

November/December 2021



# Ninety-Nines

*Inspiring Women Pilots Since 1929*

## FLYING "FIFI"

WITH B-29 FIRST OFFICER  
KATHY ROYER

*p. 10*



**plus**

**EYECARE IN FLIGHT**

**BETTY UHRIG**

**CAPTURING THE SKY**

B-29 SUPER FORTRESS  
RADIO CALL N529B

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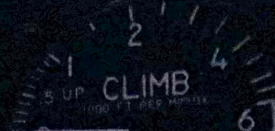
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### MISSION STATEMENT

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



2021

## NOV

1 **National Intercollegiate Flying Association (NIFA) Region IX**  
Lakeland, Florida  
✈️ Marilyn Shafer, [probbmom@gmail.com](mailto:probbmom@gmail.com)

5-6 **Fall International Board of Directors Meeting**  
Virtual  
✈️ Headquarters, [hq@ninety-nines.org](mailto:hq@ninety-nines.org)

12-13 **New England Section Fall Meeting**  
Kennebunkport, Maine  
✈️ Karissa Davann, [thedavansemail@gmail.com](mailto:thedavansemail@gmail.com)

## DEC

1 **Deadline:** Ninety-Nines Magazine Jan/Feb Issue Submission

1 **Deadline:** Proposed Bylaws/Standing Rules Amendments  
✈️ Gretchen Zahn, [governingdocs@ninety-nines.org](mailto:governingdocs@ninety-nines.org)

2022

## JAN

29 **Southwest Section 2022 Winter Workshop**  
Buena Park, California  
✈️ Samarra Dalrymple, [samarra.johnson@gmail.com](mailto:samarra.johnson@gmail.com)

31 **Deadline:** Professional Pilot Leadership Initiative (PPLI) Application for Mentoring, Spring Session  
📄 [ninety-nines.org/resources.htm](http://ninety-nines.org/resources.htm)  
✈️ [mentoring@ninety-nines.org](mailto:mentoring@ninety-nines.org)

## MAR

4-6 **Spring International Board of Directors Meeting**  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
✈️ Headquarters, [hq@ninety-nines.org](mailto:hq@ninety-nines.org)

## APR

7-10 **Southwest Section Spring Meeting**  
Location TBD  
✈️ Samantha Resop, [samantha.resop@gmail.com](mailto:samantha.resop@gmail.com)

22-24 **North Central Section Spring Meeting**  
St. Louis, Missouri  
✈️ Stephanie Maughan, [sarmstrong@siu.edu](mailto:sarmstrong@siu.edu)

## MAY

9-14 **National Intercollegiate Flying Association (NIFA) SAFECON Nationals**  
Columbus, Ohio  
✈️ Marilyn Shafer, [probbmom@gmail.com](mailto:probbmom@gmail.com)

## JUL

6-10 **2022 International Conference and Career Expo**  
Charleston, South Carolina  
✈️ Cathy Prudhomme, [cgprudhomme@gmail.com](mailto:cgprudhomme@gmail.com)

## AUG

12-13 **Palms to Pines Air Race**  
California to Oregon  
✈️ [airraces@la99s.org](mailto:airraces@la99s.org)

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

**MAGAZINE SUBMISSION DEADLINES** are one month prior to issue date. *JAN/FEB issue deadline: December 1.*



**NIFA**

NATIONAL INTERCOLLEGIATE  
FLYING ASSOCIATION

**Thank you 99s  
for your support  
both FINANCIALLY and as JUDGES!**

Mark your calendars for  
May 9-14, 2022  
National SAFECON  
Ohio State University Airport  
Columbus, Ohio

## *As Simple as That*



**Corbi Bulluck**  
*International President*

**T**he women pilots who gathered beneath the grandstand in Cleveland in 1929 and conceived the idea of forming a group for mutual support probably never envisioned that, more than 90 years later, The Ninety-Nines would still exist with the same purpose.

Charter member Fay Gillis Wells recalled, “The idea was just to help each other out. We women weren’t taken seriously. So, if one of the gals needed spark plugs and another one had connections with Champion (spark plug), why, we’d put the two of them together. It was as simple as that.”

In today’s hectic, ever-changing world, very few things seem as simple as that.

Our lives have become more complicated than ever. We have long lists of responsibilities and often we must juggle competing obligations such as family, career, and social commitments. We seem to have little time for ourselves while struggling to fit everything into our busy schedules.

Likewise, our organization is much more complex than it was 90 years ago. Today, we attend chapter, section, and international meetings. We provide aviation education to people of all ages; we mentor our student pilot members as well as our career-oriented members. We offer scholarships at the chapter, section, and international levels; we own and support two museums. We participate in fly-outs and do airmarkings at local airports. We offer educational webinars and seminars and offer first-flight opportunities through our Let’s Fly Now program.

Yet, despite the many facets of our organization, at the core is our camaraderie and the support we provide one another.

Several years ago, life member Evelyn Kropp wrote, “The Ninety-Nines are my best friends. I can depend on them being there when I need them. The friendship of The Ninety-Nines means a lot to me—knowing there is someone wherever I go who would welcome me. I could not bear the thought of not belonging to The Ninety-Nines. I would feel lost without my family.”

So, as we go about our daily lives, stepping in and out of many different settings, each with its own set of responsibilities, it’s important to remember: As Ninety-Nines, we come from all walks of life, from all over the world; we fly for the fun of it and as professional pilots; we fly all types of aircraft. But despite our differences, we are united by our love of aviation—and we support each other.

Yes, it is as simple as that.

## Ninety-Nines Magazine

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## Touch & Go



### AWARDS

## AIR FORCE PILOT CROWNED MRS. REGENCY INTERNATIONAL

**Raliene Banks** was crowned Mrs. Regency International on July 31 in Las Vegas, Nevada, at the Regency International Pageant. Raliene, who represented the District of Columbia, competed against contestants from around the world over the course of four days for this prestigious title.

As Mrs. Regency International, she will spend the year promoting empowerment, resiliency and aviation with her platform, "Take Flight Today."

Raliene Banks, daughter of Rafael and Edeliene Hernandez, was born and raised on the island of Guam. In just three and a half years, she completed her degree and graduated summa cum laude from Dowling College in New

York with a Bachelor's in aeronautics and applied mathematics. In 2008, she commissioned in the Air Force and was selected to attend undergraduate pilot training at Naval Air Station in Whiting Field, Florida and Vance Air Force Base in Oklahoma. In 2014, she graduated from Oklahoma State University with a master's in business administration.

Since joining the Air Force, Raliene has piloted the C-17, RQ-4, and KC-135. Unfortunately, in 2019, she developed Graves' disease, an autoimmune disorder that affects the thyroid and prohibits her from flying for the Air Force. She refused to let her condition get her down and decided to transform her pain into purpose with pageantry. Raliene draws from personal experience to inspire others with her platform, "Take Flight Today." The purpose of "Take Flight Today" is threefold: it empowers, promotes aviation, and educates others on how to promote resiliency within their communities.

Raliene continues to serve on active duty in the Air Force and is stationed at the Pentagon. She resides in Washington D.C. with her husband, Joshua. Together, they established Banks' property team and run multiple short and long-term rental properties.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

### AFRICAN SECTION 99s' DEPARTURE SIGN TRAVEL AFRICAN WOMEN PILOTS SCHOLARSHIP



The African Section 99s are proud to announce that their first recipient of the African Section 99s' Departure Sign Travel African Women Pilots scholarship has been awarded to **Amina Chaltu Jarso**. We would like to take this opportunity to

congratulate Amina on this incredible achievement and wish her all the best. Thanks to Todd and Linda Wright, who's generous donation made this scholarship possible.

Submitted by Ivana Alvares-Marshall - Governor African Section Ninety-Nines

### GARMIN G1000H NXI ADVANCED-IFR EARNING COURSE SCHOLARSHIP

Whirly-Girl and 99 member, **Chelsea Montgomery** of Minnesota, was awarded one of the only three Garmin G1000H NXi Advanced-IFR eLearning Course Scholarships being offered by the Whirly-Girls organization in 2022. The scholarship course will provide students with extensive training in G1000 Garmin systems.

### GARMIN GTN ESSENTIALS 2.0 eLEARNING COURSE SCHOLARSHIP

**Valerie Smith** of San Diego is a Whirly-Girl and 99 member who earned the Whirly-Girls' Garmin GTN Essentials 2.0 eLearning Course Scholarship for 2022. This course will focus on training students to use GTN and GTN Xi series touchscreen navigators.

## SCHOLARSHIPS - THEN & NOW

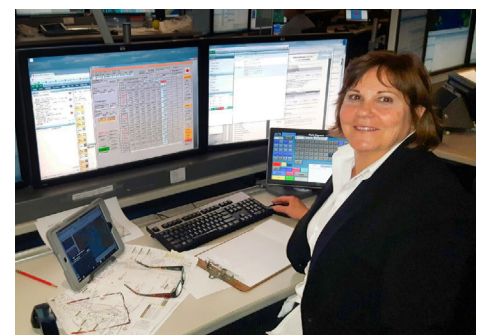
### AEMSF SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS—THAT WAS THEN, THIS IS NOW

*A Story of Perseverance and Determination*

By DENISE EGGLESTONE

First Canada Chapter, East Canadian Section Winner 1993

Being awarded the AEMSF scholarship changed my outlook on life. At the time, I was terminated by what I thought would be my forever aviation employer in 1992, after working with them for more than 14 years. My daughter was 14 months old, and I was six months pregnant with my son. My employer had recently transferred me to a new city but could not transfer my husband—even though we worked for the same company and in the same department. Being the only female ever hired in my position, I couldn't help but think I was terminated because I was pregnant, and because my employer knew that my husband had a decent-paying job. I was told to take the opportunity to stay home and look after my children. Those words still ring loudly in my ears and, remember, this was almost 40 years ago. I literally cried for months. Fortunately, I read the 99 *News* and details about the AEMSF scholarship. It couldn't have come at a better time. It turned my life around; from feeling like I wasn't good enough, to appreciating that The Ninety-Nines had faith in me after awarding me the scholarship to complete my instructor rating. I went on to instruct. Unexpectedly, three years later, my employer rehired me—to instruct. After 40 plus years in the aviation industry, I retired as a flight dispatcher.



TOP: Day of the award ceremony, 1993. **Front Row L-R:** 1993 scholarship recipients Gladys Bowditch-Gordon, Alberta Chapter; and Denise Egglestone, First Canadian Chapter. **Back Row L-R:** Betty Jane Schermerhorn, First Canadian Chapter; Karen Bailey, Alberta Chapter; and Cathy Fraser, First Canadian Chapter.

BOTTOM: Denise Egglestone working as a flight dispatcher.

## 99S SHARE IN LIGHTSPEED'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

By Susan Liebeler, Fundraising Chair

The 99s were privileged to be one of four aviation charities eligible for a \$100 donation from Lightspeed for every special limited-edition 25th anniversary Zulu 3 headset sold. Lightspeed sold all 100 anniversary headsets within a few weeks. Our goal was to garner at least 25% of the charitable donations and, thanks to messaging on social media, air show flyers and member outreach, we did better than that. We ended up getting 30% of all special limited-edition headset purchasers to select the 99s to receive charitable donations from Lightspeed! We are grateful to Lightspeed for allowing us to share in their 25th anniversary celebration and thankful for their generous donation to the 99s.

Lightspeed Aviation has been a long-time friend and supporter of the 99s. We go back a long way to their annual Vote for the 99s competitions where each year a group of aviation charities compete to gather the most online votes. For each of the four to five years these voting competitions took place, we placed either first or second and received generous cash awards each year.



99s with Allen Schrader and Lightspeed Award, Palm Springs

Kudos to Lightspeed for inspiring aviation non-profits to increase their outreach in the aviation community and for allowing the 99s to participate in a series of fun-filled contests!

## THE INTERNATIONAL FOREST OF FRIENDSHIP

By Shannon Osborne

The International Forest of Friendship (IFOF) was a bicentennial gift given to America from the city of Atchison, Kansas, the Kansas State University, Kansas Forest Service, and The Ninety-Nines organization. Made up of trees from all 50 states and 36 countries around the world, the lush five-acre forest rests in the birthplace of Amelia Earhart: Atchison, Kansas. A winding walkway runs through the forest displaying plaques that honor the men and women who have contributed to the field of aviation. Over 1500 honorees line the walkways in the IFOF, and every September more honorees are inducted.

Due to Covid-19, the 2021 IFOF induction ceremony was virtual. Included in the virtual ceremony were a few words from several international Ninety-Nines governors, a video via drone of the compass rose painting at the Amelia Earhart Airport done by the Greater Kansas Chapter of The 99s, and—the icing on the cake—a conversation with NASA Astronaut Eileen Collins and trailblazing pilot Wally Funk, the oldest woman to go into space on Blue Origin's first commercial launch. If that

wasn't enough, the ceremony began with a drone flyover capturing three seasons of the Forest (4th season still to come)!

This year's ceremony included 21 honorees, of which 17 were Ninety-Nines. During the ceremony a bench was dedicated from the Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship Foundation. Touring through the IFOF, and taking in the beauty and history was breathtaking. If you missed this year's event, you can view the recording at [ifof.org/2021-virtual-ceremony](http://ifof.org/2021-virtual-ceremony). We look forward to seeing you in person in Atchison, Kansas, on September 17, 2022. Following the induction ceremony at the IFOF, join us for lunch at the new Amelia Earhart Hangar Museum. Until then, congratulations to all the 2021 Honorees!

If there are any questions about the International Forest of Friendship, inducting someone, or dedicating a bench, reach out to Shannon Osborne [N759YU@gmail.com](mailto:N759YU@gmail.com).



## CELEBRATING AMELIA'S BIRTHDAY AT HER CHILDHOOD HOME

By Emmy Dillon

July 2021 was a celebratory month for aviation. The world-famous EAA AirVenture is back in action in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, but more significant to The Ninety-Nines is Amelia Earhart's 124th birthday on July 24. Chapters around the world celebrated with fly-ins and parties to remember Amelia as one of our founding members and as the pioneering pilot she was.

One of the most notable celebrations took place at her childhood home in Atchison, Kansas. The Amelia Earhart Birthplace Museum hosted an ice cream social, the first in person event the museum has held since the beginning of the pandemic. In addition to celebrating Amelia's birthday, the museum wanted to extend a welcoming invitation to the community in an effort to raise awareness for the museum and its great significance to local and aviation history.

Even with temperatures in the mid 90s, more than 60 people from local and distant communities attended the ice cream social.

The Amelia Earhart Birthplace Museum is located in the same house that Amelia Earhart lived in from ages three to twelve. Many people speculate that her love of adventure and flying developed during her time in that house. The museum's mission is to preserve the history of Amelia Earhart; honor and recognize the contributions women have made to aeronautics; and to present these histories and courageous exploits through local and online exhibits, activities and events.

The museum's board of trustees is dedicated to continuing the restoration of Amelia's birthplace home with many great plans and expectations for the future. And you can help!

To donate to the Amelia Earhart Birthplace Museum, visit the museum's website at [ameliaearhartmuseum.org/donate](http://ameliaearhartmuseum.org/donate) or on The Ninety-Nines website at [ninety-nines.org/donation.htm](http://ninety-nines.org/donation.htm).

Be sure to follow the Amelia Earhart Birthplace Museum on social media! Instagram: @ameliaearhartbirthplace Facebook: Amelia Earhart Birthplace Museum

# Flying "FIFI"

## Interview

with B-29 First Officer **KATHY ROYER**

By Marcia K. Gitelman, *Spaceport Chapter*

The end of WWII was marked by the introduction of the B-29, a four-engine propeller driven aircraft often called the Superfortress. At the time, it was the heaviest and one of the largest airplanes in the U.S. arsenal. A pressurized cabin allowed the B-29 to fly at altitudes up to 31,850 feet and airspeeds of up to 350 mph. Along with other modern aircraft systems, it was considered state-of-the-art technology. There were 3,970 B-29s produced by several aircraft companies. Eventually, they were officially retired, and today only two remain flying, FIFI and DOC.

FIFI was acquired by the Commemorative Air Force (CAF) in the early 1970s when a group of CAF members found the plane at the U.S. Navy Proving Ground at China Lake, California. The abandoned B-29 was being used as a missile target, but eventually was rescued and restored. FIFI flew for over 30 years until 2006 when the chief pilot decided to ground her for a power plant re-fit. This became an extensive four-year restoration. FIFI returned to flying status in 2010. Since that time, the plane has traveled from coast to coast attracting large crowds at every tour stop.

The B-29 has become a symbol of our freedom and our victory in WWII. Only four women have been fully checked out in the B-29. One of them is a Ninety-Nine, **Kathy Royer**, who is a fully accredited B-29 first officer.

**Marcia Gitelman:** What did you do for your initial training in the B-29? I know you are a retired airline pilot, and you are used to heavy equipment. You are a little person. You are not 200 pounds and six feet tall. Was it more difficult for you? Does the B-29 have modern bells, whistles, and trim, or does it require strength?

**Kathy Royer:** Initial training for the B-29 consisted of attending the Commemorative Air Force (CAF) ground school. Normally it's a two-to-three-day weekend, but this year it was online due to Covid. I was invited to Meacham International Airport in Fort Worth, Texas (FTW) for an airplane check ride. This consisted of two hours of sitting in the cockpit with the instructor reviewing checklist and emergency procedures. The flight portion consisted of flying from FTW to AFW (Fort Alliance, also in Fort Worth) and return to FTW. On the flight we did a stall series, steep turns, unusual altitude, and an emergency descent. I made a total of three landings, one of which was landing from a simulated engine failure. We also did one go around. All this took 1.8 hours.

The B-29 does require some strength. Everything is manual. There is no assist for the flight controls and no nose wheel steering. There is trim for elevator, aileron, and rudder, but



no electric trim. The airplane is very stable and flies nicely above 180 mph. The slower you go the heavier the airplane handles. When you begin a bank, you better be thinking about coming out of the bank because the bank will just keep increasing and then it does require some muscle to level out. Taxiing is interesting. Rudder is ineffective while taxiing so brakes and differential power are used. I found it challenging to be smooth. Taxiing on four engines is much easier than on two since you have better differential power available. A lot of times we taxi with the outboard engines shut down because the airplane is so big and we are not in huge airports where we need to keep from hitting the taxiway lights, especially in northern airports where the taxiway lights are higher due to getting snow. Sometimes you are just tapping on the brakes to get it to turn.

**Marcia:** What about navigation?

**Kathy:** For navigation we have updated Garmin products. A Garmin G3X, G5, and two Garmin 650s. These were just upgraded last year. You sit fairly far back from the panel so they can be hard to see clearly. Flying with an iPad makes it much easier.

**Marcia:** I know you flew a C-47 and two years ago you checked out in the B-24.

**Kathy:** I flew a C-47 for about two years and then in 2019 I checked out in the B-24. The B-24 and the B-29 are in the same squadron in the Commemorative Air Force. I flew the B-24 for about eight hours. Then came Covid. This year they had me check out in the B-29.

**Marcia:** What other aircraft have you flown?

**Kathy:** I retired off the Airbus. I have flown everything from 737 to 747-400. I retired as a captain and check airman from the Airbus. My experience flying a warbird airplane first came with the C-47 which was great experience leading to the B-24 and the B-29.

**Marcia:** How did you get involved with flying warbirds? Did you contact the Commemorative Air Force and tell them you were interested?

**Kathy:** I got involved with the C-47 first. That was Placid Lassie which is owned by the Tunison Foundation. That happened at Spruce Creek. A friend who I flew with in a formation group told me about a C-47 he and some other resident pilots would be flying. I went over to see it while they had it parked next to the runway and I met the guys managing and flying the airplane. The airplane was headed to Sun 'n Fun and, if I wanted to get involved, I knew I should show up and help out. That's exactly what I did. They liked me well enough, so they invited me to check out as a co-pilot. I did that and spent about two years with that airplane, including going to Europe.



I wasn't there for the 75th D-Day memorial, but I was there for the 70th memorial of the Berlin Airlift. After the D-Day adventure, the Tunison Foundation moved Placid Lassie to Connecticut.

**Marcia:** What happened next?

**Kathy:** Flying the C-47 got me interested in flying the planes involved in WWII. I was invited to Girl Scout Day in Deland, Florida, to talk about my career. That is a wing of the Florida Commemorative Air Force. When I was done with my presentation, someone suggested I should join the CAF Wasp Squadron. I did get involved with the Wasp Squadron and became friends with the leader, Ellie Dana. She asked me to be their financial officer. The CAF has meetings once a year in Dallas with the officers of the different squadrons. At that meeting I met Al Benzing from the B-29/B-24 Squadron. He started asking me questions and commenting; "Oh, you flew for the airlines; oh, you flew the C-47; and oh, you have a lot of tail wheel time!" I did, having previously owned a Cessna 180 and now a RV-8. "You should get involved in our squadron," Al said. I said, "What squadron is that?" He answered the B-29/B-24 squadron. I commented, "You must have a very long list of pilots." He said, "No, we are looking for pilots and you have the background we are looking for."

Al encouraged me to apply, which I did. I went to the ground school they had that year. They had just checked out a number of first officers on the B-24. I didn't think I would have an opportunity to fly that summer. But, while I was at Oshkosh in 2019, they needed a first officer to fly the B-24 from La Crosse, Wisconsin, to Lincoln, Nebraska. If I could get to La Crosse I would get my B-24 check out. I had my RV-8 in Oshkosh, so I flew to La Crosse and they checked me out the next day in the B-24. They called me again in a couple of weeks, so I was able

to get more time. This was towards the end of the season. I expected to fly it the next season but then Covid hit. That ended touring for 2020.

This year they were moving some guys along on the B-24, so they moved me over to the B-29. I have a lot more time in the B-29 now than I ever got in the B-24. I like both airplanes and they both have traits that are good and not so good. The history of the B-29 though really made that airplane a winner for me. It is certainly a very unique airplane.

**Marcia:** At that time, you probably didn't think about the fact that you were the fourth woman to fly the B-29. I know who the first two were: Didi Johnson Moorman and Dora Dougherty Strother. Both were WASPs who flew at the invitation of Paul W. Tibbets Jr., USAF brigadier general and USAF retired. Debbie King was the third. Several other women have flown at the controls while it was in the air but did not receive full checkouts. Now you, Kathy Royer, a Ninety-Nine, are fourth.

**Kathy:** I may be fourth or fifth. I read Chuck Sweeney. He wrote a book called "War's End". In that book he mentioned that on a flight out of Denver, he grabbed a WASP to fly as co-pilot. He needed someone in the seat. I don't know if she ever checked out in it. Sweeney was the commander that dropped the bomb on Nagasaki. The plane was Bock's Car.

**Marcia:** The two women who handled the controls were Micky Axton, a test engineer for Boeing, and the other was Helen Gosnell with Chuck Sweeney.

**Marcia:** You received all of this great training. What about your tour? What was your favorite experience?

**Kathy:** My favorite experience was meeting some of the people that buy rides. The bombardier seat, sitting in the nose, is the most expensive. I had a gentleman in Sioux Falls or Janesville ride along—he was so excited. His family had bought him the ride because his father had been a bombardier on the B-29. Another fun experience was at the end of the ride when we showed people around the airplane. One guy sat in the engineer's seat. He had a picture of his father because he had been an engineer on the B-29. Stuff like that makes it all worthwhile. I enjoy that aspect of it besides, obviously, flying the airplane.

**Marcia:** What was your worst experience?

**Kathy:** I have not had any bad experiences. It has all been very positive. I don't have any really bad stories. Taxiing, for me, has been a little challenging. I am a little jerkier with it than I would like to be. I joke with the guys in back that I expect them to kiss the ground when they get out after I have taxied the plane.

**Marcia:** How about maintenance of the airplane. Were there any issues while you were on tour?

**Kathy:** There were a few little issues, but nothing that you would not expect on an older airplane. We carry our own engineer. He is an excellent mechanic and there are usually a couple of other mechanics around that help out to maintain the airplane.

**Marcia:** Are you going to be going on any other tours? Next year?

**Kathy:** I don't know. If I get invited I will and I certainly hope so. I spent a total of 4 weeks on tour this summer and thoroughly enjoyed it.

**Marcia:** Do you have any additional comments?

**Kathy:** I want to express what an honor it has been to fly the B-29. When I think of the history of the airplane and the difficulty the crews endured when flying on those long missions from the Marianas to Japan and back, it makes me appreciate the opportunity I had this summer to keep their story alive. Yes, I hope I can do this again next summer and I look forward to talking to the people who come out to see FIFI. 🇺🇸





# EYECARE IN FLIGHT

## ORBIS FLYING EYE HOSPITAL

By Glenna Blackwell, Connecticut Chapter

*“Every year I look forward to attending the annual EAA AirVenture airshow in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, but my visit this year exceeded all my expectations after I was given a personal tour of Orbis’ Flying Eye Hospital.”*

- Glenna Blackwell

**A** non-profit humanitarian organization determined to end avoidable blindness worldwide, Orbis International’s programs focus on public health education, hands-on-training, advocacy, and local partnerships. The Orbis concept began when ophthalmologist Dr. David Paton, and others, noticed a lack of eye care and ophthalmic education in countries suffering with widespread blindness. Globally, 1.1 billion people are blind or have moderate to severe visual impairment, but 77 percent of this is avoidable with proper treatment. Part of the problem lies in the high costs of tuition and international travel which can prevent doctors and nurses in low-resource countries from traveling to the U.S. for training, so Orbis launched the idea for a mobile teaching hospital. By 1982 the Orbis Flying Eye Hospital finally “got off the ground” after a grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development came through, and since then, the project’s wild success is partially owed to its many generous donors like United Airlines, Pfizer, and FedEx to name a few.

Three generations of different aircraft have served as Orbis' Flying Eye Hospital: The first was a DC-8 donated by United Airlines in 1982. The second came ten years later when donations from three very generous individuals made it possible for Orbis to purchase a DC-10. Today, the Orbis Flying Eye Hospital has state-of-the-art teaching facilities, equipment, and surgical supplies aboard an MD-10 (thanks to FedEx and donations from other partners of Orbis) allowing their organization to visit and serve over 97 countries around the world. The MD-10 is entirely self-sufficient, including its own electric generators, oxygen supply, and water filtration system.

But it's not just Orbis' impressive equipment and generous donors that make the organization such a success. If it were not for Orbis' pool of more than 400 volunteers from over 30 countries donating their time and expertise to Orbis' mission, none of their work would be possible. And volunteers are especially essential in the planning process of future Orbis Flying Eye Hospital trips. It takes approximately one year to plan a trip and work out all the logistics. First, a crew must visit the proposed location to assess the airport, measure the runway length and width, and evaluate its condition as well as finding a location to park the large aircraft for their average three-week stay. Interpreters need to be recruited and staff and volunteers must meet with local hospitals to start selecting prospective patients before the aircraft arrives. Not to mention the seemingly endless amount of paperwork that local governments require before Orbis can begin training and treating.

During my tour I was fortunate enough to meet some of those volunteers and employees that contribute to this incredible mission. I spent over two hours talking with Valerie Suberg, Cyndhi Berwyn (both also 99s) and Dr. Hunter Cherwek. As they took me through the flying hospital, they could barely contain their passion and joy while sharing their stories and educating me about this amazing humanitarian operation. Their passion was infectious: I loved every minute of it.





## VALERIE SUBERG

Senior Manager of Aircraft Maintenance

*Southwest Section - Santa Rosa Chapter (current Chair)  
99 member since 1978*

Val's immersion in aviation began at an early age. Not only did her father fly for Pan Am, he was also a GA pilot with his own airplane. As a child, Val remembers being around airplanes a lot, and getting to spend time in the Pan Am hangar at the San Francisco International Airport (KSFO) every once in a while.

At 17, Val received her private pilot certificate and after graduating from college, she decided to get her airframe and powerplant (A&P) certificate so she could work on the family airplane. Val went on to work in general aviation until she was hired to work as a mechanic by Flying Tiger Airlines in San Francisco. When FedEx merged with the Flying Tigers, Val stayed on to work for FedEx.

In 2002 Val began volunteering her services to Orbis and today is on staff as the senior manager of aircraft maintenance. She is proud to lead a crew that ensures the aircraft is in top shape and safe to fly around the world.

On one of their latest missions, Orbis traveled to Ghana and Val recounted a very sweet story of connecting a

young aspiring pilot with the Ghana 99s. One of the African nurses being trained at the Orbis Flying Hospital met Val, and when she discovered Val was a pilot and mechanic, the nurse wanted Val to meet her 10-year-old daughter (who loved airplanes). Val agreed, met with the nurse's daughter and encouraged the young girl to pursue her dreams and assured her it was possible. Val also helped to connect the young girl with the local 99s to help keep her involved in aviation.

I asked Val if there was a single memory or person that may have encouraged or impacted her drive to become a pilot. She said, "most definitely my Dad, Mom and Aunt were instrumental for getting me into aviation." Val's Aunt, Dorothy Meyers, was a 99 and Powder Puff Derby racer. She taught Val ground school for her private knowledge test, and along with Val's CFI, Pauline Goslovich, mentored her for her practical test. Val recalls the Santa Rosa 99s encouraging and supporting her along the way as well.

Val's advice to young people is to continually follow their dreams. "Don't let anyone tell you that you can't do something," Val explains, "I never dreamed I would have such a wonderful career traveling the world with Orbis."

Thanks to Val, the 99s attending AirVenture this year were treated to an Orbis tour early in the morning before it opened up to the public.





## CYNDHI BERWYN

Volunteer Orbis Pilot

*Southwest Section - Aloha Chapter  
99 member since 1975*

While studying meteorology at the University of Hawaii, Cyndhi flew gliders. During her senior year the Air Force finally allowed women in the cockpit, and she jumped at the chance. Competing for a slot, she was selected as one of the first women in the program.

During her time instructing in the T-37 and T-38 for the Air Force, Cyndi also found time to fly hot air balloons, seaplanes, and helicopters.

Following active duty, Cyndhi joined the Air Force reserves. At about the same time she was hired by FedEx. Cyndhi is currently a B777 check airman at FedEx where her career has spanned over 35 years.

Alongside her busy career, Cyndhi has also found time for family, raising four children of her own.

## DR. HUNTER CHERWEK

Vice President of Clinical Services

Hunter Cherwek, M.D., the vice president of clinical services for Orbis, described to me some of the equipment used by Orbis' Flying Eye Hospital and about their partnership with Cybersight.

"The orange face mask," (pictured), "is for manual simulation exercises and used to hold the artificial

training eyes," says Dr. Cherwek. "Just like in aviation, we now train surgeons with simulation on the Flying Eye Hospital with both manual surgery simulation and virtual simulation stations."

Dr. Cherwek then went on to describe the partnership between Orbis and Cybersight. "Cybersight is our telehealth platform that now connects the ophthalmic community with freely available resources," Dr. Cherwek explains. "It's connected to the electronic medical record system for the Flying Eye Hospital so that all patients seen on our clinic days have already been discussed well before the plane lands and all those discussions/data have been uploaded and are available to the medical team on their iPad when seeing patients. The platform also allows us to communicate with our partner hospitals to remotely support teaching sessions in a training center and live surgical mentorship to help a doctor real time with a challenging case in the operating room despite the professor being thousands of miles away."

Dr. Cherwek went on to say, "Since we first took flight in 1982, Orbis has always maximized technology to push the frontiers of training and patient care. We have learned so much from aviation: from the importance of checklists to entire team training and now simulation. I feel so lucky to work and learn from such a diverse and talented team of staff and volunteers." 🇺🇸



*A Tribute to*  
**Coast Guard**  
*Aviation Pioneer*  
**Betty Uhrig**

By Beth Young, Eastern New England Chapter



**F**orty-four years ago, the first woman was sworn into the United States Coast Guard (USCG) as a cadet at the Coast Guard Academy. Betty Uhrig soon realized what an uphill battle changing the corporate culture of a traditional all-male organization would be and that it wasn't going to happen overnight.

Uhrig and the other “first generation” women in the USCG had to work hard at everything. New physical standards had to be engineered for fitness and aviation physiology, and they were largely the test subjects. Uniforms, housing, bathroom accommodations—all would take decades to work out to a habitable balance, and they had to fight their way through it, every step, every day. But that was the easy part. Winning over their bosses, peers, and subordinates was a whole other ballgame.

Uhrig relayed a funny story about winning over the hangar deck on her first tour after “A” school. She was told that girls couldn't work on helicopters because they weren't strong enough. Meanwhile, the crew set her up to work under the belly of an HU-16 Albatross. The component she was taking off weighed about 70 pounds, and she was lying under the plane to unbolt it. Occasionally she would peek up from her task to see all work stopped on the hangar deck and about 50 men standing on the sidelines waiting to see what “the girl” was going to do. In great fashion, Uhrig muscled the equipment off the aircraft and set the precedent that women could in fact work on heavy equipment. Similar stories abound in the first generation of female Coast Guardians as they fought against the stereotypes holding women back.

The second generation of women in the service, like me, were lucky to have a few female role models. The first women graduates from the Coast Guard Academy had to figure out a way to make things work. Some became hardened by the experience of always having to fight for equal rights, some were tired of the constant attention and retreated into the ebb and flow and tried to blend in quietly to the background, and then there was one group of strong leaders that never backed down, that always put their best foot forward and really shined. One of those women was Uhrig.

The women of the first generation made sure they were there to give the next generation some support and mentoring. For example, as I prepared this article, I pulled out my dusty women in aviation folder that holds sacred mementos, and there I found several letters written to me while I was in flight school by the first generation. One of the letters had the name of every USCG woman pilot to date (there were 23) and the unit they were assigned to, along with several of their bios, including Uhrig's. Those letters gave me a



*LEFT: Betty in her role as pilot for the Coast Guard's Commandant, the highest ranking member of the C.G.*

*TOP: Betty Graduating from "A" School as the Coast Guard's 1st Female Aviation Technician (AT)*

*BOTTOM: Betty at Navy Flight School Graduation*



An overhaul on a Barron shortly after earning her A&P.



Betty and her V Tail

vision of women in USCG aviation and an open door to a networking group, a pattern that continued with subsequent generations of USCG aviators.

In 2019, Uhrig, along with eight other USCG women aviators, were inducted into the Women in Aviation International Pioneer Hall of Fame for proving women had a place in military aviation and for opening the door for future generations of women to pursue their military aviation dreams.

Uhrig enlisted in the Coast Guard in 1976, the first year women were allowed to serve in the aviation field. She originally applied to the Coast Guard Academy, but was not accepted. She became an Avionics Technician and served as a radio operator on HU-16s (Grumman Albatross amphibious craft) and C-130s. She then served as a Navigator on C-130s. One of her bosses saw her potential and recommended her for a prep school for the Coast Guard Academy. Uhrig was accepted, worked hard for many years, and graduated from the Coast Guard Academy in 1984 with a BS in Ocean Engineering. As with all Coast Guard Academy graduates of the day, she was assigned sea duty for her first officer tour. Betty served on a Coast Guard Cutter out of Key West, Florida, as a student engineer and then went to flight school and flew T-34s, King Airs, and later, C-130s. She was PIC of the first all female C-130 flight crew. She later went on to fly the Coast Guard Commandant in a GIII.

When asked about one of her favorite memories, Uhrig recalled flying the Commandant into the Baltics and seeing at one of the airports a snapshot of Soviet aviation history. Lying about the airfield were various Soviet

war birds, a physical display of days gone by that was absolutely captivating.

Uhrig retired from the Coast Guard after 24 years of service and more than 8,000 flight hours as Executive Officer (XO) of CG Air Station Washington. She continued her illustrious career flying Hawkers and Gulfstreams for 17 years with Chevron. She flew to over 100 countries and achieved another milestone as the first female Chief Pilot and then GM of Chevron Aviation. She oversaw 120 planes around the globe for Chevron.

Uhrig holds an impressive list of certificates—SEL, MEL, ATP, CFII and A&P—and has approximately 15,000 flight hours (she stopped counting)! Although she says she is retired, it sounds more like she has just changed lanes. She recently earned her FAA Airplane and Powerplant certificate and has owned a 1949 Piper Clipper and now a 1978 Beech V35B. She is also the Treasurer of the Sedona Red Rockettes Chapter of The 99s. “If you really want something, no matter how daunting it may appear, keep working toward your goal and you will find a way,” Uhrig says. “I knew I wanted to go to flight school in 1976; it took me nine years and a lot of hard work and determination, but I made it!”

*Beth Young is a retired Coast Guard Pilot. She winged as an Unrestricted Naval Aviator (unrestricted meaning she can fly fixed and rotary wing) and holds an ATP, SEL, MEL, Helicopter and type ratings in DA-20 (Falcon 20) and CE750 (Citation X). After serving in the Coast Guard, she flew Part 135 for Xojet for 8 years and has over 9,000 flight hours. She is a member of the Eastern New England Chapter of The 99s.*



## Capturing the Sky - Sky Catchers Art Exhibit

By Meagan Huerta, Florida Firstcoast Chapter

I'm Meagan Huerta and I happen to be an artist and an aviator which isn't very common. Months ago, I decided to bring two completely different worlds into the same hangar—the Florida Firstcoast Chapter and FemArt—to help raise money for both of these non-profits. What I found was that both organizations share similar beliefs in freedom and independent growth. Pilots and artists both share an appreciation for being alone and absorbing the world around them. They don't necessarily follow the same rules about going outside the lines, but they both encourage us to explore our potential.

These days, a lot of people are going through a difficult time so having an art exhibit themed “anything in the sky” gave many people a reason to look up and stay positive. For myself, looking toward the sky has always helped me feel better.

The exhibit was held in the Bragg Avionics hangar at Jacksonville Executive (KCRG) in Jacksonville, Florida. We displayed mosaic steppingstones, a quilt, over 20 photographs, a recycled cylinder made into a mystical fairyland, and over 30 paintings. Most art was locally made in Jacksonville but some contributions came from across the country and even from my own family. My mother, Marilyn Huerta, sent 10 paintings from California to donate and sell for the exhibit and my grandmother, Cora Ann Finley, made an aviation quilt she sent to me from Georgia.

This was the first experience of its kind for Craig Airport and with the few volunteers, countless donations, and small crowd, everyone was able to make a few good steps in the right direction. We helped promote a small business, a firearm training instructor who is also an A&P mechanic at the airport, who offered a free class as a raffle prize. We were able to resurrect B-17 and B-24 cylinders and a B-24 radio from the Wings of Dreams Aviation Museum—which is unfortunately shutting down. We auctioned them off and were thrilled to put

them back in hands of those who have a dedication to old aviation treasures. This sparked a partnership with Bob Oehl, the former executive director of the Wings of Dreams Aviation Museum, and I'm selling six more of his B-24 cylinders and pistons in hopes of prolonging this country's appreciation for these exceptional WWII pieces of the past.

During the event, a remarkable artist and a veteran, Douglas Johnson, was kind enough to bring out his art supplies and start a live painting. A few discovery flights were given out as raffle prizes, along with a female flyer basket starter kit which was given to an aspiring woman who always sat in the co-pilot seat. A free glider flight was given to a guest who never even thought of taking flight. These are the small goals and achievements that stem from events like these. It is exposure and opportunity at your fingertips, and a free discovery flight might sound like pocket change to us but it's unworldly to people beyond the grass fields. Ironically, a man who made the highest bid on the B-17 cylinder, is now thinking of making it into a lamp—aviation and art at its finest!

I am always fond of how aviators carry a bucket full of stories with them everywhere they go. Our local Craig Airport Pilot Association (CAPA) was eager to share an abundant amount of framed photographs of old airport charts, construction of Jacksonville International tower, vintage aviation propaganda, pilots' favorite planes and greatest milestones and we all had a chance to live in these stories for a brief moment. Similarly, with the paintings, we discovered an alternate way of capturing the sky. I will continue to be involved in the Florida Firstcoast Chapter in hopes of creating new ways we can use flying to help, inspire, and educate the community.

Thank you to all that made this event possible, we raised over \$800 for our Chapter to give out scholarships someday soon! 🍷



## AirVenture 2021 at Oshkosh, Wisconsin (KOSH)

By Lin Caywood, Sugarloaf Chapter

When AirVenture 2020 was canceled, many hearts were broken since this annual event is highly anticipated by pilots like a child anticipates the arrival of Santa Claus. When AirVenture 2021—hosted from July 26 to August 1—was given the green light along with a few precautions, pilots flocked back to the airport that earns the title of “busiest in the world” for one week each year at Oshkosh, Wisconsin (KOSH).

From its humble beginnings in 1953 of a gathering of a handful of aircraft and about only 150 attendees, this year, the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) posted an attendance of 608,000—which is only the third time that attendance has exceeded 600,000 and it was without the benefit of the large population of non-U.S. based pilots that traditionally attend. Special arrival and departure procedures for pilots were in effect from July 22 to August 1. The tower recorded approximately 116 takeoffs and/or landings per hour and an approximate total of 16,378 for those ten days.

The weather was spectacular most of the week except for heavy rains and thunderstorms early in the week and a tornado that touched down on Wednesday about 10 miles from Oshkosh near the town of Ripon. Luckily, no aircraft were damaged and damage to the local

community was minimal. The weather did delay some of the mass arrivals which led to holds at multiple locations. I personally got caught in the holds on Saturday before the show and made seven turns around Puckaway Lake before I was cleared to land. However, overall the new procedures provided for a less stressful and safe approach into Oshkosh.

Loaded with booth materials, and some first-time attendees, my trusty 182 made her 10th arrival into the show. Our booth was located in the same spot—Hangar B—but we had new neighbors next to us and an aisle was created along our other side to allow for better circulation. We also had some sanitizing protocols in place to help with health safety.

The booth was a resounding success yet again. Special thanks to Cheryl Cooney and her husband, Mitch, along with Susan Conner-Steeb for being our anchors for critical setup, operational duties, and crowd control at our special event. Ninety-Nines International President Corbi Bulluck, who was attending AirVenture for the first time, pinned and welcomed many new members and greeted hundreds of existing members throughout the week. President Bulluck also attended several events to represent the organization, including the AOPA

supporters' dinner, the WomenVenture Lunch, and the International Aerobatic Club's dinner. Member Judy Phelps recruited the most members in a single time slot and Jill Tallman signed up the most members over the entire week—we quickly dubbed them our Vx and Vy volunteers of the week.

As a special treat to our members and their guests, the Orbis Flying Hospital hosted private tours of the hospital aircraft on Sunday afternoon and Thursday morning. Many thanks to 99s' Valerie Suberg, senior manager of aircraft maintenance for Orbis, for arranging the opportunity. Just over one hundred 99s and guests were able to take advantage of the special tours of the MD-10 that was generously donated to the organization from FedEx and converted into a teaching eye hospital.

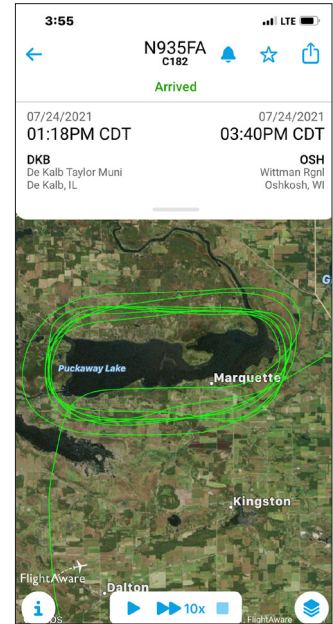
Although we were not able to host our annual member appreciation dinner this year, we are hoping to resume this popular annual event in 2022 and we have procured an exciting guest speaker.

Visitors to the booth were able to pick up a free WomenVenture t-shirt and members of The 99s could sign our logbook to receive a special members only gift that was very welcome in the heat; a foldable fan with The 99s logo printed on it. We were also excited to learn about and promote that our long-term supporting partner, Lightspeed Foundation, designated The 99s as one of only three non-profits to benefit from their 25th

anniversary promotion, where The 99s earned \$100 for each headset purchased.

Many thanks again to the lifeblood of our organization, our volunteers. Over 35 members, 49 1/2s and Friends of The 99s assisted during setup, show week, and teardown. Over 300 hours of volunteer time was recorded and every moment was appreciated. Additional time was logged at the show by members who helped with Women Sottar You Soar activities, displayed their award-winning aircraft, sold merchandise at their own or other booths, presented at forums throughout the showgrounds, and volunteered with EAA and Civil Air Patrol. Special thanks to Darcy Kulesha, Wisconsin Chapter Chair, for providing extra support for teardown and local storage needs.

I hope to see you all next year in Oshkosh! 🙌



## Deadline For Proposed Bylaws/ Standing Rules Amendments

By Gretchen Jahn,  
International Bylaws/Standing Rules  
Committee Chairman

The International Bylaws/Standing Rules (IBL/SR) Committee is working hard on potential proposals for 2022 amendments. Chapters, sections, Council of Governors, International Board of Directors, or the International Bylaws/Standing Rules Committee may propose amendments to the bylaws and standing rules. In order to present a proposal at the annual meeting in 2022 in Charleston, South Carolina, electronic or mailed copies of proposed amendments must be received by **December 31, 2021**.

To assist in preparing your proposed amendments, follow the instructions available in the library in the member area of the website. Electronic submission is

preferred (such as email), but hard copy sent by a postal service is also acceptable. For documents that require a signature, such as the letter from the chairman/governor or the minutes from the secretary, you may find it more convenient to mail a hard copy while sending the other documents electronically. 🙌

Send proposed amendments (and questions/requests) to:

Gretchen Jahn  
International Bylaws/Standing Rules Committee  
11347 Colony Cir  
Broomfield CO 80021  
governingdocs@ninety-nines.org





## Tenacity

By Donna Miller

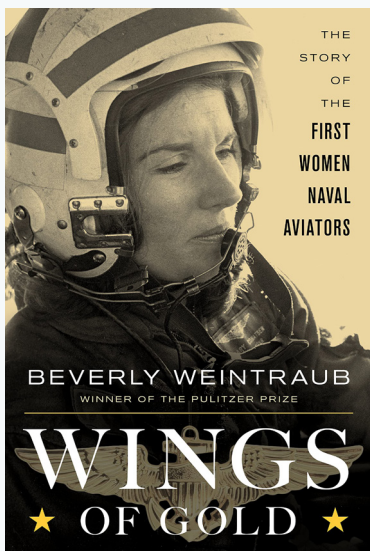
“The most difficult thing is the decision to act, the rest is merely tenacity.” – *Amelia Earhart*

**C**an you remember where you were in 1961? If you weren't born yet, think of how many years it would be until you came into the world and then think of all you've done since then. If you were born in 1961, try to think of how long ago that was and where you were on your life's journey back then.

If you were Wally Funk, you were actively working on your future as an astronaut. Not the “Oh, I'd love to see the world from that perspective” wistful dreaming from seeing the “Earthrise” photograph in National Geographic. No, Wally was undergoing testing that could advance her and 12 other women to the next level at NASA. When it became clear that NASA wasn't ready for women, most of them went back to their real lives. Wally did too, but she always kept dreaming of space, jumping on every opportunity she had to learn something about the space program. She spent time at the Cosmonaut Training Center in Star City, Russia and got herself on the Virgin Galactic guest list. Wally joyfully celebrated NASA Astronaut Eileen Collins' launch as the first female space shuttle pilot. Now, 60 years later—just this year—Wally lived her dream and launched into space with Jeff Bezos in the New Shepard rocket.

What Amelia Earhart said is true. It's hard to know what you want when you are faced with so many options. Making the decision to act and commit to your chosen dream really is the hard part. There are distractions and obstacles that try to hamper your best efforts. There are financial setbacks and doubts that rear their ugly heads. Not to mention the naysayers, especially back in 1961 when girls like Wally Funk wanted to become astronauts.

If you know what your dream is, keep your eye on the prize. Do whatever you need to do to keep it in focus. Don't be distracted by setbacks or disappointments. I look around and see what furloughs and the pandemic have done to thwart aviation careers. But if you're tenacious enough, you clearly see that those are just diversions and delays. Of course, timing and circumstances effect everyone's lives, but they don't need to push you off your course. I remember my first flying job; loading and unloading freight, flying single pilot and thinking I had made a grave mistake leaving a great job to pursue aviation. A good friend said to me, “You're on the track now. Someone is paying you to fly! Stay on the track.” He was right. As tough as it got, I had made the decision to act, and the rest was merely tenacity. I marvel at how it all works and I smile when I see the picture of Wally Funk beaming as she exits the spacecraft because after 60 years of sheer grit and tenacity, she is now an astronaut.



## Books

**WINGS OF GOLD:** *The Story of the First Women Naval Aviators*

Author: Beverly Weintraub | Lyons Press – ISBN: 978-1-4930-5511-1

Author Beverly Weintraub is a Greater New York Chapter and New York/New Jersey Section member. She is a Pulitzer Prize-winning author, and the quality of her writing and research truly make this a first-rate book. The book is a great look at an experiment that began in 1972, and while evolution and growth have happened within the program, some of the same challenges continue today.

“Wings of Gold” is one of those books that serves as both a reference and history book while telling a compelling story of the women who paved the way in a sometimes unfriendly atmosphere. Many of the principal subjects are familiar, but there's also information that may be unfamiliar and surprising. The Source section adds great background specifics and provides an opportunity to delve deeper into the story.

Thank you, Beverly Weintraub, for tackling such an important aspect of aviation, and for telling the stories of the women who shared their experiences with you.

– Jacque Boyd, *Rio Grande Norte Chapter*

# Milestones

**Caroline Adcock**  
Instrument - *Chicago Area*



**Leslie Cauble**  
CFI - *Maui Chapter*

**Grace Cowherd**  
Commercial Multi-engine - *Arkansas*

**Meredith Datena**  
Tailwheel - *Columbia Cascade*



**Deb Edwards**  
Class 4 Instructor - *Canadian Rockies*

**Emma Emmons**  
Solo - *Bay Cities*

**Jae Grossi**  
Solo - *Bay Cities*

**Trisha Hess**  
Basic Ground Instructor - *Kitty Hawk*

**Leire Kennedy**  
Private - *Chicago Area*

**Mona Knock**  
Commercial - *Chicago Area*

**Grace Kohlert**  
Commercial  
CFI and CFII - *Chicago Area*

**Eva Kozlowski**  
Private - *Chicago Area*



**Sarah Krammen**  
Solo - *Lake Tahoe*

**Tika Naidu**  
Class 4 Instructor - *Canadian Rockies*



**Natacha Martin**  
Seaplane and Multi-engine  
- *Finger Lakes*

**Taite Pryor**  
Solo - *Columbia Cascade*



**Annie Racine-Rouleau**  
Private - *British Columbia Coast*



**Phoebe Ross**  
Private - *Eastern New England*

**Aish Shrestha**  
Solo - *Maryland*



**Kristi Stephens**  
Private - *Columbia Cascade*



**Kristi Tidwell**  
High-Performance Endorsement -  
*Arkansas*



**Elizabeth Welliver**  
Private - *Monterey Bay*

**Christina Williams**  
CFII - *Hampton Roads*

**Amanda Willson**  
Private - *Colorado*

**Hannah Wilson**  
Private - *Chicago Area*

**Jessie Zuberek**  
Instrument - *Eastern New England*

# Grass Roots



Mary Dwyer, Mary Woody, Janice Pelletti, Brenda Robinette, Megan Armstrong and Candice Lamb.

## APPALACHIAN AVIATRIXES CHAPTER

On August 28, The Appalachian Aviatrixes Chapter met at the home of Brenda Robinette, who was welcomed as a new member of the Chapter along with Megan Armstrong. Brenda, a retired Southwest Airlines pilot, is a new member to the Chapter but not a new Ninety-Nine. She is also a CFI and mentors student pilots like Megan Armstrong, the Chapter's other newest member, and Candice Lamb, who plans to become a member in the future. Both students fly out of the Greeneville, Tennessee Airport. Megan is planning on an airline career while Candice is working on her aviation goals.

Along with the Chapter members, four 49 1/2s also joined the event for introductions, dinner, and some hangar flying.

- Janice Pelletti



## BAY CITIES CHAPTER

The Bay Cities Chapter had a busy summer. They gave away Chapter scholarships to seven women and hosted their first in person winging party with over 20 pilots. To celebrate Amelia Earhart's birthday, the Chapter Chair, Christine Oksas, gave a heartfelt and well researched speech as the final speaker at an Oakland Aviation Museum event, where a new placard was donated by the fraternal organization E Clampus Vitas.

- Wendy O'Malley



Posing in front of the Noll's Cabin Waco are Dinah Spadoni, Jill Feldman, Deb Meznarsic, Shelley Ventura, Claire Carr, Amanda Noll, and Madeleine Monaco.

Not pictured were Diane Cozzi, Mary Lou Erikson, Diane Hromek-Sawyer, Deena Schwartz, Jill Mann and her student, Meredith.

## CHICAGO AREA CHAPTER

The Chicago Area Chapter hosted lunch at Pilot Pete's at the west suburban Schaumburg Airport (O6C) for their fly-in/drive-in event on August 15. The weather was spectacular, and we had a great time with good food and good pilot talk, as always. Some drove, of course, but Deb Meznarsic, Shelley Ventura, Jill Feldman, Claire Carr, Jill Mann and her student, Meredith; Piper and Charlotte Noll, along with their mother, Amanda Noll, all flew in.

Representing the Chicago Area Chapter, Leire Kennedy (99), Amaya (future 99), Madeleine Monaco (99) and Cynthia Florsheim (Friend of the 99s) participated in Run The Runway, a five kilometer run and one mile walk, at the Chicago Executive Airport on August 21.

- Diane M. Cozzi

# Grass Roots



## GREATER KANSAS CHAPTER

The Amelia Earhart Airport is really changing. When I personally flew into K59 for the first time, there was no one tending to the FBO building—it was tired, old and in really bad shape. Now, not only is there a new state of the art FBO building to use, but also the Amelia Earhart Hangar Museum. But, one thing was still missing; a compass rose. Since I live in New York City, I contacted a few folks in the Atchison, Kansas, area and asked if they could take on the project, but unfortunately wasn't having much luck. It wasn't until I contacted a former New York-New Jersey Section member who was now Chair of the Greater Kansas Chapter, Laura MacAllister, that I got someone to say, "I will look into it."

The Chapter had never been involved in making a compass rose, let alone organizing one. But, they did a wonderful job on the project—which included an aerial video from a drone! Many thanks to Angie Cairo, K59 airport manager, Greater Kansas City 99s: Laura, Lindsay and Liam MacAllister; Julie Rew Bella; Renee and Steve Sterling; Billie and Brice Lenz; Elle and, her mom, Laurie; Anne Shaneyfelt from the East Kansas 99s; and Shannon Osborne from the Greater New York Chapter.

– Shannon Osborne



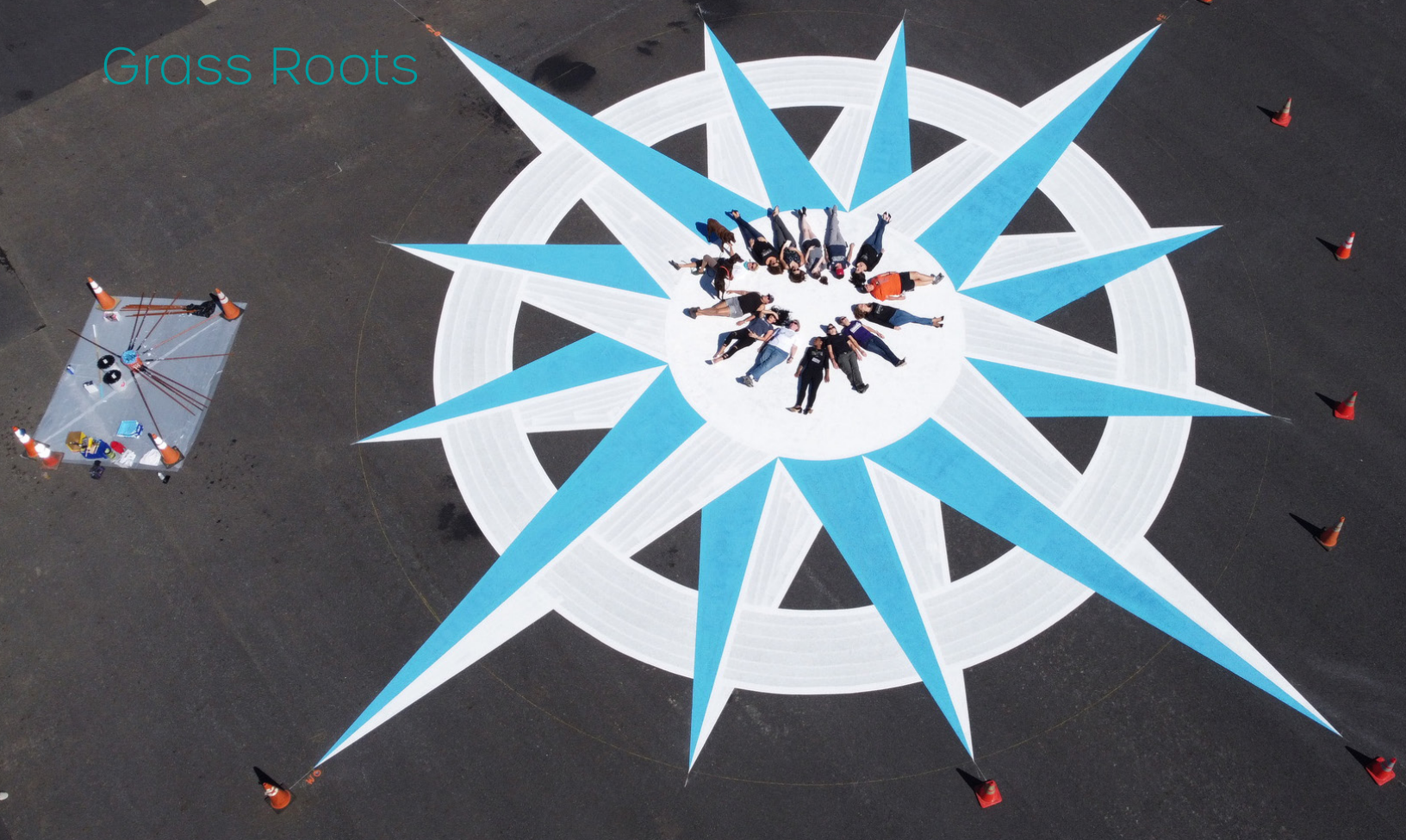
## WASHINGTON DC CHAPTER

On July 22, the Washington DC Chapter hosted a wine and paint event to raise money to cover a \$150 registration fee for a Girls in Flight Training (GIFT) program. A special shoutout goes to the Sugarloaf Chapter and Mary Latimer for working together to bring

the GIFT program to Frederick Airport (KFDK)! The Paint Night took place at the Washington International Flight Academy, located at Gaithersburg Airport (KGAI). Daun Jung graciously coordinated the event space. Kathleen O'Neil took the lead on organizing the event and reached out to the Sugarloaf Chapter to locate painting instructor Tammy Brown. Overall the event was a great success; Tammy did a wonderful job leading the class and even incorporated an aircraft into the paint scene!

In September, a leadership change took place as Kathleen O'Neil stepped down from the Chapter Chair position and was relieved by Lucy Mencia. Lucy led the most recent monthly Zoom call and introduced some new volunteer ideas—more to come on that! In addition, Kim Wood stepped into the role of Vice Chair and is working to expand the chapter's social media presence, so feel free to say hello on our new Instagram @DC99s!

– Kimberly Wood



## MARYLAND CHAPTER

### Maryland's Ninety-Nines Paint 80-Foot Compass Rose at Harford County Airport

The Maryland Ninety-Nines are proud to announce a brand new 80-foot compass rose at the Harford County Airport (0W3) in Churchville, Maryland, painted on September 24 and September 25. "We are pleased to once again be able to provide a service to the aviation community by painting a compass rose at Harford County Airport. It was exciting to finally be able to get together after many months of separation, due to the pandemic, and give back to our aviation community. It was a great outdoor event for us all," said Chapter Chair Jane Toskes. Vice Chair Sophia Dengo also commented, "I loved seeing our Chapter come together to do something that's a lot of hard work, but so satisfying in the end."

In keeping with a long-standing Ninety-Nines tradition, the Maryland Chapter painted a compass rose on Harford County Airport's property. "The last compass rose we

had painted was by The Ninety-Nines in the 80s. Harford County Airport is thrilled to have the Maryland Ninety-Nines paint a new compass rose," said Airport Owner Kevin Hess. Paint was generously donated by Dan Blair of Blair Painting and Contracting Co. who said, "We were happy to donate paint for this project to an awesome organization of very talented ladies from all walks of life that share my passion for aviation."

Compass roses—also sometimes known as wind roses—are traditionally used at airports to help pilots orient or verify the accuracy of their onboard navigational equipment.

The day was also celebrated by introducing more women in the community to aviation. The Baltimore Raven's promotional squad, the Playmakers, came as special guests. All five were treated to their first time flying in a small plane, and each had private flights over Harford County.

That wasn't the only celebration of firsts that day. We also had a Maryland 99 member, Aish Shrestha, fly her first solo on Saturday morning. Aish told us, "It was amazing I soloed on Girls in Aviation Day, my CFI's birthday and afterwards painted a compass rose! September 25 is my new favorite day!"

The Maryland Chapter of The Ninety-Nines is based at Essex Skypark Airport in Essex, Maryland, and meets on the second Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. For more information about the compass rose event visit [maryland99s.org](http://maryland99s.org).

– Shannon O'Brien

# Grass Roots



## OKLAHOMA CHAPTER

### The Oklahoma Chapter of The Ninety-Nines Holds Its 45th Annual Okie Derby on August 14, 2021

The annual Okie Derby took place at the Sundance Airport in Yukon, Oklahoma, on August 14. The Oklahoma Chapter of The Ninety-Nines always sponsors the Okie Derby, and this year they celebrated the 45th anniversary of the event. The Okie Derby helps the Chapter raise money to provide aviation scholarships for women.

Since 1990, the Okie Derby has generated more than \$70,000 to fund aviation scholarships. All of the proceeds benefit the “Wings of the Future.” The yearly event for the scholarship program helps encourage women to take an interest in aviation and helps Okie Derby participants polish their piloting skills.

Overall rankings for the Okie Derby showed that Oklahoma Chapter Ninety-Nines Angela Drabek and Elaine Regier came in eighth place; Teresa Camp and David Best came in ninth. For best in class, Angela Drabek received best 99 and Teresa Camp received best time estimate.

– Angela Drabek

*Top Row: Ninety-Nine Teresa Camp, pilot, and co-pilot David Best. Okie Derby volunteers keeping the team hydrated with water. Teresa Camp - fueling her plane for fuel judge.*

*Bottom Row: Piper Roslewski and dad Russ Roslewski fueling for the fuel judge. Team #10 - Ninety-Nines Elaine Regier, co-pilot and Angela Drabek, pilot. Okie Derby - pilot briefing before the race at Sundance Airport (KHSD)*



## SANTA BARBARA CHAPTER

Fun was had by all at a potluck barbecue hosted by the Santa Barbara 99s at Leadbetter Beach in Santa Barbara, California. Some of our founding and newest Chapter members, along with those interested in joining the 99s, attended.

– Cassandra Anne Ilich Reed

# Grass Roots

## LONG ISLAND CHAPTER

Several Long Island Chapter members enjoyed getting together for the first time in a long while for their September meeting.

During the meeting, Chapter member, Diane Tribble Fisher, received one of the first 99 pins from International President, Corbi Bullock, celebrating her 50 plus years as a 99. Diane started flying in March 1967 at Zahn's Airport on Long Island, New York. She moved to Florida for the better flying weather and soloed at North Perry Aviation in Hollywood, Florida.

To pursue her education and training for future flying, Diane moved back to Long Island and joined the Long Island Chapter of 99s in 1969. She worked at Mid Island Air Service part time while she finished college and earned her commercial pilot



certificate in 1974. Her certification helped Diane get her first job flying with Brookhaven National Laboratory on Long Island, which enlisted pilots to help collect air samples for various tests. While Diane flew the C-172 around doing chandelles with scientists and samples aboard, she was earning her way towards her future at \$4 an hour.

As a 99 she was Chapter Chairman, a section officer and an international safety Chairman. She participated in many activities including air races, poker runs, and air marking. Diane flew in the Angel Derby, the Powder Puff Derby, and local 300-mile air races.

In her career as a pilot, Diane also met the man she would marry, William Fisher, who was also a pilot. They traveled all over and started a flying club with a Piper 140 and later added a Piper 180. Diane worked with several air clubs and started her own business with other 99s calling it "Bill's Angels." The FAA wanted them to perform flight exams and also teach Part 141 and Part 135 operations which they did along with other FAA flying jobs.

After applying for airline pilot jobs, she was hired by Capital Airlines as a co-pilot on a DC-8 and progressed from there, working for many airlines. Diane also became a flight engineer on a B-727 and flew around the world for various organizations.

- Patricia J. Rockwell

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## Letters



Jean Landis and Annelie Brinkman

I went to visit our life member, **Jean Landis**, today—the day after her 103rd birthday. Wow, Jean is such an inspiration; she is sharp as a tack and healthy as a horse! We talked for a good two hours; I just love listening to her. She told me more about her life, and told me things she hadn't mentioned before. What an interesting life she has led. Little did I know that Jean is an accomplished painter; she used to deliver newspapers on horseback; she was a gymnast by profession; she taught at San Diego State University, among other educational institutions and she is a WASP. Her favorite airplane is the P-51. She told me that when the WASP were disbanded in 1944, she flew her beloved P-51 for the last time, circling the Statue of Liberty—against all regulations—waggled her wings and wept before landing for the final time.

The Chapter honored Jean's 103rd birthday with a flower delivery from Spring Vick. Jean was very happy to be remembered and recalls the fundraiser she attended in October 2019.

By Annelie Brinkman,  
San Diego Chapter

*Our newest*  
**Life Members**

**Evelyn Cowing**

**Barbara Dettmer**

**Teresa Donner**

**Jeanne Fenimore**

**Louisa Porter**

**Elaine Regier**

**Jane Rosevelt**

**New Horizons**

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

**Susan Begg**

September 16, 2021  
*Eastern Ontario Chapter*

**Kathleen Hartney-Velazco**

June 16, 2021  
*Georgia Flying Belles Chapter*

**Gene Hightower**

49 1/2 of Dell Hightower  
September 11, 2021  
*Houston Chapter*

**Mary Elizabeth Innes**

August 21, 2021  
*First Canadian Chapter*

**Charli Lamb**

August 16, 2021  
*Fort Worth Chapter*

**Asti Livingston**

September 16, 2021  
*First Canadian Chapter*

**Linda Pulver**

July 31, 2021  
*North Central Section*

**Elaine Roehrig**

August 22, 2021  
*Central New York Chapter*

**Shaaron Lee Snead**

September 15, 2021  
*Reno Area*

**Antenor Velazco**

49 1/2 of Kathleen Velazco  
June 16, 2021  
*Georgia Flying Belles Chapter*

**Patricia Thaden Webb**

February 16, 2021  
*Mid-Atlantic Section*

**Betty Fay Willmore**

April 8, 2021  
*Wisconsin Chapter*



*Our most recently enlisted*  
**Friends of The 99s**

**Richard Bengoa**

*Chandler, AZ*

**Ann King**

*Port Townsend, WA*

**Jeff Buentgen**

*Torrance, CA*

**Allison McKay**

*Vienna, VA*

**Nilay Erocak**

*Winter Garden, FL*

**Jena Parks**

*Cartersville, GA*

**Jeffrey Fanelli**

*Clarkston, MI*

**Julie Rippeth**

*Scottsdale, AZ*

**Timothy Heron**

*Columbus, OH*

**Kendra Swanson**

*Greenfield, MN*

**Katie Horton**

*Bristol, WI*

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Book your room now at [www.WAI.org/conference-hotel-2022](http://www.WAI.org/conference-hotel-2022).  
Registration now open at [www.WAI.org/22conference](http://www.WAI.org/22conference).



[WAI.org/22conference](http://WAI.org/22conference)

