

March/April 2026



# Ninety-Nines

*Inspiring Women Pilots Since 1929*

## HOW I SHED MY NEANDERTHAL PRIDE

BONUS: A REMEDY FOR AVIATION'S  
"MANPOWER" PROBLEM

*p. 14*

*plus*

**CHARTER MEMBERS  
2026 INTERNATIONAL  
ELECTIONS**

## Ninety-Nines Magazine

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International Organization of Women Pilots<sup>®</sup>

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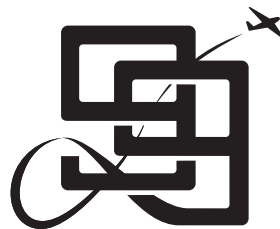
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## MISSION STATEMENT

The Ninety-Nines<sup>®</sup>  
International Organization of Women Pilots<sup>®</sup>  
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

Friends of The 99s member Greg Anderson with CFI Sydney Swartz  
of the Wisconsin Chapter, shortly after he completed his biennial  
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## Thank You to Our Sponsors



## 2026

### MAR

- 6-7 **International Board of Directors Meeting**  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
✉ [HQ@ninety-nines.org](mailto:HQ@ninety-nines.org)
- 19-21 **Annual Women in Aviation Conference**  
Gaylord Texan Resort & Conference Center  
Dallas, Texas  
☐ [www.wai.org](http://www.wai.org)
- 21 **Bluebonnet Airshow**  
Burnet Municipal Airport  
Burnet, Texas  
✉ [austinhillcountry99s@gmail.com](mailto:austinhillcountry99s@gmail.com)
- 27-29 **North Central Section Spring Meeting**  
Batavia, Ohio  
*All-Ohio Chapter*  
✉ [Val Palazzolo, val.palazzolo@gmail.com](mailto:Val.Palazzolo@gmail.com)

### APR

- 1 **Deadline: First Wings Applications to Chapter AE Chair** (or Section AE Chair, if there are no chapters)  
✉ [Apply@AEScholarship.org](mailto:Apply@AEScholarship.org)
- 4 **Flying Companion Course**  
MLAA Hangar, Peyton, Colorado  
*Pikes Peak Chapter*  
✉ [publicity@pikespeak99s.org](mailto:publicity@pikespeak99s.org)
- 14-19 **Sun 'n Fun Aerospace Expo**  
Lakeland, Florida  
For members Use Discount Code: NNI999 (capital letter I)
- 18 **Northwest Section Spring BOD Meeting**  
Wenatchee, Washington  
✉ [Bonnie Molitor, bonniemichele@outlook.com](mailto:bonniemichele@outlook.com)
- 18 **Zonta Club "Come Soar with Us"**  
Austin Hill Country Chapter  
✉ [austinhillcountry99s@gmail.com](mailto:austinhillcountry99s@gmail.com)
- 25 **New York-New Jersey Section Spring Meeting**  
Innovare Center  
Rome, New York  
✉ [Lisa Hotung, lisa.hotung@gmail.com](mailto:Lisa.Hotung@gmail.com)

- 25-26 **New England Section Spring Meeting**  
Rockland, Maine  
*Katahdin Wings Chapter*  
✉ [Casey Raymond, caseymraymond@gmail.com](mailto:caseymraymond@gmail.com)

### MAY

- 1-2 **South Central Section Spring Meeting**  
Wichita, Kansas  
*Air Capital Chapter*  
✉ [Patricia Burruss, patriciaburrussjd@gmail.com](mailto:patriciaburrussjd@gmail.com)
- 1-3 **Mid-Atlantic Section Spring Meeting**  
Churchville, Maryland  
✉ [Naomi Koehler, nlkoehler@outlook.com](mailto:nlkoehler@outlook.com)
- 1-3 **Southeast Section Spring Meeting**  
Sarasota, Florida  
✉ [Holly DiLecce, hdilecce@myakka.com](mailto:hdilecce@myakka.com)

- 2 **Queen Bess Centennial Aviation Film Festival**  
Bult Field, Monee, Illinois  
☐ [BessFF.com](http://BessFF.com)

- 29-31 **East Canada Section Annual Meeting**  
TBD, Canada  
✉ [Rani Tolton, rgtolton@gmail.com](mailto:rgtolton@gmail.com)

### JUN

- 23-26 **49th Annual Air Race Classic**  
East Alton, Illinois to Mount Vernon, Illinois  
☐ [Airraceclassic.org/event-details.htm](http://Airraceclassic.org/event-details.htm)
- 26-28 **JHV German Section**  
Annual General Meeting  
Hildesheim (EDVM)  
☐ <https://ninety-nines.de/>  
✉ [Sabina Jaeckel-Engler, scjaeckel@gmail.com](mailto:scjaeckel@gmail.com)

### JUL

- 8-12 **Ninety-Nines International Conference**  
San Diego, California  
☐ [ninety-nines.org](http://ninety-nines.org)
- 20-26 **EAA AirVenture Oshkosh**  
Oshkosh, Wisconsin  
☐ [www.eaa.org/airventure](http://www.eaa.org/airventure)

### AUG

- 27-30 **Northwest Section Fall Meeting**  
Teton Valley, Idaho  
✉ [Beth Chapple, bethchapple@gmail.com](mailto:bethchapple@gmail.com)

### SEP

- 12 **International Forest of Friendship 50th Anniversary**  
"World Friendship through Flight"  
Induction Ceremony  
Atchison, Kansas  
☐ [www.ifof.org](http://www.ifof.org)

### OCT

- 2-4 **North Central Section Fall Meeting**  
Indianapolis, Indiana  
Indiana Chapter  
✉ [Erin Hammer, erin@hammergrip.tv](mailto:erin@hammergrip.tv)

### NOV

- 6-7 **International Board of Directors Meeting**  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
☐ [HQ@ninety-nines.org](mailto:HQ@ninety-nines.org)

## 2027

### SEP

- 8-12 **Ninety-Nines International Conference**  
Sydney, Australia

**MAGAZINE SUBMISSION DEADLINES**  
are one month prior to issue date.  
MAY/JUN issue deadline: Apr 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

## Participation Is Your Power

### From Ballots to Booths to Belonging

One of The Ninety-Nines' quiet strengths is the many ways we can belong. Some members lead from the front, others work steadily behind the scenes, and others show up when they can, and all of it matters. As we begin a new year, that spirit of participation is more important than ever.

Our elections are coming up, and with them an opportunity for every member to help shape the future of The Ninety-Nines. Many of us may not personally know the candidates, and that's common in a global organization. What matters is having clear, thoughtful information to guide your vote. Next month we'll share candidate resumes, statements, and short three-minute videos in the Members Area. Please take a few minutes to review them and vote, because voting is one of the most direct ways members influence the direction of our organization. Details and voting information are included in this issue and in the Members Area at [ninety-nines.org](http://ninety-nines.org).

Participation also means showing up for one another – sometimes literally. In March, I'll be at the Women in Aviation Conference, and at SUN 'n FUN in April. If you're attending either event, please stop by The Ninety-Nines booth to say hello, connect with fellow members, and pick up some Ninety-Nines swag. And if you're able, we'd love volunteers, especially at SUN 'n FUN.

### **Volunteer at the 99s Booth**

**WAI Booth Volunteers:** [signup.com/go/OwLWKge](https://signup.com/go/OwLWKge)

**SUN 'n FUN Booth Volunteers:** [signup.com/go/QmjHoQZ](https://signup.com/go/QmjHoQZ)

To our chapter leaders, thank you. You are often a new member's first point of connection, and that role has never been more important. One of the most effective ways to help new members feel welcome is by offering small, approachable ways to get involved. Not everyone is ready to Chair a committee, but many would gladly help with social media, write a short newsletter item, organize a casual new-member coffee or fly-in, take photos at an event, or jump in on a one-time task. These small onramps build confidence, community, and momentum. Try something simple, see who responds, and adjust, engagement grows best when it feels inviting rather than intimidating.

As we look ahead, I also encourage you to register for our Ninety-Nines Annual Conference in San Diego. This year's program features dynamic speakers and timely seminars, conversations you won't want to miss. The annual Conference is where ideas spark, friendships deepen, and members return home energized with fresh perspectives for their chapters and their own aviation journeys.

Today's student pilots, newer members, and early-career aviators are watching how we lead, how we invite participation, and how we pass the torch. When we vote, volunteer, mentor, and welcome others in – even in small ways – we strengthen the foundation for the next generation of Ninety-Nines.

Our future doesn't rest on a single election, event, or initiative. It's built steadily – member by member – through participation. Thank you for being part of that work, and for helping ensure The Ninety-Nines remains vibrant, relevant, and welcoming for generations to come.

# Executive Director Message



**Jill van Egmond**

*Executive Director  
The Ninety-Nines, Inc.*

**A**s your Executive Director, I want to share why our Board of Directors – and your vote – matter so much to the future of The Ninety-Nines. Our board is made up of member-pilots that you elect, and are entrusted with guarding our mission, stewarding our resources, and charting our long-term course. They are not managing every daily detail, but they are ultimately responsible for where we are going and how we get there together.

## What Your Board Actually Does

Think of the board as the organization’s cockpit crew for strategy and oversight. They clarify and protect the mission of The Ninety-Nines and set our long-term direction. They hire, support, and evaluate key leadership, rather than managing every task themselves. They review budgets and financial reports, ask hard questions, and make sure we are using member dues and donations wisely. They also open doors for partnerships, scholarships, and programs, and represent The Ninety-Nines in the broader aviation community.

When the board does its job well, you may not always see it in obvious ways, but you feel it in the stability, credibility, and continuity of our organization.

## Why a Strong Board Matters to You

A strong board is your safeguard that The Ninety-Nines will be here for the next generation of women pilots, not just for the next event or fiscal year. It helps ensure that decisions are grounded in our mission, our history, and the needs of our members – not in the preferences of one person or one moment.

A healthy board brings independent oversight, so there is accountability for how decisions are made. It protects the financial health of the organization, which directly affects scholarships, programs, and support to sections and chapters. It also sets the tone for ethics, transparency, and inclusion across the organization. When the board is strong, The Ninety-Nines are strong – and that benefits every member.

## Your Role in Governance as a Member

In a membership organization like The Ninety-Nines, you are not just a participant – you are part of our governance structure. Our bylaws and policies give members specific rights, and one of the most important is choosing who sits on the board.

If you do not participate in elections, a small number of voices decide who represents all of us. When you do vote, you shape the values, perspectives, and priorities in the boardroom. Your vote is one of the most powerful tools you have to influence the long-term health and direction of The Ninety-Nines.

## Why Your Vote Really Matters

I know it can be tempting to think, “My one ballot will not change anything.” In member-driven nonprofits, though, elections are often decided by surprisingly small margins – your ballot can absolutely be the difference between two very different leadership teams.

When you vote, you help protect the mission by choosing leaders who clearly understand and support what The Ninety-Nines stands for. You strengthen the organization’s legitimacy, because a board elected by an engaged membership speaks with greater authority to donors, partners, and the wider aviation community. You also send a clear message that members are watching, care about good governance, and expect thoughtful, responsible leadership.

If we encourage women to take the controls in the cockpit and raise their voices in aviation, our internal elections are one way we live that value. Showing up to vote inside our own organization is part of modeling the leadership and participation we want to see in the wider world.

## How to “Pre-Flight” Your Ballot

I encourage you to treat your ballot like a pre-flight: a quick, intentional check before you act. Before you vote, you might:

Read the candidate statements and ask: Do they understand the mission and unique culture of The Ninety-Nines?

Look at their experience: Have they shown up for meetings at the chapter, section, or international levels?

Have they served on committees? Do they demonstrate follow-through?

Consider balance: Does this slate bring a mix of skills, backgrounds, and perspectives that reflect our diverse membership?

Then, **please vote**. Even if you only spend a few minutes, you are exercising a responsibility that only members can fulfill. When more Ninety-Nines participate in elections, we get a board that better reflects who we are – and we keep this organization in strong, capable hands for years to come.

# Holding Short

## Bessie Coleman Centennial Aviation Film Festival Takes Flight in Chicago Area



*A first-of-its-kind aviation film festival celebrates courage, innovation, and the future of flight.*

CHICAGO – The legacy of aviation pioneer Bessie Coleman – the first African American and Native American woman to earn a pilot’s license – will rise again with the launch of the Queen Bess Centennial Aviation Film Festival, a new national celebration of aviation history, innovation, and storytelling, on Saturday, May 2, 2026, at Bult Field (C56) in Monee, Illinois.

Marking the centennial of Coleman’s death on April 30, 1925, the festival honors her fearless spirit while looking ahead to the next century of flight. Founded through a collaboration between the Chicago Southland Chamber of Commerce, Advanced Air Mobility Institute, Vertiport Chicago, Tuskegee Airmen, Bessie Coleman Aviation All-Stars, and Aviatrix Company, the festival uniquely combines film, technology, education, and community engagement.

“Aunt Bessie opened the sky for everyone,” says Gigi Coleman, great-niece of Bessie Coleman and founder of the Bessie Coleman Aviation All-Stars. “This festival carries her legacy forward, showing young people that aviation is not just a career, but a calling.”

### About the Festival

The Queen Bess Centennial Aviation Film Festival (BessFF.com) is the first U.S. film festival dedicated entirely to aviation – bridging early flight history with emerging technologies such as electric aircraft, eVTOLs, drones, and sustainable aviation systems. Through film and live experiences, the festival showcases stories of courage, equity, innovation, and environmental responsibility.

The one-day event at Bult Field (C56) 28261 S. Kedzie Ave., Monee, Illinois, will include:

- Film screenings of short and feature films exploring aviation history, women in flight, and future-forward technologies
- A special presentation by Gigi Coleman, featuring her acclaimed one-woman show on Bessie Coleman’s legacy
- Tuskegee Airmen official honorary flyover and a presentation, honoring history and service
- Electric aviation and eVTOL demonstrations, offering hands-on exposure to next-generation flight
- Panel discussions with women leaders, engineers, pilots, and filmmakers on diversity and sustainability in aerospace
- Youth and family STEM programming, including storytelling workshops inspired by Coleman’s life
- A special screening of *Discovering Bessie Coleman* by Florida Goldcoast member Captain Beth Powell
- Special events at Vertiport Chicago, connecting innovation with real-world infrastructure

### Festival Leadership

The festival is produced by Chicago Area Chapter member Susan Roe Musacchio, an award-winning filmmaker, third-generation aviator, and founder of Aviatrix Company. Musacchio’s work bridges aviation history, women’s leadership, and the future of sustainable flight through film, festivals, and public education. She is also the creator of the Queen Bess Centennial Aviation Film Festival and the Little Fort Film Festival, which spotlight underrepresented voices in aviation and environmental stewardship. Her films explore legacy – from early flight to electric aviation – while inspiring girls and communities through STEM, storytelling, and access to the skies. Susan is also a student pilot!

“Our goal is to connect the fearless spirit of Bessie Coleman with the future of flight – one powered by imagination, sustainability, and equity,” says Musacchio. “Her story reminds us that aviation isn’t just about aircraft. It’s about possibility.”

### Why Now

As aviation enters a new era defined by sustainability and access, the Queen Bess Centennial Aviation Film Festival offers a timely platform to reflect on the past 100 years and to inspire the next generation of pilots, engineers, filmmakers, and innovators to take flight.

For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact Joanne Levine, [JoannePR@aol.com](mailto:JoannePR@aol.com).

## Registration for the 49th Annual Air Race Classic Has Opened



St. Louis Regional Airport, Illinois – The Air Race Classic (ARC), the longest-running all-women pilots’ cross-country air race in the United States, is excited to announce that registration for the 2026 race has officially opened and continues through March 31. This historic 49th annual race will take place from June 23-26, 2026, highlighting the rich aviation heritage of the Midwest and Southeast.

The 2026 race route spans approximately 2,400 nautical miles, beginning at St. Louis Regional Airport (KALN) in East Alton, Illinois, and concluding at Mount Vernon Airport (KMVN) in Illinois. Along the way, teams will test their skills and endurance through a series of enroute stops.

The 2026 race route includes stops in Frankfort, Kentucky (KFFT), Spartanburg, South Carolina (KSPA), Douglas, Georgia (KDQH), Tanner, Alabama (KDCU), McComb, Mississippi (KMCB), Russellville, Arkansas (KRUE), St. Joseph, Missouri (KSTJ), and Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin (KPDC).

The Air Race Classic continues to be the epicenter of women’s air racing, bringing together pilots of all experience levels – from college students to veteran racers. The Air Race Classic, Inc. looks forward to welcoming teams as they celebrate 97 years of women’s air racing.

Full eligibility details, the E-01 Rules, and registration links are available at [www.airraceclassic.org](http://www.airraceclassic.org).

For media inquiries or more information, please contact:

ARC Publicity Team  
Email: [publicity@airraceclassic.org](mailto:publicity@airraceclassic.org)  
Website: [www.airraceclassic.org](http://www.airraceclassic.org)

# Holding Short

## Ninety-Nine Trailblazer Captain Emily Howell Warner 50th Anniversary Alert

– Penny Rafferty Hamilton, *Idaho Chapter, Spirit of Flight volunteer*



Captain Emily Warner in her Frontier Airlines left seat. (Courtesy Emily Warner Field Aviation Museum).

In June 1976, **Emily Howell Warner** made United States aviation history again by becoming the first female to upgrade to captain for Frontier Airlines. In 1973, Emily was the first woman hired to fly for Frontier. Emily not only opened the airline flight deck for other women, she also invited them to join her. According to retired airline Captain Billy Walker, who often flew with Emily at Frontier, “Emily’s first flight in the left seat was on the Otter, with Steve Rosevear as her first officer. Between 1973 and Frontier’s demise in 1986, Emily would fly as first officer and captain on the DHC-6, Convair 580, and Boeing 737.”

Frontier’s fleet included the deHavilland Twin Otter turboprops because of their short landing and takeoff capabilities. Frontier was Denver-based, serving smaller airports in Colorado, Montana, Utah, New Mexico, Texas, Arizona, and Kansas. As Emily’s seniority increased, she moved eventually to the Boeing 737 routes.

Captain Emily Warner continued a distinguished aviation career with Continental Airlines, United Parcel Service, and with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as a flight

examiner and aircrew program manager for United Airlines Boeing 737 fleet. During her years in the sky, she logged over 21,000 hours, earning the FAA Wright Brothers Award. She was inducted into the Women in Aviation International (WAI) Pioneer Hall of Fame, named a Legend of Aviation, is in the National Women’s, National Aviation, and Irish-American Halls of Fame. In Colorado, her home state, she is included in the Women’s and the Aviation Halls of Fame. In 2015, her mountain home airport, Granby-Grand County Airport (KGNB), was renamed Emily Warner Field. Emily was always proud of her Ninety-Nines roots. The 2011 Ninety-Nines Award of Achievement for Contributions to Aviation held special meaning for her.

Author, Ann Cooper Lewis, described the late Emily Warner as a “modern first lady of commercial aviation.” In *Weaving the Winds* she wrote, “Emily wove the winds of chance, of change, and of opportunity into her career.” In 2026, around 9,000 women are airline pilots across the United States. Emily Warner and her airline sky sisters of the International Society of Women Airline Pilots (ISA+21) opened the flight deck for today’s professionals. Their motto then and now, almost 50 years later still rings true. “We are the global voice to Inspire, Support, and Advocate for female airline pilots.”

## Adventures at the NAFI Summit

– Diane Earhart,  
*Greater St. Louis Chapter*



On September 22 and 23, 2025, Greater St. Louis Chapter member Diane Earhart, participated in the National

Association of Flight Instructors (NAFI) Summit at the Military Aviation Preservation Society (MAPS) Museum in Akron, Ohio. During the Summit, she and fellow CFII, Gary Streeter, gave a presentation entitled “Death by Deadline.” Diane was the “belle of the ball” in her sectional dress, custom made by Pilot Quarters. While in Akron, Diane was able to meet with one of her first flight students from over 30 years ago, Vince Scalia, a local resident and former C135 flight engineer. Vince treated Diane and Gary with a personal tour of several local aviation sites as well as Kent State University where the trio visited the memorials to the protesters shot on May 4, 1970. While enroute to the Summit, Diane and Gary stopped at Uranus Fudge Factory at the border of Indiana and Ohio. In addition to enjoying gastronomic treats, they walked through the Vortex Tunnel, an open catwalk through a rotating tunnel of colored lights and mirrors that one would typically find in a carnival fun house. They agreed it would be a perfect simulator for students to experience spatial disorientation.

## Wright Brothers Master Pilot Awardees

**Pat Groves** (49 1/2 of Kathy Groves)  
June 2015 – *Santa Clara Valley Chapter*

**Patricia “Pat” Jayne Keefer**  
February 2022 – *Fort Worth Chapter*

**Kathleen Fagre**  
May 2025 – *Colorado Chapter*

**Phyllis Tate**  
May 2025 – *Midnight Sun Chapter*

If you would like to share the announcement of this award with others, please email your information to [Patohlsson@fly-in.com](mailto:Patohlsson@fly-in.com). Include: Name, Month, Year, and Chapter Name.

FAA Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award Applications are available on the FAA website.

Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award has certain eligibility requirements. One is that the effective start date for the required 50 years is the date of the nominee’s first solo or military equivalent.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

### Florida First Coast Chapter Written Scholarship Winners

– Jessica Mendez, Membership Chair Florida First Coast Chapter

Congratulations to our 2025 Florida First Coast Written Scholarship Winners! Please help me in congratulating **Jasmyne Perkins** and **Kit Gjendem**! Each of them will be reimbursed for a written exam and we look forward to seeing their progress as they continue on their “Pilot Walk.”



**Jasmyne Perkins** is from our Florida First Coast Chapter. She is 17 years old and is already a Private Pilot, and the first pilot in her family. Her goal is to fly as Captain on the 777A. Jasmyne

is also active with Jr. ROTC, Women in Aviation (WIA), and EAA. She says she prefers Cessnas over Pipers and “can’t wait to continue my aviation dream.”



**Kit Gjendem** is from the Air Hearts-Utah Chapter. She describes her “Pilot Walk” as humble, confident, and determined. Kit was inspired to pursue aviation after the pilot of a flight-

seeing tour in Alaska commented, “You can do this.” After her first discovery flight she knew she was committed to becoming a professional pilot. Kit plans to become a flight instructor and looks forward to mentoring other student pilots. She says, “Those knowledge tests begin to add up so I’m extremely grateful to have been considered and selected.”

### Paris Dolinger Rocks Her Aviation Goals

– Cristina Gouin  
Treasure Coast Chapter Chair

The energetic Treasure Coast Chapter Secretary, **Paris Dolinger**, is rocking the certifications, passing Fundamentals of Instructing (FOI) exam with 100%, and she also passed her IFR ground exam with flying colors on New Year’s Eve day. Paris also won the Treasure Coast 2025 yearly



scholarship, using the \$2,000 to work on her IFR flight skills. Way to go, Paris! Paris is homeschooling her two children, and working on creation of an online aviation ground school program for youth to access. When not doing all the above she enjoys flying her dad’s Carbon Cub, and delivering Cub parts across Florida. She will be chairing our Treasure Coast 99s Girl Scouts in Aviation Day slated for May, 2026.

### Pikes Peak Chapter Von Alter Scholarship Winner

– Sarah Nguyen, Publicity Chair Pikes Peak Chapter



*Melissa Kurrle (left) being awarded the Von Alter Scholarship by our Scholarship Chair, Patsy Buchwald (right). Photo taken by Sarah Nguyen.*

On December 6, 2025, the Pikes Peak Chapter awarded the chapter’s Von Alter Scholarship in the amount of \$1,500 to **Melissa Kurrle**. Melissa, the current chapter Secretary, intends to use it towards her CFII training. She can be contacted at [secretary@pikespeak99s.org](mailto:secretary@pikespeak99s.org).

This Chapter scholarship is named for LaVonna Alter, June 6, 1928 - October 10, 2012. “Von” joined the The Ninety-Nines September 5, 1969, and was a member of the Pikes Peak Chapter, and the now-dissolved Colorado Chapter of Silver Wings. She earned her Commercial, Instrument, and Multi-Engine ratings before going on to receive flight instruction

in both a hot air balloon and a sailplane. She not only participated in the “Powder Puff Derby” and other women’s air races, she was an active member of both the general and aviation community. Von served as Co-Chair of the Pikes Peak Chapter and remains an inspiration to us all.

## MEET OUR MEMBERS

### Eastern Pennsylvania Chapter Member Susan Maule Retires

– Captain Susan Maule



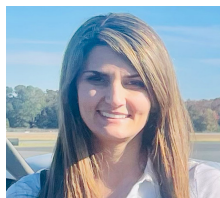
This past fall I retired after 40 years as an airline pilot. Starting in 1985, I flew Metroliners for Wings West in California, then from 1986 to 2025 at Piedmont (the original USAir) and American Airlines I flew the Fokker F28, Boeing 737, 757, 767, Airbus A330, and Boeing 787. My last flight was PHL-Amsterdam-PHL on the 787. To celebrate, 25 friends and crew dined on a private boat cruise on the canals in Amsterdam. On board the flight home were many friends, including my very first passenger, my brother Brent. I was 17 and he was 4. Also on board was my flight instructor, retired American Airlines Captain Brian Van Wagnen who, along with my dad, Ray, took turns signing me off for the 12 planes I soloed on my 16th birthday. They also signed me off for my Private Certificate and Commercial Rating. He taught all three of us to fly.

It was a fantastic final trip. I am grateful and humbled for all I learned and experienced, and for the people and sights that will stay with me always.

# Holding Short

## REPORTING POINTS

### Eastern Pennsylvania Chapter News



Eastern Pennsylvania Chapter member **Shahd Majeed** is working on her Multi-Engine training.

### WINGS Reminder and 10,000 Hours Achieved

– Sarah Nguyen, *Publicity Chair, Pikes Peak Chapter*



November 19, 2025, **Zoan Harclerode** of the Pikes Peak Chapter passed the CE-525 Type Rating annual recurrent check ride and earned

Basic, Advanced and Master WINGS. Zoan reminds us all that completing a course of training and passing a check ride or certification test qualifies for at least one phase of WINGS in the FAA's Pilot Proficiency Award program. Information is available at [faasafety.gov](http://faasafety.gov).

On July 5, 2025, during a flight from KTYX (Knoxville, Tennessee) to KOXC (Waterbury, Connecticut), Zoan logged her 10,000th hour as a pilot! She currently serves as Treasurer of the Pikes Peak Chapter, and we are proud and grateful to have her in our Chapter. Zoan would like to give a special shout-out to Lori Bednarik, member of the Eastern Pennsylvania Chapter, Mid-Atlantic Section, and Lori's husband Ed, who greeted her on the ground later that day at KRDG (Reading, Pennsylvania).

*Photo by First Officer Amado Cervantes.*

### Michigan Chapter Successes

– Barb Vukits, *Michigan Chapter*



**Kim Fanelli** had the honor and excitement to fly left seat with an Egyptian Air Force pilot in Cairo, Egypt. She flew in a single engine ZLIN 143 out of Sphinx International Airport (SPX). The flight included views down the Nile River, over the beauty of the historic city, around the Giza Plateau, and the Great Pyramids.

Kim shared that the experience was awe-inspiring and she described it as “a flight of a lifetime.”



**Rachel Morrow** achieved her 1,500 hours total time in late December and started as first officer with Endeavor Air on January 20, 2026.

**Esme Lowry** passed her Stage 1 check ride at Crosswinds Aviation in December 2025 and soloed on January 24, 2026. Esme was awarded an Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship last fall. She is being mentored by Deborah Howell.

**Haley Haley-Sellers** passed her Private Pilot check ride in January 2026 at the historic Willow Run Airport (KYIP). Haley felt this was a perfect location for her becoming a licensed pilot as Willow Run is where they built thousands of B-24 Liberators during WWII.

## Historic Research Help Needed!

Looking for a way to volunteer for The 99s at the International level?

### Join The Team

Do you enjoy writing and proofreading? Historical research and meeting new chapter members? Consider joining the team of talented and dedicated members of the Publications Committee. This is a great way to get involved with The 99s and can be accomplished remotely, with flexible time commitment.

We are actively seeking writers to interview members, proofreaders with a sharp eye for grammatical and graphic details, and researchers to assist in our Charter Member project. Committee members also assist with outreach to Governors and Chairs of the various International committees to remind them of deadlines and encourage submitting Grass Roots, Milestones and Committee Reports.

### CONTACT US

Contact Publications Committee Chair Lori Plourd at [news@ninety-nines.org](mailto:news@ninety-nines.org) or [99spubschair@gmail.com](mailto:99spubschair@gmail.com)

*Looking forward to hearing from you!*

## So You Want to Train in a C-Registered Aircraft With Only an FAA Certificate?

By Kelli O'Donnell, *Florida Suncoast Chapter*

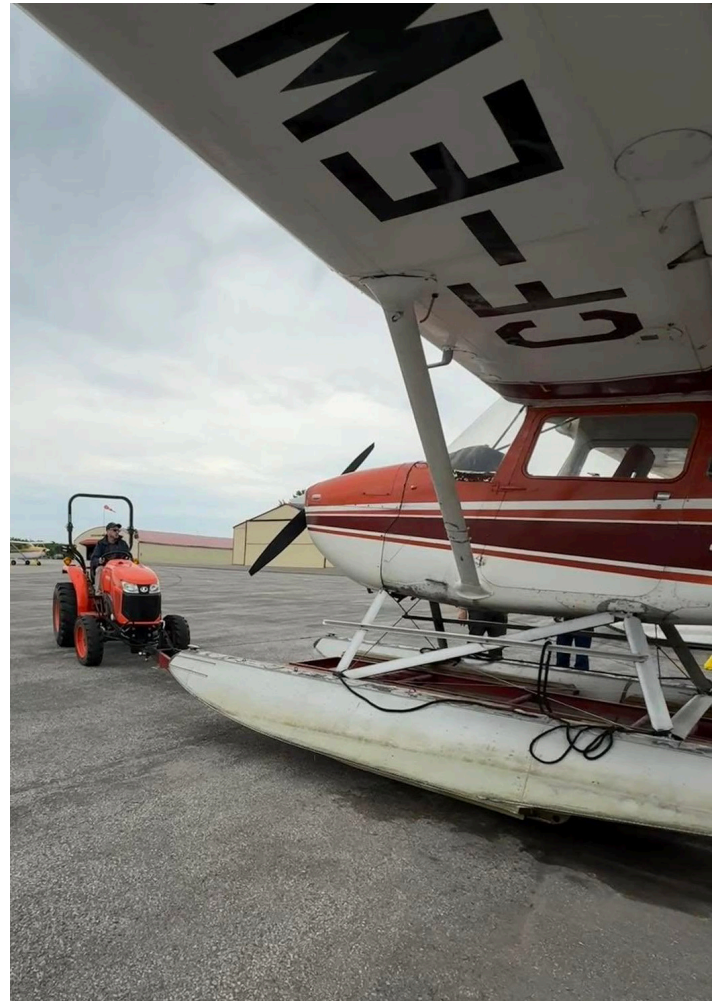
As part of the process of putting my Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship application together last fall, I had to find out if I needed a Transport Canada License to be able to conduct and legally log seaplane training in a C-registered aircraft as only a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Certificated pilot. I had two options.

This article describes two paths that can be followed to log flight training in a C-registered aircraft when you hold only a FAA Certificate. The first is simple: Yes, apply for a Transport Canada License. As a FAA Certificate holder, this process is fast tracked to a point, as a conversion process is followed that bases issuance on your FAA Certificate. Training and a check ride are not required to be eligible for a Transport Canada License at the private level; however, a conversion written test of around 20 questions must be completed. Where this starts to get difficult is that separate tests must be completed for a private conversion, night flying conversion, and/or an instrument conversion. In order to be eligible for a commercial Transport Canada conversion, both a written and a check ride are required.

Unlike in the United States, a person is not eligible to take a written until they have obtained a Canadian Medical Certificate. This exam can only be completed in Canada. Also, unlike the U.S., the Medical Certificate is not issued at the end of the exam. The medical examiner must first send in the results to Transport Canada, where they will review it and base their decision on whether they agree with the medical examiner's decision to issue. It took a little over a month to receive my medical from Transport Canada after my exam. There is little opportunity for medical walk-ins, and all written tests must be scheduled and taken in Canada. In my experience, there is also very little availability to take a written last minute. This means that unless you live close to the Canadian border, this process will most likely involve more planning since multiple trips and appointment scheduling will need to be completed. Transport Canada no longer allows the initial medical or any of the written tests to be conducted outside of Canada. However, the first medical renewal can be conducted virtually from another country before the requirement to conduct it again in Canada is required.

After completing the medical exam and passing the written test(s), a Transport Canada Conversion License can be applied for. Once a Private Transport Canada Conversion License is received, a person is eligible to log training time in a C-registered aircraft. If a Commercial Transport Canada Conversion License is received, a person is not only able to log training time in a C-registered aircraft, but also able to receive compensation. Interestingly, in the case of seaplane flying, a person is also able to instruct in seaplanes once they have received 50 hours of flight time in a C-registered seaplane, even if they do not have an instructor's rating from either country.


The easier route is to apply for a Transport Canada Foreign License Validation Certificate (FLVC). This can even be approved for FAA Certificate commercial pilots who have received a job offer in Canada in a C-registered aircraft and plan to receive

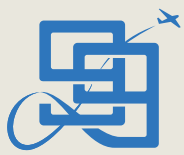


compensation. However, this is a temporary option and not a permanent one. The FLVC is only good for one year. The process involves filling out the Transport Canada application, submitting the required FAA Certificate, Medical Certificate, and passport documents and, of course, paying a fee. Approval is based on review of FAA submitted documents and took a little over a month for me to receive. If flying a C-registered aircraft for longer than a year, another application must be submitted. Transport Canada does prefer that a permanent license is applied for over multiple temporary FLVCs if long-term flying is anticipated.

In my situation, applying for a FLVC was the most efficient since my known training time was going to be temporary. However, I took the time while I was in Canada to start the process of converting my FAA Certificate by obtaining a Canadian Medical. I am currently in the planning stage to see when I can return to Canada to take my written exams. For those with Transport Canada Licenses, the FAA has a similar conversion reciprocity program.

Hopefully this information will open up some of your opportunities to explore flying in another country. It was definitely worth it for me.

\*Information provided was correct at the time of writing. For the most up to date information, please go to the respective FAA or Transport Canada websites. 



## CHARTER MEMBERS

By Penny Rafferty Hamilton, Ph.D., Idaho Chapter

### Mary Hanmer Goodrich Jenson

November 6, 1907 – January 4, 2004



Born in 1907 to a prosperous Connecticut family, Mary's grandfather managed the Hartford and New York Steamboat Company and the Hartford & Wethersfield Horse Railway. Mary attended the Collegio Gazzola in Verona, Italy and then attended Gibbs College, founded in Providence, Rhode Island. Wikipedia claims, "The Gibbs schools promoted a message of female empowerment, while focusing on the type of education that would be most valuable to women at the time."

Next, Mary went to Columbia University. At age 20, she applied to the Hartford Courant to become a journalist. It was around this time that Mary began her flight training. The newspaper leadership hired Mary on the condition that she become a licensed pilot. In 1927, Mary became the first female licensed pilot in Connecticut. She was the first woman hired by the Hartford Courant with her own byline. She was the first female newspaper aviation editor in the New England area.

In 1928, Mary bought her own airplane, a Kreider-Reisner KR-21. A new model cost around \$4,000; in 2026 dollars that would be around \$76,000. Her airplane was a sporty, two-seat biplane with tapered wings and a Kinner radial engine, known for its sturdy build and good handling. Mary began competing in air shows, air racing events, and "bomb throwing," which involved dropping bags of flour at ground targets. The precision flying experience was a valuable skill.

In 1929, Mary was invited to the meeting of women pilots where The Ninety Nines was formed. In the early 1930s, Mary flew her biplane around Connecticut, encouraging women to fly. She became a director of the short-lived Betsy Ross Air Corps (1931-1933) founded by Opal Kunz, also a Ninety-Nines charter member. In 1933, Mary became the first woman to fly solo to Cuba from the United States. Mary's flight was remarkable because aviators of that era faced significant challenges with primitive navigation equipment, unreliable aircraft technology, severe weather exposure, and significant institutional barriers for women.

Sadly, after her historic aviation triumph, failing eyesight grounded Mary. In 1936, Mary was the only female passenger on the Hindenburg airship when it overflew Hartford. Interestingly, Mary was then hired by Walt Disney Productions' promotion department in California to work on the film Dumbo, the flying elephant. It was there Mary met her future husband, Carl D. Jenson. In 1940, they married.

In 1941, they moved back to Wethersfield, Connecticut, where Mary became heavily involved in civic volunteerism. She founded and led the town's Women's Association. She served on the Board of Education, and the Council of Social Agencies of Greater Hartford. In 2000, she was honored with induction into the Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame for her significant achievements in aviation, journalism, and her community. In January, 2004, Mary Goodrich Jenson flew West.

### Nellie Zabel Willhite

November 22, 1892 – September 2, 1991



Born in 1892 on a cold November day in South Dakota, Eleanor "Nellie" Zabel had a challenging childhood. At an early age, measles left her deaf. A few years later, her mother died. While Charley "Pard" Zabel loved Nellie, he knew she had special needs. Nellie was sent to Sioux Falls to attend the South Dakota School for the Deaf. Nellie learned to read lips. She adapted to her hearing loss, becoming extremely independent. After graduation, Nellie briefly married Dr. F.V. Willhite. However, Nellie's independent spirit did not match that

of her very professional, and much older husband. The marriage ended quickly.

Nellie worked as a typist, until one fateful day her flight instructor friends suggested she learn how to fly. According to Nellie's Find a Grave entry, her friends said, "Nellie, why don't you take lessons? If you learned to fly, you'd be the first woman pilot in South Dakota." Willhite was stunned and intrigued by the idea. But lessons cost \$200, and she didn't have the money. She called her dad to tell him. "Before I knew it there was a check for \$200 waiting for me," she said. In 2026, that cost would be over \$3,700.

In her 30s, Nellie enrolled in flight school on November 13, 1927. She was the 13th student to sign up for the Harold Tennant class. The weather was so bad that winter it took Nellie two months to complete the instruction. After 13 hours of training, Nellie flew solo on Friday the 13th in January 1928. Nellie scoffed at superstitions associated with the number 13.

From the South Dakota Magazine, "Nellie repeatedly circled the Renner landing field in her open cockpit plane. She gazed down at the people gathered on the soggy grass. They were frantically waving at her to land, certain she'd lost her nerve. She circled again, then eased the biplane into position. Spraying a fountain of icy water, she made a perfect landing in a puddle. With dark curls peeking from under her aviator's cap, Nellie climbed from the plane. The instructor and student pilots, all men, surrounded her, shouting and pounding her on the back. She'd done it! Nellie Willhite was the first female pilot in South Dakota." She was also the first deaf woman in the United States to earn a pilot's license. Nellie explained that although she could not hear the engine, she could feel the engine vibrations.

After successfully completing flight school, Nellie flew "Pard," an Eagle Rock biplane named after her father, who had gifted her the plane. She made a good living as a popular barnstormer with aerobatics and loop-the-loops. Nellie competed in air shows and races. In November, 1929, Nellie became a Ninety-Nines charter member. In 1941, Nellie founded the first South Dakota Ninety-Nines Chapter. In 1944, Nellie became the first deaf woman commercial pilot transporting airmail and animals. She continued to fly until she was 52.

In 1978, Nellie was inducted into the South Dakota Hall of Fame. In 1991, shortly before her death, she was honored in the South Dakota Aviation Hall of Fame.

## Mildred E. Workman Kauffman

April 19, 1908 – August 8, 1932



Born in 1908 in Kansas, Mildred became known as “KC Aviatrix.” She loved aviation in childhood. She began as a mechanic at the American Eagle Aircraft Corporation of Kansas City, which manufactured rugged, high-wing biplanes. Mildred became the company’s demonstration pilot and aircraft sales representative.

Mildred was a good pilot and promoter. She became a stunt flyer and record-setter. In August 1929, Mildred flew with fellow pilots H.E. Trotter, the American

Eagle Los Angeles Branch manager, and Claud Parker on an epic goodwill 3,500-mile flight from the East Coast to the West Coast. The purpose was to promote aviation and American Eagle airplanes. Mildred flew an American Eagle Phaeton powered by a Wright J-5, 165-horsepower, five-cylinder engine. The three-seat, single-engine plane held two passengers side by side in the front, with the pilot behind them in an open cockpit.

At that time, the purchase price ranged from a low of \$3,200 to \$8,000. Today that would be around \$60,000 to \$150,000. In July, 1929, American Eagle was the world’s third largest aircraft production company. This gave Mildred a highly visible role as a pilot in the newer world of aviation. They finished the successful tour on November 22, 1929, in Oakland, California. Mildred then joined the newly formed Ninety-Nines.

The goodwill tour afforded Mildred with sufficient hours to become the 16th U.S. woman with a Transport License. Mildred won the 25-mile Kansas City nine-day International Air Circus and Pilots’ Reunion, which made headlines. In February 1930, in St. Louis, she broke Mildred Stinaff’s 42-consecutive loop record. At an altitude of 8,400 feet, Kauffman made 57 loops, but due to haze, officials on the ground were unable to see 11 of the loops establishing her world record at 46. The loop-the-loop aerobatic maneuver consists of a 360-degree vertical turn where the pilot is upside down at the top of the loop.

On March 31, 1930, over Buffalo, New York, she attempted to break her loop record, but her plane stalled. Flying upside down she slipped from her safety belt and went over the side. Opening her parachute and landing safely in the soft mud outside the airport, Mildred Kauffman became the third woman to join the Caterpillar Club, formed in 1922, whose members have all been saved by a parachute.

Undaunted, Mildred was determined to continue her record breaking. On the hot August Sunday morning, with a packed grandstand of hometown boosters, Mildred Kauffman’s airplane was only 75 feet in the air when it collided with another plane which just took off. At only age 24, she would never fly the special plane built for her to compete in the upcoming National Air Races in Cleveland. The bright aviation star was lost to history.

## Ila Fox Loetscher

October 30, 1904 – January 4, 2000



Ila created enduring aviation and conservation legacies. In 1904, Ila Marie Fox was born into a family led by an Iowa country doctor. She attended school in Pella, Iowa, which was established by Dutch immigrants seeking religious freedom. In 1928, Ila graduated from the University of Iowa with a Bachelor’s degree in Arts.

While working as a recreational director in Davenport, Iowa, Ila developed interest in aviation because Charles Lindbergh,

as part of the Guggenheim Goodwill Tour with the Spirit of St. Louis, had visited Iowa in August of 1927. Enthusiasm for flying was planted firmly when Ila began her flight lessons. Also, she promoted aviation at the Moline airport in nearby Illinois. On September 1, 1929, at age 25, Ila became the first native-born Iowa licensed female pilot and the first woman licensed pilot in Illinois. In November, Amelia Earhart invited her to join The Ninety-Nines.

On June 8, 1933, Ila married engineer David Loetscher. Later, the couple moved to Bridgewater, New Jersey, where David was a chemical engineer. Ila became a key railroad comptometer operator. They had no children. After David’s death in 1955, Ila visited her parents at their Texas winter home. She quickly fell in love with nearby South Padre Island and moved there.

Ila became aware of the Kemp’s ridley sea turtle, an endangered species, when she joined a group of volunteers who travelled to Mexico to gather and protect the precious sea turtle eggs from poachers and predators. They relocated the eggs for hatching to a protected South Padre Island beach in Texas, creating nesting grounds.

Each day Ila learned more about the beautiful sea creatures. She developed an affection for them and worked tirelessly for their protection. Under her leadership, the volunteer group received a state rehabilitation license for injured endangered sea turtles. Interest grew in the media and with marine conservationists. In 1977, Ila founded Sea Turtle, Inc., a nonprofit corporation focused on protecting and preserving sea turtles, particularly the Kemp’s ridley. Ila earned the nickname, “the Turtle Lady.”

Soon popular television talk shows were booking the “Turtle Lady.” The Tonight Show starring Johnny Carson, Late Night with David Letterman, Today, and Real People expanded Ila’s platform to inform viewers of the endangered species. National Geographic produced a documentary. Today Ila’s Sea Turtle, Inc. is thriving, with staff and volunteers working on outreach, education, conservation, and rehabilitation. A new education center and turtle hospital are being built. Ila proved that one person with passion can make a huge impact. Ila Fox Loetscher’s aviation legacy was recognized with induction into the Iowa Aviation Hall of Fame.

*CORRECTIONS: The “Charter Member” profile of Helen “Faye” Gillis Wells incorrectly stated her date of death as December 2, 2024. The correct date is December 2, 2002. The photo caption at the bottom of the profile also contains her name misspelled; correct spelling is Gillis, not Gilles. The Publication Committee regrets the errors.*

# How I Shed My Neanderthal Pride

## *Bonus: A Remedy for Aviation's "Manpower" Problem*

– By Greg Anderson,  
*Friends of The 99s Member*

"Good afternoon," I said, smiling hopefully at the receptionist in Arnold Hall, the cadet social center at the U.S. Air Force Academy. "I am a 1972 graduate. I haven't been back for a while, but I understand grads can tour the Cadet Area with a cadet escort."

"Welcome back, sir," she replied politely. "Let me see if I have a cadet for you. Please give me a few minutes." She stepped back into an office.

That summer afternoon around 1990 had a life-changing experience in store for me, one with echoes to a touchy political subject in 2026. And the experience came with a bonus – a simple solution to one of aviation's most vexing issues.

Kindly indulge some sentimentality to set the stage.

Waiting for my escort, nostalgia swept through me as I looked down the marble and glass hallways that held so many memories for men like me who passed through them years before. Artwork on the walls showcased Air Force heroes. Courageous men grinning from cockpits with thumbs in the air. Uniformed men with chests full of ribbons saluting one another. Famous men depicted in aerial dogfights. Others walking on the moon.

Gazing down the hallowed halls, phantom echoes of some 1,400 pairs of shuffling, spit-shined shoes filled my ears, taking my mind back to Basic Cadet Training in the summer of 1968. Squinting through shifting shafts of sunlight and shadow, I imagined columns of young men trudging wearily through the lobby to an after-dinner training lecture. My mind's eye caught an apparition of a fresh-faced, eighteen-year-old version of myself turning to



enter the doors of a large auditorium. I remembered how tired, hungry and homesick he was.

A vivid flashback brought one particular evening to mind. Shortly after we collapsed into our seats, Brigadier General Robin Olds strode out onto the auditorium stage. Our illustrious Commandant of Cadets was larger than life, fresh from combat in Southeast Asia and bristling with esprit de corps. He was a triple ace with 17 aerial victories from World War II and Vietnam. Silver stars glittered on his shoulders, and silver wings gleamed above colorful ribbons on his chest. General Olds' well-deserved renown and heart-stirring tales of combat in the air inspired a desire in all of us to achieve perhaps the pinnacle of male pride and prowess – becoming a fighter pilot!

The Air Force would assign me not to fighters, but to the KC-135 Stratotanker, and to re-fueling missions around the world including the "last battle of Vietnam," a joint rescue operation in 1975 called the Mayaguez incident. I did not serve a career in the Air Force, but rather 35-plus years in senior museum leadership positions with the Experimental Aircraft Association in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and Wings Over the Rockies Air & Space Museum in Denver, Colorado. In those roles, I was honored to associate with General Olds from time to time. What I learned from Olds in my cadet years and respected from his life was critical to shaping the rest of mine.

"Sir, I have your cadet escort for you," called the welcome desk attendant, interrupting my sentimental musings.

*Top of page: The author is pleased to be reminded of the promising future for women in aviation. In late September, he completed his biennial flight review with a CFI 57 years his junior. Eighteen-year-old Sydney Swartz instructs from Langlade County Airport (KAIG) in Antigo, Wisconsin. She is a member of The Ninety-Nines with her eye on a professional career in aviation. (Photo by Greg Anderson)*

I turned back to the welcome desk. Like grads everywhere, I harbored hunches that classes following mine had a different cadet experience, maybe an easier one, reflecting societal changes and perhaps altered expectations. One big change was the introduction of women into the Cadet Wing in 1976. I was eager to see how my cadet escort resembled the fresh-faced, 18-year-old self I remembered from years ago, to finding out what made him tick, and what he thought about having women in the Cadet Wing.

Behind the attendant, the office door opened, and out she came.

She? My surprise probably showed. She was tall, lean, and athletic, dressed in a flight suit and combat boots. Her short-cropped, dark hair framed an attractive, feminine face. She stepped forward confidently and nodded, flashing a wide smile as she looked me in the eye, extending her hand in welcome.

“How do you do, Sir?” she said.

“Good to meet you,” I replied, collecting myself. “It’s nice to be back here.”

“I couldn’t agree more,” she said with a chuckle and firm handshake. “I’m just back from SERE.”

I smiled, remembering SERE well. Until relocated a few years later, “Survival, Escape, Resistance, and Evasion” was a grueling program in the nearby mountains considered by many cadets, including me, as the most challenging experience of our four years. SERE included solo, night-time wilderness navigation with terrain maps and survival rations while evading adversaries in pursuit. It also included realistic POW camp isolation and training in techniques to resist indoctrination. SERE was required of all Air Force pilots, and it was mandatory during our second cadet summer to help weed out anyone halfheartedly committed to a flying career.

We left Arnold Hall and strolled onto the terrazzo, getting acquainted with small talk along the broad expanses of stone and marble that served as march and drill areas. All around us, salutary greetings and crisp marching orders echoed from marble and glass dormitories and the seventeen-spired Cadet Chapel. Here a “Good afternoon, sir,” there a “Column left, march,” further away a “Right shoulder, arms!” Occasionally, the guttural barks of upperclassmen were interrupted by a higher-pitched female voice that seemed out of place and took some getting used to.

My mind flashed back to a tanker mission in the late 1970s with one of the first female navigators in the Air Force whose inflight voice on the intercom similarly caught my ear. She confidently called my turns during a re-fueling rendezvous with a flight of FB-111s. I recalled admitting to myself that she was as good as any navigator I had flown with – maybe better than some for the extra scrutiny she had to endure.

But that was before women were allowed into the ranks of fighter pilots and combat roles. Attitudes and stereotypes I had grown up with were wavering, but not yet welcoming. I managed to consider myself gallant for accepting women in some traditionally male roles, but I held reservations with others. I had always placed women on a pedestal, honoring the familiar roles they played in my life. I remember concerns that allowing women to fly in combat seemed certain to change standards. For a time, I settled on a perspective that said, “OK, but if we’re going to war and we get shot down, I want to be able to carry them out of enemy territory if necessary – and I want them to be able carry me out too.”

So, I still had questions, and I was curious about my escort’s future plans.

“I want to be a fighter pilot,” she told me in no uncertain terms. At the time, there was talk in Congress about approving women in combat roles. It turned out that approval would be granted before my escort would graduate, and she hoped to be one of the first. She stood before me with the prop and wings insignia on her flight cap that marked her as a full-fledged member of the Cadet Wing. She had survived not only SERE, but a challenging fourth-class year that included orientation flights in a variety of high-performance Air Force aircraft. Now she wanted to serve her country as a fighter pilot.

Alas, I have long since forgotten her name. But our time together convinced me she would be successful in whatever career path she chose. As I drove back to Denver, I had a thoughtful conversation with myself. Maybe, if she met uncompromised standards, my country should be happy she wanted to serve as a fighter pilot. I was returning home to a family with three young daughters. I wanted them to grow up to be whatever they wanted to be, not what society thought they should be. I realized I had been placing women on pedestals of my choosing, not theirs. And I realized when we open doors to equal opportunity, we cannot open them only part way.

Anyone in combat must meet certain standards. But, sorry to say, not all men could carry my 200 pounds back to friendly lines. And physical standards aren’t the only ones. How about leadership, determination, and skills? How about the ability to win the fight from the cockpit or foxhole in the first place?

My museum career allowed me to honor aerospace in all its aspects, including what women bring to it. We created a “Women with Wings” exhibit in the EAA Museum. At Wings Over the Rockies, we honored three barrier breakers we called the “First Ladies of Air & Space” with our Spreading Wings Award. Emily Howell Warner pushed herself from a flight instructor at small airports to become America’s first woman pilot at a major commercial airline. Eileen Collins went from being a math teacher to become the first female Space Shuttle commander and led the mission that followed the horrific Challenger explosion. And Patty Wagstaff trained herself to become the first female aerobatic world champion, winning over both men and women – and she did it three times!



*Honored with prestigious Spreading Wings Awards from Wings Over the Rockies Air & Space Museum, Eileen Collins, Patty Wagstaff, and Emily Howell Warner exemplify inspirational achievement in fields of space, general aviation, and commercial aviation, respectively. (Photo courtesy of Wings Over the Rockies)*

Fast forward to the present. DEI is a loaded term these days. There have been overreactions on both sides. Advocates for and against diversity, equity, and inclusion often push agendas to unreasonable lengths. We must all have higher regard for a common good and reasonable standards. There will always be what we may politely call scuttlebutt about where lines are drawn. But it seems to me we must keep opportunities as unlimited as the skies we fly in. Gravity doesn't care who is flying an airplane. And if flying is the ultimate freedom, it should not be off-limits to anyone who can meet standards.

Herein lies a bonus realization that my afternoon brought home to me. Our aviation community has always been worried about our "manpower" problem – finding enough pilots to keep our community healthy and growing. One-half of America's population that are females make up approximately 5% of the pilot workforce. And since pilots make up less than 1% of the general population, we have lots of room for improvement! Sincerely welcoming women can help fix our manpower problem.

The aviation community gets it. A great majority of aviators have embraced this solution, as women are taking their place in military and civilian positions from cockpits to air traffic control towers to executive offices. One key is to stimulate interest in girls at younger ages. Aviation fascinates both girls and boys of elementary ages, but they often fall into familiar academic tracks soon after. Opening doors all the way for young girls and presenting inspirational female role models will help resist teenage culture and high school subjects that may pull them back into traditional career patterns.

Fortunately, every pilot – including women – can pay forward the attributes of aviation. Emily Howell Warner gave much of her life as a Board member to Wings Over the Rockies' educational mission. Eileen Collins serves nonprofit boards and chairs education programs. Patty Wagstaff inspires countless future



Recent Air Force Academy graduating classes have seen approximately 30% women graduate to serve in the U.S. Air Force (gold sash) and U.S. Space Force (silver sash). (U.S. Air Force photo by Trevor Cokley)

aviators at airshows and creates better pilots through aerobatic training in her school.

Back at the Air Force Academy, debate continues about traditions and changing times. Women have thrived in leadership as their numbers have grown. Comprising some 30 percent of the Cadet Wing, in 2024 women were Cadet Squadron Commanders in more than half of 40 squadrons. Two recent Cadet Wing Commanders were women, one also a Rhodes Scholar.

What about General Robin Olds, the legendary ace revered by fighter pilots? What would he say about women fighter pilots? Olds "flew west" in 2007, but I spoke with his daughter, Christina, who finished his memoirs in the highly regarded biography, *Fighter Pilot*, co-written with Ed Rasimus. Christina said her father's natural sense of chivalry wondered not about capabilities but how men and women would fly and work together.

"But," she told me, "After meeting the women and seeing them perform in combat and on teams like the Air Force Thunderbirds, he said 'I was wrong, they are in every way as capable as a guy, and they are all part of one big, amazing team.'"

Somewhere out there I believe is a fifty-something year old woman enjoying a distinguished aviation career that she achieved through hard work and determination. Back around 1990, as a much younger cadet, she shared her goals with an older Academy graduate on a summer afternoon that remains a lesson in his life today.

My Neanderthal pride has been replaced by my pride in her. We are joined in what we graduates call the "Long, Blue Line." We did not stay in touch, so I do not know what heights she has reached or if she is still flying. But I am confident she is a better person for her aviation experience. And aviation is a better community.

And I am a better man. 



Spreading wings is for all of us. (Photo courtesy of Wings Over the Rockies)



# International Election

of Officers, Directors,  
Members of Nominating Committee,  
and Trustees

By Kathy Fox, *Chair of Election Procedures Committee*

## INTERNATIONAL ELECTION 2026: HOW TO VOTE

International Elections open soon.

Voting opens on March 15, 2026, at 12:01 a.m. GMT  
and ends on May 1, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. GMT.

Thank you to everyone who responded to our recent voting survey, your feedback is driving several improvements to this year's election process, including:

- Electronic ballots sent by text and email.
- A new Elections 2026 page in the Members Area of The Ninety-Nines website will include each candidate's information and individual videos for Officers and Directors. The electronic ballot will allow voters to link directly to each candidate's information.
- Periodic reminder messages will be sent by email and text. Please don't wait to vote!
- Greater involvement of section and chapter leadership is recommended to make sure that members know where to find information about candidates and to encourage members to vote. For example, this information could be shared during member meetings or voting parties. If candidate videos are shown at such meetings, all videos for IBOD candidates must be shown to ensure all IBOD candidates receive the same attention.

The official ballot will be delivered in one of two forms: electronic (email and text) or paper. If you choose electronic voting, you will receive an electronic official ballot at the email address (and/or cell number) on file with The Ninety-Nines. If you did not choose electronic voting, you will receive an official paper ballot at the mailing address on file with The Ninety-Nines.

**Please read the ballot notification email carefully** – some sections may be running Section Executive Elections at the same time.

Delivery of paper ballots to your address may take several weeks depending on your location. If you do not receive a ballot, either via

email, text, or regular mail, please contact Laura Ohrenberg at HQ: [hqmanager@ninety-nines.org](mailto:hqmanager@ninety-nines.org). Paper ballots must be mailed back at the voter's expense and postmarked no later than May 1, 2026.

The slate of candidates is prepared by the Nominating Committee in accordance with the bylaws and standing rules. Candidates for each position are listed on the ballot in the order received by the Nominating Committee per the standing rules requirement.

You may vote for up to the maximum number of open seats shown on the ballot for each position. For each position, you can select your choices as follows:

- From the nominated candidates listed on the ballot, or
- Write in the name of a different eligible candidate (please do not write in the name of a candidate already listed on the ballot for that position), or
- Indicate that you are abstaining for that position.

Ballots are prepared in accordance with industry standard procedures for secret ballots and are distributed using current membership records maintained by The Ninety-Nines. No unique voting numbers list is kept.

Ballot instructions will also clarify the criteria for spoiled ballots.

All ballots (both electronic and paper) are retained until after the next Annual Meeting.

Please refer to the January-February issue of the Ninety-Nines magazine for Clarification of Standing Rule VIII – NOMINATIONS, ELECTIONS & PROCEDURES with respect to campaigning activities.

Please direct any questions about these procedures to Kathy Fox, *Chair of the Election Procedures Committee* at [electionprocedures@ninety-nines.org](mailto:electionprocedures@ninety-nines.org).

# MEET THE CANDIDATES

## CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

CANDIDATES FOR  
**PRESIDENT**

VOTE FOR ONE



### **Terry L. Carbonell**

*Paradise Coast Chapter,  
Southeast Section*

I'm honored to seek the opportunity to serve The Ninety-Nines as President. My prior service on the International Board of Directors—as Director and Vice President—has provided

me with insight and experience to guide our organization as we approach our centennial celebration.

As both a motivational flyer and visionary leader, I am committed to advancing our shared goal of reaching 10,000 members by our 100th anniversary. Membership must embody true purpose—cultivating personal growth while fostering meaningful contributions to the aviation community. To achieve this, I propose the following priorities:

**Strengthen youth engagement:** Build partnerships with youth organizations to inspire the next generation of aviators while creating opportunities for current members to connect with future pilots.

**Enhance member retention:** Establish a dedicated retention committee to engage with past and lapsing members, identify their needs, and welcome them back into active participation.

**Support Sections and Chapters:** Provide stronger organizational resources and expand opportunities for involvement in national and international events.

**Secure financial growth:** Expand our donor base, corporate sponsorships, and strategic partnerships to ensure long-term stability.

**Elevate branding and outreach:** Refine our marketing efforts to attract more women pilots and expand participation through Friends of The Ninety-Nines.

I remain deeply committed to introducing women to the joy of flight and the value of our sisterhood through the Let's Fly Now! First Flight Program. As President, I will proudly and passionately represent The Ninety-Nines around the world, championing the role of women in aviation and advancing the mission of our organization.



### **Minnetta Gardinier**

*Iowa Chapter,  
North Central Section*

The President is the chief executive officer and conducts the business of The 99s as authorized collectively by the International Board of Directors. This collaborative approach is essential to gain consensus on

the Board and across our membership.

For me, three words epitomize The Ninety-Nines – camaraderie, mentoring, and networking. They changed my aviation experience; I share and promote these qualities across The 99s.

My top goals will be to: 1) grow our membership through new members and better retention; 2) support and strengthen our Chapter/Section leadership; 3) work with our Executive Director to pursue funding opportunities; and 4) increase the visibility of The 99s throughout the aviation community. I led our Board through a team process to update our Strategic Plan, providing a framework to advance these goals.

For the 2023 International Conference (Jordan), my Board liaison role expanded unexpectedly to actually organize and manage the conference. A rapidly evolving Middle East crisis demanded cautious scrutiny for our members' safety. It illustrated the importance of flexibility, depth of knowledge, and readiness to respond.

I spearheaded the search to hire our Executive Director – researching professional search firms; sharing options with the Board; working with the President/Board to coordinate interviews and final selection. It provided a great experience bringing everyone to a shared consensus and successful hire.

While serving continuously on the Board for the past seven years, I have worked closely with our Board, Headquarters staff, and leadership to build trust, rapport, and respect.

Review my resumé for full background details.

CANDIDATES FOR

**VICE PRESIDENT**

VOTE FOR ONE

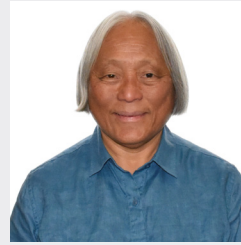
**Janet Patton***Ambassador Chapter,  
South Central Section*

It is my great pleasure to serve the 99s. A member since 1988, my most recent position was International Director (2021-2025). The 99s were instrumental in my flying career. As such, I am honored to serve through dedicated work to the 99s.

Becoming the next Vice President would be a logical step as I wish to continue serving the 99s on the IBOD. It takes time to learn the ways of managing the 99s, and I find there is great wealth of experience in this organization. Over the past 5 years, I have very much enjoyed meeting many members at Section and International meetings. Currently, I am finishing an MBA in Organizational Development & Leadership and will graduate May 2026. Learning many things related to non-profit management, I am excited to help continue the momentum we have and seeing the 99s grow and expand into our future.

In aviation I am: a 777 Captain, a Bonanza and PA28 owner/pilot, and a hot air balloon owner/commercial pilot. My love of aviation includes sharing this love and passion with others, especially through the 99s.

To all 99s, it is my sincere hope you will consider electing me for the position of Vice President. In this position, we can grow and learn together how to best support each other leading into our next one hundred years. It is an honor and privilege to serve on the board, and I am dedicated and devoted to you, the 99s.

**Pat Chan***Bay Cities Chapter,  
Southwest Section*

The Ninety-Nines is a well-respected nonprofit within the aviation community. Since 1929 they have inspired 99s with their dreams of learning to fly. Members benefited from scholarships, educational assistance and mentoring opportunities. Their history was saved and along the way friendships were made.

Communication within our organization can identify what will appeal to young and old alike. 99s will value their membership as they are inspired throughout their lives.

Ninety-Nines shared more than aviation. They gathered together from chapters and sections, to summit Amelia Earhart Peak, in Yosemite National Park. I joined two of those backpacking trips. In the spirit of collaboration, we all reached the top of Amelia Earhart Peak.

My flight time was in general aviation for the exhilaration of being in the sky.

I was employed in a corporate environment for 36 years. It brought opportunities to work in creative, administrative and technical fields. Skills were developed to communicate with diverse ways of thinking. Work processes and project management skills were honed during those years.

Since joining The Ninety-Nines I held elected positions beginning with Chapter Vice-Chair and Chair. Then became Section Vice Governor, Chaired section committees, served two terms as Section Governor and was a Ninety-Nines Museum of Women Pilots Trustee. Next I became an International Director.

Over the years, I recorded about 170 oral histories for The Ninety-Nines.

As Vice President, I'd work with the President to continue benefiting members with their dreams of flying while ensuring the longevity of The Ninety-Nines, Inc.

CANDIDATE FOR

**SECRETARY**

VOTE FOR ONE

**Aileen Coverdell** *Mid-Columbia Chapter, Northwest Section*

After three and a half years of active participation in the management of the business affairs of The Ninety-Nines, Inc. as International Treasurer, I am excited to accept the added responsibility of officially maintaining accurate records of actions and decisions of the Board; fostering communication and ensuring proper management and utilization of important organizational records both for its historical significance and governance record as International Secretary.

My qualifications for the position as International Secretary may not be evident in my professional background as an accountant, but this career has qualified me in the essential documentation of processes. I have completed several continuing education classes on the requirements of managing official records. I regularly attended administrative meetings and reviewed the records of the secretary and clerk of the board. I also have personal experiences of secretarial duties for the Mid-Columbia Chapter of The Ninety-Nines, several homeowner associations, my volunteer experience with the local American Red Cross board, and several professional organizations that I have been involved with.

I have worked hard to uphold the trust shown when you elected me as Treasurer for two terms. If elected to this new position as Secretary, I will take seriously my obligation to maintain an accurate account of all Board proceedings as set in the Board Operating Policies and Procedures. I have brought to you a level of experience, and I ask that you give me the same confidence that you gave me before, toward my next goal in serving as your International Secretary.

CANDIDATE FOR  
**TREASURER**

VOTE FOR ONE

**Maria Lamia** *Blue Ridge Chapter, Southeast Section*

In 2013, I reconnected with aviation through a Wisconsin event, which led me to The Ninety-Nines after meeting a CFII and discovering the organization at 88C. My passion for flight is rooted in family—my father was a WWII P-51 pilot. I earned my pilot license at University of North Dakota in 1976.

I joined the 99s and Wisconsin Chapter in 2014, I've served in various leadership roles at Chapter level, at the North Central Section as Treasurer and at the international level as Trademark Chair and member of the International Conference Committee. Upon moving to South Carolina in 2020, I supported the Carolina and Blue Ridge Chapters, helping the latter grow significantly.

Professionally, I have supervised accounting functions at both large- Johnson Controls and Georgia Pacific and small companies-Micro Estimating and Harbinger, covering cash management, billing, financial consolidation, audit, compliance, and project finance. Additionally, I volunteered as financial chair for a Wisconsin non-profit event for 17 years.

Since 2007, I have traveled extensively across the U.S., Canada, Central America, Europe, Russia, India, the UAE, Dubai, and Morocco.

My love for aviation drives me to inspire others, especially women and young female pilots. The Ninety-Nines should continue to nurture all members by understanding their needs and encouraging lifelong engagement. Supporting and mentoring each other ensures we all realize our flying ambitions.

Though I am not currently an aviator, I actively support flight through The Ninety-Nines. I seek election as Treasurer to apply my accounting expertise.

CANDIDATES FOR  
**DIRECTORS**

VOTE FOR TWO

**Susan Glisson**  
*Kentucky Bluegrass Chapter,  
North Central Section*

I joined the Kentucky Bluegrass Chapter of The Ninety-Nines in 2003 seeking to find women pilots who shared my passion for aviation. Little did I know how that first step would change my life, expand my aviation knowledge and provide a network of women

pilots, many of whom have become dear friends.

On The Ninety-Nines chapter level I have served as Chair, Vice Chair and have been on the Bylaws and Nominating Committees. I am currently chapter Membership Chair. On the section level I served as Membership Chair, Secretary, Vice Governor and currently, Governor. In my local aviation community, I have served at my home airport as social director, Secretary of the Skylane Pilots Association Board of Directors and am currently newsletter editor. I also served as EAA Chapter 21 Young Eagles Coordinator and continue to volunteer at Young Eagles events. I have flown in 5 Air Race Classics and have volunteered at ARC stops and at the ARC booths at various air shows.

I see The Ninety-Nines as a unique organization of which I am proud to be a member. My goals as an International Director would be to continue to promote The Ninety-Nines, strengthen the connections between chapters, sections and International, and use the leadership skills I have gained along the way to further the mission of our organization.

I would be honored to serve as an International Director.

**Teresa Camp**  
*Oklahoma Chapter,  
South Central Section*

As a passionate leader with over 40 years of experience working with the Department of Defense and the FAA, I am excited to offer my candidacy for the Director position on the International Board of Directors of the Ninety-Nines. Throughout my career, I

have honed my skills in program management, engineering, and public speaking, demonstrating a proven ability to inspire teams and foster innovation.

My extensive background includes significant roles at Boeing and Pratt & Whitney, where I successfully integrated complex systems and led diverse teams to achieve ambitious goals. As a private pilot, I have successfully raced in the Air Race Classic and Okie Derby, flown a self-fly safari in Africa, and earned a sea plane rating in Alaska. I have flown small planes in nearly every US state. As an active member of the Ninety-Nines, I have led teams to paint compass roses, served in several chapter positions and supported numerous aviation activities. I bring a deep understanding of our community's mission to support and advocate for women in aviation.

As a board member, I will focus on strengthening our global network, enhancing mentorship, and promoting initiatives that empower women pilots. I am committed to building consensus and encouraging collaboration among our members. Together, we can harness our collective expertise to advance the aviation industry and enrich the lives of aspiring female aviators worldwide.

I am eager to contribute to the Ninety-Nines' legacy of making aviation more accessible and inclusive. Thank you for considering my candidacy.

CANDIDATES FOR

**DIRECTORS (CONT...)**

VOTE FOR TWO

**Heather Grimes***Florida Goldcoast Chapter,  
Southeast Section*

I am seeking election to the International Board of Directors of The Ninety-Nines because I believe strongly in the mission of the organization and in the value of supporting women at every stage of their aviation journeys.

My involvement with The 99s has been rooted in active, hands-on leadership at the chapter and local levels. I currently serve as Chair of the Sun 'n Fun booth, one of our most visible outreach efforts. I also previously served as Chapter Chair during a period of significant growth, helping guide the chapter to become the largest in the network.

Through a collaborative fundraising effort—working closely with and learning from some of the more experienced members of our chapter—we were able to award nearly \$30,000 in scholarships this year. That experience reinforced the importance of mentorship, continuous learning, teamwork, and shared leadership within The 99s.

This past year, much of my focus was on completing several major professional milestones, including earning three type ratings and my Airline Transport Pilot certificate. As a United Express pilot recruiter who is now an FO for a United Express carrier, I understand firsthand the demands of building a professional aviation career and navigating a constantly evolving industry.

I also appreciate the uniquely female perspective of balancing career ambitions with family and personal responsibilities. Like many women in aviation, I understand the challenges of managing competing priorities and the importance of having a strong support network.

I am proud of the momentum we have built locally and am ready to bring that same energy, collaboration, and commitment to the International Board. I would be honored to serve and to help make a meaningful difference for The Ninety-Nines.

**Lara Gaerte***Indiana Dunes Chapter,  
North Central Section*

Below are my responsibilities and experiences that I feel qualify me to serve as a Ninety-Nines International Director:

I have experience in many facets of aviation including:

- I have been an active CFI since 1995, with over 8000 hours dual given.
- I am a FAA Designated Pilot Examiner since 2019.
- I started and ran a successful FBO as Owner/Manager 2007-2022, Century Aviation at DeKalb County Airport, KGWB.
- I am a contract Corporate Pilot in the Citation Bravo and Challenger 601.
- My volunteer experience includes as a 99s Chapter Vice Chairman; the Air Race Classic Board of Directors 2010-2023, ARC President 2014-2023; AOPA ASN for KGWB 2006-present, FAA Fast Team Representative (many years).
- Aircraft Owner – With my husband, I currently own a Piper PA-28-180C, a Waco YMF5, a Piper J3C-65, an Aeronca 7AC Champ, and a Cessna 150. I did a complete restoration of the 7AC during the Covid pandemic.

My aviation career is deeply rooted in General Aviation. As an FBO owner/manager, I was responsible for all aspects of a successful business including but not limited to leadership, strategic planning, budgeting, AR/AP, HR, project management, efficiency, and team member development. These same skills were utilized during my volunteer service with the 99s, Air Race Classic, the FAA, and as an ASN representative. I have spent the last 25 years volunteering with various aviation organizations and believe that my diverse experiences would be beneficially shared with my fellow Ninety-Nines. I appreciate your consideration of my candidacy for an International Director position.

CANDIDATES FOR

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

VOTE FOR THREE

**Anita Mixon** *Treasure Coast Chapter, Southeast Section*

I am seeking election to The Ninety-Nines, Inc. Nominating Committee to continue serving an organization that has been central to my aviation journey and my commitment to supporting women pilots.

I am a Life Member of The Ninety-Nines and have served in leadership roles at both the chapter and section levels, including as a Founding Member and Past Chair of the Treasure Coast 99s, as well as Director positions at the Chapter and Southeast Section levels. These roles have given me practical experience with volunteer leadership, member engagement, and the operational challenges faced by chapters and sections across our organization.

Professionally, I have experience in governance, compliance, and risk management. As a Senior Compliance Analyst for a Fortune 500 company, I lead enterprise governance initiatives, chair cross-functional committees, and support executive leadership through complex regulatory and risk-informed decision-making. This background has strengthened my ability to evaluate issues thoughtfully, ask the right questions, and contribute constructively at the board level.

Aviation safety, education, and mentorship are core to my service. As an FAA Safety Team Representative and active aviation volunteer, I strongly support the Ninety-Nines' mission to advance safety, education, and opportunity for women pilots worldwide.

If elected, I will be an engaged, collaborative member, focused on listening to our members, supporting our leaders, and helping guide The Ninety-Nines forward while honoring its legacy and values.

CANDIDATES FOR

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE (CONT..)**

VOTE FOR THREE

**Kathy Lester-Ross***Wisconsin Chapter,  
North Central Section*

Twelve years as a 99 have been life-changing. It is easy to see the value and rewards of supporting the aviation goals and accomplishments of our members. With Wisconsin Chapter work on fundraisers, newsletters, scholarships, compass roses, charity events, volunteering at EAA-AV,

sharing ballooning information, growing our membership, and serving in many Chapter leadership roles, the value of 99s membership is easily seen.

Serving as a North Central Section Director, Membership Chair and Secretary over the past 8+ years, I've had the opportunity to advance the mission and goals of The 99s organization in varied ways. Each year, I am more familiar with the processes, programs and personnel that comprise our organization. A detail oriented, outcomes based work ethic has proven successful in my business & healthcare environs. These same skills transfer to organizational needs.

"Each One – Reach One – Teach One" is a mantra we can adapt to assure our membership is dynamic, growing and committed to advancing our missions. By learning our members' strengths and assisting in overcoming their aviation challenges, we enhance our personal and organizational successes. By identifying those who can lead others to achieve success, we enhance our organization in its entirety. Nominating Committee members are tasked to find those 99s to lead us into the future.

To assist in the growth and strength of The 99s, I would be honored to serve a second term on The 99s International Nominating Committee, via the 2026 Election process.

**Judi Oswald***Eastern New England Chapter,  
New England Section*

I am honored to submit my position statement for the Nominating Committee of The Ninety-Nines, an organization that has played a meaningful role in my aviation journey. My love of flying goes beyond time in the cockpit—it is rooted in the confidence,

discipline, and sense of belonging that aviation has given me, and in the friendships and mentorship found within this organization.

Flying has taught me the importance of preparation, sound judgment, and accountability. Those same qualities define how I approach service and leadership. I am naturally organized, detail-oriented, and dependable, and I value clear communication and follow-through. I believe these traits are especially important on the Nominating Committee, where careful consideration and confidentiality are essential.

I am passionate about helping The Ninety-Nines continue to thrive through strong, thoughtful leadership. Our organization is made up of members with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and stages of flying, and I believe our leadership should reflect that richness. Serving on the Nominating Committee would allow me to listen to members, recognize both experienced and emerging leaders, and support a fair and transparent nomination process.

If elected, I would approach this role with integrity, respect for our traditions, and a genuine desire to serve the membership. It would be a privilege to contribute in a way that supports the future of The Ninety-Nines while honoring the shared love of flying that brings us together.

CANDIDATES FOR

**AMELIA EARHART BIRTHPLACE MUSEUM**

VOTE FOR TWO

**Karin Rodland***Columbia Cascade Chapter,  
Northwest Section*

I am not a professional aviator, but I am passionate about aviation. For over fifty years I have been engaged in biomedical research, and a key element of success in that profession is the ability to articulate your research goals to others outside your field, so

that they understand what you do and why, share your enthusiasm, and fund your project. One can abbreviate this skill set as 'grant writing', but it is really about vision and communication. I would like to apply this skill set to benefit the Ninety-nines, and I can think of no better application than obtaining external funds to support the infrastructure needs of the Amelia Earhart Birthplace Museum. In my opinion, the AEBM is a living testimony to the American dream of aspiration, from humble beginnings to tackling unimaginable tasks – and clearly, this is the legacy of Amelia Earhart to the Ninety-nines. I hope to apply the organizational and communication skills I developed as a researcher to maintain and sustain the AEBM as an enduring inspiration to the next generation of women pilots.

**Sherry LeMaster***Kentucky Bluegrass Chapter,  
North Central Section*

Sherry retired as a Financial Advisor from Edward Jones Investments. She previously served in senior fundraising and management positions with institutions of higher education, including Wake Forest University and the University of Oklahoma Health

Sciences Center. She has served the U.S. Department of Education as a Consultant for a variety of federally funded grant programs. She earned her bachelor and masters degrees at the University of Kentucky.

Sherry is a Life Member of the Ninety Nines International Association of Women Pilots where her service has included Kentucky Bluegrass Chapter Chair, helping to facilitate the Maui Chapter charter, the North Central Section Amelia Earhart Scholarship Committee and South Central Section Director. She currently serves as the Treasurer of the Board of Trustees of the Aviation Museum of Kentucky.

Sherry learned of the 99s, during a luncheon where she met the late Astronaut Sally Ride, while earning her pilot license on a grass strip in Georgetown, KY. She and BFF (the late) Marjorie Richison, won, and later placed, in the annual Okie Derby Precision Air Rally, sponsored by the Oklahoma Chapter. One of her greatest aviation adventures was flying roundtrip from Marchmont Plantation Airpark in Advance, North Carolina to and Palmer, Alaska. Aviation has been a lifelong interest and passion.

CANDIDATES FOR

**AMELIA EARHART MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

VOTE FOR TWO

**Susan Passmore***Old Dominion Chapter,  
Mid-Atlantic Section*

I am nearing the end of my first term as an Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship Fund (AEMSF) Trustee. During my 3-year term, I have served as Corresponding Secretary, Chair, and Co-Chair. As a “Mama Bird”, I have mentored 18 Fall 2023 First Wings

and 21 Spring 2025 First Wings scholarship winners. I witnessed the dedication and enthusiasm of our scholarship winners and it is infectious. This program changes lives.

Learning to fly led me to a career change. After almost 25 years in the computer industry, I became a program manager for the FAA. I created a multi-disciplinary research team to prototype and test new concepts to improve the efficiency and safety of the National Airspace System. I used all the skills I learned over the course of my career to solve aviation challenges. Now retired, I still have a program manager’s viewpoint and I prefer a team approach. I have used all these skills to contribute to the mission of the Ninety-Nines and the AEMSF Trust.

I am seeking a second term to continue to contribute to one of the very real benefits of 99s membership. I will continue to use AEMSF trust funds wisely to open doors for 99s through scholarships.

**Madeleine (Emmy) Dillon***San Diego Chapter,  
Southwest Section*

I am honored to be considered for Trustee of the Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship Fund (AEMSF), a program that has empowered women in aviation since 1940 through flight training, technical and academic scholarships, and international support. The AEMSF not only

preserves Amelia Earhart’s legacy — it actively shapes the future of aviation by giving women the resources to grow, achieve, and lead.

As a past AEMSF scholarship recipient, I know firsthand how transformative this support can be. The scholarship enabled me to complete my master’s degree, strengthening my work as a safety advocate and representative. The opportunities it created continue to influence my career every day, and I carry deep gratitude for the women and donors who made that possible. For nearly five years, I have served as my chapter’s Scholarship Chair, gaining hands-on experience with AEMSF processes, mentoring applicants, and seeing firsthand the growth and refinement the program has achieved.

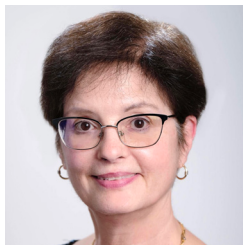
As Trustee, I would bring lived experience to the stewardship of the AEMSF. I am committed to upholding its values of fairness and transparency, ensuring that every award reflects the trust placed in this program. I also believe strongly in expanding outreach so more women — from First Wings applicants to advanced students — recognize what is possible through AEMSF.

The AEMSF changes lives. It changed mine. Serving as Trustee would be both an honor and a chance to help ensure that future generations of women receive the same support, confidence, and opportunity that allowed me to thrive.

CANDIDATE FOR

**ENDOWMENT FUND**

VOTE FOR ONE

**Rosanne Isom** *New Jersey Chapter, New York-New Jersey Section*

My name is Rosanne Isom and I am a member of the New Jersey Chapter, New York – New Jersey Section of the Ninety Nines. I am running for a position on the Endowment Fund. My skill set would be an asset for this trust. I have many years of financial experiences. I founded a company 38 years ago. We are manufacturers of scientific laboratory consumables and instrumentation. I have established sales channels with all major worldwide pharmaceutical companies, and helped establish my company as a worldwide brand.

I chaired the New York-New Jersey section’s fundraising efforts to obtain their mandatory section 501(c)3 status, which included its nine chapters. A major fundraiser was needed. Judy Bolkema

-Tokar and I hand-quilted a queen size quilt, in record time which was raffled. The quilt was a tremendous success.

My board and I set up the groundwork for future missions of the New York – New Jersey Section. At the International level I served on the Nominating committee and am currently the International Conference Sponsorship Chair.

I chaired numerous fundraising and educational programs including Poker Runs, Pennies-A-Pound events, helping Girl Scouts achieve their Aviation Badge. I continue to co-chair the updating of a large display at the NJ Aviation Hall of Fame Museum, located in Teterboro NJ. This display features New Jersey female pilots including an extensive history of the (WASP) Women’s Air Force Service Pilots from New Jersey.

Thank you for considering me for the position of Endowment Fund Trustee.

CANDIDATES FOR

## MUSEUM OF WOMEN PILOTS

VOTE FOR TWO

**Leslie Prellwitz***Chicago Area Chapter,  
North Central Section*

I began serving the Ninety-Nines on an International Level in 2015 as a Director, having served in leadership roles at the Chapter and Section levels since I joined the organization in 2003. I've utilized the variety of skills gained in those capacities, as well as my professional career of over

30 years, to deliver service, leadership and value to each role.

A pause in my International Level service in 2024 allowed some improvement in work-life balance; and helped to clarify an additional option for me to continue serving the organization, in the role of a Trustee. My previous IBOD experience has afforded me the opportunity to interact with leadership on all four of our organization's trusts; and I see the Museum of Women Pilots as an area where my knowledge of the group's challenges, and my history as an IBOD director, could be put to use to help advance the group's goals.

It is my fervent desire to continue to serve the Ninety-Nines in this unique way; and ask for your vote for that opportunity, as Trustee on the Museum of Women Pilots.

Thank You for your consideration.


**Alexandra Kindrat***Eastern Ontario Chapter,  
East Canada Section*

I am deeply committed to the mission of the Museum of Women Pilots, supporting its efforts to preserve the history of women in aviation and to inspire future generations through education, public engagement and outreach. With a Doctorate degree and a career as a researcher, scientist, administrator,

and professor, I have made significant contributions to the advancement of aerospace and aviation. My research on microgravity's effects on visual perception aboard the International Space Station and at NASA's Johnson Space Center has advanced the understanding of human performance in spaceflight environments.

Among my advanced degrees, I hold graduate degrees from McGill University and Concordia University, a Master of Science in Human Space Flight from the International Space University and certification in Management and Leadership from Harvard Business School. This foundation supports my work across many leadership roles in aviation and aerospace.

My commitment to the Ninety-Nines includes service as Vice-Chair and Scholarship Chair for the Quebec Chapter, as well as my role on the Ninety-Nines Publication Committee. In these capacities, I have contributed to scholarship programs, mentorship activities, editorial initiatives and projects helping women pursue their aviation goals.

I am a recipient of a Ninety-Nines Academic Scholarship and a Northern Lights Aero Foundation Elsie MacGill Award, in addition to being recognized by the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics and Women in Aerospace. These achievements reflect my commitment to supporting women in aviation and my dedication to the values upheld by the Museum—honoring the past while inspiring the future of women in flight. 



## Careers



# Habits


By Donna Miller, *Colorado Chapter**"You do not decide your future. You decide your habits and your habits decide your future." – F. Matthias Alexander*

If you aren't familiar with James Clear, who wrote the bestselling book *Atomic Habits*, I highly recommend getting to know his work. He explains that achieving a goal is just a series of day-to-day habits. If you work toward creating a system that encourages good habits, the result will take care of itself. For example, if you are studying for a new rating or preparing for recurrent training, how can you make the habit of studying easy so that you are more likely to do it? Is your study area clear of distractions and clutter? What if you leave your study material

out and ready to go so that you see it when you walk into the room? If everything is in plain sight, sitting down for even ten minutes is better than not looking at the books at all. If you have to unpack your study materials and "build your nest," you might decide not to do it.

What about bad habits? It's easy to get into the habit of pulling out your phone when you have an alert. The habit takes ten seconds. However, you may use the next hour scrolling or checking emails that can be taken care of later. The one hour you had set aside to study has now been reduced to fifteen minutes.

Another process is what James calls "habit stacking." If you already have habits that are in place, you can add another at the same time. For example, if you generally get up and make coffee before starting your day, you can add reviewing aircraft limitations (or something similar) while the coffee is brewing. If the review takes longer than the brewing process, the coffee can be considered a reward for getting it done. What can you learn while brushing your teeth? If you put memory items on the mirror, it's easy to review them at least twice a day.

Creating systems that support good habits will serve you well throughout your whole life. Here is where they matter: James explains that we don't rise to the level of goals. We fall to the level of systems. We can't just want the goal. We have to want the lifestyle that will get us there. This is important because systems are ongoing. We can be happy with our lives right where we are and also be working toward something in the future. The two can be true at the same time. James explains that an acorn does not criticize itself for not being a sapling or a huge oak tree. It's easy to fall into the trap of thinking, "Once I reach my goal, then I'll be happy." That is the thief of joy. I often tell aspiring professional pilots that in your quest to become an international widebody airline captain (or whatever your goal is), don't forget to enjoy where you are on your journey. Good habits will help. 

# Places to Go & Things to Do

## FLORIDA SPACE COAST, NASA AND LOCAL MUSEUMS



Top left: Artemis preparing for launch with the monster creeper that moves it in front. (Photo by Mary Bryant) | Top right: 99s at the NASA/Space Florida Hangar including Mary Bryant, Florida Suncoast Chapter; Laura Kelly, Eileen Weingram, and Linda Sollars, Daytona Chapter; and Pat Ohlsson, Long Island Chapter. (Photo by Gretchen Howell) | Bottom left: Marker etched into the concrete of the shuttle landing runway indicating where the wheel of the last shuttle stopped. It's reported that the crew avoided braking to make the shuttle program last as long as possible. (Photo by Mary Bryant) | Bottom right: Taking off from the Shuttle landing runway with the NASA assembly building in the rear. (Photo by Rob Unterberger)



**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)

**W**ith extreme winter weather throughout much of the U.S., the sunny skies and current 70 degree days in Florida beckon. A great place to visit is Space Coast Regional Airport (KTIX) in Titusville, Florida, which is home to the Valiant Air Command Museum and has easy access to the Kennedy Space Center, NASA, and cruise ports.

If you have only a short time, upon landing at KTIX, tell the controller you want to taxi to the Valiant Air Command Museum ([valiantaircommand.com](http://valiantaircommand.com)) where parking is available on their ramp. Food is not available here, so pack a lunch or snack to eat at the picnic tables under the nearby trees. The museum is home to more than 50 historic warbirds and is a wonderful place to learn about the crews who flew them. Entry fees are \$10 to \$22.

If you are able to stay longer, contact Space Coast Jet Center (321-267-8355), the small but highly rated FBO at KTIX, to reserve overnight parking and a rental car, if you want one. It has reasonable fuel prices and fees. Ride-share options are also available for the 15-minute ride to Kennedy Space Center or the 20-minute ride to Port Canaveral for a cruise. The FBO can also provide suggestions for good viewing places for a launch.

Details and options to visit the Kennedy Space Center can be found at [kennedyspacecenter.com](http://kennedyspacecenter.com). A variety of experience levels are available, from general admission (\$30) to "Fly with an Astronaut" (\$200+), where tours are conducted by an astronaut and access to the newly opened Apollo/Saturn V Center, lunch, and autographed memorabilia are provided. Also included are IMAX experiences, the Space Shuttle Atlantis

tour with viewings of the pre-shows The Flight and Coming Home, and the Shuttle Launch Experience, which simulates what it's like to launch into space on a shuttle traveling 17,500 mph. VIP experiences (\$180) and other experience levels are also available. Plan at least one or two days here and be sure to reserve well in advance for the VIP experiences, Astronaut Tours, and IMAX tickets.

On your way in or out of KTIX, contact the nearby NASA tower on 128.55 (Space Florida Launch and Landing Facility Airport, KTTS) for permission to do a low pass down the 15,000-foot shuttle landing strip. Although permission to land should not be expected, a low pass from 50 to 500 feet AGL is often granted. If the tower is closed, it's possible to do the flyby on your own. However, be very mindful of TFRs and the nearby restricted areas. If it's close to launch time, permission to fly the runway is unlikely. There are a variety of YouTube videos with details about flying the shuttle runway.

Our Spruce Creek EAA Chapter 288 worked for months to arrange permission to land on the shuttle runway. Permission was finally granted after obtaining many approvals from several agencies, certificates of insurance for landing aircraft, and background checks for pilots and passengers. After landing, we were met by buses which took us on a tour past the NASA and SpaceX facilities, and Artemis on its launch pad along with the giant creeper which moved it. We then visited Space Florida's hangar. Although I'd visited some of the facilities previously, landing on the shuttle runway and standing where the last shuttle rolled to a stop was memorable.

So come explore the Space Coast and thaw out!

# Headaches in the Cockpit

## What Pilots Should Know About FAA Rules and CACI

By Dr. Rachael Ferraro, Senior AME, Aviate Medical, Intermountain Chapter

If you've ever paused before checking the "headaches" box on your FAA medical application, you're definitely not alone. Headaches are one of the most common neurologic complaints pilots report, ranging from tension headaches after a long duty day to migraines or cluster headaches. Many pilots worry that admitting to headaches will automatically ground them.

Here's the good news: most headache disorders are FAA-acceptable, and many qualify for Conditions AMEs Can Issue (CACI) when specific criteria are met.

### Why the FAA Cares About Headaches

The FAA isn't concerned about the headache itself, it's concerned about what's causing it and how it could affect safety in the cockpit. Headaches can sometimes signal an underlying neurologic condition or cause distraction, visual disturbances, or incapacitation.

When evaluating headaches, the FAA looks closely at:

- Frequency and severity
- Associated neurologic symptoms
- Medication use
- Stability over time
- Impact on flight operations

It's also important to emphasize that pilots should always talk with their doctor about headaches, especially if they are new, changing, or getting worse. Increasing frequency or severity can occasionally be a sign of a more serious condition that deserves investigation. Addressing headaches early protects not just your Medical Certificate, but your long-term health as well.

### Common Headache Types and FAA Guidance

#### 1. Tension-Type Headaches

Tension headaches are the most common type pilots experience. They're usually mild to moderate, described as a band-like pressure around the head, and not associated with neurologic symptoms.

Triggers often include stress, fatigue, dehydration, posture, or muscle tension in the neck and shoulders.

**Medications:** Acetaminophen, ibuprofen, or naproxen – provided you tolerate them well and have no side effects.

Most tension headaches can be issued at the exam without deferral. I'll add a personal note here: I suffer from tension headaches myself. Long days, stress, and poor sleep – especially on layovers – can all contribute. What's helped me most is being proactive. I get regular massage with a strong focus on the head and neck, which has significantly reduced both the frequency and severity of my headaches. Tight occipital and cervical muscles, often aggravated by hotel pillows, are a very real trigger for many pilots.

Hydration, stretching, and muscle care can make a big difference.

#### 2. Migraine Headaches (With or Without Aura)

Migraines may include visual aura, nausea, or light sensitivity, which understandably make pilots nervous about reporting them. However, many pilots with stable, well-controlled migraines qualify under CACI and continue flying without interruption.

The key factors are predictability, infrequency, appropriate medication use, and no in-flight incapacitation.

#### 3. Cluster Headaches

Cluster headaches cause severe, unilateral pain around the eye or temple and may include tearing, nasal congestion, or eyelid drooping. They occur in clusters over weeks.

CACI may be possible if attacks are infrequent, stable, and treated with FAA-acceptable medications. Active or unpredictable clusters usually require deferral and further review.

### FAA CACI Headache Eligibility Criteria

To qualify for CACI (for migraines and select cluster headache cases), all of the following must be met:

- No more than one episode per month
- No more than two urgent care or outpatient visits in the past 12 months
- No inpatient hospitalizations for headaches
- Diagnosis well established
- Stable and predictable headache pattern
- No progressive neurologic disease
- Normal neurologic exam between episodes
- No in-flight incapacitation
- Pilot does not fly during active symptoms
- Medications are FAA-acceptable and well tolerated

If all criteria are met, the AME can often issue at the exam without FAA deferral.

### Medications Allowed Under CACI

**Preventive medications** (stable dose, non-sedating, ground trial completed):

- ACE inhibitors (ACE-I)
- Angiotensin receptor blockers (ARB)
- Beta blockers
- Calcium channel blockers (CCB)
- CGRP antagonists (preventive use only)

**Abortive medications** (no-fly times apply):

- Triptans: 24-hour no-fly
- Eletriptan (Relpax) & Frovatriptan (Frova): 72-hour no-fly
- Metoclopramide (Reglan): 36-hour no-fly
- Promethazine (Phenergan): 96-hour no-fly
- CGRP abortives (Ubrelvy, Nurtec): 48-hour no-fly

Ground trials are required, and pilots must never fly during active headache symptoms

## Medications Typically Not FAA-Acceptable

- Narcotics or opioids
- Barbiturates
- Sedating or cognition-impairing drugs
- TCAs, gabapentin, lacosamide, lamotrigine, lasmiditan, pregabalin, topiramate, valproic acid

Always confirm with your AME and reference FAA.gov for the most current guidance.

## When Headaches Require Deferral

An AME must defer if there is:

- More than one episode per month
- Increasing frequency or severity

- Abnormal neurologic exam
- Seizure-like activity or loss of consciousness
- Use of disallowed medications
- Excessive urgent care or ER visits
- Any history of in-flight incapacitation
- Further evaluation – often with neurology consultation – is required.

## Bottom Line for Pilots

- Tension headaches: almost always issuable
- Migraines: often CACI-eligible if stable and controlled
- Cluster headaches: possible, but more restrictive

Early medical evaluation, stable treatment, and open conversations with your AME

can prevent unnecessary delays – and keep you flying safely and confidently.

Have more questions? I will be guest speaking at SUN 'n FUN in April and would love to see you there! 🌈



**Dr. Rachael Ferraro**  
Senior AME, Coeur d'Alene,  
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208-777-5282

# The Mental Runway

## Is Automation Quietly Undermining Your Confidence?



### Tammy Barlette

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

and often. After all, why not use the tools available?

The challenge is this: when we fly less, we gradually lose the very proficiency we're trying to protect.

When manual flying isn't practiced, confidence fades, and performance follows.

What often goes unrecognized is how this erosion actually shows up. The erosion is subtle, often appearing as hesitation rather than an error. Pilots may still be technically capable, current, and legal, yet feel less comfortable hand-flying, delaying automation disengagement, or managing the airplane manually when conditions become dynamic.

If it isn't recognized early, it tends to show up by surprise.

That surprise usually arrives on a day that is anything but routine. An abnormal situation, degraded automation, weather, or an unexpected task can suddenly demand skills that haven't been

**M**odern aviation has given us extraordinary tools. Automation reduces workload, enhances precision, and adds layers of safety when used well. But there's a quieter side effect that often goes unexamined, regardless of experience level.

Many pilots are wired as perfectionists. We value precision, consistency, and doing things "the right way." When the autopilot can hold altitude more precisely, fly a smoother profile, or manage tasks more efficiently than we can by hand, it's tempting to engage it early

exercised in a long time. And as we all know, those moments are not rare outliers in aviation. They are inevitable.

The issue isn't automation itself. The issue is the absence of a deliberate, ongoing plan to maintain hand-flying proficiency alongside it.

Without that plan, pilots may unintentionally create a cycle where reliance on automation reduces practice, reduced practice erodes confidence, and eroded confidence leads to even earlier automation use. Over time, the cockpit can start to feel heavier than it should, not because skill is gone, but because access to it has narrowed.

Breaking that cycle requires intention and follow-through.

It's not enough to say, "I should probably hand-fly more." Proficiency improves when practice is structured, consistent, and respected as part of normal operations rather than something reserved for check rides or ideal conditions.

One pilot I know accepted a simple challenge from a peer: hand-fly every other day to the maximum extent allowed by procedures. Nothing extreme. Nothing unsafe. Just a commitment to regular engagement with the airplane. Over time, the change wasn't just technical. Confidence returned. Decisions felt steadier. Automation became a tool again, not a crutch.

Automation is here to stay, and that's a good thing. But confidence doesn't come from technology alone. It comes from knowing, through repeated experience, that when the automation steps aside, you can still comfortably fly the airplane.

The question isn't whether automation is making aviation safer. It is.

The more useful question is whether we are being intentional enough to ensure it isn't quietly eroding the confidence we'll need when it matters most. 🌈

## 2025 Collegiate Women's Achievement Award's First Recipient

– Marilyn Shafer, CWAA Committee Chair



*Jun Oikawa of the All-Ohio Chapter, is the first recipient of The Ninety-Nines Collegiate Women's Achievement Award.*

This award will be presented annually to a student who exemplifies the values we hold dear: academic excellence, professionalism, leadership, and volunteerism. By recognizing the achievements of exceptional student members, the Collegiate Women's Achievement Award (CWAA) will inspire others to strive for excellence, engage in leadership, and give back to their aviation communities. Whether they are working toward their Private Pilot Certificate or preparing for a career as a commercial airline captain, these students are the future of aviation – and of our organization. If you would like to contribute to the advancement of these college women, please visit The Ninety-Nines' webpage and click on the Donate tab to select 99s Collegiate Women's Achievement Award: <https://www.ninety-nines.org/donation.htm>

The field of seven applicants from across the United States was narrowed to two – due to lack of recent flight experience by some applicants, including one who was not a Ninety-Nine – and sent to our three external judges, who unanimously selected the first recipient of the Collegiate Women's Achievement Award, Jun Oikawa. Jun's impressive years of experience and perseverance to achieve her goal of becoming a pilot continue to be an inspiration.

Born in Isesaki, Japan, just two hours west of Tokyo, flying was her interest at a very young age. Unfortunately, her 4-foot-10-inch frame, 4 inches shy of the minimum requirement in Japan, eliminated her from flight schools. Undeterred, Jun served in the Japan Air Self-Defense Force for 23 years, fulfilling various non-flying duties. Meeting her U.S. military husband changed many things in her life. His change of duty station brought them to the U.S., which ended her Japanese military career shy of receiving her retirement eligibility. But a whole new door opened, with no height restrictions imposed in the U.S. to become a pilot.

Now a college student in Dayton, Ohio, Jun is pursuing her dream of becoming a professional pilot while balancing her life

as a wife and mother of two young boys. Becoming a member of the All-Ohio Chapter has brought her family closer as they travel together by car or plane to chapter meetings and events. "Seeing my two little boys so happy to wear their youth-sized headsets is a moment I will never forget. The Ninety-Nines has brought our family so much closer together and I am grateful to The Ninety-Nines for giving us great opportunities and precious memories."

Her aviation-related college courses have included aerodynamics, airline operations, and accident investigations along with attending FAAST team seminars concerning aviation and risk management. Reading books by Captains Shults, Rippelmeyer, and Savino, while attending their speaking engagements, helped Jun to establish a personal connection. Outside of aviation, Jun has a black belt in karate, which she credits as an important aspect in molding her into an aviation professional. Karate taught her more about focus, effort, perseverance, and the importance of becoming a responsible individual. While experiencing a magneto failure during a late-night solo flight, she learned the importance of staying calm and being flexible while making safety the priority.

Currently Jun is training to become a Certificated Flight Instructor (CFI). She is eager to train and mentor others with the ultimate goal to fly for HondaJet. As a Japanese woman, she is inspired by HondaJet's Japan-U.S. collaboration. She says, "Flying for them will be a unique way to blend my heritage with my passion for flying. Wherever this journey takes me though, I want to be someone who inspires women to soar beyond barriers, just as I am doing right now."

Jun's lifelong friend credits her many exceptional qualities as a responsible and capable aviator. Her supervisor, while stationed at Naha Air Base, Okinawa, Japan, points to Jun's consistent motivation to learn from different career fields and enhance efficiency and effectiveness in her everyday duties as an assistant administrative manager. Working as a script writer and monthly on-air personality for the base radio station, Jun's communication skills found her serving as a translator for numerous conferences and bilateral training missions to bridge Japanese and American cultures. She helped other service members to increase their English skills which led her team to win the national English competition.

Jun has been an active member of the All-Ohio Chapter in the North Central Section since 2023 and currently serves as their Membership Chair since fall of 2024. She volunteered at the 2024 Air Race Classic in Newark, Ohio, and the 2024 Girls in Aviation Day with plans to return to these events. She has painted Compass Roses with the Scioto Valley Chapter. Memorial Day found Jun at the gravesite of an Ohio Ninety-Nine WASP, planting an American flag and leaving flowers. The 2025 EAA AirVenture in Oshkosh witnessed Jun representing The Ninety-Nines and recruiting new members. In 2026 Jun will serve as Chair of the Transportation Committee for the North Central Section Meeting.

Jun says, "Being part of The Ninety-Nines makes me feel that I am not alone in this endeavor...I am happy to give back in any way I can." Congratulations to Jun Oikawa, recipient of the 2025 Collegiate Women's Achievement Award.

Help advance women in aviation by donating as an individual, chapter, or section to The Ninety-Nines Collegiate Women's Achievement Award located on The Ninety-Nines home page under the Donate tab. With your support, we can make a difference.



## World Friendship Through Flight

**September 11 & 12, 2026**

### Friday Night Cocktail Party

Enjoy an evening of social time and museum access to the award-winning Amelia Earhart Hangar Museum.

### Saturday Events

Saturday's celebration includes the Induction Ceremony, Picnic with the Pilots, planting of the 2026 Liberty Tree, visits from the Kansas Cosmosphere and Kansas Forest Service, a special appearance by Smokey Bear, a Paper Airplane Contest, and engaging activities for all ages.

The evening concludes with the Gala featuring a keynote speaker, special presentations, honoree recognitions, and unforgettable moments.

### Sponsor an Honoree in 2026

The International Forest of Friendship invites you to sponsor a nominee for induction into this living memorial dedicated to the world history of aviation and space. Honorees are celebrated during the ceremony, and an engraved stone bearing their name is placed along the walkways of the Forest.

Application and payment deadline: July 1, 2026. Help ensure their legacy takes root for generations to come.

## International Forest of Friendship

Established in 1976 as a Bicentennial gift to the United States from the City of Atchison and the Ninety-Nines—an international organization of women pilots—the International Forest of Friendship is a living arboretum and memorial honoring the world history of aviation and space exploration. Founded by Atchison native Joe Carrigan and Ninety-Nines member Fay Gillis Wells, the Forest embodies the Ninety-Nines' motto, "World Friendship Through Flight," by recognizing aviators from around the globe.

The Forest includes trees representing all 50 U.S. states and the 35 countries where members of the Ninety-Nines reside. Throughout the year, state and international flags are displayed, adding vibrant color and symbolism to the grounds. Each year, new honorees are inducted, with commemorative plaques embedded along the winding walkways among the trees. The Forest is open to the public year-round.

# International Forest of Friendship

Open sunrise to sunset every day of the year. Admission is FREE.

Designated in 1976 by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior as the first National Recreation Trail in Kansas.

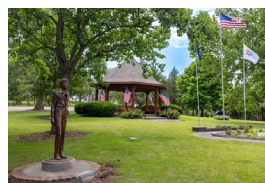
See 100 flags flying in the Forest during the 50<sup>th</sup> annual celebration September 12.

913-367-1419

forestoffriendship@gmail.com

www.ifof.org

*"You haven't seen a tree until you've seen its shadow from the sky."  
-Amelia Earhart*



Scan to learn more:



Donate Now



Contact the Forest office for information on events in the Forest such as weddings, field trips & family gatherings. Visit ifof.org for children's activities to enhance family visits to the Forest, Located at 1 Allingham Drive, Atchison, KS 66002

## 2026 99s International Conference Professional Pilot Career Panel

### “Blazing the Trail for Today’s Career Pilots”

Saturday, July 11, 2026, 2-4 p.m.

*An inspirational and informative panel discussion for career pilots and aspiring career pilots!*

*The Professional Pilot Career Panel is included with full conference registration, one-day Saturday registration, or career panel-only registration.*



### MODERATOR



#### Janet Patton

This year marks 40 years of flying for Career Panel Moderator Janet Patton of Denton, Texas. A Michigan native, Janet joined the Michigan Chapter in 1988 and is now Chapter Chair for the Ambassador Chapter, which she founded in 1999.

Janet became the first female pilot for Spirit Airlines in 1996 and first woman captain in 1998 in the DC-9. Later that year, Janet was hired by American Airlines, where she has flown the Airbus 319 and 321, Boeing 727, 737, 757, 767, 777, and 787. She is currently a Boeing 777 captain based at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport (KDFW) in Texas.

In her role as Moderator, Janet hopes to encourage and inspire members on the professional pilot path.

### PANELISTS



#### Nivedita Bhasin

Nivedita Bhasin is one of India’s pioneering women airline pilots, a former Air India Boeing 787 commander who has spent more than four decades breaking barriers in aviation. As a flight safety leader, instructor, and global advocate for women in aviation, she continues to inspire the next generation to aim higher.



#### Barbara Barrett Clark

Barbara Barrett Clark worked for Zantop International Airlines as their first female first officer on a four-engine DC6 in 1972. In the spring of 1973, she was hired by Eastern Airlines as their first female pilot, serving as flight engineer, flight engineer check airman, and first officer.



#### Maria Ziadie-Haddad

Maria Ziadie-Haddad was the third woman in Jamaica to earn a Jamaican Commercial License and the first woman commercial pilot hired by Air Jamaica. In 1996 she became Air Jamaica’s first female captain, flying the Boeing 727. Maria was also part of the first all-female crew in 1997 on the Airbus A320. Maria joined Atlas

Air as a Boeing 747-400 first officer in 2010, initially based in Huntsville, Alabama. She’s flown extensively on the Boeing 747-400, 747-8, and the Dreamliner large cargo freighter. She upgraded to captain on the 747 in December 2015.



#### Valerie Palazzolo

Valerie Palazzolo has been a pilot since she was 19 and has been a proud 99s member for 47 years. In 1987 she was hired by American Eagle Airlines and soon became the first woman captain in the ATR 42/72. In 1991, she was the first woman to work at the Detroit Flight Standards

District Office (FSDO) as an FAA aviation safety inspector, with 110 men alongside her. She has ATR 42/72, Dornier 28, DC-9/MD-88, and Boeing 747 Captain and Flight Engineer Ratings. Valerie has helped open doors for countless women in aviation and exemplifies the excellence and accomplishments of women in aviation worldwide.

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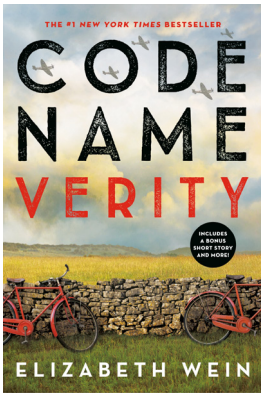


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[go.lightspeedaviation.com/ninety-nines](https://go.lightspeedaviation.com/ninety-nines)





### **CODE NAME VERITY**

Author: Elizabeth Wein

When I stumbled upon the historical fiction novel Code Name Verity at my local library, I was immediately drawn to its focus on women in aviation during World War II. While this book is categorized as a young adult novel, I do not doubt that it will resonate with anyone interested in aviation, history, or stories of bravery and friendship.

Elizabeth Wein's background as a pilot shines through on every page. Her thorough research is clearly evident in the rich historical details woven throughout, even down to the fact that ballpoint pens were originally invented for the Royal Air Force.

The characters are exceptionally well-written, with such depth that it is hard to believe Julie and Maddie were not real people. Fortunately, some characters reappear in another novel of Wein's, The Enigma Game, which I look forward to reading next.

By picking up Code Name Verity, you will not only gain insight into the Air Transport Auxiliary, the Women's Auxiliary Air Force, and the immense, often overlooked contributions of women in wartime aviation, but also support an aviator author.

**Guest Reviewer:** Sarah Fudali, Student Member of the *Maple Leaf Chapter, East Canada Section*, and aspiring commercial pilot who enjoys pairing her passion for aviation with a love of reading.

Publisher: Hyperion Book CH | Copyright 2012 | ISBN: 978-1423152880 | Available on Amazon



### **I SEE AN AIRPLANE UP IN THE SKY**

Author and illustrator: Sheila M. Young, *Finger Lakes Chapter, New York-New Jersey Section*

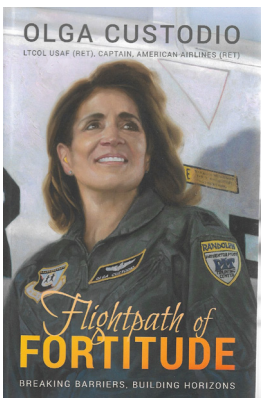
As a former first-grade teacher, I love a good children's picture book – especially one that I can give to my adult buddies! This is absolutely one of those books.

The illustrations are simply gorgeous. Of course, the opening page, which gives a place for writing the owner's name and a choice of "I'm a Future Pilot" or "I'm a Pilot," is purple with snow-capped mountains. That's where I fell in love.

The book is in rhyme, but it makes sense and isn't a sing-song approach. In the book I received, there were several separate slips of paper tucked inside that provided background information on why the author chose to write the way she did. There are also questions and individual input sections for a highly interactive approach. Young's "Acknowledgments, Special Thanks, and About the Author/Illustrator" sections round out a beautifully crafted little book.

For children or adults, this is a beautifully inspiring book you'll love.

Publisher: Fearless Sky LLC | Copyright 2025 | ISBN: 979-8992547009 | Available on Sheila's website: sheilamyong.com



### **FLIGHTPATH OF FORTITUDE**

Author: Olga Custodio, *San Antonio Chapter, South Central Section*

There seem to be several inspirational and self-help books out right now that use aviation as the basis and background. In my estimation, this one stands above the others.

The chapter headings say a great deal about the content and are very relatable to anyone interested in or needing an "I've been there" sort of experience. The introduction is titled "Air Woman," and some subsequent chapters include "Dreaming Teen, Resilience and Reckoning, Fiestas and Fortitude," and ending with "Inspiring the Next Generation to Soar." That final chapter sums up the book nicely. The book is well done, and it is most assuredly inspirational.

There are several photos in the book that round out the content and contribute to the background.

Very simply, Custodio's background is an inspirational story. She was the first Latina to complete USAF Undergraduate Pilot Training. She was also the first Latina commercial airline pilot for American Airlines. Her shared experiences come across as very much a "you can do this, too" message. I like this book a lot. I'm glad I added it to my library.

Publisher: Pur Flygirl | Copyright 2025 | ISBN: 979-8992345209 | Available on Amazonformats

# Milestones



**Olivia Arnold**  
ATP/First Officer  
Envoy Air  
– Michigan



**Michayla Dechnik**  
Private  
– Eastern Pennsylvania



**Chastity Jackson**  
Solo  
– Kentucky Bluegrass



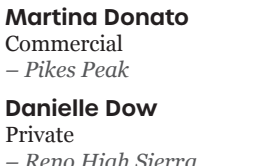
**Esme Lowry**  
Solo  
– Michigan



**Kaden Rice**  
Private  
– Dallas



**Evelyn Bienkowski**  
Commercial  
– Eastern Pennsylvania



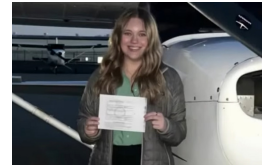
**Martina Donato**  
Commercial  
– Pikes Peak



**Katherine Jett**  
High performance  
endorsement  
– Tennessee



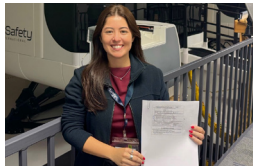
**Kim Marcell**  
CFI  
– Minnesota



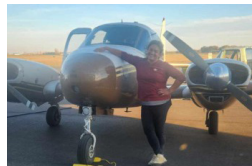
**Jessica Salyers**  
CFI  
– Kentucky Bluegrass



**Ana Gabriela Costa**  
Hawker 900xp  
– Florida Goldcoast



**Ana Gabriela Costa**  
Hawker 900xp  
– Florida Goldcoast



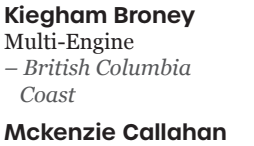
**Becky Juarez**  
Multi-Engine  
– Minnesota



**Lydia Munro**  
Solo  
– Kentucky Bluegrass



**Lauren Stettbacher**  
CFI  
– Wisconsin



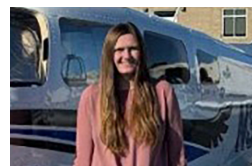
**Kiegham Broney**  
Multi-Engine  
– British Columbia  
Coast



**Cheymy Granjeno**  
Private  
– Florida Goldcoast



**Sherry Ann Ketcham**  
ATP  
– Bay Cities



**Michelle Noland**  
CFI, CFII, and MEI  
– Minnesota



**Abigail Thibodeaux**  
Private  
– Lake Charles



**Jess Carrera**  
Private  
– Orange County



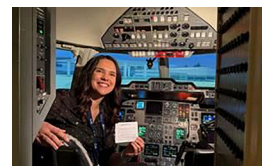
**Haley Haley-Sellers**  
Private  
– Michigan



**Carmen Kivisto**  
ATP; C-130 Captain  
– Minnesota



**Katie Palmer**  
AGI  
– Pikes Peak



**Tiphani Tolan**  
ATP & Hawker Type  
Rating  
– Orange County



**Minfei Chen**  
E175 type rating, ATP  
– Bay Cities



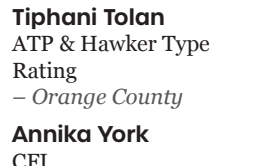
**Sarah Haskett**  
CFI, Advanced Ground  
Instructor (AGI)  
– Michigan



**Zoe Krohne**  
Multi-Engine  
– Tennessee



**Chloe Park**  
Commercial  
– Kentucky Bluegrass



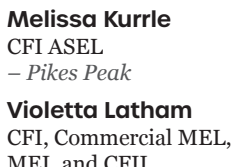
**Annika York**  
CFI  
– Pikes Peak



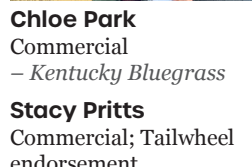
**Mary Dauphinais**  
Private  
– Eastern Pennsylvania



**Samantha Inguanzo**  
CFI  
– Florida Goldcoast



**Melissa Kurrle**  
CFI ASEL  
– Pikes Peak



**Stacy Pritts**  
Commercial; Tailwheel  
endorsement  
– Pikes Peak



**Kay Ziegenhagen**  
Commercial  
– Lake Tahoe



Treasure Coast members enjoyed a fun holiday party that included a hot air balloon presentation and demonstration.

## TREASURE COAST CHAPTER

Treasure Coast Chapter member Michaelene “Mica” Emerson (flying a Piper Cherokee) and Treasure Coast Chapter Chair Cristina “Tina” Gouin (flying a Cessna 172A) helped the Vero Beach Florida EAA Chapter 99 by flying 29 of the 44 attendees at Young Eagles Day held on December 13, 2025. Thus, The 99s rocked the 99. Leave it to The 99s to save the day!

Cookies for Controllers is a program initiated by our Vice Chair Anita Mixon. During our holiday party, we assembled cookie boxes with cookies donated by all attendees. Members then took the boxes to the air traffic controllers at Georgia airports and FBOs within the Treasure Coast region of Florida. Each box had a thank you certificate, signed by all The 99s at our party. In total we delivered to 11 ATCs and FBOs who support The 99s.

Since the weather actually cooperated at the Treasure Coast Chapter holiday party, it included a presentation and a demonstration about hot air ballooning, thanks to new member, student hot air balloon pilot Alianne Watkins, 99 Katalin Watkins, and Commercial Balloon Pilot and member Marissa Vereb. Marissa was the youngest commercial balloon pilot at the 2025 Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta. One of her students, Angelica Jung, joined in as well, and created a great opportunity for our chapter, guests and the airpark community to join in and try tethered rides and participate in crewing the setup, inflation, and deflation of her balloon system. Thanks to all my Ninety-Nine members who came to join the fun and camaraderie! Fun and food were had by all attendees! A huge thank you to Aileen Watkins (our new Treasure Coast Chapter Chair of the PR/Comms Committee) and husband Bob, for sharing her home with us yet again as hosts of the party.

- Cristina Gouin



Australian Section members, clockwise: Cathy Hobson, Australian Section Vice Governor; Anne Carter-Coleman; Will Weatherbee, husband of Kathy Koshan; Kathy Koshan, Daytona Chapter member; and Dominique Estival, Australian Section Governor.

## AUSTRALIAN SECTION

### Australian 99s Host Daytona Chapter Member

Australian Section members Anne Carter-Coleman, Governor Dominique Estival, and Vice Governor Cathy Hobson lunched with Daytona Chapter member Kathy Koshan on December 19, 2025, at Manly Beach outside of Sydney, Australia. Kathy was visiting Australia for the holidays and also managed a trip to Tasmania, where she met with Australian Section member Maria Stiles and student pilot Aimee Butler (guest) in Hobart. Maria is one of a handful of women to have flown the 2,000-kilometer Tasman Sea between Australia and New Zealand solo in a single-engine airplane, without the benefit of high-tech weather or communication equipment, in 1998. She is mentoring Aimee, who was the recipient of the Tasmanian Branch 2024-25 Gifted Trial Instruction Flight Promotion and a student member of the Australian Women Pilots Association (AWPA). Aimee is an RN and also received the Honeywell Open Scholarship from the Australian Chapter of Women in Aviation International. All are anticipating our arrival for The 99s International Conference in September 2027 in Sydney.

- Kathy Koshan



*Top: Kentucky Bluegrass December holiday gathering in Louisville, Kentucky. | Bottom: Kentucky Bluegrass 99s at the local EAA Chapter's VMC Meeting at the Aero Club in Louisville, Kentucky.*

## KENTUCKY BLUEGRASS CHAPTER

We ended 2025 in December with lunch at Cattleman's Roadhouse in Louisville, Kentucky, for our holiday gathering. Ninety-Nines, friends, and family celebrated with a gift exchange game and a rousing aviation version of The Twelve Days of Christmas.

In January we met with the local EAA Chapter for their VMC Meeting at the Aero Club in Louisville, Kentucky. Terri Donner spoke about The Ninety-Nines and afterward the Aviation Jeopardy game included questions about our organization. Fun was had by all!

- Sue Glisson



*Top: Every Austin Hill Country Chapter member brought cookies to the holiday party to assemble into treat boxes for area ATCs. | Bottom: Austin Hill Country Chapter members provided a booth at the Wings, Wheels & Wine Airshow in Llano, Texas.*

## AUSTIN HILL COUNTRY CHAPTER

The Austin Hill Country Chapter has participated in some awesome activities in the last few months! We kicked off November with the Wings, Wheels & Wine Airshow on November 8, 2025, in Llano, Texas. We provided a booth with approximately \$200 in donations received toward our scholarship fund.

On November 15, 2025, Austin Hill Country 99s participated in Women in Aviation International's annual Girls in Aviation Day at Atlantic Aviation at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (KAUS). We participated with a booth, event setup, and volunteered with all the girls participating in the educational event.

On December 12, 2025, we held a combined holiday party with Women in Aviation International at the residence of our Aviation & Aerospace Education Chair Lisa Halvorson. It was a wonderfully festive event where every member brought cookies as we assembled treat boxes for the ATCs in the greater Austin area. We delivered boxes to Austin Executive Airport (KEDC), San Marcos Regional Airport (KHYI), Georgetown Executive Airport (KGTU), Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (KAUS), KAUS TRACON, and AUS Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF).

- Hannah Lundgaard

# Grass Roots

## MICHIGAN CHAPTER

The Michigan Chapter held meetings via Zoom in both December and January. Suzette Biela, Vice Chair, led a discussion that included a Q&A session with a panel of Michigan Chapter member CFI's following our business meeting in December. Flight instructors participating in the panel were Barb Goodwin (Columbia Cascade Chapter, retired), Suzette Biela, Grace Eger, Linda Langrill, and Rachel Morrow. Also participating were members pursuing their CFI: Cherry Kan, Sarah Haskett, and Samantha Inguanzo (Florida Goldcoast Chapter). The panel took questions from members and provided valuable information to support member training and proficiency goals. January's meeting included a presentation by Chair Linda Langrill. Linda's presentation was entitled "My Flying Story in Six Logbooks." Linda shared information about her aviation career, beginning with her discovery ride and continuing to her ATP Rating. Both student pilots and more experienced pilots alike were able to share some of their own experiences, benefit from hearing about the experiences of others, and feel a sense of camaraderie with fellow members.

Our Michigan Chapter newsletter is distributed to all members via email each month. Our Aviation & Space Education Chair Melanie McNicholas, provides valuable information each month highlighting safety and aircraft operations. Subjects included: magneto checks and "hot prop" prevention; importance of oxygen use when flying general aviation aircraft; incorrect pattern entry in general aviation.

The Michigan Chapter met for an in-person holiday event on December 13, 2025. The event was organized by Event Chair Reya Dila. Members met at the Ailibi Restaurant, a local favorite, for brunch then toured the Air Zoo Aerospace & Science Museum in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Reba Milow hosted the event and welcomed everyone with warm hugs.

The Chapter recognized the following members who were awarded the Michigan 99s' Sandy Denton Traveling Trophy. Each month Michigan Chapter members share their accomplishments with chapter leadership. It's a challenge each month to select only one of the many deserving members who have achieved their personal and professional aviation goals. The most recent trophy winners were Olivia Arnold, ATP/First Officer Envoy Air, in January; and Haley Haley-Sellers, Private Pilot, in February.

Our Chapter Fundraising Chair Deborah Howell organized and led a chapter fundraiser in December. Members were able to donate funds to support chapter activities and receive customized Michigan 99s merchandise in return for their donation. During our January meeting, Deborah shared that \$575 was raised which exceeded her goal of \$400 for the event.

The Michigan 99s recently welcomed six new members: Amie Stiltner, Marah Jefferies, Madelynn Yakim, Marissa Marshall, Megan Hamilton, and Emily Robbins.

- Barb Vukits



*Top: Michigan Chapter members met for a holiday event at a favorite restaurant. Left to right: Sarah Haskett, Madelynn Yakim, Chasadena Yakim (Madelynn's mom), Erin McCoy, Reba Milow, Linda Langrill, Julie Lowman, Lydia Hodgson, and Esme Lowry*

*Bottom: Michigan Chapter members followed their holiday festivities with a tour of the Air Zoo Aerospace & Science Museum in Kalamazoo, Michigan.*



Left: Members at the winter business and holiday party on December 7, 2025. Back row: Becky Juarez, Chris Kocinski, Brenda Hanson, Ellen Quist, Melissa Aho, and Miranda Rubio Lopez. Front row: Marcy Drescher, Amelia Strauss, Patti Sandusky, Cheryl Daml, and Lisa Karan. | Right: Minnesota Chapter members and Santa at the Tree of Hope on December 6, 2025.

## MINNESOTA CHAPTER

Winter came early in Minnesota and the Minnesota Chapter kept busy with the Tree of Hope, which took place this year at the Atlantic FBO at the Anoka County Airport (KANE) on December 6, 2025. Our members helped collect, organize, tag, and distribute around 5,000 toys to children at 42 hospitals, all the Ronald McDonald Houses in the state, and a women’s shelter. We held our last event of the year, our winter business and holiday party, on December 7, 2025, at the Atlantic FBO at KANE. Chapter Awards were given to Becky Juarez for most Minnesota airports landed at in 2025 and Patti Sandusky for most Minnesota 99s activities attended in 2025.

We also wrap up the year by celebrating the accomplishments of Carmen Kivisto on her ATP and becoming the captain of a C-130; Michelle Noland on her CFI, CFII, and MEI; Kim Marcell on becoming a CFI; and Becky Juarez on her Multi-Engine.

– Dr. Melissa Aho



Northeast Kansas Chapter members enjoy their annual post-holiday potluck at the home of Cheri Thompson (front right).

## NORTHEAST KANSAS

The Northeast Kansas Chapter held its annual post-holiday potluck and meeting on January 17 at the home of member Cheri Thompson and her husband Mike. After quite a feast, our meeting focused on upcoming events, which include: painting a new compass rose at our local Lawrence Regional Airport (KLWC) this spring; serving as an Air Race Classic timing crew at the Rosecrans Memorial Airport (KSTJ) stop in St. Joseph, Missouri, in June; and honoring folks at the 50th anniversary of the International Forest of Friendship in September.

– Sara Tompson

# Grass Roots

## CHICAGO AREA CHAPTER

We hope everyone's holidays were happy and bright! The Chicago Area Chapter members had a wonderful time at our holiday party. A big thank you to Chapter Secretary Lisa Mitchell and Chef and 49½ Peter. And the food? We'd describe all of it, but it would take the rest of this column. Needless to say, it was delicious. Also, thank you to Madeleine Monaco for arranging to have the event at a truly lovely venue. It was fun to talk, catch up, and just hang out with everyone.

- Diane M. Cozzi



Chicago Area 99s and guests celebrate the season at the Lake Barrington Shores Clubhouse.

## WYOMING, COLORADO, AND PIKES PEAK CHAPTERS

### Breaking Boundaries at Altitude: A Cross-Section Success Story

In the fall of 2025, the spirit of aviation proved that it knows no borders as the Wyoming, Colorado, and Pikes Peak Chapters joined forces for a historic cross-section collaboration. Bridging the gap between the Northwest and Southwest Sections, these three chapters organized an ambitious 30-day Poker Run fundraiser running from September 15 through October 18. Pilots took to the skies to build their winning hands, visiting a network of two Wyoming airports (KTOR and 82V) and five FBOs in Colorado (KSTK, KCFO, KFLY, 1V6, and KBJC). This unique partnership was designed not only to raise funds but to strengthen the bonds between chapters that, while geographically adjacent, usually operate independently within their respective section boundaries, fostering a sense of community and shared purpose among women pilots.

The event culminated on October 18 in Broomfield, Colorado, where members and supporters from all three chapters gathered to reveal their cards and celebrate a month of safe flying and friendly competition. The room was filled with excitement as participants vied for a cornucopia of prizes generously donated by organizations across both states. Some of the prizes included passes to Snowy Ridge Ski Resort in Laramie, Wyoming; iFLY Indoor Skydiving vouchers; tickets to the Pikes Peak Cog Railway and the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Museum; Love Hot Air Balloon Rides in Loveland, Colorado; and many more donations from local businesses that proudly support women aviators. This gathering highlighted a vital truth about flying in the West: considering the vast distances involved in traversing our large states, cross-border support is essential. By looking beyond state lines, these pilots fostered a new level of camaraderie, proving that we can achieve more when the chapters pool their resources and energy, regardless of where the sectional lines are drawn on a map.

Most importantly, the event was a resounding success for the future of women in aviation. Proceeds from the Poker Run have significantly bolstered the scholarship funds for the Wyoming, Colorado, and Pikes Peak Chapters alike, ensuring the next generation of pilots has the support they need to earn their wings. The energy generated by this collaboration has already set wheels in motion for the future. Plans are currently underway for another cross-sectional, multi-state 99s event. This Poker Run was merely the first of many initiatives dedicated to shrinking the distance between us and expanding the opportunities for our members, filling us with pride and confidence in our collective progress.

- Nita G. Tallent, Wyoming Chapter



Top: Three Chapters – Wyoming, Colorado, and Pike's Peak – gather at the terminus to learn the winning hands at the 2025 Poker Run. (Photo by Margot Plummer, Colorado Chapter) | Center: A cornucopia of prizes awaits the winning hands. Many thanks to the generous donors. (Photo Credit Pikes Peak Chapter) | Bottom: Busy yet smiling, counting the cards at the Poker Run. (Photo Credit Pikes Peak Chapter)



Top: Gabby Cassettari, Teresa Camp, Cailee Carthel, Allison Schlotthauer, Trina Southard, Saralyn Patterson, Cyndi Ice, Tia Feronti. Back row: guest Jami Jarvi, Cindy Schultz, and Mica Foster at the Okie Derby banquet. | Center left: Oklahoma Chapter Chair Teresa Camp and 49½ enjoyed the 1940s hangar dance at the Tulsa Air and Space Museum. | Center right: Okie Derby top fuel score winner Cyndi Ice. | Bottom: Teresa Camp, left, and Cyndi Ice with Lady Liberty at the Tulsa Air and Space Museum

## OKLAHOMA CHAPTER

The Oklahoma Chapter hosted the 46th annual Okie Derby Proficiency Air Rally on September 13, 2025, at Sundance Airport (KHSD). Participants from the chapter included Allison Schlotthauer, Teresa Camp, Saralyn Patterson, Gabby Cassettari, with Cyndi Ice winning the top fuel score with 99.35%. A banquet followed the Okie Derby. The Derby is a proficiency air rally. Participants are assessed on how well they perform against their own estimates for speed and fuel consumption. It has evolved to include fundraising for the Oklahoma Chapter Wings of the Future Scholarship. Since 1990, over \$100,000 has been awarded to further aviation education. On October 4, 2025, Oklahoma Chapter members attended a 1940s hangar dance at the Tulsa Air and Space Museum.

– Cyndi Ice



## Our newest Life Members

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Dana Davis</b><br>San Luis Obispo County Chapter | <b>Kyla Savick</b><br>Florida First Coast Chapter |
| <b>Deirdre Dreger</b><br>Northwoods Chapter         | <b>Jessica Stearns</b><br>Paradise Coast Chapter  |
| <b>Patricia Kent</b><br>Santa Barbara Chapter       | <b>Shannon Jipsen</b><br>Ambassador Chapter       |
| <b>Lennie Muttick-Sorenson</b><br>Aloha Chapter     | <b>Karen Vaughn</b><br>Orange County Chapter      |



## Our most recently enlisted Friends of The 99s

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Shelly Baumgartner</b><br>Austin, TX       | <b>Britte Marsh</b><br>Portland, OR  |
| <b>Jonathan Bieganski</b><br>Silberton, OR    | <b>Keira Norman</b><br>Arvada, CO    |
| <b>Juanita Boyd</b><br>Mckinney, TX           | <b>Layla Prieto</b><br>Miramar, FL   |
| <b>Hannah Butters</b><br>London, Essex        | <b>Yolanda Puig</b><br>Louisia, KY   |
| <b>Cherise Jennings-Skeen</b><br>Redlands, CA | <b>Renee Scherrer</b><br>Lahaina, HI |
| <b>Kristina Krozak</b><br>Ocean View, DE      |                                      |



## New Horizons

This space is dedicated to our members and 49½s who have passed on to New Horizons. We will miss them, and thank these 99s for all of their contributions to our organization.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Kathy Walton</b><br>Reno Area Chapter<br>October 5, 2026             | <b>Bonita Ades</b><br>Colorado Chapter<br>January 15, 2026                    |
| <b>Dorothy Dickerhoof</b><br>Northeast Kansas<br>January 12, 2025       | <b>Toni Marina</b><br>Lifetime Member<br>Keystone Chapter<br>January 28, 2026 |
| <b>Susan White</b><br>Australian Section<br>June 24, 2025               | <b>Shirley McFall</b><br>Orange County<br>January 29, 2026                    |
| <b>Shirley Macdougall</b><br>First Canadian Chapter<br>December 4, 2025 |   |

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*you belong to a sisterhood of women pilots  
who lift each other higher.*



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women pilots *fly further together.*

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- Scholarships and education
- Support for your aviation goals
- Advocacy for women in aviation

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