

January/February 2025



# Ninety-Nines

*Inspiring Women Pilots Since 1929*

**INTERNATIONAL  
CONFERENCE  
BURLINGTON, VERMONT**

*p. 18*

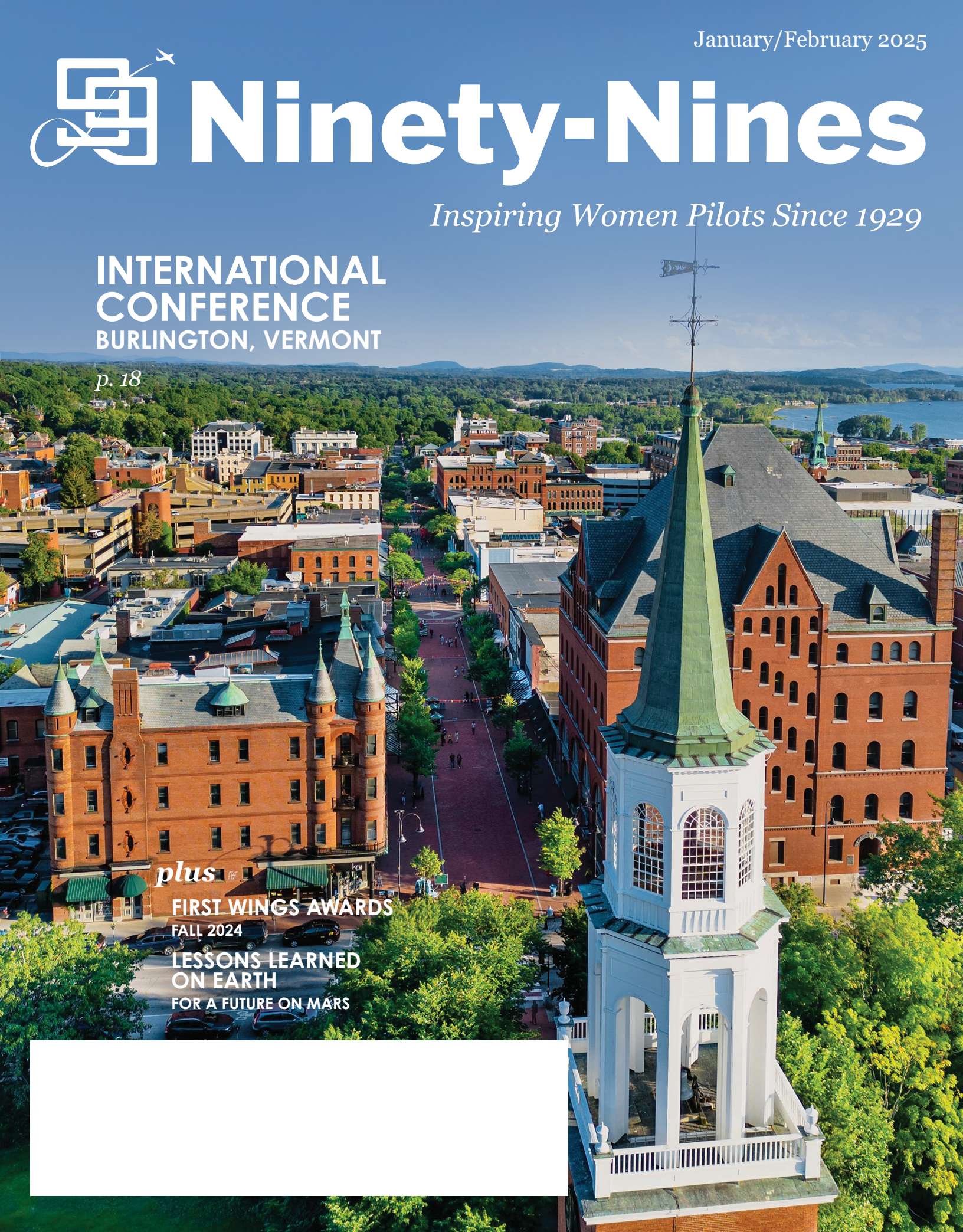
*plus*

**FIRST WINGS AWARDS**

**FALL 2024**

**LESSONS LEARNED  
ON EARTH**

**FOR A FUTURE ON MARS**





## Ninety-Nines Magazine

Published by The Ninety-Nines, Inc.®  
International Organization of Women Pilots®

A Delaware Nonprofit Corporation  
Organized November 2, 1929 (ISSN 1548-565X)

### Publications Committee

Lori Plourd, *Chairperson*

Jacque Boyd, Corbi Bulluck, Rebecca Burghy,  
Jann Clark, Diane Earhart, Lu Hollander,  
Linda Horn, Susan Larson, Donna Miller,  
Shannon Osborne, Julie Paasch, Janice Pelletti,  
Kate Scott, Eva Thierry, Sara Tompson

Kirn Creative, *Creative Direction*

### International Headquarters/ Ninety-Nines magazine

4300 Amelia Earhart Dr, Suite A  
Oklahoma City, OK 73159-1140 USA

Mail: PO Box 950374  
Oklahoma City, OK 73195-0374  
Phone: 405-685-7969  
or toll free 844-994-1929  
Fax: 405-685-7985  
Email: 99s@ninety-nines.org  
Website: ninety-nines.org

### Article Submissions

Visit [www.ninety-nines.org](http://www.ninety-nines.org) for info  
or email [news@ninety-nines.org](mailto:news@ninety-nines.org)

### Advertise with Us

Email: [advertisingmgr@ninety-nines.org](mailto:advertisingmgr@ninety-nines.org)

### Editorial Policy

The opinions expressed in the articles presented  
in this magazine are those of the authors and  
shall not be construed to represent the policies  
or opinions of The Ninety-Nines, Inc.®

The Ninety-Nines magazine is published  
bimonthly by The Ninety-Nines, Inc.®,  
International Organization of Women Pilots, at  
4300 Amelia Earhart Drive, Suite A, Oklahoma  
City, Oklahoma, 73159-1140.

The subscription is included in the annual  
Ninety-Nines membership dues and Friends  
of The 99s dues. Periodicals postage paid at  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and other additional  
mailing offices. Neither The Ninety-Nines, Inc.  
nor the Publisher can accept any responsibility  
for the correctness or accuracy of the matters  
printed herein.

The Ninety-Nines, Inc. does not warrant,  
guarantee or endorse any specific product or  
service that is advertised in its printed or online  
catalog or magazine.

The Publications Committee and the Publisher  
reserve the right to reject any material  
submitted for publication. Copy submitted for  
publication will become the property of The  
Ninety-Nines, Inc. and will not be returned.

### Annual Dues

U.S. – 65 USD; Canada and the Caribbean – 57  
USD; Overseas – 44 USD; Student Member – 35  
USD (65 USD after first two years).

Non-member subscription rates: U.S. – 20 USD;  
Canada and other countries – 30 USD

### Address Changes

Send to: The Ninety-Nines, Inc.®  
International Organization of Women Pilots®  
4300 Amelia Earhart Dr., Suite A  
Oklahoma City, OK 73159-1140 USA

## International Board of Directors



**Robin Hadfield**  
*President*



**Minnetta Gardinier**  
*Vice President*



**Debi Dreyfuss**  
*Secretary*



**Aileen Coverdell**  
*Treasurer*



**Nivedita Bhasin**  
*Director*



**Janet Patton**  
*Director*



**Mary Build**  
*Director*



**Pat Chan**  
*Director*



### MISSION STATEMENT

The Ninety-Nines®  
International Organization of Women Pilots®  
promotes advancement of aviation through  
education, scholarships, and mutual support  
while honoring our unique history and sharing  
our passion for flight.

### Let's Get Social



### ON THE COVER

Don't miss this year's International Conference, when the  
New England Section hosts members from around the world  
in beautiful Burlington, Vermont, July 9-13, 2025.



- 4 Calendar
- 5 President's Message
- 6 Charter Members
- 8 Holding Short
- 9 Touch & Go

## 12 First Wings Awards Fall 2024

## 15 Lessons Learned on Earth for a Future on Mars

By Fiona Smith, British Section

## 18 International Conference July 9-13, 2025 | Burlington, Vermont

By Minetta Gardinier, 99s Vice President

- 24 Reports
- 27 The Mental Runway
- 28 Book Reviews
- 29 Ask the AME  
Careers
- 30 Places to Go & Things to Do
- 31 Milestones
- 32 Grass Roots
- 38 Life Members  
Friends of The 99s  
New Horizons



---

***Thank You to Our Sponsors***





## 2025

### JAN

- 3 **Deadline:** Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship  
Applications to Chapter AE Chair
- 11 **Soup & Slice**  
Hosted by Memphis Chapter  
Charles Baker (2M8); 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m.  
Millington, Tennessee  
✉ [lois\\_nice@hotmail.com](mailto:lois_nice@hotmail.com)
- 15 **Deadline:** Professional Pilot Leadership Initiative (PPLI) Application for Mentoring Spring Session  
☞ [ninety-nines.org/resources.htm](http://ninety-nines.org/resources.htm)
- 15 **Deadline:** AE Scholarship Application Forms to Section Chairs
- 25 **Southwest Section Winter Workshop**  
Hilton Garden Inn Palmdale  
Palmdale, California  
Antelope Valley Chapter
- 31 **Deadline:** Nominations for The Ninety-Nines International Awards.

### FEB

- 5 **Deadline:** AE Application Forms from Section to AE Scholarship Trustees

### MAR

- 7-8 **International Board of Directors Spring Meeting**  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
✉ [Info@ninety-nines.org](mailto:Info@ninety-nines.org)
- 27-29 **Annual Women In Aviation Conference**  
Gaylord Rockies Resort & Convention Center, Denver, Colorado  
☞ [wai.org](http://wai.org)
- 28-30 **South Central Section Spring Meeting**  
Sulphur, Louisiana  
Lake Charles Chapter  
✉ [Sandra.Leder@sleder99@yahoo.com](mailto:Sandra.Leder@sleder99@yahoo.com)

### APR

- 1 **Deadline:** First Wings Applications to Chapter AE Chair (or Section AE Chair, if there are no chapters)  
✉ [Apps@AEScholarship.org](mailto:Apps@AEScholarship.org)
- 1-6 **Sun 'n Fun Aerospace Expo**  
Lakeland, Florida  
Lakeland Linder Regional Airport (LAL)  
☞ [flysnf.org](http://flysnf.org)
- 10 **German Section Meeting at AERO**  
Lake Constance  
Friedrichshafen, Germany  
✉ [Ursula.Hammer@t-online.de](mailto:Ursula.Hammer@t-online.de)
- 15 **AE Scholarship Results Available**

### APR (cont.)

- 25-26 **Mid-Atlantic Section Spring Meeting**  
Dover, Delaware  
✉ [Rachel.Anderson@rachelailleen27@gmail.com](mailto:Rachel.Anderson@rachelailleen27@gmail.com)
- 25-27 **North Central Section Spring Meeting**  
Iowa City, Iowa Chapter  
✉ [Sue.Glisson@smgflyer1@gmail.com](mailto:Sue.Glisson@smgflyer1@gmail.com)
- 26 **New York-New Jersey Section Spring Meeting**  
Harris Hill, New York  
✉ [nyjn99s@gmail.com](mailto:nyjn99s@gmail.com)

### JUL

- 9-13 **Ninety-Nines International Conference**  
Burlington, Vermont  
Hilton Lake Champlain
- 15 **Deadline:** Professional Pilot Leadership Initiative (PPLI) Application for Mentoring Fall Session  
☞ [ninety-nines.org/resources.htm](http://ninety-nines.org/resources.htm)
- 21-27 **EAA AirVenture Oshkosh**  
Oshkosh, Wisconsin  
Wittman Regional Airport  
☞ [eaa.org/airventure](http://eaa.org/airventure)

### OCT

- 1 **Deadline:** First Wings Applications to Chapter AE Chair (or Section AE Chair, if there are no chapters)  
✉ [Apps@AEScholarship.org](mailto:Apps@AEScholarship.org)
- 23-26 **South Central Section Fall Meeting**  
Albuquerque, New Mexico  
Rio Grande Norte Chapter  
✉ [Jo.Cunningham@lucyfur.me.com](mailto:Jo.Cunningham@lucyfur.me.com)

### NOV

- 7-8 **International Board of Directors Fall Meeting**  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
✉ [Info@ninety-nines.org](mailto:Info@ninety-nines.org)

### MAGAZINE SUBMISSION DEADLINES

are one month prior to issue date.  
MAR/APR issue deadline: Feb 1.

Check the online calendar for the latest information.  
☞ [ninety-nines.org/calendar.htm](http://ninety-nines.org/calendar.htm)





**Robin Hadfield**

*President*

*The Ninety-Nines, Inc.*

[president@ninety-nines.org](mailto:president@ninety-nines.org)

## ***Celebrating Achievements and Looking Ahead***

**A**s we reflect on the past year, we celebrate the many achievements and milestones of our remarkable members. Thanks to the scholarships provided by our chapters, sections, and the Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship Fund, countless members have earned new ratings, advancing their skills and careers. These accomplishments highlight the dedication and resilience of our members. We also welcomed the Saskatchewan Chapter, and I had the honor of sending a congratulatory video for the Phoenix Chapter's 95th Anniversary Celebration. Looking back at 2024, I also acknowledge the generous donations from our members to The Ninety-Nines and our four Trusts, along with the \$1 million bequest from founding member Jodie Wood Wallingford's son, Bill Wallingford. Yet, this year also brought moments of sorrow as we lost several cherished members. Their contributions to The Ninety-Nines will forever be remembered, and their legacies will continue to inspire us as we move forward.

Looking ahead, this is our opportunity to embrace new challenges, support one another, and build on the legacy of courage, innovation, and camaraderie that has defined The Ninety-Nines for 95 years. Together, we are poised for another year of remarkable accomplishments.

This year, we are focused on several key initiatives to strengthen and guide The Ninety-Nines into the future. We have selected an executive search firm to help hire an Executive Director, a crucial step in expanding our leadership capacity. Our new website is in its final testing phase, ensuring a smooth launch that enhances the experience for members and visitors alike. As we conclude our previous Strategic Plan, we will develop a new four-year plan this spring, providing a clear road map for our efforts and focused goals moving forward. These priorities reflect our commitment to growth, innovation, and the sustained success of our organization.

To expand our reach within the aviation community, we continue to build partnerships through mutual advertising and collaborations with companies like Lightspeed Aviation and AviNation. The Lightspeed program includes not only Ninety-Nines members but also Friends of The Ninety-Nines, offering an excellent opportunity to grow financial support. AviNation is a quarterly magazine with a reach of over 80,000, dedicated to inspiring youth in aviation and provided to aviation colleges and tradeshow.

As president, my personal goal – other than to fly more this year – is to ensure every chapter and member has the resources and support necessary to thrive. Director Mary Build is collaborating with the revised FAA Safety Team (FAAST) program to bring safety learning benefits to our members. Through our website, social media, bi-monthly online meetings, and email, we will equip chapters with the tools and guidance they need to grow and strengthen their membership. Engaging members is a top priority as we focus on increasing membership and improving retention, ensuring every member feels valued, supported, and inspired to remain an integral part of our community.

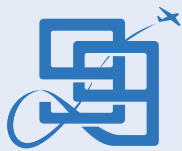
**YOU CAN HELP MAKE IT HAPPEN THIS YEAR** by joining one of our committees. Getting involved in a committee is one of the best ways to make a meaningful impact within The Ninety-Nines while building camaraderie and connections with fellow members. Whether at the chapter, section, or international level, your unique skills and ideas can help shape our programs, events, and initiatives. Committees offer an excellent opportunity to grow as a leader, share your passion for aviation, and contribute to our organization's success.

Consider assisting with one of these committees: Airmarking, Digital Marketing, Membership, Social Media Content Creation, Website (WordPress experience required), and Building Maintenance (perfect for a member with real estate or property management experience).

**Robin Hadfield**

*President, The Ninety-Nines, Inc. | [president@ninety-nines.org](mailto:president@ninety-nines.org)*





## Margery Brown 1892-1961

Inspired by Charles Lindbergh's Atlantic flight in 1927, Margery Brown trained to fly with Bill Winston, Lindbergh's instructor, in a Jenny with many cushions. Loving the freedom of flying high in the sky, the diminutive 4'11" pilot was well-known in the New York area for enthusiastically promoting aviation, especially for women.

Margery had married to an often-absent wealthy industrialist, and bored with high society, found that flying gave her confidence, pleasure and purpose. "Flying has given me the only independence I ever had," she said. "Before I began flying, I was so helpless that my husband's secretary had to buy my ticket, help me pack and get to the train. Now I'm off alone, looking after everything myself."

Given her personal experience, it is no surprise that Margery strongly advocated for women to become pilots and prove themselves capable fliers and contributors to the advancement of aviation.

Sharing Margery's belief that women fliers should band together for mutual benefit and support, her friend Clara T. Studer of the Curtiss Wright Company took action and gathered up the dynamic foursome of Margery, Neva Paris, Faye Gillis and Frances Harrell. Together they prepared and sent the 'call to meeting' letter, tallied responses, and coordinated the meeting place, transportation and refreshments for the first women pilots' meeting in November 1929, thus effectively launching the new 99 Club.

Margery flew extensively around the United States, Canada and Cuba, hoping to light the flying spark in women everywhere. She left the racing and endurance records to her flying sisters, trying to avoid publicity.

However, despite her best efforts, stories and pictures of her adventures and personal life often made the newspapers. When Margery decided to jettison the absentee Mr. Brown in 1931, she went to Reno for a quick divorce. A local reporter created a tongue-in-cheek headline announcing: "Aviatrix 'Chutes Hubby Via Reno'"

Margery embarked upon an extensive world-hopping trip in 1934, hoping to log flight time in every country in the world. Traveling by steamer, her new custom-built airplane strapped to the deck, the journey began in Honolulu and continued through the South Seas, Australia, China, Japan, India and beyond.

In addition to being an enthusiastic ambassador for 99s and women in aviation, Margery served as roving reporter for the 99er newsletter, sharing stories of her adventures abroad.

With deepest appreciation for her courage and determination in supporting women pilots and The 99s, we remember charter member Margery Brown.



## Opal Logan Kunz 1896 -1967

Adventurous Opal Kunz received her pilot's license June 7, 1929, at Newark Airfield, New Jersey, after training with Captain John Donaldson, a WWI ace. She immediately purchased a cream and gold Travel Air, but crash landed in an orchard after engine trouble on June 24. She promptly purchased another Travel Air and entered the first transcontinental Women's Air Derby in August.

However, race officials would not allow her to fly the 300hp aircraft, deeming it "too fast for a woman to fly." Undeterred, Opal instead found an aircraft with lower horsepower to enter.

The race began at Santa Monica, California, with numerous stops enroute to Cleveland. The first leg to San Bernadino was short, allowing extra time for publicity. Huge crowds swarmed the field; people and cars blocked the runway, kicking up clouds of dust and forcing the racers to land awkwardly. In the low visibility, Opal pancaked, causing minor damage to the landing gear. Quickly repaired, she went on to finish the race, the eighth heavy class aircraft to land.

Opal strongly advocated for women's involvement in aviation and became a charter member of The 99s, attending the initial meetings and acting as president pro-tem for the first few months, as the organization coalesced and official nominations were gathered and voted upon.

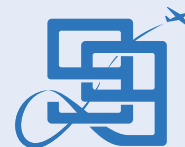
Opal was married to Dr. George F. Kunz, Tiffany & Company vice-president and resident gem expert, who commissioned Tiffany's to design The 99s logo pin, with two squared overlapping 9s and an optional diamond in the center. This design is still in use today, easily recognizable in our marketing materials and proudly worn by 99s worldwide on clothing and jewelry.

During the 1930s, Opal continued to fly in air derbies and flew frequently to visit friends and family. She initiated the Betsy Ross Corps, a women's air reserve intended to fly supporting roles in war. However, it was an idea before its time, and the corps disbanded after only a few years. Opal would later see her idea come to fruition in the WASP of World War II.

When the war broke out in 1941, Opal immediately began training collegiate students and Navy cadets as part of the Civilian Pilot Training Program. In the 1950s, she moved to California and finished her aviation career as an inspector at the Aerojet-General Corporation plant near Sacramento.

We honor Charter Member Opal Logan Kunz and gratefully remember her many efforts to ensure the success of the new 99 Club.





## Frances Harrell Marsalis

1900 – 1934

Enamored of aviation, Frances Harrell shook the Texas dust off her boots and began flying at Roosevelt Field in 1928. Her initial instructor was Bill Winston, who taught Charles Lindbergh, and later Bill Marsalis, an Eastern Transport captain, whom she married in 1930.

Showing a strong aptitude for flight, Frances learned fast and rapidly accumulated the hours for a

transport license. She became part of the Curtiss-Wright Exhibition Company, touring the United States and Cuba as a stunt flier, practicing and flying her daredevil routines daily.

Frances won numerous trophies, including the 1933 Annette Gipson Trophy and the Clark Gable Trophy, flying against six men. She also set two major refueling endurance records. The first was 196 hours, 5 minutes aloft with Louise Thaden over Long Island in August 1932, and the second was 237 hours, 42 minutes aloft with Helen Richey over Miami, Florida in December 1933.

As a respected member of the burgeoning aviation scene in New York and around the U.S., Frances put on numerous flying displays, participated in national flying meets and air pageants, and assisted in coordinating many such events.

These skills and her close friendships with other women pilots led her to be part of the planning team, comprised of Faye Gillis, Neva Paris, Margery Brown and Frances, who prepared and sent the 'call to organize' letter to all women pilots, to meet on November 2, 1929 and create a club just for women fliers.

From that successful meeting more than 95 years ago, The Ninety-Nines now have thousands of members, chapters and sections spanning the globe, sharing their passion and love of aviation. As a key organizer and charter member, Frances is remembered with gratitude and honored for her place in our history.

Frances died on August 5th, 1934 during the National Air Races at Dayton Municipal Airport. In the final turn of a closed-course race, her Waco F-3 banked sharply to avoid other aircraft, pitched abruptly down and struck the ground, tumbling several times.

A squadron of nine planes – three Army, three Navy, three civilian – flew an escort of honor for the airplane carrying Frances to funeral services at Roosevelt Field, New York. A large and notable group of aviators attended, included Amelia Earhart, who said, "Mrs. Marsalis was one of the friendliest and most likeable women I have ever known, and also one of the best pilots."

Frances is buried in the Marsalis family plot at Oaklawn Cemetery, Centerville, Mississippi.



## Vera Dawn Walker

1896-1978

Born and raised on a cattle ranch in Taylor County, Texas, Vera Dawn Walker moved to California in 1920 to work as a stunt double for MGM Studios. While filming *Riders of the Purple Sage*, actor Tom Mix invited her on an aerial sightseeing tour. Initially hesitant, Vera Dawn was captivated and immediately wanted to become a pilot.

Turned down by several flight schools, Vera Dawn earned her license in 1928 at

the Standard Flight School in Los Angeles, the first woman trained there. A petite 4'11" and 95 pounds, the "Tiny Texan" used cushions to reach the rudder pedals and was well-known locally for her guts and determination.

The following August, industrialist and pilot Howard Hughes sponsored Vera Dawn in the first Women's Air Derby, flying a Curtiss Robin cross-country from Santa Monica to Cleveland as part of the National Air Races. She quietly ignored the fact that she'd cracked a couple of ribs during recent stunt work and flew the race as planned.

The route had several stops across Texas, and when the racers landed in Abilene, Vera Dawn had the scare of her life as the large Walker family rushed onto the airport to see her, led by her excited father who stepped into the path of her still-turning propeller. Luckily someone pulled him out of harm's way in the nick of time.

Vera Dawn and her airplane successfully finished the race at Cleveland. A few months later, she had accumulated enough hours to qualify for a Transport Pilot license, the 11th woman to do so.

The following spring, she flew with a large group of pilots and airplanes for the first California Air Tour, a promotional tour of 14 cities. She learned formation flying skills from Major Mike Doolin, a WWI pilot, during this time.

Panther Motors then offered Vera Dawn a job demonstrating airplanes to showcase their aircraft engines. In early 1931, she flew from Denver to Guatemala, where she likely contracted tuberculosis. After a lengthy recovery in Arizona, she elected not to pursue further flying work and went on to a successful career in real estate.

Hometown pilot Vera Dawn Walker is celebrated with an exhibit at the Abilene Regional Airport and is buried nearby in Cope Cemetery. She is gratefully remembered for her role as an aviation pioneer and charter member of The 99s.

# Holding Short

## REPORTING POINTS



Greater New York Chapter member **Kelly Donovan** is excited to report that her solo long cross-country has been completed! Her solo long cross-country traversed three states: New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and New York.



*Samantha Suter*

Michigan Chapter is proud to congratulate the following members: **Morgan Kuzera**, who graduated from The Ninety-Nines Professional Pilot Leadership Initiative (PPLI); **Samantha Suter**, who started training at SkyWest Airlines in October; and **Lydia Hodgson**, who just passed her Private Pilot knowledge test with a score of 88%.

Chicago Area Chapter member **Sarah Ditelberg** reports “I am conducting biomedical research at NASA on spaceflight associated neuro-ocular syndrome (SANS). This is a cluster of findings seen in the majority of astronauts in long-duration spaceflight missions and remains a “red risk” – one that we have to gain a greater understanding of before embarking on deeper space missions to Mars. My lab does the bulk of the research on SANS at NASA, and right now I am looking at which factors contribute the most to someone developing SANS as well as which factors might be protective, to greater characterize who is most at risk of developing the condition.” Sarah is flying a Cessna 150 at LaPorte Muni in LaPorte, Texas, working on her Private.

## SCHOLARSHIP NEWS

### Ginny Carlin Memorial Scholarship Awardee completes Instrument Check Ride

– Maria Esparraguera, *Maryland Chapter*



In 2023, the Maryland Chapter selected an award recipient, **Julia Levitina**, for the Ginny Carlin Memorial Scholarship. Julia is a member of the Eastern Pennsylvania Chapter.

The Ginny Carlin Scholarship reimbursed a check ride fee in pursuit of a certificate or add on. Julia successfully completed her Instrument check ride in October 2024, after having to switch to four different airplanes because of maintenance issues, and three different instructors because of personal issues. Her tenacity in completing the rating was remarkable given these circumstances. She credits the motivation of being awarded the scholarship as a factor in her diligence.

### Michigan Chapter Congratulates Their Scholarship Winners

– Barb Vukits, *Michigan Chapter*

The Michigan Chapter is proud to announce the following scholarship winners:

**Cherry Kan** won a generous scholarship, For Love of Country Scholarship. **Sarah Haskett** was a winner of an Amelia Earhart Scholarship that enabled her to earn a Commercial Certificate. **Shawnee Schroeder** was awarded the Fall 2024 Women in Corporate Aviation (WCA) Scholarship for the Universal Weather and Aviation Dispatch Course. **Leah Murphy**, Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship Foundation Academic Scholarship recipient in 2021, used the \$10,000 towards her Master of Science degree from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, which she recently received. **Deborah Howell** passed her Private Pilot written exam and was selected to receive The 99s’ First Wings Award to complete her Private Pilot Certificate.





## INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR NIVEDITA BHASIN HONORED AT THE PRESIDENT'S RESIDENCE WITH THE PEOPLE INITIATIVE



India Section member and International Director **Nivedita Bhasin** reports on her recent experience as an invitee at the Rashtrapati Bhawan, the official residence of the President of India, and sharing center stage with other accomplished women aviation professionals. Honorable President of India, Shrimati Droupadi Murmu, interacted with a group of women achievers in the Indian aviation sector at Rashtrapati Bhavan. The meeting took place under the initiative The President With the People, which aims to establish a deeper connection with people to recognize their contributions.

Under the initiative of President Secretariat, The President With the People, Honorable President interacted with 51 women achievers in the civil aviation sector, including pilots, cabin crew, flight dispatchers, air traffic controllers, maintenance engineers, airport managers and regulators. The event, which brings together pioneering women in civil aviation, holds exceptional significance as we honor those who have dared to defy stereotypes, conquer challenges, and inspire a generation by rising to leadership in a field traditionally dominated by men. A great opportunity to share our stories of grit and determination, of struggles and breaking glass ceilings. Certainly, a day to remember!





Top left: FAA Safety Team Program Manager, Joe Mollahan, presenting Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award to Debra Plymate, Oregon Pines Chapter. Photo by Bill Origer | Top center: Debra with roses at the Master Pilot presentation by her 1958 Cessna 182 Skylane. Mural in the background was painted on site at PDX in 2001. | Top right: Debra in the pilot seat of the C182. | Bottom left: Team Speedy, Bev Clark and Debra with Race 4 C150 in the 2009 Palms to Pines Air Race. | Bottom center: Debra with Sky King in 1964. The 99s on the plane was a prophetic sign. | Bottom right: Cross-country flight training as CFI with Lillian Mutch

## DEBRA PLYMATE RECEIVES THE WRIGHT BROTHERS MASTER PILOT AWARD

It's hard to believe it's been 50 years since my first solo flight as a student pilot. Reflecting on that journey is a joy – revisiting my early instructors and leafing through my logbooks, filled with memories of incredible adventures in general aviation aircraft. Some of the most memorable experiences include the year I commuted to work from Honolulu to Maui, Hawaii; annual vacations with my husband in our plane, crossing the continent; and overflying breathtaking national parks like the Grand Canyon, Monument Valley, and Yellowstone. Over the years, we've flown all across the U.S., starting from California early in our careers, moving to Virginia, and eventually settling in Oregon.

Becoming an aviator inspired me to find a career that complemented my passion for aviation. In 1976, I joined the FAA as an oceanic controller at Honolulu Center, then transferred to Maui as a flight service specialist. Returning to the mainland, I served in Stockton before moving to Elko Flight Service Station (FSS) to address a staffing shortage. After a year in Elko, I earned a promotion to the Automated FSS in Oakland, where I worked first as a specialist and later as staff in the manager's office. The pinnacle of my career came in Washington, D.C., where I served as Congressional Liaison for the Secretary of Transportation, Elizabeth Dole. From there, I worked at FAA Headquarters in the air traffic division before returning to the field at Leesburg AFSS. Eventually, I came back to Oregon and retired from McMinnville AFSS.

Being a member of The Ninety-Nines has also been a

significant part of my life as an aviator. Joining the Oregon Pines Chapter encouraged me to fly more independently and fostered lifelong friendships. My pilot friends and I have met at various airports, attended fly-ins, and even enjoyed airplane camping. Some of my favorite missions included flying as a two-pilot crew: Bev Clark and I competed as “Speedy” (Race 4) in the 2009 Palms to Pines Air Race, while Debbie Origer and I teamed up as the “Deb-in-Airs” for cross-country flights in my C182 Skylane to 99s conferences in Oklahoma City and Ottawa.

Being a 99 is about more than flying – it's about friendship and honoring aviation's rich history. Growing up in a flying family, I have been immersed in aviation for as long as I can remember. My father, Glenn Plymate, was an architect and became Oregon's Supervisor of Airports in the 1960s. He oversaw the construction of three new airports in the state, including Independence, where I am now based. He also built our family home, the “Launch Pad,” in the adjacent airpark. In the final year of his life, he built the “Skyport” hangar, where we held the Oregon Pines 99s celebration in his honor.

Receiving the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award is an extraordinary privilege. This award is presented to aviators with 50 years of piloting experience, and it holds special significance in my family. My father, Glenn Plymate, received the award in 2013, and my husband, Wayne Nutsch, is also a recipient. Joining their ranks on this roll of honor is a deeply meaningful milestone in my life as an aviator.



## SPACEPORT CHAPTER HONORS TWO VERY SPECIAL 99S

– Judi Oswald, *Spaceport Chapter*

September 14, 2024 was proclaimed as **Bobbi Lasher and Carol Gosling Day** at the Spaceport Chapter. These two ladies have been an integral part of the Spaceport Chapter for a long time.

Bobbi has been an active 99 and a Spaceport member for over 31 years. She's held every position available in our chapter including Chapter Chair, Treasurer, Permanent Scholarship Trustee (for 24 years), Amelia Earhart Chapter Chair, Newsletter Editor, Webmaster, Communications Chair, Membership Chair, and Quartermaster and painter of compass roses. In the area of Central Florida, Bobbi was a Chief Judge for National Intercollegiate Flying Association (NIFA), Region IX for one year, and a NIFA Event Judge for over 20 years. She was also a timer for the Great Southern Air Races. She's still our Spaceport Webmaster and Communications Chair. Bobbi and her husband, Rick, loaned their Cessna 152 to Florida Institute of Technology Aviation teams for one year to compete in competitions with the only caveat being that the flyers must put fuel in the plane. Bobbi and Rick also built and flew their own plane. Bobbi is very active in promoting The 99s.

Carol has been an active member of The 99s for over 51 years and she is our longest serving active member. She has served as Spaceport Chapter Chair, Treasurer (for 21 years), a Chapter Scholarship Trustee, and both Section and Chapter Airmarking Chair. She has served as a NIFA judge, Region IX, and has been a timer for the Great Southern Air Race. Carol recently received the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award for 50 years of safe flight, and she was the only woman to receive that award that evening. She has attended many Southeast Section meetings and International Conferences. Carol is still very active in the Spaceport Chapter, attending meetings, and is in charge of ordering and delivering the name badges to our new members. Carol, like Bobbi, is very active in promoting The 99s.

The Spaceport Board of Directors decided to honor Bobbi and Carol by asking several organizations to proclaim September 14, 2024, as Bobbi Lasher and Carol Gosling Day. These organizations included The International Organization of Women Pilots, the Southeast Section, Spaceport Chapter, Florida Institute of Technology Aviation, Piper Aircraft, Valkaria Airport, Melbourne Airport, Melbourne City Council, Cocoa City Council, Titusville City Council, EAA Chapter 724, and EAA Chapter 1288. We were able to present a proclamation on official letterhead with signatures from all of the above organizations to each of the ladies.

It was a great honor for us to be able to recognize these women and have the local area declare September 14, 2024, as the Bobbi Lasher and Carol Gosling Day at their places of business.



Top: Bobbi Lasher, Melbourn City Council Mimi Hanley, and Carol Gosling.

Middle: Ventura County Chapter member Carly Shukiar of Piper Aircraft presents their proclamation to Bobbi and Carol.

Bottom: Spaceport Chapter members on hand to celebrate Bobbi and Carol.

2024 Fall

# First Wings Awards

**C**ongratulations to the 15 student pilot members named recipients of the Fall 2024 First Wings Awards. Those women represent 12 different chapters in nine separate sections.

They represent the United States, Canada, Nepal, and India.

The First Wings award is a progressive scholarship of up to \$6,000 towards an initial pilot certificate. Awarded each spring and fall, First Wings payments are based on specific flight training milestone achievements, which are:

- WRITTEN EXAM \$500
- SOLO \$2,500
- LONG CROSS-COUNTRY \$2,000
- PRIVATE \$1,000

For the Fall 2024 cycle, the AEMSFS Trustees were able to fund these awards in the amount of \$69,000. Three winners have already claimed some of their Milestone awards.

Originally, the scholarship was not milestone-based. The awards for our student pilot members began in 2001 as the New Pilot Award of \$1,500, which was increased to \$2,000 in 2012. In 2013, the award was renamed the Fly Now and was worth up to \$3,000 based upon specific milestone completion. Soon after, the award amount was doubled, increasing the value to the current \$6,000, and most recently, it became the First Wings Award.

Our grassroots approach within the organization begins at the chapter level. One of the biggest changes leading to the most success was the addition of a mentoring process. The follow-through and open exchange between the recipient and their mentor is hugely important. Many of the Mentors in this award cycle are past-winners of the New Pilot, Fly Now, First Wings, and AE Flight Training Awards. Once again, the Trustees would like to extend a special thank-you to the Mentors of our winners who have a special means of giving back to The Ninety-Nines, Inc.



## Neerja Aggarwal

Bay Cities Chapter, Southwest Section  
**Mentor:** Rebecca Erb

I'm currently completing my PhD at UC Berkeley in electrical engineering and computer science. When asked as a kid, "Which superpower do you wish you had?" I always answered, "I wish I could fly." Now, I'm training out of San Carlos Airport (KSQL) in California on a 1945 Taylorcraft. I hope to work towards advancing my ratings, giving flights to girls through Young Eagles, and continually empowering other women to join aviation. Thanks to my partner, my CFI, my family, and The 99s for enabling my dream!



## Bailey Caldwell

Santa Rosa Chapter, Southwest Section  
**Mentor:** Arianna Hanson

From my first ever small plane takeoff, I've loved every part of flying. I'm Bailey Caldwell, a student pilot passionate about all things aviation. I've been fortunate to learn from a variety of pilots, gaining experience in tailwheels, experimental aircraft, and warbirds. I work for a private jet management company, which means I get to be at the airport all the time. This scholarship will be invaluable as I continue working towards my Private Pilot Certificate. I look forward to a career in aviation and having the time of my life in the skies!



## Ankita Das

Eastern Ontario Chapter,  
East Canada Section  
**Mentor:** Rani Tolton

I'm currently training for my Private Pilot License at the Rockcliffe Flying Club (CYRO) in Ottawa, Canada. Flying has been my childhood dream. In spite of my full-time job as a software developer, I was determined to start working towards my dream, which began in April 2024. I plan to progress in my aviation career to become a commercial pilot, and my ultimate dream is space exploration. I'm so delighted to be part of The 99s, honored to be the recipient of the First Wings Award, and I'd like to thank the AEMSFS for helping me propel towards my dreams.





### **Catherine Doody**

British Columbia Coast Chapter,  
West Canada Section  
**Mentor:** Colette Morin

I live in British Columbia, Canada, where I work as a registered nurse and find joy in helping others. In addition to my career, I have a passion for adventure and aviation. My goal is to get my Commercial Pilot License and I'm excited to see where my aviation journey takes me. Glacier Air flight school has been incredibly supportive in this journey and enriched my experience. As a proud member of The 99s, I'm looking forward to connecting with other aspiring women pilots through chapter activities and sharing our love of flying.



### **Yan Chang He**

Colorado Chapter, South Central Section  
**Mentor:** Naomi Chaquenco

I'm Yan Chang He (AKA Sabrina). I've had 11 dreams since high school and have devoted my life to following my heart and pursuing my dreams for the past 27 years. In 2020, I actualized my sixth dream by publishing my bilingual book, *11 Dreams: The 3 a.m. Go-Getter*, in paperback and audiobook versions. My seventh dream is to achieve financial freedom and devote my abundance to making a difference for others. Becoming a professional pilot would make this dream come true! After attaining a Private Pilot Certificate, I plan to start my instrument training immediately.



### **Lillian Dugger**

Bay Cities Chapter, Southwest Section  
**Mentor:** Erica Ames

Growing up, I was surrounded by planes and pilots, with my first flight at five years old. My grandpa was in the Air Force and my aunt a Delta pilot: I have developed a love for flying. I graduated high school in May 2024. In the fall, I started community college and working on my Private Pilot Certificate. Next, I plan to enroll in a professional pilot program as an instrument applicant. I am dedicated to pursuing my dream of flying professionally, setting examples for girls who dream of learning to fly, and becoming involved in the aviation community.



### **Deborah Howell**

Michigan Chapter, North Central Section  
**Mentor:** Cherry Kan

I'm a student pilot and proud member of the Michigan Chapter of The 99s. While I'm currently a licensed therapist, my passion for aviation took flight after my discovery flight in March 2024. I've since decided to pursue my dream of becoming a professional pilot. I've already started planning trips to go on with my Private Pilot Certificate, including a flight to my sister in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan! As a mom of two, balancing family, work, and flight training is a challenge, but I'm excited about every moment of this journey!



### **Karen Ghatala**

British Columbia Coast Chapter,  
West Canada Section  
**Mentor:** Cindy Pang

I'm a student pilot and proud member of the British Columbia Coast Chapter. Inspired by my father, an airline pilot, and grandfather, an RAF WWII veteran, aviation has always been part of my story. Embracing the belief that it's never too late to pursue your dreams, I celebrated my first solo flight while balancing a young family and career, where I support employer wellness and mental health. As a member of the Squamish Flying Club and with encouragement from The 99s, my goal is to inspire, mentor, and train future female aviators in the Sea-to-Sky Corridor.



### **Madeline Hurley**

Midnight Sun Chapter, Northwest Section  
**Mentor:** Kelly Reynolds

Originally from Rougemont, North Carolina, I'm a proud graduate of Appalachian State University. I live in Alaska and work in the construction industry. I enjoy spending time outdoors, taking advantage of all Alaska has to offer! I'm a member of the Midnight Sun Chapter, where I volunteer at local aviation events and lead the chapter's monthly book club. I'm fortunate to have found friendship and camaraderie with the women of the Midnight Sun Chapter. I look forward to completing my flight training and encouraging other women to pursue their aviation goals.



### **Raji Khadka**

Nepal Chapter, Nepal Section  
**Mentor:** Bipashi Tara Tuladhar

I'm Raji Khadka, a member of the Nepal Section currently pursuing my flight training in Texas. I've always been fascinated with aviation and the idea of flying. After I earn my Private Pilot Certificate, I plan to take my parents on a flight and also fly around different states. I'm honored to receive the First Wings Award, as it represents not only a financial investment in my future but also a testament to my commitment towards aviation. I look forward to contributing and advancing the field of aviation, and to inspire and help other women like me.



### **Jennifer McPhie**

Air Hearts-Utah Chapter,  
Southwest Section  
**Mentor:** Halley Mallory

I'm proving it's never too late to chase your dreams and build a new future for yourself! Inspired by my dad, a retired Air Force helicopter pilot, I left a successful marketing career to pursue my passion for aviation. Balancing the challenges of flight training with raising two kids, I'm determined to show them that with hard work, focus, and resilience, anything is possible. My goal is to become a CFI and one day teach my daughter to fly. I truly believe that new horizons are always within reach – one small step, and one determined flight, at a time.



### **Kitty Leineke**

Air Hearts-Utah Chapter,  
Southwest Section  
**Mentor:** Anna Danfeit

Born to an airline captain and flight attendant, I was destined for the skies, being named after Kitty Hawk. I began my career in aviation as a flight attendant, now transitioning to the other side of the flight deck door. I recently passed my Private Pilot check ride and will continue flight training full time with the ultimate goal of flying for the legacy carrier my family and myself have all flown for. I'm honored to have been selected to receive this scholarship, and I'm beyond grateful to have the support of The 99s as I continue on this journey.



### **Katrina Smith**

Central New York Chapter,  
New York-New Jersey Section  
**Mentor:** Joanne Bolton

As a news anchor, real estate agent, mom of four, and student pilot, I'm humbled and inspired to earn the board's vote of confidence to receive the First Wings Award. The funding tied to earned milestones adds to the excitement of crossing each threshold in aviation. I often fly with my 13-year-old daughter, Lydia, who has already accrued hours at the yoke, and my nine-year-old daughter, Vivien. Together, we hope to inspire the love of flying in others. We hope to reinvigorate our local chapter and place the sky in reach for other aspiring pilots.



### **Aleiah Martin**

Kitty Hawk Chapter, Southeast Section  
**Mentor:** Sandra Smith

My name is Aleiah Martin, and I'm a high school senior in the Aviation Academy at T. Wingate Andrews in High Point, North Carolina, pursuing my Private Pilot Certificate. My love for flying began at 14 while visiting Charlotte Douglas International Overlook. Shortly after, I completed a discovery flight and immediately mapped out my future goals. I enjoy volunteering at aviation events and helping youth discover a passion for the profession. Next year, I will attend Elizabeth City State University to further my aviation studies for additional certificates and ratings.



### **Gabriela Tan**

All-Ohio Chapter, North Central Section  
**Mentor:** Victoria Harris

I'm Gabriela Tan, a content marketer and freelance copywriter chasing my dream of becoming an airline pilot. Originally from Canada, I moved to Ohio last year and started training for my Private Pilot Certificate in April 2024. My passion for aviation took flight after seeing a United Aviate ad featuring diverse female pilots – it was the spark I needed to pursue this path. After earning my Private Pilot Certificate, I plan to volunteer with organizations like Pilots N Paws to build hours toward my Instrument Rating and give back as I reach for the skies.





# LESSONS LEARNED ON EARTH FOR A FUTURE ON MARS

By Fiona Smith, *British Section*

**T**here is a secret huddled deep within the Collados del Asón Natural Park, located in the Cantabrian Mountains of Spain. It's a portal to a distant land. Cave complexes once used by our earliest ancestors offer modern humans the chance to simulate life on Mars. Alpha Base lies within a secure facility. The cave setting is significant. Since we know settlers living on Mars would face deadly bombardment by cosmic radiation, living within lava tunnels and cave systems on Mars would offer some protection.





Astroland is one of a handful of organizations that conduct analogue astronaut missions. These exercises simulate long-duration space habitation, typically on a planetary surface. By practising procedural tasks such as air lock protocols, donning and doffing space suits, and other experiments such as biological research, all alongside the everyday business of sleeping, washing, and eating, we can anticipate and overcome problems that arise in space exploration. Military personnel practice for deployment in friendly lands, flight crews train in simulators. Astronaut crews will train together in multiple environments, and the analogue model is used by other groups, such as civilian responders, as well as the usual space researchers.

On occasion, spaces are open to other curious customers. There needs to be some selection criteria in place, as missions are at risk if customers drop out or misunderstand the mission parameters. Every so often, when Astroland is featured in the media, they get a flurry of enquiries, but most are not serious. Several would-be astronauts want to visit the facility for just a day, or are appalled to learn that mobile phones will be confiscated during the mission. I'd only recently discovered the world of analogue astronauts – people and habitats rehearsing space missions in austere environments. It's relatively exclusive, and some missions are more closed than others, but openings do exist. Astroland in Spain, which was on my radar already, advertised a mission for February 2024. Feeling underqualified and expecting rejection, I sent them my credentials and crossed my fingers. After an online discussion, I was admitted. I was absolutely elated to be selected for the Atlantis Mission. In the last 14 years, it's estimated that there have been 2,000 analogue astronauts, according to Astro Perform. My crewmates included: an engineering student, an architect with an interest in space architecture, and an analogue enthusiast working in software development. The four of us shared a strong interest in space flight, but no professional experience.

Over the course of five sols, the crew followed a schedule within the habitat. We tended to seedlings and studied cave samples. All crewmembers submitted daily psychological assessments. The highlight of any day was a trip into the cave, on an EVA – extra-vehicular activity. This took the format of preparing for exit: suiting up, wriggling into a climbing harness, putting on boots and gloves, and finally, a helmet. The suits were close fitted but stretchy, and the helmets not too heavy. The helmets were ventilated and contained cameras and torches to film our movements and light the way. The climbing harness was important, as we explored the cave, we encountered points to climb and descend.

By simulating what happens day to day, the analogue astronaut gets some impression of the tasks involved in space habitation, and the mission control observatory have a chance to assess personnel for future suitability. It's a mix of serious study and strange fun.



The cave itself was beautiful. The lava tunnel complex is a fragile ecosystem, and all Astrolanders are reminded to protect it. Like an igneous cathedral, the tunnels and caverns were lit up in eerie red light, evoking the Red Planet. A river ran through the lower stages of the lava tunnel, and every surface was slippery and water hewn. The first entry to the Alpha Base and our lodgings within Ares Station was nerve-racking. The crew did not know each other and had barely trained together. But a few excursions later, hopping from rock form to rock form felt like second nature.

Settling into our routines, there was ample time for preparation, quiet reflection, and private study. It was interesting to observe the other crew mates: Who needed assistance more? Who struggled with boredom? Who adapted to surroundings best? Comparing the start of the mission to the end, there were certainly changes in crew presentation. Dr. Tess Morris-Paterson, an astronaut trainer, in a recent podcast described JAXA – the Japanese space agency – taking late-stage astronaut recruits into an analogue simulation for three days, and only then do they assess them. By that time, the masks have dropped.

I drew personally upon my past military experience and my crew resource management lessons learned through aviation. I treated the exercise seriously, but also with wonder; I spent a week living in a cave! I thought of other astronauts and applicants going through selection, and constantly asked myself, “What makes a great astronaut?” I satisfy one or two criteria! But, given the investment in training, and the dedication required, the competency list is long and the standards sky-high. An analogue simulation sounds ideal in terms of selection, maybe even as a prerequisite requirement, along with the other weighty qualifications that no amount of CV fluff can blag. I can’t assess the quality of Astroland against other analogue simulations; however, it was clear to me that the situation brought out the true behaviours of all of us, providing insight that any assessor would find invaluable.

At a fractious point, our mission coach intervened over Zoom with a team dynamic model: Director, Analyzer, Socializer, Relater. It appeared we’d all taken a place within this paradigm. Some of my colleagues were delighted: We’re a perfect team! I looked and saw the explanation for our tensions and conflict. We were all doing different things. The combination of strange, dehydrated food, a lack of creature comforts, and the unknown will test most people physically and mentally. Throw in a little disagreement, and things might just kick off.

Our team was thrown together, with an arbitrary commander in place. The simulation magnified every little thing. With such intensity, there is also no escape. It’s also a bit dull at times, in a similar fashion to the quiet of a military exercise. Once you’ve been in every room, eaten, washed, prepped, done a bit of writing, then that’s it. Our habitat was a central dome, with two small domes to the side serving as sleeping quarters. The very end was toilet provision, with a low-seated chemical bowl, and room to just about disrobe and sponge wash. The central area had to serve as a common rest area, kitchen and dining room, gym space,



and administrative sector. In sharing that space, we all had to consider conversation topics, the space we took up (with workouts, our personal equipment), and our conduct. The periods of quiet were the most insightful. How do astronauts sit with the routine, everyday spaces in between the wonder and the terror? I was delighted to be without my mobile phone and without internet: I can’t be sure all of the crew felt the same way! It’s in those quiet moments, with no distractions, that one can find delight or despair.

I enjoy finding lessons in life experiences, telling stories, and using metaphor in all I do. I’m training to become a commercial pilot, whilst working my day job for a museum as a fundraiser. Storytelling comes with the territory, and pilots love to tell a tale. I learned a lot in those short few days about human psychology, the best and worst of management, and about myself. Analogue astronauts aim to anticipate and solve space problems on earth and ahead of missions to the International Space Station (ISS), the Moon, Mars, and beyond. The research done by stations across the world feeds into a larger body of work, helping us become better astronauts ahead of leaving our planet. I’m going to carry these lessons with me. I’m planning a PhD with a history of science theme, and of course, I’m waiting for the next analogue mission. I still dream of space flight, and it feels closer than ever, but manifesting thoughts gets you nowhere: What counts is action. Wanting is not enough. With further flight training, solid academics, and continuing development, anything is possible. Charge towards your dreams! Who knows where they will lead? 🚀





# THE NINETY-NINES INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

JULY 9-13, 2025 | BURLINGTON, VERMONT

By Minnetta Gardinier, 99s Vice President

**T**he Ninety-Nines International Conference Committee and the New England Section invite you to the 2025 International Conference in Burlington, Vermont, July 9-13, 2025. Join Ninety-Nines from all over the world on the shores of Lake Champlain at the Hotel Champlain, Curio Collection by Hilton. As the New England Section members told us last year, “Burlington or Bust!”

## FUN FACTS TO KNOW ABOUT BURLINGTON

- Burlington is situated on the eastern shore of Lake Champlain, between the Adirondack Mountains of New York to the west and the Green Mountains to the east.
- Burlington is the most populous city in the state of Vermont.
- The city is located just 45 miles south of the U.S.-Canada border.
- Burlington was chartered by Governor Benning Wentworth of New Hampshire in 1763 and named for the Burling family, who were pioneer landowners.
- Burlington is home to the University of Vermont, Champlain College, and Vermont’s largest hospital, the UVM Medical Center.
- We all scream for ice cream! Ben & Jerry’s began in 1978 when Ben Cohen and Jerry Springfield opened their first ice cream shop in an old gas station in Burlington; the world-wide corporation is based in South Burlington.





## Conference Registration

Conference information and registration forms may be found on the Conference website. Go to [www.ninety-nines.org](http://www.ninety-nines.org) and click on the Conference logo.

Full Registration for Ninety-Nines, Guests, and Friends of The Ninety-Nines includes: Conference materials, access to Hospitality Suite and Fly Mart, Thursday Keynote Breakfast and Keynote Address, Thursday Welcome Reception, Seminars, Saturday Breakfast, Saturday (Evening) Career Panel, Saturday AE Scholarship and International Awards Banquet, and option to purchase tours.

## Deadlines and Fees

- Early Registration by March 31, 2025: \$329 USD
- On-Time Registration by May 31, 2025: \$359 USD
- Late Registration after May 31, 2025: \$379 USD
- One-day registration is also available; consult the Conference website.

## Conference Hotel

The 2025 Conference hotel is the Hotel Champlain Burlington, Curio Collection by Hilton, 60 Battery Street, facing the shores of Lake Champlain in the heart of downtown Burlington. The Conference rate is \$309 for single or double occupancy, representing a significant discount from the advertised rate in summer months. The hotel features an indoor pool and fitness center. Light breakfast and lunch items are available at Lily May's Coffee and Café, and dinner is available at Original Skiff Fish and Oysters, an onsite restaurant inspired by traditional Atlantic coast taverns and oyster bars. Self-parking, valet parking, and EV charging are available. Numerous restaurants are located within walking distance of the hotel.

Hotel reservations at the Conference rate will be made as part of the Conference registration process; individuals should not attempt to make reservations on their own.

## Getting There

Patrick Leahy Burlington International Airport (KBTB), located approximately four miles from the Conference hotel, is a joint-use civil and military airport served by United, Delta, American, Frontier, Breeze, and Sun Country Airlines. Ground transportation is available by taxi, ride services, and rental cars.

For general aviation arrivals, Heritage Aviation is a full-service FBO located at KBTB; U.S. Customs services are available onsite. Fuel discount will be offered to Conference attendees.

## SUPPORTING THE CONFERENCE

### Conference Sponsorships

Businesses and corporations are encouraged to show their support of The Ninety-Nines by becoming a Conference Sponsor. Sponsorships are offered at multiple levels, and a custom package can be created to meet the needs of the Sponsor. Conference Sponsors receive recognition at the Conference and in Conference print materials. Conference Sponsorship information and forms are available on the Conference registration website.

Individuals can also become Conference Sponsors and may choose an amount to donate when they register for the Conference. Individual Sponsors will be recognized in the Conference Program.

For more information, contact Rosanne Isom at [99sconferencesponsors@gmail.com](mailto:99sconferencesponsors@gmail.com).

### Sponsor A Pilot

Generous Ninety-Nines have often expressed an interest in supporting Student Pilot members who would like to attend an International Conference for the first time. The option to "Sponsor a Pilot" is available when registering for the Conference. Funds donated will be allocated through a drawing to help offset some of the expenses for Student Pilot members attending their first Conference.

### Fly Mart/Exhibit Hall

The Ninety-Nines 2025 International Conference provides the opportunity for businesses and individuals to promote their products and services to a large group of enthusiastic pilots, strengthen customer relationships and loyalty, and demonstrate their commitment to the advancement of aviation. The Conference also provides recruitment opportunities for airlines and other aviation companies seeking to hire pilots. For sections and chapters, selling merchandise at the Conference can be an excellent fund-raising opportunity.

Information and forms are available on the Conference registration website. Exhibitors and vendors will be recognized in the Conference program.



# Fun Things To Do In Burlington

## PRE-CONFERENCE OPTIONS

### Full Day Tour – Stowe, Vermont

Wednesday, July 9

Depart in the morning with a knowledgeable local guide for one of Vermont's most quintessential towns, Stowe. Enjoy a full day of Green Mountains, history, and edible treats! Warm up your vocal cords, as you may spontaneously start singing "The Hills are Alive" when you visit the famed Trapp Family Lodge. The Lodge is more than just a hotel; it's a family home with years and years of history in its walls. Learn about the family's extensive history, and go behind the scenes with a guided tour with a meet and greet by Maria von Trapp's grandchildren. Afterwards, explore the property and take in the stunning views! Your included lunch will be provided at the Trapp Family Brewery, offering a traditional Austrian platter. On your way back to Burlington, stop at Cold Hollow Cider Mill, where you can purchase locally crafted products such as Cabot Cheese, Long Trail seasonal brew, Ben & Jerry's ice cream, and fresh cider doughnuts.

### Half-Day Tour – Shelburne Farms

Wednesday, July 9, 12:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Shelburne Farms' historic campus along the shores of Lake Champlain is a 1,400-acre diversified working farm located on the unceded, traditional, and contemporary homelands of the Winooskik band of the Abenaki. At the Farm Store & Welcome Center, grab a visitor guide, ask questions, and pick up some products from the farm and other Vermont producers, such as cheddar cheese made right on the property from the milk of their Brown Swiss cows, maple syrup, meat, and organic veggies and fruit from their market garden. Explore meadows, pastures, forests, the Inn flower gardens, and the lakeshore across ten miles of walking trails. Enjoy beautiful views east to Camel's Hump and the Green Mountains and stunning views of the Inn, Lake Champlain, and Adirondack Mountains from the top of Lone Tree Hill. During your visit, have lunch on your own.

### Dinner Cruise On Lake Champlain

Wednesday, July 9, 5:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Welcome aboard The Spirit of Ethan Allen – "Lake Champlain's Largest Cruise Ship and Floating Restaurant!" Enjoy panoramic views of the lake and Vermont mountains while enjoying delicious food. The Spirit of Ethan Allen is berthed a short walk from the hotel; there is also a parking area located 250 feet from the ship.

## CONFERENCE OPTIONS

### "The Granite Capital Of The World"

Thursday, July 10, 12:30 - 4:30 p.m.

On this guided tour through the Green Mountains, your first stop is in Barre, the "Granite Capital of the World." Here you will visit the world's largest and most modern granite manufacturing plant. Witness workers in the world's largest deep-hole quarry and learn how granite is processed and used. At the end of your tour, there will be time to visit the showroom and lovely on-site gift shop. Depart Rock of Ages and travel down the hill to Hope Cemetery, known for the superb granite craftsmanship on its memorials and tombstones. Hope Cemetery was established in 1895, and then consisted of 53 acres. It was designed and planned by the renowned landscape architect, Edward P. Adams. By 1895, skilled artisans from around the world, especially Italy, had been flocking to Barre to become a part of the booming granite industry. It's estimated that one-third of all memorials and tombstones in the United States came from Barre. Hope Cemetery has since grown to 65 acres with more than 10,000 tombstones and memorials located inside, all made from Barre Gray granite. The cemetery has been referred to as a "museum of granite sculpture."

### Vermont Air National Guard Base

Thursday, 12:00 - 3:00 p.m.

The Vermont Air National Guard Base is the proud home of the 158th Fighter Wing, co-located at Burlington International Airport. Federally recognized in August of 1946 with the 134th Fighter Squadron, the Green Mountain Boys began their first flying mission with the F-47 and historically became the first Air National Guard unit to base the F-35A Lightning II, the most advanced and capable weapon system in the U.S. Air Force. On this tour of the base, you may have the opportunity to see this jet take off (depending on the flight schedule), visit static displays, and talk with pilots and maintenance experts. NOTE: Basic background checks are required for this tour. Registrants will be asked to provide identification information several weeks prior to the tour, including passport numbers. There is a maximum of 55 participants on this tour.

### Shelburne Museum

Friday, July 11, 12:30 PM - 4:00 p.m.

This tour leads you into the Town of Shelburne, chartered in 1763 and home to the Shelburne Museum where you will discover treasures from America's past. The Shelburne Museum is described as one of the world's great museums of American folk art, artifacts, and architecture. The museum's founder, Electra Havemeyer Webb, was a pioneer collector of Americana and American folk art. Explore 37 exhibit buildings, stroll through 45 scenic acres, and discover 80,000 pieces of Americana including

the most important collection of wildfowl decoys in the world, an outstanding collection of quilts, coverlets, hooked rugs, and over 200 horse drawn vehicles. See the 220-foot side-wheel steamboat, the Ticonderoga, that is a National Historic Landmark. During your visit, have lunch on your own at the museum's on-site concession.

### BETA Technologies

Friday, July 11, 1:30-4:00 p.m.

Join this exclusive tour of BETA Technologies, a pioneering leader in electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft. During this immersive experience, you'll witness firsthand how BETA has rapidly transformed the future of aviation with their 100% electrically powered aircraft. Get up close with the innovative technologies that power these groundbreaking aircraft as you learn about the inception of BETA's eVTOL vision, from the spark of an idea to the rigorous design process. Discover how BETA's commitment to sustainable aviation has driven unprecedented advancements in both safety and performance, all in record time. Your visit will include a look at the cutting-edge testing labs, interactive displays showcasing key design elements, and an insightful discussion on the future of eVTOL technology with BETA experts. There is a maximum of 55 participants on this tour.

## ON YOUR OWN

### Church Street Marketplace

[www.churchstreetmarketplace.com](http://www.churchstreetmarketplace.com)

Stroll this outdoor pedestrian mall offering an eclectic mix of shops, galleries, and eateries. *Located .4 miles from the hotel.*

### Community Sailing Center

505 Lake Street  
[www.communitysailingcenter.org](http://www.communitysailingcenter.org)

Explore the lake in a rental canoe, kayak, or paddleboard. *Located .6 miles from the hotel.*

### ECHO Science Center

Visit this science and nature museum on the lakefront. *Located .2 miles from the hotel.*

### Local Motion Bike Rentals

1 Steele Street  
[www.localmotion.org](http://www.localmotion.org)

Rent a bike to explore the many biking trails in Burlington and along the lakeshore. *Located .5 miles from the hotel.*

### Waterfront Park

10 College Street

Walk, jog, or bike through this large regional park located along the shore of Lake Champlain and enjoy the views across the lake of the Adirondack Mountains. *Located .3 miles from the hotel.*



# PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE

(subject to change)

## WEDNESDAY, JULY 9

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

*PRE-CONFERENCE OPTION*  
Full-Day Tour to Stowe

9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.  
Exhibitor Set-Up

8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Registration

12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
*PRE-CONFERENCE OPTION*  
Shelburne Farm

12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Exhibits/Fly Mart

2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Hospitality

2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
International  
Board of Directors  
Meeting

5:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.  
*PRE-CONFERENCE OPTION*  
Dinner Cruise on  
The Spirit of Ethan Allen

## THURSDAY, JULY 10

8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Registration

7:00 a.m. - 7:45 a.m.  
Keynote  
Continental Breakfast

8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.  
OPENING KEYNOTE ADDRESS  
"Takeoff Tactics: How  
to Crush Goals with  
Mentorship and Grit"

**Colonel Laura Caputo, USAF**  
*USAF Colonel; Commander  
of the US Air National Guard  
158th Maintenance Group;  
Flight Instructor at BETA  
Technologies*

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Exhibits/Fly Mart

9:15 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.

*SEMINAR*  
"FAA Investigations: What  
Every Lawyer Wants You  
to Know Before You Need  
to Know It"

**Kathy Yodice**  
*Aviation Attorney, Pilot,  
Aircraft Owner*

10:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Hospitality

10:45 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

*SEMINAR*  
"Ratings Beyond  
the ASEL"  
*Triple Feature!*

"Do You Need a License  
to Fly That?"

**Kathy Wadsworth**

"Adventures  
with a Splash"

**Casey Raymond**

"Soaring - The Hidden  
Gem of Aviation"

**Cynthia Fitzgerald**

10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

*SEMINAR*  
"Paying it Forward for the  
Future of Aviation and  
Aerospace"

**Aileen Watkins**  
*Captain, Atlas Air, Boeing 767*

12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
*OPTIONAL TOUR*  
Vermont Air National  
Guard Base

12:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

*OPTIONAL TOUR*  
Barre, VT, "The Granite  
Capital of the World"

1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
Trust Meetings

4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Council of Governors  
Meeting

5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
Meet and Greet for First-  
Time Attendees

6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.  
Welcome Reception  
(Cash Bar)

## FRIDAY, JULY 11

7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Registration

8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

*SEMINAR*  
"Tools to Keep You Safe"  
FAA Wings Credit

**Doug Stewart**  
*CFI, Master Instructor, DPE,  
General Aviation Joint Safety  
Committee*

9:15 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.

*SEMINAR*  
"Be a Lifeline Without  
Needing a Lifeline"

**Alyssa Miller**  
*Operation Airdrop, Pilots  
N Paws, Lifeline Pilots and  
Elevated Access*

9:15 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.

*SEMINAR*  
"Aviation for a Cause"  
*Double Feature!*

"Flying for Conservation  
of Protected Species"  
**Kelli O'Donnell**

"Women Build"-  
Promoting Gender and  
Equity in Aviation"

**Beth White**

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Exhibits/Fly Mart

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Hospitality

10:30 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

*SEMINAR*  
"Laugh, Learn, Lead"

Round table discussions to  
inspire and energize Chapters  
and Sections  
- All members encouraged  
to attend!

12:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

*OPTIONAL TOUR*  
Shelburne Museum

1:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

*OPTIONAL TOUR*  
BETA Technologies

4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Pre-Annual Meeting  
Comm Session

5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.  
Governors/Presidents  
Reception

*Option for Past/Current  
Governors and Presidents*

## SATURDAY, JULY 12

7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.  
Registration

7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.  
Breakfast Buffet

8:30 p.m. - 11:30 a.m.  
Ninety-Nines International  
Annual Meeting

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
Luncheon for Ninety-Nines  
Life Members

12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Exhibits/Fly Mart

1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Hospitality

1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Pilot Career Panel

1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

*SEMINAR*  
"Flying to Greenland  
and More"  
**Minnetta Gardinier**  
*Pilot, Aircraft Owner, Air Racer*

3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
International Board of  
Directors Meeting

6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.  
Cocktail Hour  
(Cash Bar)

7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.  
AWARDS BANQUET  
Amelia Earhart  
Memorial Scholarships  
Ninety-Nines  
International Awards

# 2025 FEATURED CONFERENCE SPEAKERS AND SEMINARS

## OPENING KEYNOTE ADDRESS

### Take-off Tactics: How To Crush Goals With Mentorship and Grit

**Colonel Laura Caputo, USAF**

Thursday, July 10, 8:00 a.m.



Drawing from her military career, Division I athletic background, and leadership experience, Colonel Laura Caputo motivates audiences to push past their limits, believing everyone can

achieve more than they ever thought possible. In this engaging presentation, Laura will share her insights on overcoming challenges and achieving big goals by breaking them into smaller, actionable steps, or TTPs (Techniques, Tactics, and Practices). Drawing from her experience as a woman in the male-dominated fields of aviation and the military, Laura offers practical strategies for facing obstacles, finding mentors, and embracing setbacks as learning opportunities. She also highlights how aviation can empower women to take control of their lives and reach new heights, encouraging everyone to pay their success forward by helping others along the way.

Laura Caputo is a Colonel in the U.S. Air Force and the Commander of the 158th Maintenance Group in Vermont, where she leads over 400 Airmen in maintaining combat readiness for the Air National Guard's F-35 fighter jets at the 158th Fighter Wing. She is also a flight instructor at BETA Technologies, an aerospace R&D company developing a 100% electrically powered aircraft.

### B-777 to the (Afghan) Rescue

**Celeste Pearce**



Thursday, July 10, 9:15 a.m.

September 2021 was a highlight in Celeste's career. She was the First Officer on the B-777 for American Airlines, flying three unique missions that brought home

at-risk Afghan civilians and the 82nd Airborne as part of the Civil Reserve Air Fleet during Operation Allies Refuge/Welcome. She will tell the story of this life-saving adventure.

Celeste is in her 37th year at American Airlines as a First Officer in the Boeing 777. In 1986, she was one of only 1,500 women to hold an ATP. She volunteers for her union as a "return to work" sponsor, is a sudden grief response team member, and continually does all she can to inspire, educate, and support everything and anything for Aviatrrix.

### FAA Investigations: What Every Lawyer Wants You To Know Before You Need To Know It

**Kathy Yodice**

Thursday, July 10, 9:15 a.m.



This presentation offers a review of the most common legal issues that could face anyone in the aviation community, including FAA ramp checks and investigations, troubles in the FAA medical certification

process, accident reporting to NTSB and the insurance company, aircraft purchases and leases, and employment and training contracts. Circumstances can change unexpectedly – we'll help raise your awareness so that you can be armed to take action, avoid missteps, and protect your best interests.

Kathleen A. Yodice, Esq. has been practicing aviation law for 39 years, first as a lawyer in the FAA's Chief Counsel's Office and then in private practice in the boutique law firm started by her father, John Yodice, in 1960. She represents the interests of clients in all aviation-related legal matters worldwide. She is a pilot, aircraft owner, and an active member of The Ninety-Nines Sugarloaf Chapter.

## TRIPLE FEATURE!

### Ratings Beyond the ASEL

Thursday, July 10, 10:30 a.m.

Join presenters Kathy Wadsworth, Casey Raymond, and Cynthia Fitzgerald as they share how they've experienced the joy of flight in not-so-usual ways and perhaps inspire others to do the same.

### Do You Need a License to Fly That??

**Kathy Wadsworth**



Lighter-than-air (LTA) aircraft: what are they? When Katherine started flying in the 1970s, acquiring a Hot Air Balloon rating was a bit different than the current FAA requirements. Further ratings helped her achieve the goals she set for herself and allowed her to take advantage of the opportunities that came along during her career. And what were those fabulous opportunities? We'll find out.

In February 1974, Kathy traveled to Albuquerque, New Mexico, to attend the 3rd International Balloon Festival, where she had her first hot air balloon flight. By April, she accomplished her first solo flight. In 1978, Kathy set several world records in small-size category balloon systems. For her, it was in the AX-1 and AX-2, the smallest categories, which no one had previously flown for records, starting a terrific 40-year career in LTA flight.

### Adventures With a Splash

**Casey Raymond**



Join Casey as she recounts her journey through the turbulent waters of aviation. Despite many challenges, she found her place as a flight instructor dedicated to sharing the joy of flight. With a deep passion for GA flying, it was only natural

that she would discover the world of seaplanes. From the freedom to explore to the technical challenge of flight and the amazing community of advice and support, seaplanes encompass everything she loves about aviation.

Katahdin Wings Chapter Chair Casey Raymond is a 20-year-old commercial pilot from Maine who holds a CFI Certificate and her ASES Additional Rating. Although her home is in the sky, she's found her calling igniting that spark in others, whether that be through community outreach, speaking with educational programs, or teaching her flight students. When she's not flying, she is also a student pursuing her A&P Certificate through the University of Maine at Augusta.

### Soaring – The Hidden Gem of Aviation

**Cynthia Fitzgerald**



Want to stay in the air for 10 hours for less than \$100? Learn the art of soaring. It's incredibly economical. It improves your skills as a powered pilot. It will hone all your stick and rudder

skills. You won't be nervous about making an emergency landing, because you will practice those skills on every glider landing. Please join Cynthia in learning more about soaring and a club near you.

Cynthia is a commercial instrument pilot with Land, Helicopter, Sea, and Glider Ratings. She was an Air Traffic Controller for 27 years with experience in Tower, Approach and Center. For the last ten years, she has focused on flying gliders and promoting the art of soaring in conjunction with her job as a mom. Cynthia is also the President of the Franconia Soaring Association.





## 2025 FEATURED CONFERENCE SPEAKERS AND SEMINARS

### Paying it Forward for the Future of Aviation and Aerospace

**Aileen Watkins**

Thursday, July 10, 10:30 a.m.



Aileen joined The Ninety-Nines immediately after receiving her Private Pilot Certificate in 1989. With the assistance of the Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship Fund, she attained the qualifications necessary to achieve her goal of airline Captain. Paying it forward to the next generation of pilots has been part of her mission, so she co-founded the Past Winners/ Pay it Forward Scholarship. This is her story and inspiration, which in turn may inspire you to achieve your goals and share your passion for flight with others.

Aileen is currently a Boeing 767 Captain with command positions in the Boeing 747, 767, 737, and ATR42/72. She has also worked as an Instructor, Check Airman and FAA Designated Training Center Evaluator on the HS-125. She was awarded a Master of Science with a dual emphasis in human factors in aviation/ aerospace and aviation/aerospace safety systems from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University. Aileen was also an original member of The Pro Ninety-Nines.

### Safety Seminar for FAA Wings Credit: Tools to Keep You Safe

**Doug Stewart**

Friday, July 11, 8:00 a.m.



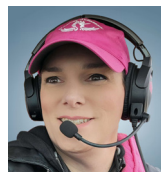
Risk management can be somewhat subjective, dependent upon a person's risk tolerance. The risk versus reward equation might keep one pilot from ever flying in anything other than benign conditions, whereas another pilot might eagerly launch into menacing skies. In this presentation, Doug will present a variety of tools to help pilots reach an objective assessment of the potential risks of any flight, assisting them in making the go, no-go decision.

Doug Stewart, an inductee into the National Flight Instructor Hall of Fame, and the 2004 National Instructor of the Year, is a full-time flight instructor focusing on real-world IFR training. To date, he has provided more than 13,500 hours of flight instruction. He has been a Master Instructor for 26 years and a Designated Pilot Examiner for more than 20 years. The Executive Director Emeritus of SAFE, Doug has served on the General Aviation Joint Safety Committee (GAJSC) and is also a subject matter expert for Pilot Workshops and Community Aviation.

### Be a Lifeline Without Needing a Lifeline

**Alyssa Miller**

Friday, July 11, 9:15 a.m.



Public benefit flying can be one of the most rewarding ways a pilot can utilize their privileges, providing a crucial lifeline to those in need. However, it sometimes proves to be a very challenging form of flying, as well. In this session, we'll examine lessons learned from flying relief missions in the wake of Hurricane Helene, animal rescues, and other flights for passengers with medical or humanitarian needs. You'll learn about the joys and some of the, perhaps, unanticipated challenges of flying these charitable public benefit missions.

Alyssa Miller is an instrument rated private pilot with over 800 hours of flight time. Flying her personal Cherokee 180 out of a small municipal airport in Southeast Wisconsin, she has flown public benefit missions for charitable organizations including Operation Airdrop, Pilots N Paws, Lifeline Pilots, Elevated Access, and EAA Young Eagles. When she's not out flying, Alyssa is a cybersecurity executive and recognized international public speaker.

### DOUBLE FEATURE!

#### Aviation for a Cause

Friday, July 11, 9:15 a.m.

Discover the transformative power of combining a passion for aviation with commitment to a cause. Join presenters Beth White and Kelli O'Donnell as they explore the intersection of aviation and altruism, showcasing two very different ways that aviation and nonprofit organizations can work together.

#### Women Build - Promoting Gender and Equity in Aviation

**Beth White**



Join Beth and other team members to hear about Habitat for Aviation's Women Build Planes program, an all-female team of "Rosies" building an airplane at Franklin County Airport in northwestern Vermont. Learn how they are showing folks everywhere that women build, fly, and fix airplanes.

Beth White is an education "possibilitarian", artist, writer, doula, mentor, aviatrix, breast cancer survivor, and Pilot-in-Command at Habitat for Aviation, which Beth established to provide real-world learning opportunities for youth and adults who love to work with their hands. Learning is grounded in relationships, relevance, and practice and provides an onramp for FAA A&P Certification through apprenticeship.

### Turtles Fly Too!

**Kelli O'Donnell**



Every year, more than 1,000 sea turtles are stranded in the Cape Cod area due to cold-stunning caused by exposure to cold temperatures for too long. With limited rehab locations in the area, max capacity is soon reached, and

Turtles Fly Too is called upon to move these turtles to facilities that can care for them until they are ready for release. Learn how Turtles Fly Too has increased survival for multiple protected species across the U.S., Canada, and beyond by utilizing general aviation aircraft to reduce transport time and stress.

Since 2019, Kelli has combined her love of sea and sky by volunteering with the nonprofit Turtles Fly Too. She has streamlined efficiency for the organization with her experience as a pilot, marine biologist, and familiarity with federal endangered species permitting. Kelli has also flown multiple missions, recruited several Ninety-Nines to be turtle fliers, and is currently investigating obtaining the first donated amphibious seaplane for the organization to further its mission.

### The Serendipity of Aviation - Flying to Greenland and More...


**Minnetta Gardinier**

Saturday, July 12, 1:30 p.m.



A friend of a friend was flying her Bonanza from Bellingham, Washington, to Greenland and had an unexpected last-minute need for a co-pilot replacement. Minnetta received the call as she was leaving AirVenture.

Three days later, she was on a flight to St. John's, Newfoundland, to join the adventure. The next morning, they launched northward, and Minnetta discovered a whole new definition of remote flying. Over three weeks, they landed in six Canadian provinces, one territory, and Greenland. It was a grand experience that was never on her radar, and now she will share it with you!

Minnetta Gardinier began flying at age 49 and discovered a new passion in life. She holds a Private Pilot Certificate and Instrument Rating and has landed in 47 of the Lower 48 States and competed in 15 Air Race Classics. She has been a member of the Iowa Ninety-Nines since 2006 and is currently serving as the International Vice President of The Ninety-Nines. 



## E-Z WINGS

### THE 99S PARTNER WITH FAA WINGS SAFETY PROGRAM

– Mary S. Build, *Director The Ninety-Nines, Inc.*  
*FAA Team Representative Liaison with the FAA*

The Ninety-Nines are reigniting our collaboration with the FAA as Industry Members. We are all encouraged to use the new access to the Wings Safety program at [www.ezwings.net](http://www.ezwings.net). That link will give you access to the FAA site. We now have an opportunity to show our depth of safety programs and share them with the FAA, and the FAA will be encouraging people to visit The Ninety-Nines' site. I highly recommend you participate in the Wings Safety seminars.

If you have any questions, please get in touch with me at [mary.build@gmail.com](mailto:mary.build@gmail.com).

### ARE YOU READY TO VOTE IN THE NEXT NINETY-NINES ELECTION?

– Kathy Fox, Chair,  
*Election Procedures Committee*

The next elections for International Directors, Committee members, and Trustees will be held from March 15 - May 1, 2025.

Voting online is easy, efficient, secure, and cost effective. Make sure that you have opted in for online voting (which is much less expensive than voting by mail). If you aren't sure of your status, please log in to The Ninety-Nines website and go to "Update Information." Look for this section (below) and select "yes," then make sure that you've listed your most current email address.

#### Online Voting

Online Voting: \*Would you like to vote online  
(versus physical mail)?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Voting online, rather than requesting a paper ballot, can really lower the voting costs for your organization.

Should you still prefer to receive a paper ballot, please make sure that you have updated your correct mailing address on file.

The choice is yours, thank you!



### THE NINETY-NINES AND LIGHTSPEED AVIATION: A NEW MEMBER BENEFIT PROGRAM FOR THE NINETY-NINES & FRIENDS OF THE NINETY-NINES

Lightspeed Aviation is excited to offer a special Members Benefit Program to members of The Ninety-Nines and Friends of The Ninety-Nines.

#### Affordable Access to Premium Headsets

Through this program, Lightspeed Aviation provides members with discounted access to their premium ANR headsets, the Lightspeed Delta Zulu® and Zulu 3.

- **Discounted Pricing:**  
Members of The Ninety-Nines and Friends of The Ninety-Nines are eligible for a \$100 discount on the Lightspeed Delta Zulu.
- **Charitable Funding:**  
Purchases made by any Ninety-Nines member or Friends of The Ninety-Nines through custom affiliate links will be eligible for donation contributions. Lightspeed will donate 10% of all eligible sales to the Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship Fund. Donations will be distributed monthly or quarterly, depending on the program's final structure.
- **Quarterly Drawings:**  
Lightspeed will host a quarterly drawing exclusively for Ninety-Nines members to win a FREE Lightspeed Delta Zulu headset.

Check out the next page for the QR code to access our custom portal with Lightspeed. Let's raise funds for the Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship while enjoying one of the best headsets on the market!

Link To Access 99s & Friends of The 99s Lightspeed Discount:  
[go.lightspeedaviation.com/ninety-nines](http://go.lightspeedaviation.com/ninety-nines)





*“Lightspeed is the leader in bolstering the culture and practice of safety in aviation...*

*...to ensure its longevity both from the experience of the aviator, and also the industry as a whole”*

— Sam Resop, Chapter Chair, Phoenix, Ninety-Nines, Inc



NINETY-NINES MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT

**Save \$100** on the  
**Lightspeed Delta Zulu today!**

*PLUS 10% of all purchases go to the Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship Fund*

 **LIGHTSPEED®**  
**DELTA ZULU**

## INTERNATIONAL AWARDS DEADLINE JANUARY 31, 2025

The International Awards Committee is soliciting nominations for five prestigious awards to be presented by The Ninety-Nines, Inc. at the 2025 International Conference in Burlington, Vermont. The deadline for submitting nominations is January 31, 2025.

### Award of Achievement (for Ninety-Nines)

Three Awards of Achievement may be presented for:

- Contributions to The Ninety-Nines
- Contributions to Aviation
- Humanitarian Efforts

**Who May be Nominated?** An individual member of The Ninety-Nines (living or deceased); a group of Ninety-Nines; or an organization within The Ninety-Nines, such as a Chapter, Section, Committee, or Trust.

\*\*\*An individual recipient must be a current member or have been a current member at the time of her death.

### Award of Merit (for non-Ninety-Nines)

Recognizes a significant contribution to any facet of aviation, such as aviation or aerospace education, aviation science, aviation history, aviation commerce, aviation legislation, etc.

**Who May be Nominated?** An individual (male or female, living or deceased) or an organization.

\*\*\*The recipient may not be a current or former member of The Ninety-Nines or of a group within The Ninety-Nines.

### George Palmer Putnam Award (for non-Ninety-Nines)

Recognizes support provided to The Ninety-Nines by an individual (male or female, living or deceased) or an organization. The contribution may have occurred in the past or present, as a single action or a series of events.

**Who May be Nominated?** An individual (male or female, living or deceased), or an organization. The recipient may not be a current or former member of The Ninety-Nines or of a group within The Ninety-Nines.

### Who may submit nominations?

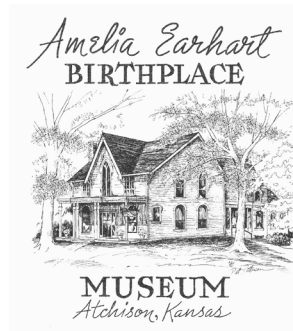
A Ninety-Nines Chapter, Section, or Trust.

How to nominate: Submit a one-page letter, signed by two officers or trustees (as appropriate). The nomination must include the name, address, and telephone number of the nominee or the nominee's next-of-kin if the nominee is deceased. Up to three additional pages of substantiating material may be attached to the letter.

Email your nomination to [awards@ninety-nines.org](mailto:awards@ninety-nines.org). Nominations should be received by the deadline, Friday, January 31, 2025.

**Note:** Previous nominees may be resubmitted

**Questions?** E-mail [awards@ninety-nines.org](mailto:awards@ninety-nines.org)



## EXPLORING AMELIA EARHART'S CHILDHOOD: STORIES OF ADVENTURE AND CURIOSITY

The "Amelia Earhart Stories" podcast, written by Purky Kidder and narrated by Heather Roesch, the Executive Director of the Amelia Earhart Birthplace Museum, explores the childhood

experiences of the legendary aviator Amelia Earhart. The podcast draws on stories published by Amelia and her sister, Muriel, about their early years. Each episode lasts about 10-15 minutes and highlights unique and playful moments from their childhood, such as memorizing "Peter Rabbit" at the age of four and referring to chickens as "domineecrips."

The podcast illustrates how Amelia and Muriel viewed life as one big adventure, filled with curiosity and discovery. Through these stories, listeners gain insight into the formative experiences that shaped Amelia's adventurous spirit and contributed to her groundbreaking achievements in aviation.

Inspired by the podcast, Mika Schader, the Assistant Director of the Amelia Earhart Museum, launched the blog "The Adventures of Meelie." Published in tandem with the "Amelia Earhart Stories" podcast, it helps to tell these delightful stories visually.

**LISTEN** to the podcast "Amelia Earhart Stories" here:

<https://tinyurl.com/mr2r8net>

**READ** the blog "The Adventures of Meelie" here:

<https://www.ameliaearhartmuseum.org/news-events>





# The Critical Role of Mental Performance Training in Aviation



**Tammy Barlette**

*Tucson Chapter,  
Founder and CEO of  
Crosscheck Mental  
Performance Training*

*Tammy, a retired Air Force pilot with extensive instructor experience in the T-37, T-38, A-10, MQ-1, and MQ-9, understands the critical role mental performance plays in aviation. Her passion for teaching and belief in the transformative power of mental performance training drives her mission to help aviators enhance focus, reduce stress, and build confidence. These skills are not only essential for success in the cockpit but are also crucial for maintaining peak performance in every aspect of aviation.*

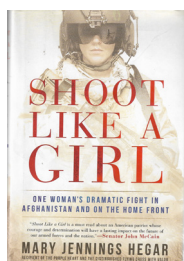
Flying demands much more than just technical skills. It requires a pilot to manage stress, maintain focus, make critical decisions under pressure, and recover quickly from mistakes. These mental challenges are a significant part of aviation, yet they are often overlooked in traditional training programs. Mental performance training, however, is designed to address this crucial aspect of flying, providing pilots with the tools they need to navigate the skies with confidence and precision.

For women pilots in particular, mental performance training can be an invaluable asset. In a field where female aviators may feel additional pressures or face unique challenges, having a strong mental toolkit is key. Confidence, focus, and stress management are essential components of a successful flying career, no matter what stage you're in – whether you're logging hours as a student pilot or managing the complexities of an airline cockpit.

Incorporating mental performance training into your routine can transform your flying experience. The foundation of this training involves understanding how the brain reacts under stress and how to apply specific techniques to maintain focus, composure, and confidence. Pilots are taught strategies such as visualization, self-talk, breathing techniques, and mental rehearsal. These tools are not only helpful in critical moments, like handling an in-flight emergency, but also in everyday tasks such as maintaining concentration during long cross-country flights or preparing for check rides.

The benefits of mental performance training are significant. Pilots who incorporate these techniques report lower stress levels, better decision-making, and increased productivity. Training your mind to stay sharp and calm leads to quicker recovery from mistakes, more effective learning during training sessions, and an overall enhanced flying experience. It can also help reduce anxiety related to performance, allowing pilots to fly with greater assurance in themselves and their abilities.

In aviation, mental resilience can be the difference between success and failure. By investing in mental performance training, pilots can reduce the cognitive load that comes with high-pressure flying environments and improve their overall performance. Ultimately, it's about having the mental capacity to manage the unexpected and maintain clarity in moments that demand fast, accurate decision-making. Whether you're flying solo or with a crew, these skills will set you apart as a pilot who is fully in command — not just of the aircraft, but of your mind as well. —



Publisher: *Shoot Like a Girl* | New American Library (Penguin-Berkley Publishers) Copyright 2017

*Fly Like a Girl* | Philomel Books (Penguin Random House Books) Copyright 2020  
Both available on Amazon



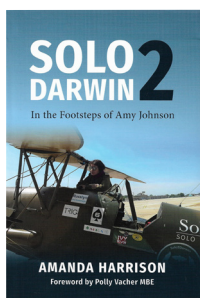
**SHOOT LIKE A GIRL:** *One Woman's Dramatic Fight in Afghanistan and on the Home Front*

**FLY LIKE A GIRL:** *One Woman's Dramatic Fight in Afghanistan and on the Home Front (Young Readers Edition)*

Author: Mary Jennings Hegar

Hegar's book is extremely honest and sometimes difficult to read, but I think that's one thing I liked best. She pulls no punches. The accounts of her service are stunning – her courage on and off the battlefield in Afghanistan is well-documented and a testament to who she was as a soldier and who she is as a person. One thing about both books that stands out for me is that there's very little difference between the accounts of her service in Afghanistan in the adult version and the young readers edition. There's no dumbing down of her flight experiences. Kudos to Hegar for doing that.

Hegar is the recipient of the Purple Heart and the Distinguished Flying Cross with Valor. That alone should whet your appetite for a good read – and add in the work she's done for women to officially service in combat roles. This book is a very timely report on the conditions for women in the military. I highly recommend it.



Publisher: Grub Street Publishing  
ISBN: 978-1911714040  
Copyright 2024  
Available on the Grub Street website: <https://grubstreet.co.uk/product/solo2darwin/>

**SOLO2DARWIN:** *In the Footsteps of Amy Johnson*

Author: Amanda Harrison (Foreword by Polly Vacher MBE)

This book is Harrison's account of her duplication of Amy Johnson's flight in a Tiger Moth from England to Australia in 1930. That sounds so simplistic – and this book definitely is not!

I had just finished reading *Alone in the Sky*, which is New Zealander Jean Batten's account of duplicating that same flight of Amy Johnson (along with so much more) in 1934. Those two flights were in a Tiger Moth with no radios! Harrison truly duplicated those flights when she chose to use no radios or modern navigation devices. I was truly shocked at how she replicated the same feelings I had when reading the other two accounts done so many years ago. Her experiences and her writing are wonderfully frightening. It's a great read.

As the book jacket says, "So strap in and prepare to go on a trip of a lifetime. Twelve countries, 2,600 miles, 46 flying hours, two engine failures, one aeroplane, one female pilot – all equals one amazing adventure!"

This is a book that should definitely be in your library. Plus, I absolutely love her photo on the second page of the book!



Publisher: Wheatmark  
ISBN: 978-1627873017 (Color Paperback)  
Copyright: 2015  
Available on Amazon

**FLY OVER DOWN UNDER:**

*Australian Adventures by Single-Engine Airplane*

Author: Michele Morgan Cabot, Tucson Chapter, Southwest Section

Saying this is a fun book is putting it mildly. It will make you jealous enough to look at trying the same experience. The trip route at the beginning of the book basically says everything about everything. However, as Michele says in her intro "Pulling It Together" the book pulls together the threads from "out of my head, notes, and aircraft log." Incidents, unfamiliar processes, hotels, restaurants, food, new friends – this book is a flying travelog that has it all.

Michelee's writing is a joy to read – lots of humor adds to the story. Each chapter flows through the route and is simply beautifully written. Technical enough to entice pilots, but also allows non-pilot readers to have a great experience with an extraordinary flight. I loved the book!



## Ask the AME



**Dr. Rachael Ferraro**

Senior AME,  
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho  
Aviate Medical PLLC  
www.aviatemedical.com  
208-777-5282

I wasn't sure whether to dive right into a topic or introduce myself first. I love covering a lot of ground, but why trust my opinion until you know who I am, right? So here goes.

I'm a new Senior Aviation Medical Examiner (AME) based in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. I moved here six years ago and have been practicing Internal Medicine for almost 20 years. Over the years, I've often listened to my husband talk about the FAA and the flight physicals pilots undergo. He always seemed stressed out by them, which fascinated me. Why are pilots so anxious about a physical?

As the years went by, I noticed the same pattern among our pilot friends. They would stress over any ailment or, worse, ignore symptoms of illness out of fear of losing their medical certification. This pattern hit home when we nearly lost a friend to stage 4 colon cancer in their 50s because they chose to ignore the signs rather than risk their medical certification. I knew this had to change.

Earlier this year, I decided to become an AME. I'm 15 years younger than the average AME and part of a small percentage of female AMEs. So, what else sets me apart? My journey began with the perspective of a commercial pilot.

I spent months researching what makes this exam so intimidating. What information could I share to help ease pilots' tension? How could I empower them to live healthy lives? How could I help pilots navigate the process when medical conditions arose?

I started by asking the pilots themselves. My husband was first, followed by numerous pilot friends of all ages and medical classes. I compiled a list of trusted local specialists I've worked with over the years to ensure pilots had access to care when needed. I also created a schedule to address pilots' concerns whenever they need me.

In October, I traveled to Oklahoma to complete my training, filled with excitement. Believe it or not, the FAA offers many avenues for pilots to continue flying safely, even when medical conditions arise. I returned ready to take the next steps. I made time to visit flight schools and give talks. I attended pilot association meetings, answering questions from those who might otherwise have been afraid to ask their own AME.

I also quickly found The Ninety-Nines and am so glad I did. I felt welcomed into this elite group of women and can't wait to contribute!

I plan to continue writing articles that touch on the examination process, disease management, FAA procedures, and anything else this amazing community needs. I want to make it my mission to guide you through the process and get you back to doing what you love. My ultimate goal is to empower healthy living for a lifetime of flying.

Thank you for having me and join me next time for a deep dive into the examination process. 🏆

## Careers

### The Power of Now

By Donna Miller, *Colorado Chapter*



Where has your mind been focused lately? Are you thinking primarily of the past, the present, or the future? Of course, your thoughts shift as you go about your day, but where does it rest when you're not focusing on the task at hand? There's no wrong answer, but noticing can be helpful.

My runner friend, Mary, has a watch with features that tell her everything she's done and is currently doing. She knows her heart rate, pace, stride, and the list goes on. She can track her progress by looking at her past performance and adjusting her current workouts. She can plan her workout week ahead based on this compiled data. She seems to move easily between the past, present, and future. And she does really well when race day rolls around.

I've been thinking about this as I ponder goals and habits moving into the new year. It isn't enough to set goals and work toward them. If you don't set a strong habit pattern to accompany your goals, it's easy to get sidetracked and lose your way. (Just look at the gym attendance statistics from January to March.) On the days that you just don't want to do anything, it's important to remember how strong habits done now create your future. I love how different it feels to say, "I want to become a widebody Captain," compared to, "What would a successful pilot do right now?"

Because the tide in our industry changes so quickly and profoundly, it makes it even more important to keep your habits strong and consistent through it all. I remember when the pandemic hit, there were so many pilots who stopped flying because the outlook was so bleak. I encouraged pilots that that was the best time to get ahead! Get a new rating, stay current and build the requisite experience so that when (not if) the industry improved, they would be in a better position to take advantage of the upturn.

The industry turned around faster than any of us thought it would, and hiring was at an all-time high when the restrictions were lifted. What a great time to get into the game if you were prepared! While hiring has slowed a bit while the airlines determine what comes next, remember to keep your good habits steady.

If you are where you want to be, know that the good habits you establish are still important. If you fly for a living, you know that you always have recurrent training on the horizon. Even if you fly for fun, it's always less stressful to get onto the plane feeling confident that you are prepared for the worst-case scenario.

Start this year fresh with good habits that will allow you to look back and know you've done the best you can do. Start each day with good habit patterns that will get you where you want to be in the future. Your life is made up of the choices you make each day: Make them good ones. 🏆

# Places to Go & Things to Do



Left: Visit the weird and wonderful Salvador Dali Museum across the street.

Right: Chill out at The Vinoy Veranda Bar overlooking the yacht basin, or stay the night at the resort.



**Mary Bryant**  
*Florida Suncoast  
Chapter*

*Mary has been a pilot and 99 for over three decades. She holds ATP, CFII, MEI, and CE500 Ratings. She is an aviation business owner, aircraft owner, and active pilot. She loves to fly and is always looking for places to go and things to do; suggestions always welcome!*  
[marybryant100@gmail.com](mailto:marybryant100@gmail.com)

With the short, gloomy days of winter approaching in many areas of the country, we shift our focus to the warm and sunny southern regions of the U.S. where we are entering the best time of the year to fly. Although Florida has been battered by hurricanes this year, its balmy days and sunny beaches now beckon. Few locations have more to offer than my home town airport of St. Petersburg, Florida, the Albert Whitted Airport (KSPG).

Albert Whitted is a beautiful, historic waterfront airport located next to downtown St. Petersburg. The Hangar Restaurant, on the second floor of the terminal, overlooks the airport and yacht basin. It has outstanding food from breakfast through dinner and offers entertainment on weekend evenings. The grouper sandwich, our area's iconic offering, is outstanding, as are the fish tacos. For burger fans, you can't do much better elsewhere. From the terminal, walk across the street to the Salvador Dali Museum, which houses the largest collection of Dali paintings and sculptures outside of Spain. Its world-class exhibits feature the latest technology. It was among the first in the U.S. to host the immersive Van Gogh walk-in exhibit and offers a downloadable mobile app, which makes Dali's evocative paintings seem to move and come alive, along with other frequent multisensory experiences.

St. Petersburg is a thriving artist community. It's home to the Morean Arts Center, The Chihuly Collection, the James Museum of Western & Wildlife Art, the Museum of Fine Arts, glassblowing and clay studios, and many galleries – all within easy walking distance of the airport. Continue your walk past the Dali along

the waterfront parks and Yacht Club, and you'll reach several blocks of sidewalk restaurants featuring a variety of world cuisines. If your walk takes you out to the end of the pier, home to even more restaurants, you'll pass the St. Pete Museum of History, which houses a replica of the Benoist flying boat. This craft put St. Petersburg on the map as the home of the first scheduled airline. The Benoist's first scheduled flight was between St. Petersburg and Tampa – approximately thirteen miles. The Benoist is also depicted on the side of the control tower at Whitted Airport.

In addition to the many sidewalk and waterfront restaurants, St. Petersburg is also home to more than 35 craft breweries. Burn off some calories riding the hop-on, hop-off pedal pub as you self-propel yourself around the pub scene. Take a walking tour of over 170 murals in the downtown area or, if something more offbeat appeals, schedule time with your friends on the floating tiki bar or a Segway tour. Biplane rides, helicopter tours, and kayak excursions are also available.

For those who can't resist the call of the beach, the SunRunner Bus runs from downtown St. Petersburg to St. Pete Beach. Rental cars can be obtained at the airport or you can always Uber to the many other beaches in the area. Some of these beaches routinely rank in the top 10 in the world. Although the beaches have been battered by recent storms, they are, hopefully, on their way to recovery by the time this is published.

Boutique and chain hotels are abundant in the area, with the historic Vinoy being the elegant grand dame of them all. Many weekends feature waterfront festivals, so be sure to book ahead.



# Milestones

**Nanette Barrett**  
Instrument & Commercial  
– Houston Chapter



**Alana Bicoy**  
Commercial  
– Old Dominion



**Kiegham Broney**  
Commercial  
– British Columbia Coast



**Emily Cemazar**  
CFI  
– Michigan

**Piper Colantone**  
Private  
– Chicago Area



**Catherine Doody**  
Solo  
– British Columbia Coast

**Ashley Elsensohn**  
Multi-Engine Instructor  
– NOLA

**Karen Ghatala**  
Solo  
– British Columbia Coast

**Charlotte Gibson**  
Commercial  
– Canadian Rockies

**Esmeralda Guzman**  
Solo  
– Sutter Buttes



**Sarah Haskett**  
Commercial  
– Michigan



**Kensie Hewson**  
Multi-IFT; Seaplane  
– Canadian Rockies



**Bridgett Higgins**  
Private  
– Monterey Bay



**Crystal Hoffman**  
ATP  
– San Diego



**Jennilee Huculak**  
Commercial  
– Canadian Rockies

**Kendra Huttema**  
Commercial  
– Canadian Rockies



**Candace Lamb**  
Instrument  
– Appalachian Aviatrices



**Brie Lorey**  
CFI  
– Bay Cities

**Cherry Kan**  
Commercial  
– Michigan

**Audra Knieper**  
Solo  
– NOLA



**Morgan Kuzera**  
PIC Type Rating  
in the Citation CE-525  
– Michigan

**Mona Madry-Adams**  
CFI  
– Bay Cities



**Lauren Mangus**  
Commercial  
– Florida First Coast



**Rachel Morrow**  
Multi-engine; CFI  
– Michigan

**Mandi Neumann**  
CFII  
– Wisconsin

**Claire Posey**  
Multi-Engine Commercial  
Add on  
– NOLA



**Destany Parker**  
Instrument  
– Michigan



**Ann Marie Sutter**  
Boeing 767 Captain Upgrade  
– Mt. Shasta



**Sophia Taylor-Home**  
CFI  
– Monterey Bay



**Amanda Tosto**  
Class 2 Flight Instructor  
Rating  
– British Columbia Coast

**Paulina Umansky**  
Private  
Houston Chapter

**Darlene Woelfel**  
Multi-Engine & Commercial  
Houston Chapter



**Cherish Wurts**  
Instrument  
– San Diego





## NOLA CHAPTER

Every year for about 25 years, with just a few exceptions during COVID-19, the NOLA 99s have gathered for an overnight we call Top Gun. It's always been a great tool for building relationships. Through the fun of this event, we share our aviation dreams and desires along with the frustrations we may encounter. We used to meet at one of our member's homes who could accommodate us. But that has changed as we age. Because it is such a strength building event full of camaraderie, the seasoned members pressed hard to do it again. We asked a neighbor who has a lovely hangar if we could use his place for the night. As he fully supports aviation, he gladly welcomed us into his schedule. Over 25 women attended. More than half were our newer members who surely benefitted from this. Interestingly enough, NOLA has grown in the last year and half with over 45% new members! We really want to love these girls through the challenges, and this Top Gun event does well to do that. Our evening rounded out with the young bloods spread out on their blow-up mattresses amidst the vintage aircraft watching Top Gun on a screen which hung on the hangar door. Nothing could be sweeter.

– Mae Marquet



## ALABAMA CHAPTER

Alabama Chapter members were busy in the last few months attending events with the goal of introducing The Ninety-Nines and all the benefits of membership, as well as providing hands-on aviation activities that included aircraft weight and balance and making foam plate airplanes.

– Kathleen Powell



*Top left: Meagan Slappey discussing weight and balance at WAI Girls in Aviation Day at the Southern Museum of Flight in Birmingham, Alabama. | Top right: Abigail Abercrombie and Kimberly Wilcox at the Annual Moontown Airport (3M5) Fly-in. | Bottom left: Abigail Abercrombie, Kathy Powell, and Meagan Slappey at the Girl Scouts Leadership Summit in Trussville, Alabama. | Bottom right: Kathy Powell and Nancy Miller-Borg at Career Aviation Day at St. Clair County Airport (KPLR) in Pell City, Alabama.*



## NORTHEAST KANSAS CHAPTER

Members of the Northeast Kansas Chapter met at Lawrence Regional Airport (KLWC) on November 23, 2024 to plan activities for 2025, including participating in or working at the Air Race Classic. (Several in attendance had to leave before the photo.)

– Sara Tompson

*Front row, left to right: Michelle Stauffer, Linda Meyer, Tammy Willits, Sara Tompson. Back row, left to right: Joyce Parker, Robyn Lee, Laura Burnham, Mira Wilson, Cheri Thompson, Ann Shaneyfelt*



*Left: Gold Cup Air Rally participants arriving the evening before the rally. | Right: The Gold Cup Air Rally winners: Holly Linn, Anna Pangrazzi and Sarah Rondeau.*



## EAST CANADA SECTION

The East Canada Section held its annual Gold Cup Air Rally (GCAR) in September. This year, it was a one-day rally in southern Ontario with Wingham Airport (CPR7) as its base. The East Canada Section Air Rally was started by the First Canadian Chapter member Marilyn Dickson over 20 years ago. It's not a race but a series of challenges focused on skill improvement, including map reading, flight planning, fuel calculations, spot landings, and more. The rally can be a one-day event or several days to farther destinations. The Air Rally has featured destinations ranging from Calgary, Alberta, and Denver, Colorado, to Newfoundland, and everywhere in between. There are questions about the history and geology of the places flown over and about the identification of landmarks, as well as history and knowledge questions about The 99s. There can be questions about survival in remote areas flown over. Envelopes with the challenges are handed out, which are marked and scored. Winners are announced at a final awards banquet.

We usually gather at an airport the evening before the rally starts. There is a reception and dinner where the excitement flourishes and bubbles over. This year, it was a one-day local rally in southern Ontario starting in Wingham Airport owned by Ninety-Nines member Summer Papple. There was a route that we had to decipher through clues, landmarks to

find by calculating latitude and longitude, and questions to answer. The route took us to the shores of Lake Huron with its aqua green water reminiscent of the tropical waters of the Bahamas. Then north along the Lake Huron shore to the Bruce Peninsula. One spot calculated and identified was a sunken ship wreck that we could spot in the crystal-clear water near the northern tip of the Bruce Peninsula, and another was the Grotto, a sea cave. Then south along the Georgian Bay shore line with Niagara Escarpment visible and back to Wingham Airport. It's such a beautiful place to fly over. The minimum number of pilots required is two. It would be too much work for just one pilot. Lunch was enroute at the Wiarton Airport (CYVV) on the peninsula, where there is a display about Canada's first licensed female pilot, Eileen Vollick, who was born there. Ninety-Nines helped to rename the airport terminal after Eileen.

Answers to the questions were handed in on arrival in Wingham before dinner where the winners were announced. This year the winners were Holly Linn, Anna Pangrazzi, and Sarah Rondeau. They were presented with the Gold Cup which they get to take home and keep for a year. So much is learned in these rallies. But best of all is the camaraderie and the friends that are made.

– Akky Mansikka





Top left: Izzy Kearney, Sandra Shelton, Julie Harris. Back: Gabby Cassettari. Front: Diana Miller, Mystie Hartpence, Holly Blunk, Gail Foote, Dawn Mills, Phylis Hensley, Cyndi Ice, guest Alana Stewart, Teresa Camp, Kristi Kelly-Bolner. | Top right: Cyndi Ice, Elaine Regier, Allison Schlotthauer, Gail Foote, Mystie Hartpence, Teresa Camp, Holly Blunk, Addison Dry, Izzy Kearney. | Bottom left: Chapter members aboard the KC-135 refueling flight. | Bottom center: Cyndi Ice, Allison Schlotthauer, Elaine Regier, Angela Drabek, Teresa Camp at the FAA/CAMI hypoxia chamber. | Bottom right: (back to front) Allison Schlotthauer, Maddie Sibilia, Cyndi Ice, 49½ Damin Hartpence, Elaine Regier, and Teresa Camp get ready for a cold plunge.

## OKLAHOMA CHAPTER

The Oklahoma Chapter was very busy for three weeks in November. Several Oklahoma Chapter and other South Central Section members attended a gala to honor The 99s' 95th anniversary. The event was organized by the Oklahoma Aerospace and Aeronautics Department and Sandra Shelton and was held at the Oklahoma State Capitol in Oklahoma City.

Members then visited the 507th Air Refueling Wing stationed at Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma and experienced flight in a KC-135 to refuel a B-52. Izzy Kearney is the Director of Operations for the unit and scheduled the flight.

Members soon after met up at the FAA Civil Aerospace Medical Institute (CAMI) to experience the hypoxia chamber and cold water survival program. Oklahoma Chapter Secretary Cyndi Ice scheduled this educational event.

– Cyndi Ice



## FIRST CANADIAN CHAPTER

### Celebrating Women in Aviation at the Elsie MacGill Northern Lights Award

Several 99s from the First Canadian Chapter attended the 15th annual Elsie Awards gala in Toronto, Canada, celebrating Canadian women who have made a significant contribution to aviation. They are true trail blazers. It's the "Oscars" of aviation. Instead of getting an Oscar, the honorees are presented with an Elsie, named after Elsie MacGill, Queen of the Hurricanes, fighter aircraft produced for World War II that played a key role in the Battle of Britain. Elsie was a Canadian engineer, businesswoman, advocate for women's rights, and first female aeronautical engineer in the world. Members of the First Canadian Chapter started the Elsie MacGill Northern Lights Award, which has grown into a huge annual gala, inspiring future generations.

– Akky Mansikka





Attendees at the Fall North Central Section Meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

## MICHIGAN CHAPTER

Our Aviation & Space Education Chair, Melanie McNicholas, writes a monthly update on pertinent safety and proficiency topics. Her topics this fall included fall flying in Michigan, checklist modifications, sharing expenses with passengers, crosswind landing proficiency, fuel contamination in below freezing temperatures, types of aircraft icing and resources for getting accurate weather briefings regarding forecast icing conditions.

Our chapter members purchased children's aviation books during September and October, shared the books at our October Zoom meeting, and the books will now be donated to a school in the Detroit Public Schools. Titles included: *Violet the Pilot*; *Born to Fly*; *The Fearless Flights of Hazel Ying Lee*; *Fly High! The Story of Bessie Coleman*; *Skyward: The Story of Female Pilots in WWII*; *Mae Jemison: A Kid's Book about Reaching Your Dreams*; and *Katherine Stinson: The Flying Schoolgirl*.

Frances Rose, Michigan Chapter Secretary, and I attended the Fall Section Meeting at Minneapolis, Minnesota, in September. The behind-the-scenes tour at Delta Airlines was very fun and informative. We look forward to attending the Spring Section Meeting in Iowa City, Iowa, in April 2025 and hosting the Fall Section Meeting in Michigan in 2026.

We hosted another successful Girls Fly Too event with the Girl Scouts of Southeast Michigan on October 5, 2024, at Michigan Aviation FBO at the Pontiac Airport. Forty-two Scouts and over 20 adults attended. Thanks to Frances Rose for coordinating the event.

Kelly Jost was the featured guest of Shaesta Waiz on AVIATE Platform, a podcast released in September 2024. Kelly spoke about having been a member of the FAA Women in Aviation Advisory Board (WIAAB)

which worked over a two-year period to produce a detailed report, *Breaking Barriers for Women in Aviation: Flight Plan Future*, which is being promoted by Women in Aviation International (WAI) and by many other aviation organizations. Listen to the podcast here:

<https://bit.ly/4gjCFVm> Read the advisory board's report here: [https://www.faa.gov/regulations\\_policies/rulemaking/committees/](https://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/rulemaking/committees/).

We hosted the Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore on November 2, 2024, at the Cherry Capital Airport (KTVN) for a Girls Fly Too event. It was the first of these events to be held in Northwestern Michigan, and it had been the hope of Sandy Denton to host such an event for the girls in this part of the state. Sarah Pagano, Midland Barstow Airport Manager, brought together a great group of volunteers to share their passion for aviation with the girls, their leaders and parents.

At our November chapter meeting, Rebecca Durbin, Michigan Chapter 99 and Captain in the U.S. Marine Corps, shared her journey towards becoming a Naval Aviator and flying the MV-22 Osprey. Rebecca is currently working towards a shift to the civilian sector and plans to eventually come back home to Michigan.

On December 7, 2024, Pearl Harbor Day, we will meet and celebrate one last time our 90th anniversary of becoming a chapter in The Ninety-Nines.

Appropriately, we will have breakfast at The Bomber Restaurant where Rosie the Riveter is prominently featured, then we will adjourn to the Michigan Flight Museum & Air Adventures at Willow Run Airport in Belleville, Michigan, where many Rosies worked to help build B-24 Liberator aircraft for the war effort in World War II.

– Linda Langrill





Top: 99s Kenosha Meeting – Jill Feldman with her gyroplane. | Bottom: Ellen, Cynthia, Shelley, and Madeleine at NCS Meeting in Minnesota.

## CHICAGO AREA CHAPTER

A recent chapter meeting was held at the Feldman hangar in Kenosha, Wisconsin (KENW) – a great day for “Gyromania” and fall colors! An interesting program on gyroplanes was presented by Jill Feldman, meeting hostess, and her 49½, Dan, after the business portion of the meeting. Showcased were their two gyroplanes, one of which they built at the factory in Germany. Jill has recently soloed in the gyroplane – you go girl!

The Minnesota 99s hosted a wonderful Fall Section Meeting at Bloomington, Minnesota, Cambria Hotel adjacent to Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport (KMSP). From pick up at Flying Cloud Airport (KFCM) to a hot air balloon demonstration, to a Friday night dinner cruise on the river, through hours of hospitality (their hospitality room had a margarita machine). Then Saturday morning breakfast and business meeting, afternoon tours of the airport (incredible access was provided), and a really nice banquet with silent auction. Of course we took pictures. Four Chicago 99s attended: Ellen O’Hara, Cynthia Madsen, Shelley Ventura, and Madeleine Monaco.

– Diane M. Cozzi



Top: Kentucky Bluegrass members and guests at their November meeting, hosted by Chapter Chair Evie Sapp and Secretary Chloe Park. | Bottom left: Brooklyn Richendifer instructing Hindio Garad on the sim. | Bottom right: From left to right: Chloe Park, Brooklyn Richendifer, and Evie Sapp.

## KENTUCKY BLUEGRASS CHAPTER

Kentucky Bluegrass members Sue Glisson, Kaye Moore, and Terri Donner were among Ninety-Nines posing in front of the Oklahoma Capitol Building. Our thanks to Representative Nicole Miller and the Oklahoma 59th Legislative Women’s Caucus in partnership with the Oklahoma Department of Aerospace and Aeronautics, Will Rogers International Airport (KOKC), and Sundance Airport (KHSD) for a delightful evening and banquet in the beautiful Oklahoma Capitol Building in Oklahoma City, in honor of The Ninety-Nines 95th anniversary.

Our November meeting was hosted by Chapter Chair Evie Sapp and Secretary Chloe Park, both aviation program students at Eastern Kentucky University (EKU). We met at Central Kentucky Regional Airport (KRGA) in Richmond, Kentucky, where we learned about the university’s aviation program. Also hosting the meeting were Madeline Elliott and Brooklyn Richendifer, ECU aviation students. We didn’t waste any time signing them up, and both are now members of the Kentucky Bluegrass Chapter. After trying out the simulator, we had a delicious salad and pizza lunch.

– Susan Glisson





## BRITISH COLUMBIA COAST CHAPTER

British Columbia Coast Chapter held their chapter meeting on Saturday, November 2 while celebrating the 95th anniversary of The 99s! The meeting was held at the Aero Club of British Columbia at Pitt Meadows Regional Airport (CYPK).

– Madeline Ungurain



Top: Painting the compass rose. (Photo courtesy of Sandra Smith). | Bottom left: Painting the compass rose. Pictured is Julie Seel (back to the camera), Chapter secretary Kris Morisen (center), Chapter chair Jan Squillace (standing). | Bottom right: (from left to right) Rosemary Gibson, Julie Seel, and Chapter Chair Jan Squillace. The final three standing after completion of the compass rose at Wayne Executive Jetport, Goldsboro, North Carolina. (Photo courtesy of Rosemary Gibson).

## KITTY HAWK CHAPTER

### Ninety-Nines Mark Wayne Executive Jetport

On October 19, 2024, the members of the Kitty Hawk Chapter painted a 50-foot compass rose at the Wayne Executive Jetport (KGWW) in Goldsboro, North Carolina. The compass rose is used by pilots to help ensure the accuracy of their compasses. A group of 15 women pilots gathered to paint the compass rose: Chapter Chair Jan Squillace, Vice Chair Debbie Dukeman, Secretary Kris Morisen, Marlene Raseta and her daughter Maria, guest Brook Heyel, Sandra Smith, Emily Wallace, local flight instructor Egie Blackman, Egie's daughter and two nieces.

The compass rose is part of various airmarking programs. The Ninety-Nines have completed since the early days of aviation when pilots relied on signs or ground markers to point their way while flying. Through the efforts of founding member Phoebe Omlie in 1934, The Ninety-Nines have painted numbers on runways, names of airports on rooftops, and refurbished wind markers in addition to the compass rose.

Airports that would like airmarkings can contact their local chapter and request the airmarking they would like. Because The Ninety-Nines are a nonprofit, they request that the airports provide the supplies for the project while the chapter will provide the pilot-power to mark and paint the airmark.

– Krista L. Morisen, PhD



Witches of the South Wicked Gathering attendees from left to right: Morgan Bennett, Abigayle Abercrombie, Liucija Smaizyte Wright, Kathy Powell, Jessica DeCorte, Barbara Drake, Terri Bazacos, Lois Horne, Deborah Yarbrough, Ramona Banks, Janice Pelletti, Linda Richards, and Eileen Hamby.

## MEMPHIS CHAPTER

On October 26, 2024 at St. Clair County Airport (KPLR), the Alabama and Memphis Chapters hosted the Witches of the South Wicked Gathering. Activities for the community included trunk or treat with airplanes and cars, Pell City Animal Shelter pet adoptions, and luncheon. The trunk or treat was well attended by the community with upwards of 100 attendees, including kids of all ages and some dressed in costume. Kids were able to sit inside the cockpit of some of the planes, which was frightening for some and exhilarating for others. The event was a huge success, and there is talk about holding it again next year. Pell City hosted a hangar party afterwards where food, fellowship, and games were provided leading to loads of laughter and fun!

– Lois Horne



# Grass Roots



Top: (left to right) Hannah Rust, Gail Keys, Cynthia Axell, Nancy Schuster, Martha Reith, Chuck Tippet (Flying Circus pilot), Laura Savino, Karen Doyle (Peggy's sister holding the flag), Jerry Whitehouse (Peggy's son), Mary McCutcheon, Pete Sinclair (Flying Circus skydiver), Krystal Whitehouse, Brian Whitehouse (Peggy's son), Tammy Whitehouse, Beth Whitehouse (Peggy's daughter). Sue Passmore is in the Stearman in the background right. (Photo taken by The Flying Circus). | Bottom: 99s from left to right: guest Jeannine Bouvier, Kim Wolfe, Morgen Reeb, Melissa Plumer, Laura Savino, Nancy Schuster, Sue Passmore, Debbie Gallaway, Marge Shaffer, Colleen Whitehouse, Cynthia Axell, guest Charlene "Charlie" Haskell, Martha Reith, Mary McCutcheon. Missing in the photo: RJ McGlasson, Marti Constantinos.

## OLD DOMINION CHAPTER

Family, The Flying Circus, and the Old Dominion 99s celebrate Peggy Doyle's Life

The Flying Circus Airshow in Bealeton, Virginia, (<https://www.flyingcircusairshow.com>) dedicated its last show of their 54th season to Peggy Doyle, who sadly flew to new horizons September 14, 2024. The skydiver opened the show carrying the U.S. flag that flew at half-mast during the show. Later, the whole crew of the airshow signed the flag and presented it to Peggy's family. Jana Leigh Sheaffer performed the wing-walking routine. The missing woman formation was a moving end to the show.

Thanks to Chuck Tippet and the Flying Circus for organizing the memorial activities and giving us a day of celebration in the air in Peggy's name.

The previous day, the Old Dominion 99s gathered with Peggy's family to celebrate her life in her own backyard. It was part Oktoberfest and part Irish wake. We told stories, laughed, cried, and cheered a life well lived. Peggy was a charter member of our chapter and she is missed each and every day.



## Our newest Life Members

**Jo Agee-Housler**  
San Antonio Chapter

**Rosemary Albrecht**  
New Jersey Chapter

**Tamara Barto**  
Aloha Chapter

**Judith Freitag**  
San Antonio Chapter

**Virginia Gallenberger**  
Member at Large

**Robin Laws**  
Ambassador Chapter

**Gail Lingo**  
Eastern Pennsylvania Chapter

**Pamela Melroy**  
Antelope Valley Chapter

**Marilyn Patierno**  
New Jersey Chapter

**Jan Pessel**  
Midnight Sun Chapter

**Teresa Quemada-Vives**  
Arabian Section



## Our most recently enlisted Friends of The 99s

**Amanda Bird**  
Nepean, Ontario

**Stephanie Folsom**  
Atchison, KS

**Preeti Lnu**  
Homestead, FL

**Kathleen McCartan**  
Pensacola FL

**Kayon McLeod**  
Whitby, Ontario

**Arthur Meconi**  
Portsmouth, NH

**Ike Newton**  
Cropwell, AL

**Chloee Page**  
Murfreesboro, TN

**Beverly Sweeny**  
Prospect, KY



## New Horizons

This space is dedicated to our members and 49 1/2s who have passed on to New Horizons. We will miss them, and thank these 99s for all of their contributions to our organization.

**Mary Story**  
Life Member  
August 1, 2024  
Chicago Area

**Billie Downing**  
October 13, 2024  
Eastern New England Chapter

**Patsy Dawn Knox**  
Charter Member  
of the Arabian Section  
October 21, 2024  
Arabian Section

**Sophie Thibodeaux**  
November 17, 2024  
Houston Chapter

**Jan Hoopman**  
November 25, 2024  
Australia Section

**Margaret Brennan-Maxey**  
December 7, 2024  
Mt. Shasta Chapter

**Judith Bolkema Tokar**  
December 9, 2024  
New Jersey Chapter

**Correction** | Nov/Dec issue, p. 16, International Forest of Friendship Inductees Report:

Deborah Yarbrough served as Past-President of Professional Women Controllers.



# “SiriusXM helps me find the best tailwinds.”

Emmy Dillon, 777 Cargo & Air Race Pilot



“My use of SiriusXM weather begins on the ground where I’m able to see ahead to the weather conditions at our destination. Inflight, I use it to find what altitude has the best tailwinds and the base radar to help me avoid pop-up storms.”

#### Emmy Dillon

~2,500 hours, ATP, CFI, CFII, IFR, tailwheel, high performance and complex endorsements

International Cargo Airline Pilot, Air Race Classic Education Director, 2016 Air Race Classic Winner, 99s Chapter Scholarship Chair, B-25 pilot for the Commemorative Air Force, Patriots Jet Team music coordinator

## SiriusXM AVIATION

Learn more at  
[siriusxm.com/aviation](https://siriusxm.com/aviation) or watch why  
Emmy flies with SiriusXM weather  
by scanning the QR code.



**IMPORTANT INFORMATION:** The SiriusXM Service may include traffic, weather and other content and emergency alert information and data. Such information and data is not for “safety for life,” but is merely supplemental and advisory in nature, and therefore cannot be relied upon as safety critical in connection with any aircraft, sea craft, automobile, or any other usage. Service not available in AK or HI.

© 2024 Sirius XM Radio Inc. SiriusXM and all related logos are trademarks of Sirius XM Radio Inc. and its respective subsidiaries. All rights reserved.





# CONTINUING THE TRADITION

JOIN US NEXT SUMMER FOR OUR 48TH AIR RACE CLASSIC

June 17 – 20, 2025 | Fairhope, AL – Spokane, WA

Register Between January 2nd and March 31, 2025 | [www.airraceclassic.org](http://www.airraceclassic.org)