored by their nation with the highest award possible for civilians this past March. These WASP are in their 80s and 90s now, and yet remain as feisty and funny as they were when they were young women with pilot's certificates bounding into Sweetwater, Texas, during the war for training. About 300 WASP are still living, and about two-thirds of those attended the ceremony in the U.S. Capitol.

Two events took place on Tuesday, March 9: a Remembrance Ceremony at the Air Force Memorial and a reception at the Women's Memorial (Women in Military Service to America or WIMSA) at 4:00 p.m. The first was open to the public, but the latter was limited to the WASP and two guests. The Gold Medal ceremony had so many attendees that they could not fit in the Capitol Rotunda.

There were numerous planners for this event, from getting the bill passed last fall, to planning and funding the week's events, but the date of the ceremony wasn't decided upon until sometime in February. Only then did many of us realize that the WASP, some now on fixed and limited incomes, needed various types of support. In addition to coordinating with WIMSA, Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison's office, Wings Across America (the WASP support organization), and American Airlines and AirTran Airways for free and discounted flight tickets for WASP and their guests, a number of WMA and WAI members from the Capital Region Chapter put together, in a week's time, an incredible volunteer drivers' effort to pick up these WASP and their parties from airports and train stations, transporting them to their hotels. The drivers also transported many parties to the three major events for those who did not stay in the National Harbor area where WIMSA had arranged chartered buses. At the end of the week, more transporting occurred as the WASP departed for home on Thursday and Friday. Many of the groups consisted of five to seven persons, requiring two vehicles and two volunteer drivers. In case you never thought about it, I've learned...women in aviation circles mostly drive vehicles that carry three or four passengers—BMW convertibles, two-door coupes, run-down Jeeps—not too many minivans, so those were like gold!

I was totally amazed and inspired by the multitude of people, many of whom I did not know, who, after one simple request, volunteered with boundless enthusiasm to be made use of anytime, anywhere. I was the coordinator matching up requests for rides with drivers and we succeeded rather triumphantly in transporting nearly everyone who needed a ride. The fact that so many people—some flying in from overseas, some from other places in the U.S., one pregnant, one with her daughter in the car, others deeply involved in the week's events in other ways, some renting cars—were so willing to give of their time and effort enriched my heart and, I'm sure, those of others as well. I knew the WMA members, but not those in WAI and was completely overwhelmed by their responsiveness. Every driver expressed how honored they felt to be helping the WASP, and how thoroughly they enjoyed getting to know that particular WASP and her family. And many drivers, of course, ran a number of driving missions over the course of the week. These drivers also made the coordination flow smoothly for me as they were always where they needed to be, without exception.

With a list of about 35 volunteer drivers, who roamed the D.C. area to include all three airports and a number of D.C. hotels, we provided dependable rides throughout the week from airports, to hotels, regardless of whether the pickup was at 4:00 a.m. or 10:00 p.m. Approximately 10 percent of the 200 WASP who arrived in the D.C. area for the week's events used our volunteer service, and we were all thrilled to be able to help so many WASP and their family members get around in a way that was not only economical for them, but showed them how much their service in World War II is honored by those of us who came after them, how proud we are of them, and in how much high esteem we continue to hold them.

It was truly our pleasure to help. I think the only regret most of us might feel is that we could have used more planning time to provide an even better service, but we're pretty proud of what we were able to provide. ➔

.....
Connie Reeves served as one of the first female U.S. Army helicopter pilots, an intelligence officer, and an expert on Western Europe. She is the author of several books.

Patty Wagstaff

Patty Wagstaff AirShows Inc.

*National Aviation Hall
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“If I can do it, anyone can do it.”

Anyone can do what? Win the U.S. National Aerobatic Championship three times? Have their airplane enshrined in the Air & Space Museum? Be inducted into the Aviation Hall of Fame? Actually, Patty Wagstaff is talking about something more basic and far more important as far as she is concerned. It's a theme she constantly repeats, especially to other women. "Aviation changed my life dramatically from the day I first soloed. It gave me the confidence in myself that I needed to face life's challenges and helped me attain my personal and professional goals."

Learning To Fly Is Learning To Live

Most people who don't fly believe it's something that only a select few can do. Superhumans with laser vision, Einstein

brains and blinding white teeth. She says, "When I tell people, 'If I can do it, you can do it,' it's true. I'm not any different than a lot of people. People will ask me if it's too late to learn to fly. No it's not. You'll be a lot better at it."

What Sets Her Apart Brings Us All Together

You may look at Patty and think she's one in a million, but the point is that all women in aviation are like Patty. You don't have to fly for a living to be crazy about it. You don't have to be well-known to feel that aviation makes you different from the rest of the world. "What's so neat about it is there's room for everyone to create her own niche. It attracts women with energy and drive, all winners like you."

She reads FLYING every month

There's something else that Patty has in common with most women in aviation. She reads *FLYING* every month, so should you. "I always tell people to read *FLYING*. I've learned a ton from it over the years and I still learn from every issue."



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