

September/October 2025



# Ninety-Nines

*Inspiring Women Pilots Since 1929*

## CASEY RAYMOND

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES  
AND SOARING HIGH

*p. 22*

*plus*

BURLINGTON OR BUST

2025 INTERNATIONAL  
AWARDS

2025 AMELIA EARHART  
MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP  
FUND WINNERS



## Ninety-Nines Magazine

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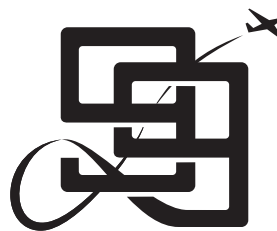
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## MISSION STATEMENT

The Ninety-Nines<sup>®</sup>  
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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

At age 15, Casey Raymond knew she was going to be a pilot, and by age 20 she has attained her CFI rating, but not without several obstacles in between.

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By Cathy Prudhomme,  
International Conference Committee Chair



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Friends of The 99s  
New Horizons

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## *Thank You to Our Sponsors*



2025

## SEP

- 12-13 **International Forest of Friendship Celebration "Flying and Forests"**  
Atchison, Kansas  
☐ [ifof.org](http://ifof.org)

## OCT

- 1 **Deadline:** First Wings Applications to Chapter AE Chair (or Section AE Chair, if there are no chapters)  
☛ [Apps@AEScholarship.org](mailto:Apps@AEScholarship.org)
- 3-5 **North Central Section Fall Meeting**  
Oshkosh, Wisconsin  
Wisconsin Chapter  
☛ [Sue Glisson, smgflyer1@gmail.com](mailto:Sue_Glisson_smgflyer1@gmail.com)
- 3-5 **Northwest Section Fall Meeting**  
Butte, Montana  
☐ [nw99s.org](http://nw99s.org)
- 3-5 **Southwest Section Fall Meeting**  
Monterey Bay Chapter  
Seaside, California  
Embassy Suites Monterey  
☐ [sws99s.org](http://sws99s.org)
- 10-11 **Southeast Section Fall Meeting**  
Daytona Beach, Florida  
Daytona Chapter  
☐ [daytona-99s.org](http://daytona-99s.org)  
☛ [Amanda Fallon, afallon01@gmail.com](mailto:Amanda_Fallon_afallon01@gmail.com)
- 23-26 **South Central Section Fall Meeting**  
Albuquerque, New Mexico  
Rio Grande Norte Chapter  
☐ [scs99s.org](http://scs99s.org)

## OCT (Cont.)

- 24-25 **New England Section Fall Meeting**  
New Bedford, Massachusetts  
Eastern New England Chapter  
☛ [Margo Cheel, margot@margotcheel.com](mailto:Margo_Cheel_margot@margotcheel.com)

## NOV

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

2026

## JAN

- 1 **Deadline:** Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship Application  
☛ [Apps@AEScholarship.org](mailto:Apps@AEScholarship.org)

## JUN

- 26-28 **JHV German Section**  
Hildesheim (EDVM)  
☐ [ninety-nines.de](http://ninety-nines.de)

## JUL

- 8-12 **Ninety-Nines International Conference**  
San Diego, California  
☐ [ninety-nines.org](http://ninety-nines.org)

### MAGAZINE SUBMISSION DEADLINES

are one month prior to issue date.  
NOV/DEC issue deadline: Oct 1.

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



Have you given an outstanding presentation to your Chapter or Section that you would like to share at the International Conference?

We are looking for dynamic presenters for the 2026 International Conference to be held July 8-12, 2026, in San Diego, California. We invite you to share your aviation knowledge and expertise with Ninety-Nines members and guests. Presentations should be approximately one hour, including time for questions and answers.

#### If interested in presenting, please submit:

- ✈ Your name (and chapter if applicable)
- ✈ A short abstract of your proposed topic
- ✈ A brief biography, including previous speaking experience

**Send to:** [99scallforpresenters@gmail.com](mailto:99scallforpresenters@gmail.com) by **October 1, 2025**. Selected speakers will be notified by November 1, 2025. If selected, you'll be asked to submit a photo for publication in the Ninety-Nines magazine and International Conference program.

**Please note:** Participation is on a volunteer basis. Membership in *The Ninety-Nines* is not a requirement but preferred. Each presenter is responsible for his or her own transportation, lodging, meals, registration, and parking. This is not a venue for promoting products or services.

# The President's Message



**Robin Hadfield**

*President*  
*The Ninety-Nines, Inc.*  
president@ninety-nines.org

As we turn the page on summer, I find myself reflecting on the energy and camaraderie that defined our Annual Conference in Vermont. From start to finish, the event was a resounding success – thanks to the thoughtful planning of our Conference Committee, led by Cathy Prudhomme, and the warm hospitality of the New England Section. While each conference has its own unique flavor, one thing never changes: the unmistakable warmth and spirit of The Ninety-Nines that fills every room and every conversation.

If you couldn't join us this year, you'll find highlights from the conference in this issue, including inspiring moments from our Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship winners and our International Awards honorees. Their achievements remind us of what's possible when women support women in aviation.

From Vermont, it was straight on to Oshkosh for EAA AirVenture, where we proudly welcomed 86 new members to our organization! Whether you met us at our booth, attended a seminar, or simply felt the pull of this extraordinary sisterhood, we're thrilled to have you onboard. As a member of The Ninety-Nines, you've joined the world's oldest organization of women pilots – and one of the most welcoming.

**Let me be clear: there is no one way to be a Ninety-Nine.**

You may be just beginning your flight training or working as an airline captain. You may fly once a week or once a year – or not at all right now. You might be deeply involved in your chapter or quietly cheering us on from afar. Regardless of where you are in your aviation journey, you belong.

What makes The Ninety-Nines so powerful is the richness of experience, passion, and perspective each of you brings. Our strength is in our diversity – of backgrounds, flying styles, and stages of life. And it's that diversity that creates so many ways to engage.

You don't need to Chair a committee or fly 200 hours a year to make a difference. A small gesture – a thank you to a volunteer, mentoring a student pilot, sharing a social media post, or bringing a friend to a fly-in – can spark something greater. Every action, big or small, helps us grow stronger together.

This fall, I invite you to stay connected. Attend a chapter meeting, join an online event, or just check in with a fellow member. And if you're curious about how decisions are made at the International level, consider attending the Board of Directors Meeting in Oklahoma City on November 7-8, 2025. These meetings are open to all members and provide a great opportunity to learn more and get involved.

As we move into the cooler months of September and October, I hope you find time to enjoy the changing seasons, chase a few more sunsets from the cockpit, and take pride in being part of a community unlike any other.

Thank you for all that you do. And if there's anything I can do to support you, please don't hesitate to reach out.

**Robin Hadfield**

*President, The Ninety-Nines, Inc.* | president@ninety-nines.org



# Executive Director Message



**Jill van Egmond**  
*Executive Director*  
*The Ninety-Nines, Inc.*

**T**he past 12 weeks with The Ninety-Nines have been nothing short of extraordinary. It's true what they say, time truly does fly when you're having fun! From day one, Laura, Amy, Nautica, and Martha embraced me with such warmth, instantly making Headquarters feel like home.

In this short time, I've had the privilege of participating in the Chapter Chair roundtable and Conference Committee meetings. July, especially, was an incredible whirlwind – attending the annual conference in Burlington and then spending nine unforgettable days in Oshkosh. Meeting so many of you along the way has been an absolute joy, and your kindness and passion have left a lasting mark on me. I'm excited to see what wonderful adventures lie ahead!

As many of you know, I'm not yet a pilot, but that dream has always lived in my heart. Hearing your remarkable stories and sharing your adventures over the past months has turned that quiet spark within me into a blazing flame. Now, more than ever, I know the time has come for me to begin my own journey.

I've long found inspiration in the story of Emma "Grandma" Gatewood, a true trailblazer. At 67, she became the first woman to solo hike the entire Appalachian Trail in a single season, a 2,190-mile journey, with little more than determination and an unbreakable spirit. In your stories, I recognize that same courage facing obstacles, overcoming adversity, and pursuing passions with relentless resolve.

Thanks to your encouragement, I'm more motivated than ever to chase my dream. As I write this, I'm eagerly anticipating my very first discovery flight with Route 66 Flight School on Friday, August 8. I promise to keep you posted every step of the way!

Thank you all for your unwavering support and inspiration. You, and Emma, remind me that it's never too late, you're never too underprepared, and never too female to take that bold first step toward your dreams. Sometimes, all it takes is a single act of courage, a quiet step into the unknown.

Here's to all the trailblazing women who dare to take flight, no matter when or how we start!

## Historic Research Help Needed!

### Early Women Aviators – Charter Members of The 99s

By Penny Rafferty Hamilton, Ph.D.

Our volunteer team is creating short biographic entries for all the charter 99 members, and **we need your help learning more about the following remarkable aviators:**

**Mary Ellen Bacon** — DOD 1936, License #9969. With research help from the Ada County Public Library in Meridian/Boise, Idaho, on findagrave.com we found Mary Ellen Dial, DOB May 26, 1879. A Mary E. Dial Bacon is buried in the Harrison Cemetery in Buckner, Illinois. The only information is that she had 11 children with no hint of any aviation. Plus, in 1929, this Mary Ellen Bacon would be 50 years old. So she probably is not THE Mary Ellen Bacon, charter member of The 99s.

**Barbara W. Bancroft** — DOD 2004, License 6200.

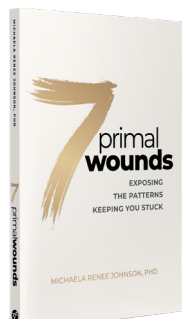
**Bernice G. Perry Blake** — Died 1996 License 9138.

**Ruth Thomas Bridewell McConnell Hughes** — Died Nov 26, 1970, buried in Skokie, Illinois, license 6793.

### CONTACT

If you or a student wants to research/share information, please contact me at [DrPenny1@earthlink.net](mailto:DrPenny1@earthlink.net)

# Holding Short



Dr. Michaela Johnson with the 1944 WWII Stinson Reliant "Scarlett."

## From Wounds to Wings: Pilot and Psychotherapist Launches First-Ever Aerial Book Tour to Promote Emotional Wellness

– Dr. Michaela Renee Johnson

In her transformative new book, *7 Primal Wounds: Break the Patterns Keeping You Stuck*, Bay Cities Chapter member Dr. Michaela Renee Johnson, a licensed marriage and family therapist, invites readers on a heartfelt – and refreshingly upbeat – journey into the hidden beliefs that quietly sabotage our relationships, careers, and feelings of self-worth.

Michaela blends neuroscience, therapeutic insights, and case studies from 15 years as a clinician to reveal seven core wounds that shape human behavior – such as “I am insignificant,” “I am not good enough,” and “I am damaged” – and shows readers how to finally rewrite the narrative.

“You are not broken. You can turn your wounds into wings,” Michaela said. Each chapter explores the root of a specific wound, how it manifests in adulthood, and how to shift from survival mode to empowered living. Warm and witty, *7 Primal Wounds* gives readers the courage to choose differently – and the roadmap to begin.

To celebrate the book’s release, Michaela is taking healing to the skies with the first-ever aerial book tour. Launching September 10, 2025, she’ll fly 7,000 nautical miles in “Scarlett,” her lovingly restored 1944 World War II Stinson Reliant, touching down in 35 states and making more than 130 stops. The “Wounds to Wings” tour is part book launch and part living metaphor, reminding people that healing can be daring, expansive, and untethered from the ground.

At each stop, Michaela will invite readers

to meet her at a local airport and grab one of 100 advance copies of her book – each containing a unique flight log – read a chapter (or the whole book), and pass the book forward like a game of “tag, you’re it.” Johnson says her mission is for these 100 early copies of *7 Primal Wounds* to reach seven countries by the book’s official publication date.

“Aviation is a metaphor for life,” Michaela said. “This tour aims to show people life is a runway, and it’s up to you to take off.”

Guests will meet SkyTalkDoc (Michaela), “Commander” (a Skypirate), and WingPup Wally, a certified pet-assisted therapy dog. Attendees will receive a SkyTalkDoc swag bag and get a chance to sign “Scarlett’s” guest book. Media outlets are welcome to request a ride-along during a leg of the journey or meet Johnson at local tour stops. The entire experience will be documented on social media, with opportunities for interviews, features, and collaborations.

For more information, please visit [www.michaelarenee.com](http://www.michaelarenee.com) or [www.7primalwounds.com](http://www.7primalwounds.com).

## Spitfires’ Remaining Living Pilot Nancy Stratford

San Diego Chapter and Life Member **Nancy Stratford** not only was featured in the recently released book *Spitfires*, by Becky Aikman, she also just celebrated her 106th birthday. *The Guardian* wrote a wonderful piece about Nancy and her aviation journey (*The Guardian*: <https://apple.news/AxQIBtSfTlSK4J-wWF4V5Q>) Recently, San Diego Chapter Chair Claudia Asmussen, who had received a scholarship in the name of Nancy Stratford, visited Nancy at home. Claudia, along with San Diego members Vice Chair Tania Rivers, Mary Schreindl, and Evelyn Tiplady also attended a book presentation by the author of *Spitfires* at the local bookshop.

*San Diego Chapter members (left to right): Tania Rivers, Spitfires author Becky Aikman, Claudia Asmussen, Mary Schreindl, Evelyn Tiplady.*



## Olivia Anderson – 99s AEMSF 2024 – Winner No. 863



*Australian Section member Olivia Anderson with her R22, 2024 (Photo courtesy of Olivia Anderson)*

Born July 18, 2000, in Mossman, Queensland, **Olivia Anderson** loves distance running, the outdoors and

all things cowgirl. Before flying, she worked as a ringer on cattle stations across Northern Australia. It was a very physically demanding job, so now that she spends her days sitting in the cockpit, fitness has become such an important part of her life. A quiet trail run after a long day in the seat clears her head “like nothing else!”

To attain her goal of earning a Commercial Helicopter Pilot Licence, Olivia started training full time in January 2020 and achieved it by March of that year at age 19. Since then, she has worked as a mustering pilot across the Kimberley and Northern Territory. She’s also flown R44s as an airwork pilot in the remote Kimberley.

Olivia joined The 99s in 2022 and applied for the Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship in 2024. She won and used it to gain a Gas Turbine Endorsement (GTE) in an Airbus AS350 helicopter. She completed the training with Helibiz at Airlie Beach, Queensland, in July 2024. Her goal was to upskill and position herself to move into larger aircraft within the airwork sector. Ultimately, she hopes to work in longline operations and on firefighting, and the GTE brings her one step closer. She has yet to attend a 99s Annual General Meeting but would definitely love to.

Currently “Sky Cowgirl” is mustering out of Broome in Western Australia, having just finished a short summer flying job in New Zealand. Her ultimate plan of firefighting roles in turbine helicopters is well in sight.

**Come and Meet Olivia and More of Our Members in Sydney, Australia at The 99s International Conference in September 2027**



## A Lasting Legacy: The 99s Compass Rose Welcomes Visitors to the Pioneers of Flight Exhibit at the Smithsonian

The Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum, in Washington, D.C., has just reopened five newly restored galleries on its upper floor, part of an ongoing, multi-phase renovation that began in 2018.

Among the recent additions is a new Ninety-Nines compass rose feature leading into the Pioneers of Flight exhibit hall, commemorating our organization's legacy. Located at a prominent entrance or gallery threshold, the display includes contextual text and artifacts celebrating the contributions of The Ninety-Nines and highlight the role of women pilots throughout history and our enduring impact on aviation.

It's a beautiful testament to the place we've held in aviation for almost a century – guiding visitors through the galleries in the very spirit of women in flight.

Whether you're planning a visit soon or guiding others through the museum, look for The Ninety-Nines display at the top level – a heartfelt nod to our shared heritage and a bridge connecting past and future generations of women pilots.

Stop by, take a look, and feel pride in seeing The Ninety-Nines showcased at the heart of one of the world's most iconic aviation institutions.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

### Eva Thierry Wins Check Ride Scholarship

– Maria Esparraguera



The Keystone Chapter is proud to announce **Eva Thierry** as the 2025 recipient of the Ginny Carlin Memorial Scholarship, which provides reimbursement for a check ride. Eva, a teacher and student pilot, is working to complete her training and schedule her check ride this summer. She's also one of the editors of The 99s' Straight and Level monthly newsletter and helped with the recent International Conference in July.

### Congratulations All-Ohio Chapter Member Jun Oikawa

– Margaret Hazlett



All-Ohio Chapter member **Jun Oikawa** celebrated receiving both the AE Scholarship and Debbie Franceus Memorial Scholarship this year at the International Conference in Burlington, Vermont.

### Austin Hill Country Selects Spirit of the WASP Aviation Scholarship Recipient

– Sarah Wendt

The Austin Hill Country Chapter is proud to announce the recipient of the first annual Spirit of the WASP Aviation Scholarship (SWAS) for 2025. The scholarship supports an aspiring female aviator pursuing aviation training and reinforces The Ninety-Nines' mission: the advancement of aviation through education, scholarships, and mutual support, while honoring our unique history and sharing our passion for flight.



**Grace Gillespie** of College Station, Texas, was chosen for her motivation, passion, and commitment to pursuing a career in aviation. She currently

holds both Commercial Pilot and Certified Flight Instructor Certificates. The \$7,000 award will support her completion of the flight training required to become a professional pilot. Grace is a graduate of Texas A&M University and works as a customer service representative at Astin Aviation in College Station. She's a member of the Houston Chapter, Women in Aviation, and an active volunteer with the Civil Air Patrol, and the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Youth Equine program.

"Grace's story of perseverance throughout her aviation journey thus far honors the spirit of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) for whom this scholarship is named," said Sarah Wendt, Chair of the Austin Hill Country Chapter. "We are thrilled to support Grace on her way to becoming a professional pilot."

The Austin Hill Country Chapter's Spirit of the WASP Aviation Scholarship honors the Women Airforce Service Pilots, who courageously answered their nation's call, proved their place in the skies, and were nearly forgotten for their service during World War II. This scholarship recognizes their service and sacrifice, inspiring the next generation of female pilots to carry forward their legacy of excellence in aviation.



**Esme Lowry** was awarded the AOPA Foundation David and Florence Kleine Flight Training Scholarship. Esme will use the funds to complete her Private Pilot Certificate.

Two Michigan 99 members, **Leah Murphy** and **Cami Oblinger**, were awarded 2025 Debbie Franceus Memorial Aviation Foundation Scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each.

## REPORTING POINTS

### Idaho Proud of Ella Bleffert

– Susan Clarke



Congratulations to Idaho Chapter member **Ella Bleffert** on her solo flight!

As a dedicated member of both The 99s and the

Civil Air Patrol, Teton Valley Composite Squadron, Ella has actively supported aviation outreach events throughout the community. This fall, she will take the next step in her journey by attending Metropolitan State University of Denver to pursue her aviation goals. We're proud to celebrate this exciting milestone and look forward to watching her soar!

### Chicago Area Chapter Members News

– Diane Cozzi

**Pamela Rolon** earned her ATP and is currently working as a flight dispatch instructor at United Airlines. Congratulations to **Mariko Duskow**, who recently completed initial training with United Airlines and is now one of their newest A320 first officers, based at Chicago O'Hare International Airport (KORD).

### Wright Brothers Master Pilot Awardees

This is the first request for those who have been honored with the FAA Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award. As a 99, if you would like to be included, please email your name, month/year received, and chapter name to [PatOhlsson@fly-in.com](mailto:PatOhlsson@fly-in.com)

**Jessica R. Stearns**, September 2011  
– *Paradise Coast*

**Beth Ann Oliver**, November 2011  
– *Tucson*

**Marie Carastro**, June 2015  
– *Alabama*

**Marcia Gitelman**, November 2016  
– *Finger Lakes*

**Julie Clark**, April 2019  
– *Sierra Gold*

**Ruth Estelle Jacobs**, January 2020  
– *Treasure Coast*

**Harriet Anne Bregman**,  
January 2020  
– *New York Capital Region*

**Kaye Moore**, October 2021  
– *Kentucky Bluegrass*

**Janice Kathryn McWilliams**,  
May 2023  
– *Florida Suncoast*

**Olga Mitchell**, June 2023  
– *Eastern New England*

**Jan McKenzie**, July 2023  
– *Colorado*

**Carol Anne Gosling**, July 2023  
– *Spaceport*

**Mary Latimer**, February 2024  
– *Wichita Falls*

**Deb Plymate**, April 2024  
– *Oregon Pines*

**Mary Lynn O'Donnell**, June 2024  
– *New Jersey*

**Vicki Lynn Sherman**, August 2024  
– *Spaceport*

**Peg Ballou**, November 2024 – *All-Ohio*

**Georgia E. Pappas**, April 2025  
– *Eastern New England*

**Patricia Ann Ohlsson**, June 2025  
– *Long Island*

**Mary Bryant**, June 2025  
– *Florida Suncoast*

The Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award is named in honor of Orville and Wilbur Wright, who were two American aviation pioneers credited with inventing, building, and flying the world's first successful motor-operated airplane. The Wright Flyer flew on December 17, 1903, at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.

The Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award is the most prestigious award the FAA issues to pilots. This award is to recognize individuals who have exhibited exemplary aviation expertise, distinguished professionalism, and steadfast commitment for at least 50 years of piloting experience.

There are certain eligibility requirements; one is the effective start date for the 50 years is the date of the nominee's first solo flight or military equivalent. Applications are available on the FAA website: Pilots - Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award - FAA - FAASafety.gov

### Michigan Chapter Members Marking Milestones

– Barb Vukits

**Madison Barch** received her Instrument Rating in June, just 12 weeks after obtaining her Private Pilot Certificate.

**Lydia Hodgson** completed her first solo flight on June 15, 2025. Lydia shared, "It was an amazing experience, and I was so grateful to all the people who came out to support me." **Reya Dila** passed her private pilot written exam with a score of 90 and soloed on June 5, 2025, at Wexford County Airport (KCAD) in Cadillac, Michigan. **Abby Shah** soloed on May 27, 2025. She is excited to have reached this milestone and looks forward to continue flying. **Jen Little** fulfilled a lifelong dream and bought a 1966 Piper Comanche (PA-24-260B) in June and received her High Performance/Complex Endorsement thanks to her son, JR Sciple, who is a flight instructor.

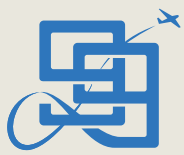


**Rachel Morrow** completed her CFII training in Florida and is currently working as a flight instructor, with 900 PIC and 400 dual instruction hours. Rachel also had her first private pilot student pass his check ride. Kassie Miller, a first officer with American Airlines, earned her B737 Type Rating on July 18, 2025.



Michigan Chapter Chair **Linda Langrill** received the 2025 Aviation Spirit Award by the Debbie Franceus Memorial Aviation Foundation. Linda truly deserved

this award for her unwavering and passionate support for giving back to general aviation and inspiring pilots across our state and beyond.



## CHARTER MEMBERS

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

### Mary Charlotte Alexander Held

March 2, 1893 - April 16 April 1955



Mary Held was a trailblazing Virginia business owner. In April 1924, with her husband, John, Mary opened the J.I. Alexander Motor Company, a Studebaker car dealership. As President and Treasurer, she was among one of the earliest women to found and lead successful automobile business. In 1926, John abandoned the business, his wife, son, and daughter, and Mary filed for divorce. She worked hard, expanding the automobile dealership in 1927. Although she was preparing to close the

car dealership when she began flying lessons in 1929, she said she “wanted to be able to add sales of airplanes to her Lynchburg, Virginia, automobile dealership.” She trained at the Curtiss-Wright Flying School, first at Roosevelt Field on Long Island, and later in Baltimore. Mary became the first woman to graduate from the Baltimore Curtiss-Wright Flying School.

Mary was outspoken in defense of women, especially mothers, who made the choice to pursue flying. She often combined parenting with aviation, once hosting an “air party” for her daughter and friends in 1930, flying them over the Gulf of Mexico. She listed her occupation in the Lynchburg city directory as an “aviatrix.” In her book, *The Fun of It*, Amelia Earhart credited Mary with promoting aviation as “a serious endeavor.”

Mary often flew in air shows in her open-cockpit Moth airplane. Rather than barnstorm as an aerobatic crowd thriller, she focused on demonstrating the utility of aviation. In the early 1930s, she earned her Airline Transport Pilot Certificate and founded an air transport business, flying regularly scheduled flights from Norfolk to Washington, D.C. She operated under a special permit at a Virginia Beach National Guard airfield. Two years later, the permit was revoked after one of her pilots violated the field’s regulations.

With her aviation and business skills in demand, Mary worked in California for Lockheed. By the end of the 1930s, she joined Pan American Airways in an administrative position. At that time, Pan Am was rapidly expanding its international reach and establishing itself as a leader in long-distance air travel. The airline pioneered transatlantic and transpacific services using innovative flying boats that offered passengers both luxury and comfort.

Mary was a Ninety-Nines charter member. She is recognized as a Virginia Women in History honoree and on the National Air and Space Museum’s Wall of Honor. Following her second marriage to Emil Charles Held, she lived in the Washington, D.C., area and pursued a new interest in art.

*Photo: Mary Alexander Held was affectionately described as “Flying Grandma” by Amelia Earhart.*

### Ruth Elder Camp King

September 8, 1903 - October 9, 1977



In 1925, Ruth Elder began flying in Lakeland, Florida, where she was taught by flight instructor George Haldeman. Ruth earned her Private Pilot Certificate (No. 675). The U.S. Army medical officer who conducted her flight exam declared Ruth “the most perfect physical specimen of the American girl I have ever seen.” Soon, Ruth began flying under the nickname “Miss America of the Air.”

After Charles Lindbergh’s historic transatlantic flight in May 1927, Ruth and George planned their own attempt to cross the

Atlantic, following the shipping lanes. On October 11, 1927, flying a Stinson SM-1 Detroit named “American Girl,” they lifted off from Roosevelt Field in New York. Sadly, the next morning, the engine failed over the Atlantic near the Azores. They ditched the aircraft within sight of an oil tanker and were rescued. The ship’s captain radioed the news. Although they did not successfully reach their destination, they did fly about 2,600 miles nonstop – setting a new over-water endurance record and marking the longest flight ever made by a woman at that time. New York City honored them with a ticker-tape parade.

Hollywood soon called the daring female aviator. Mary was cast in the silent film *Moran of the Marines*, which was released in theaters nationwide in October 1928. Her second film, *The Winged Horseman*, followed a few months later, starring Ruth in the lead role. She was reportedly paid \$250,000 – the equivalent of over \$4.5 million in 2025! Later, she said, “The money slipped through my fingers and soon there was nothing.”

In 1929, flying the rugged Swallow Wright J-5 biplane in the first All Woman Transcontinental Air Race, Ruth’s address was listed as Beverly Hills. Just before the race takeoff in Santa Monica, businessman and movie producer Walter Camp Jr. proposed. The *Kansas City Star* broke the story with the headline, “Flying to her Wedding!” They divorced in 1932. Ruth was married seven times – to C.E. Moody, Lyle Womack, Walter Camp Jr., G.K. Thackery, Arnold Gillespie, and twice to Ralph King.

In November 1929, she joined The Ninety-Nines. In the 1950s, she was employed as a secretary for Howard Hughes’ aircraft company. Upon her death in 1977, Ruth Elder King had her ashes spread over the Golden Gate Bridge. Her legacy was shared in *Flying Solo: How Ruth Elder Soared into America’s Heart*. *Fly Girls* author, Keith O’Brien, said, “I hope that Ruth Elder will be remembered for her bold and daring spirit. And for the confidence it took not only to make that flight, but to graciously put up with all the pressures and expectations she faced in 1927.”

*Photo: Newspapers called aviator and actress Ruth Elder “Miss America of the Air.” (San Diego Air & Space Museum archive).*

## Viola Estelle Gentry

June 13, 1889 - June 23, 1988



On December 20, 1928, Viola Gentry set the first women's non-refueling endurance flight record. She became North Carolina's first federally certificated female pilot on February 25, 1928, certificate No. 1822. Viola was always adventurous. As a teen, she briefly joined the circus – a bold move that revealed her determination to escape her father and stepmother. She married at 16, for the same reason. Her marriage was later dissolved, and Viola was sent to live with relatives in Florida.

There, without permission, Viola

took her first airplane ride. Punished for her sky adventure, she was briefly returned to North Carolina before being sent to family friends in Connecticut.

In 1917, with the United States engaged in World War I, Viola worked in an ordnance factory. She sold Liberty Bonds and joined the American Red Cross, travelling to San Francisco. After witnessing a stuntman land an airplane on the city's tallest hotel, Viola became obsessed with aviation. She voraciously read every aviation book she could find and worked two jobs to afford flying lessons. When her male flight instructor told her that women belonged at home, not in airplanes, she ditched him and moved to New York.

In 1924, landing at the Long Island Curtiss Field Flight School, she worked as a restaurant cashier to afford flying. On March 14, 1926, "The Flying Cashier," made front-page news and became an instant celebrity when she flew under the Brooklyn and the Manhattan Bridges. After becoming a charter member of The Ninety-Nines, she partnered with pilot John "Jack" Ashcraft to set a new refueling endurance flight record. Hampered by fog and an empty fuel tank, they crash-landed.

John died instantly. Viola's injuries kept her in the hospital for more than a year. She stayed involved with promoting other aviators such as Australian Harold Gatty and Wiley Post in their 1931 around-the-world flight. In 1932, Viola welcomed Amelia Earhart back to New York after her world-famous flight across the Atlantic.

Viola continued to work tirelessly to champion women in aviation and preserve early aviation history. In 1954, she received the Lady Drummond-Hay Air Trophy for her support of women in aviation. In the early 1960s, Viola partnered with Myrtle "Kay" Thompson Cagle to compete in the All Woman Transcontinental Air Race.

In 1967, finally, after 50 years as a cashier, Viola Gentry, at age 73, secured a role in aviation history for the University of Texas, traveling the U.S. to encourage her fellow "Early Bird" pilots to donate their records to the History of Aviation Archives. More in-depth history about Viola can be found in *North Carolina Aviatrice Viola Gentry* by Jennifer Bean Bower.

*Photo: Viola Gentry with her Travel Air 9000 after setting the first women's endurance record on December 20, 1928. (Image WikiCommons)*

## Wilma Louise Walsh LaMont

August 21, 1900 - October 11, 1994



Born in Vermont at the turn of the century, Wilma Walsh was educated at Burr and Burton Seminary. She was elected to several leadership positions, including class vice president. Outgoing and involved, Wilma sang in the choir, participated in the drama club, played field hockey, and was the star of the language team. She attended Middlebury College in Vermont, and after graduation, studied abroad. She became fluent in French and Spanish.

While in Europe, airplanes and aviators were always in the news. Upon her return to the United States, she pursued this new passion with the same determination she had shown in mastering foreign languages. In October 1929, she became one of only a handful of American women to earn a Private Pilot Certificate (No. 4272). She was the first woman in Vermont history to attain this status. She was a charter member of The Ninety-Nines, where mutual support among women aviators proved vital to their success.

Soon, Wilma used her language skills to teach French and Spanish, first in Belleville, New Jersey and, later, in Norwich, New York. In 1933, she resigned her teaching position to sail to Germany to marry foreign diplomat George D. LaMont. According to *The American Foreign Service Journal*, "George D. LaMont, Third Secretary at Kovno, Lithuania, and Miss Wilma L. Walsh, of Dorset, Vermont, were married in Hamburg on February 18, 1933. The bride had arrived from the United States the day before. After a brief stay in Hamburg, Mr. and Mrs. LaMont left for Berlin, where they planned to spend a week before proceeding to Kovno, where the groom had been stationed for the past two years."

Foreign language skills are an important asset in the diplomatic corps. After a posting in Lithuania, the couple returned to the United States. In 1938, George was appointed council general to Morocco. After her husband's numerous postings abroad, they divorced in New York in February 1946. Wilma returned to teaching languages. She said flying was a pleasant diversion from the classroom. In retirement, she lived in California, Arizona, and Massachusetts.

*Photo: Wilma Walsh was Vermont's only pilot at the time of this newspaper's publication.*

## Historic Research Help Needed!

See the bottom of page 6 for details.



*BETA Technologies generously opened their doors to The Ninety-Nines, showcasing their cutting-edge work on the development and manufacture of electrically powered planes.*

# *Burlington or Bust* – *We Did It!*

By Cathy Prudhomme  
*International Conference Committee Chair*

**T**he Hotel Champlain, with its beautiful lake views, provided a scenic setting for more than 200 members, guests, and Friends of The Ninety-Nines who attended the 2025 International Conference, held July 10-13 in Burlington, Vermont. Many people arrived early for a full-day excursion to Stowe, Vermont, on Wednesday, followed by a Lake Champlain dinner cruise that evening on the Spirit of Ethan Allen.

The Conference officially kicked off Thursday morning with an inspirational keynote address by U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Laura Caputo, titled “Takeoff Tactics: How to Crush Goals with Mentorship and Grit.” Following the keynote address, an exciting line-up of speakers gave presentations on a wide range of topics, including the Afghanistan airlift, FAA investigations, ratings beyond the ASEL, and the future of aviation and aerospace. Many thanks to our Thursday speakers: Celeste Pearce, Kathy Yodice, Kathy Wadsworth, Casey Raymond, Cynthia Fitzgerald, and Aileen Watkins.

Thursday afternoon provided time to network in the hospitality suite, where New England Section members offered a variety of regional treats – even New England clam chowder! Two very different tour options were available, and participants raved about both: a visit to Barre, Vermont – known as “The Granite Capital of the World” – or a tour of the Vermont Air National Guard base, which included a thunderous F-35 takeoff demonstration.

The conference welcome reception on Thursday evening featured a very special guest: Bram Kleppner, grand-nephew of Amelia Earhart and member of the Vermont House of Representatives. Bram delivered welcoming remarks, including some anecdotes about the trail-blazing women in his family. He brought with him a beautiful Bible – which had been in his family for generations – and displayed it open to the page where Amelia’s birth and his own were recorded.

Attendees were up early again on Friday morning for an 8 a.m. standing-room-only FAA Safety Seminar presented by Master CFI Doug Stewart. The morning continued with presentations by Alyssa Miller (“Be a Lifeline Without Needing a Lifeline”), Kelli O’Donnell (“Flying for Conservation of Protected Species”), and Beth White (“Women Build Planes”).

The Friday morning seminar lineup concluded with “Laugh, Learn, Lead,” where rich round-table discussions provided information and inspiration for attendees to bring back to their chapters and sections. If you missed this opportunity in Burlington, don’t miss out next year’s conference in San Diego!

As a Friday afternoon tour option, BETA Technologies generously opened their doors to The Ninety-Nines, showcasing their cutting-edge work on the development and manufacture of electrically powered planes. A visit to the Shelburne Museum was also an option, the largest art and history museum in New England.



1. Arianna Strand and Constance Castillo of the Connecticut Chapter. | 2. New England Section members celebrated Margot Cheel's (center) birthday with cake and Ben & Jerry's ice cream. | 3. Suzanne Collins, Hampton Roads Chapter and Dorothy Berthelet, Eastern Ontario Chapter. | 4. New York-New Jersey Section members Bev Weintraub, Greater New York Chapter; Nancy Neumann, Long Island Chapter; Willy Mattocks, Western New York Chapter; Lisa Hotung; Western New York Chapter, Section Governor; Shelley Ewalt, New Jersey Chapter; Lorraine Denby, New Jersey Chapter; Jill Hopfenmuller, Long Island Chapter. | 5. The hospitality suite was a busy spot during the conference. | 6. Alyssa Christian, San Diego Chapter, is awarded her AEMSF certificate by President Robin Hadfield and AEMSF Fund Chair Susan Passmore. | 7. Scholarship winner and Turtles Fly Too seminar presenter Kelli O'Donnell (center) receives her AEMSF certificate from President Robin Hadfield and AEMSF Fund Chair Susan Passmore. | 8. Center, Bram Kleppner, grand-nephew of Amelia Earhart, was the welcome reception speaker. Ninety-Nines were excited to meet Bram and captured a shot with him and the Earhart family Bible, showing the births of both Amelia and Bram. | 9. Lin Caywood, Sugarloaf Chapter, with her mother Carol Fries Caywood; Ellen Nobles-Harris (seated), Delaware Chapter; and Mary Wunder, Eastern Pennsylvania Chapter. | 10. Hospitality Suite Committee members Glenna Blackwell, Rachel Betlinski, Julia Lindow, Lori Plourd and Constance Castillo. | 11. Carlton Prudhomme, 49 1/2 of Cathy Prudhomme, (International Conference Committee Chair), Marty Brophy, 49 1/2 of Jan McKenzie, Colorado Chapter. | 12. Eastern New England Chapter member Servet Yatin and Nivedita Bhasin, India Section Governor.



1. Madeleine Monaco, Chicago Area Chapter with Kentucky Bluegrass Chapter members Terri Donner, Kaye Combs Moore. | 2. Author and Greater New York Chapter member Bev Weintraub featured her book “Wings of Gold” at the Author’s Table. | 3. North Central Section members. | 4. Elsbeth Roach of the Intermountain Chapter with Mid-Columbia Chapter members Bonnie Molitor and Aileen Coverdell (International Treasurer), Beth Chapple, Western Washington Chapter, Northwest Section Governor. | 5. Ninety-Nines kicked off the International Conference with a sunset dinner cruise on Lake Champlain. | 6. Doug Stewart, FAA Safety Seminar presenter; Judy McCarthy, Ventura County Chapter; Glenna Blackwell, Connecticut Chapter; and Judy Phelps, Ventura County Chapter | 7. Katahdin Wings Chapter members Karissa Davan and Amanda McWhirk; Morgan Sullivan-Walsh, Connecticut Chapter.

The Ninety-Nines Annual Meeting took place on Saturday morning for members at the conference and those participating virtually. Following the Annual Meeting, some 75 life members attended a sponsored luncheon in thanks for their support of The Ninety-Nines. The Life Member Luncheon was first held in 2022, and made possible by Corbi Bulluck, who came up with the idea of a Life Member Luncheon and procured the funding to sponsor it. A few months before she passed away, Corbi arranged for the funding of the luncheon this year and next, a testimonial to her belief that the life members should be honored in some way for their financial commitment to the organization.

Saturday afternoon’s presentations included a fun talk on “Flying to Greenland,” presented by Minnetta Gardinier, and a “Professional Pilot Career Panel,” coordinated and facilitated by Janet Patton. Thank you, career panel presenters Tina Hartlaub, Michelle Hovey, Dotty Norkus, Janet Patton, Aileen Watkins, and Lucy Young. A refreshing surprise that afternoon was complimentary ice cream, provided in the Fly Mart by the local Burlington Ben & Jerry’s shop. The ice cream was the perfect accompaniment to the birthday cake celebration for Margot Cheel, Governor of the hosting New England Section.

The Conference concluded on Saturday evening with the Awards Banquet, honoring the recipients of The Ninety-Nines International Awards, the President’s Award, the Award of Inspiration, and the Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship winners. Some 250 members, guests, and award winners attended.

Thank you to the New England Section, The Ninety-Nines International Conference Committee, and the International Board of Directors for helping to make the 2025 conference a huge success! 🌊

## The Ninety-Nines 2025 International Conference Committee

**Cathy Prudhomme**,  
Houston Chapter, South Central Section  
*Committee Chair*

**Ramona Banks**,  
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*Publications*

**Glenna Blackwell**, Connecticut  
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*Section Liaison, Conference Vests  
and Bags, Hospitality*

**Mary Build**, Katahdin Wings Chapter  
New England Section  
*Immediate Past Section Governor,  
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**Margot Cheel**, Eastern New England  
Chapter, New England Section Governor  
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South Central Section  
*Seminars and Speakers, Governors/  
Presidents Reception, First Time  
Attendees Meet and Greet*

**Candie Oldham**, Eastern New England  
Chapter, New England Section  
*Section Liaison, Fly Mart/Exhibits*

**Lori Parker**, Sedona Red Rockettes  
Chapter, Southwest Section  
*Seminars and Speakers, Laugh, Learn  
and Lead Seminar*

**Arianna Strand**, Connecticut Chapter,  
New England Section  
*Section Liaison*

**Jessie Zuberek**, Eastern New England  
Chapter, New England Section  
*Section Liaison*

Ninety-Nines International Vice President  
**Minnetta Gardinier**  
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**Anna Echols Lawlor**,  
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## Invitation to Submit

### NOMINATIONS FOR 2026 INTERNATIONAL AWARDS

The International Awards Committee is soliciting nominations for five prestigious awards to be presented by The Ninety-Nines, Inc. at the 2026 International Conference in San Diego, California. The deadline for submitting nominations is **January 31, 2026.**

#### AWARD OF ACHIEVEMENT (for Ninety-Nines)

Three Awards of Achievement may be presented for:

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

**Who May be Nominated?** An individual member of The Ninety-Nines (living or deceased); a group of Ninety-Nines; or an organization within The Ninety-Nines, such as a Chapter, Section, Committee, or Trust. An individual recipient must be a current member, or have been a current member at the time of her death.

#### AWARD OF MERIT (for non-Ninety-Nines)

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

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

#### GEORGE PALMER PUTNAM AWARD

(for non-Ninety-Nines)

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

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

#### Who may submit nominations?

A Ninety-Nines Chapter, Section, or Trust.

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

Email your nomination to

**Awards@ninety-nines.org.**

Nominations should be received by the deadline, **Sunday, January 31, 2026.**

**Note:** Previous nominees may be resubmitted.  
**Questions?** Email Awards@ninety-nines.org

# 2025 International Awards

## AWARD OF INSPIRATION

### SUNITA L. WILLIAMS

NASA Astronaut and U.S. Navy Captain, Retired



**Sunita "Suni" Williams** exemplifies courage, resilience, and the pioneering spirit of aviation and space exploration. Selected as a NASA astronaut

in 1998, she has flown three space missions – Expeditions 14/15, 32/33, and 71/72 – and logged an extraordinary 608 days in space, among the highest for any astronaut.

In 2024, Williams and NASA astronaut Butch Wilmore launched aboard Boeing's Starliner on its first crewed flight. After the agency returned the Starliner uncrewed, Williams became commander of Expedition 71/72, and they returned aboard a SpaceX Dragon capsule in March 2025.

Williams holds the record for the most spacewalking time by a female astronaut – 62 hours and 6 minutes – ranking fourth on NASA's all-time list. Over her career, she has demonstrated technical excellence and trailblazing leadership in one of the most demanding environments known to humanity.

Born in Ohio and raised in Massachusetts, Williams holds degrees from the U.S. Naval Academy and Florida Institute of Technology. As a Navy pilot and test pilot, she logged over 3,000 flight hours in more than 30 aircraft.

Her awards include two Defense Superior Service Medals, the Legion of Merit, and several other military commendations. She is a member of the Society of Experimental Test Pilots and the American Helicopter Society.

The Ninety-Nines is proud to recognize Captain Sunita L. Williams with the 2025 Award of Inspiration for her extraordinary achievements and her continued dedication to inspiring the next generation of aviators and explorers.

## HUMANITARIAN AWARD

### PEGGY DOYLE



**Peggy Doyle** was the daughter of pilot Harrison Doyle but initially planned on a career as a grade schoolteacher. After her mother was diagnosed with cancer,

however, she left college to care for her and then decided to become a nurse. After earning advanced degrees she practiced at several Washington, D.C. area hospitals, helping people as a psychiatric nurse, and later in private practice. Peggy was honored by George Mason University in 2015 for her work throughout her career.

She learned to fly, joined The Ninety Nines in August of 1985, and continued learning, reaching CFI status and helping people as both a nurse and a flight instructor. Her interest in providing humanitarian support through both of those professions expanded over the years to include many outreach activities.

Early in her career, Peggy flew all over the country promoting new technology for patients with ALS. She volunteered for Compassion Airlift, beginning in 2008, providing free transportation to those who needed specialized medical care. She flew more than 216 hours transporting ill or injured people for their medical care. That was the equivalent of 1.5 times around the world doing this great work.

As a member of The Ninety Nines, Peggy served in many capacities, but most notably as an Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship Fund Trustee for many years, aiding and assisting those who were coming up in aviation after her. As an extremely valuable and committed volunteer Trustee, Peggy was chosen as a permanent Trustee to provide continuity, historical knowledge, and educational assistance to newly elected members of the Trust. For 30 years Peggy was focused on those who won the AEM Scholarships and to her mentees on the Trust.

Loving outreach, compassionate giving, personal caring, generosity with time and talents, wife, mother, grandmother, pilot, nurse, counselor, humanitarian, and Ninety Nine.

## AWARD OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO AVIATION

### LORI PLOURD

Katahdin Wings Chapter, New England Section



For 24 years, **Lori Plourd** has been an enthusiastic Ninety-Nine and an active member of the Katahdin Wings Chapter and New England Section. She has

attended International meetings, participated in air races, and materializes at events across the country to support the advancement of women in aviation. As you review her Ninety-Nines activities, many of her officer roles overlap – all while she was working, flying, and living an adventurous life. She has served since 2017 as International Publications Committee Chair. She has served as Governor, Vice Governor, Newsletter Editor, Secretary, Webmaster, and Airmarking Chair for the Section. For her chapter Lori has been Chair for a total of five terms and served in many other positions.

But Lori has not been nominated for this award because of the impressive number of offices she has held in The Ninety-Nines, or her tremendous amount of time committed to the organization over the last two-plus decades. She has been nominated because of her passion for bettering and promoting the members of The Ninety-Nines and for the positive spirit in which she has made the contributions she has made. Lori has a genuine desire to see others succeed and a positivity that has made her the heart of the Katahdin Wings Chapter. She has a desire for the team, the project, or the objective to be successful. She is not looking for recognition or credit.

Lori also has incredible talent as a graphic designer and earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Maine College of Art in 1986. She is a graphic designer for The Bridgton News and has used her knowledge and experience to produce the *Ninety-Nines* magazine since 2017.

Lori has faced personal challenges with her health, as well as those of her loved ones, yet she has continued to help this organization grow. Through her personal challenges she has never faltered in her commitment to The Ninety-Nines, often saying there was always something more for her to contribute.

## AWARD OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO AVIATION

### BETH WHITE

*Eastern New England Chapter, New England Section*



**Beth White:** Educator, Artist, Writer, Doula, Mentor, Aviatix, Breast Cancer Survivor, Pilot-in-Command at Habitat for Aviation

In the Spring of 2022, Beth White emerged from a 10-month battle with breast cancer with an idea: to create an apprenticeship program at Franklin County State Airport (KFSO) where youth work alongside adult mentors servicing conventional and electric aircraft.

A pilot and airplane mechanic apprentice herself, and with family roots in the trades, Beth's creation, Habitat for Aviation, provides an on-ramp for real-world learning opportunities. The participants, who love to work with their hands, are supported by the organization in entering the FAA's apprenticeship certification track. Each day, Beth puts systems in place that bring to life John Dewey's philosophy that we "learn best what we live" – a deep throughline tenure in education spaces. She has served most recently as regional director for Big Picture Learning and Habitat for Aviation, where each learning experience is grounded in relationships, relevance, and practice.

In October, 2023, Habitat for Aviation launched its Women Build Planes program, where an all-female team of "Modern Day Rosies" is building an airplane at Franklin County Airport, in northwestern Vermont, to show folks everywhere that despite the fact that only 2.6% of airplane mechanics are female, women build, fly, and fix airplanes.

## AWARD OF MERIT FOR NON-99S

### RICHARD A. BLEVINS



**Richard A. Blevins** has spent 46 years in the aviation industry, including military service, private sector leadership, and aviation education. As Director of Aviation at Northeast

State Community College, he developed the only FAA Part 147 Aviation Maintenance Technology (AMT) training program at a community college in Tennessee.

Richard's contributions have shaped the future of aviation education in Tennessee and beyond. In building FAA-certified programs in a high-tech education center, he has ensured the program's success and sustainability. His community outreach efforts have directly influenced the lives of hundreds of young women, many of whom have pursued aviation careers.

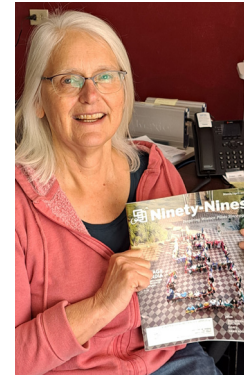
Richard built Northeast State Community College's AMT program from the ground up. He overcame societal barriers in a traditionally male-dominated field, advocating for equal opportunities for women in aviation. His graduates currently work for companies such as PSA Airlines, Fly Exclusive, Standard Aero, and Gulfstream Aerospace.

Richard was inducted into the Tennessee Aviation Hall of Fame in 2022. U.S. Rep. Diana Harshbarger spoke before Congress to recognize his extensive contributions to aviation. He has engaged over 300 young women through the Girls Technology Camps he developed. Participants learn how to rivet, preflight aircraft, start an aircraft, and fly in one of the college's Redbird MCX flight simulators. He also collaborated to create the largest Girl Scout badge program in the Tri-State area. To date, 84 Girl Scouts have earned aviation merit patches, and one former participant is now enrolled in his program.

In 2023, he briefed 1,200 high school students on aviation careers. In 2024, he sponsored aviation education summer camps for 60 students and conducted an aviation camp for 20 educators. He builds community and familiarity with aviation by sponsoring local events. His free Santa in a Helicopter photo session included 300 participants in 2024. Attendees were able to get family portraits and learn more about his program and aviation career opportunities. His collaborative efforts with organizations like The Ninety-Nines ensure that women of all ages have the resources, role models, and opportunities they need to succeed.

## PRESIDENT'S AWARD

### LORI PLOURD



Each year, the President's Award is given at the discretion of the International President to recognize a member whose extraordinary dedication and service have made a lasting impact on The Ninety-Nines. This is not an annual obligation

– it is a heartfelt acknowledgment, given only when someone's contributions truly rise above.

The 2025 President's Award goes to **Lori Plourd**, whose quiet leadership and creative vision have left an unmistakable mark on our organization. Lori works tirelessly, often behind the scenes, to uplift our mission, strengthen our sisterhood, and ensure our legacy continues to soar.

As Chair of the Publications Committee, Lori Plourd has guided the *Ninety-Nines* magazine with passion and precision. Under her leadership, the magazine has become more than a publication – it's become a voice for our members, a celebration of our milestones, and a thread that connects us across continents.

Lori's editorial eye, graphic design expertise, and storytelling instinct have elevated every issue. But more than that, her belief in the value of each member's journey has given flight to stories that inspire us all. In her role as Chair of the Publications Committee, she also gives guidance to the *Straight & Level* editor, reviewing each newsletter for factual errors, grammatical errors and typos. She simply makes us look good!

A proud member of the Katahdin Wings Chapter in Maine, Lori's love of aviation is matched only by her commitment to The Ninety-Nines, where she brings heart, talent, and unwavering dedication.

It is my absolute privilege to present Lori Plourd with the 2025 President's Award – for her outstanding service, her quiet leadership, and for showing us how powerful our shared stories can be. 🌟

# MEMBERSHIP GIVEAWAY!

# WIN A LIGHTSPEED DELTA ZULU HEADSET

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### HOW TO ENTER

1. Scan the QR code
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Use promo code 99S100 at checkout.



## 2025 AMELIA EARHART MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND WINNERS

The Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship Fund Trustees are pleased to announce that they were able to award 23 scholarships for 2025. The amount of those awards is \$214,928.08. Thank you to each and every member who has ever donated to the scholarship fund. YOU are the reason we are able to make these awards.

The scholarship recipients represent the United States, Canada, Japan, Peru, Sudan, Switzerland, and India. They are members of seven different Sections and 19 different Chapters.

Four Academic scholarships were awarded, one of which qualified to be the first Marta Bohn-Meyer Awardee. Two Vicki Cruse Emergency Maneuver Training Scholarships were awarded. The flight training scholarships included an Advanced Seaplane Training Course, a Helicopter Mountain Flying course, several flight instructor ratings, both in the U.S. and Canada, Multi-Engine Add-on courses, plus Commercial and Instrument ratings.

At the time this piece was written, three of the scholarship recipients have finished their ratings. Congratulations to all of them!

Again, the only reason this scholarship opportunity exists is because of the dedication of those members who donate. We have been fortunate enough to reap the benefits of families who have donated in memory of loved ones, those who choose to make monthly contributions and those who remember the Fund when they renew a membership. THANK YOU to everyone.



### Megan Bouchard

#### GROUP 1 IFR

Quebec Chapter, East Canada Section

I'm Megan, a passionate aviation enthusiast who figured out in my 30s what I wanted to be when I grow up – a pilot. A mom to two amazing girls, longtime volunteer, and executive assistant-turned-aspiring airline pilot, I discovered later in life that girls can fly planes too. I'm incredibly honored and proud to be a recipient of the Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship. As I work toward completing my Multi-IFR, I carry deep gratitude for the women who came before me and hope to honor them by flying with purpose and inspiring other women to follow their own dreams.



### Shantal Bustamante

#### COMMERCIAL MULTI-ENGINE ADD-ON

Los Angeles Chapter, Southwest Section

I'm a Certified Flight Instructor, and I'm proud to represent women and Latinos in aviation. In my time off I love volunteering, and I love helping other women accomplish their aviation goals. I mentor new female student pilots and give free ground and flight instruction to those who are struggling in their training. This scholarship will allow me to obtain my Commercial Multi-Engine Add-On Rating and extend my outreach. My goal is to become an airline pilot and continue fighting to make the flight deck more inclusive!

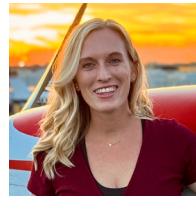


### Leslie Cauble

#### CFII

Arkansas Chapter, South Central Section

Inspired by my CFI grandmother who loved The 99s, I began flying at age 42. What began as a hobby quickly developed into a passion for aviation education, and I enjoy serving others through instruction, offering mock check rides, podcasting, and writing aviation articles. I'm proud to carry on the legacy of my grandmother by helping women achieve their flying goals and supporting the mission of The 99s. I hope to encourage others so they know it's never too late to follow their dreams. This scholarship will help me earn my CFII, and I'm very thankful for the generous support of the AEMS.



### Alyssa Christian

#### IFR

San Diego Chapter, Southwest Section

I'm a full-time flight attendant, private pilot, and aviation student passionate about inspiring others through aviation. I'm incredibly honored to receive the Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship, which will support my training as I pursue my Instrument Rating and continue working toward becoming a commercial pilot. I've been self-funding my training at Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport in San Diego, and this scholarship brings me one step closer to achieving my goals. I look forward to paying it forward by mentoring fellow 99s and encouraging more women to believe that their dreams in aviation are not only valid – but fully within reach.



### Michelle JoAnn

#### COMMERCIAL

Aloha Chapter, Southwest Section

I've been serving the Aloha Chapter in Hawaii since 2019 and am proud to lead such a great group of female aviators in paradise as the Chapter Chair since 2021. In 2024, I created the Hawaii Aviation Expo, Hawaii's largest home-grown aviation event, hosted by The 99s. I will use this scholarship to complete my Commercial Certificate, after which I plan to get my Multi-Engine and CFI. I want to show my daughter that women are worthy of any career they desire! Mahalo Nui Loa to the AEMSF Trustees for this honor.



### Cherry Kan

#### CFI

Michigan Chapter, North Central Section

As the first person in my family to become a pilot, receiving this scholarship is an incredible honor. The award will go toward my next milestone: becoming a flight instructor. I'm excited to earn this credential and become a source of encouragement and support for my future students as they navigate this challenging yet rewarding career path. My love for aviation and flying has been intensified by the togetherness of the female pilot community, especially The 99s. I will continue paving the way for future generations, just as the trailblazing women who flew before me have done.



## 2025 AEMSF SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

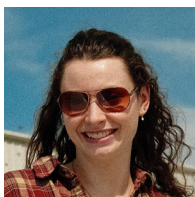


### Natasha Kawalek

#### CFI

*Columbia Cascades Chapter, Northwest Section*

I recently left a 22-year career in broadcast meteorology to pursue aviation full time. I'm flying local aerial tours out of Troutdale, Oregon for Envi Adventures and actively flight training to become a CFI. I earned my bachelor's degree in telecommunications from Pepperdine University and the American Meteorological Society Seal of Approval for broadcast television. I'm married with adult kids and nine-year-old twins. Once I become a CFI, I'll work at a local flight school, mentor student pilots, and accrue the hours required by Horizon Air for its Pilot Development Program, in which I'm enrolled.

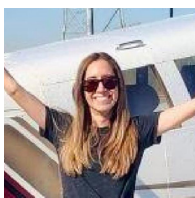


### Halley Mallory

#### COMMERCIAL MULTI-ENGINE ADD-ON

*Air Hearts-Utah Chapter, Southwest Section*

I'm Halley, I grew up in Georgia and moved to Utah for college. After graduating, I realized my passion for flying, started training, joined The 99s, and later changed jobs to immerse myself in the world of aviation. I then became Vice Chair of my local 99s chapter and, after I earned my Commercial Pilot Certificate, was accepted into the Professional Pilot Leadership Initiative program of The 99s. I'm excited to get my Multi-Engine Rating and take another step towards my dream of being a career pilot!



### Alexandra McGill

#### CFI

*San Luis Obispo County Chapter, Southwest Section*

As a Southwest flight attendant with the goal of becoming an airline pilot, I can't imagine my life without aviation! I'm proud to be the first pilot in my family and hope to inspire other young women to see aviation can be accessible to everyone. Flying has introduced me to some amazing friends and pushed me out of my comfort zone in many ways. Upon completing CFI, I plan to instruct at my flight school in Paso Robles, California, while working towards my ATP requirements.



### Dana McLaren

#### VICKI CRUSE EMERGENCY MANEUVER TRAINING

*Wisconsin Chapter, North Central Section*

Meeting the inspiring 99s at AirVenture ignited my aviation dream, transforming me from just a teacher to a dedicated private pilot and active member of the Wisconsin Chapter. Inspired by Vicki Cruse's legacy through my 99s friends, my commitment to safety and skill is profound. This Emergency Maneuver Training, made possible by this scholarship, is vital for my growth and for empowering future female aviators through events like GirlVenture. Honoring Vicki's memory, I aim to demonstrate that dedication makes any aviation dream achievable.



### Dhelal Mohammed

#### GROUP 3 INSTRUMENT

*Sleeping Giant Chapter, East Canada Section*

My name is Dhelal, and I'm a first-generation immigrant and commercial pilot based in

Thunder Bay. I started out in aviation as a flight attendant, and my love for learning and travel grew into a full pursuit of becoming a pilot. I've earned both my Private and Commercial Certificates, and I'm currently working toward my Group 3 Instrument Rating. Earning a Group 3 Rating would allow me to fly single-engine aircraft and secure a position as a first officer serving remote communities – an opportunity to explore these great communities while contributing to essential air service across Northern Ontario. As someone who didn't take a conventional path, I'm passionate about showing others – especially women and immigrants – that there's no one way to succeed in aviation. Through my work with The 99s, I hope to continue uplifting and inspiring others to take their dreams seriously.



### Keerthana Dileep Nair

#### VICKI CRUSE EMERGENCY MANEUVER TRAINING

*Manitoba Chapter, West Canada Section*

I'm honored to be an AEMS recipient and am beyond grateful for the opportunity to work alongside such inspiring women pilots. Being part of this incredible community has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my journey. Every day, I'm motivated to grow, give back, and chase my dreams with even more passion. I'm so thankful for the support, encouragement, and friendships that have made this adventure even more meaningful. I'm excited for what's ahead!

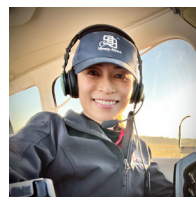


### Kelli O'Donnell

#### ADVANCED SEAPLANE COURSE

*Florida Suncoast Chapter, Southeast Section*

I'm so thankful for the continual support from The 99s on my flying journey. I'm proud to be a second time recipient of the Amelia Earhart Scholarship and look forward to continuing to represent The 99s as I advance in my dual career. In the future, I plan to combine my passion for sea and sky by forming my own aerial marine biology business utilizing seaplanes. This training will make that goal a reality. As a single parent who has been able to steadily accomplish my goals, I hope to inspire and continue mentoring other women pilots.



### Jun Oikawa

#### ACADEMIC

*All-Ohio Chapter, North Central Section*

Growing up in Japan, my childhood dream was to become a pilot, but at 4'10" I was too short for Japanese flight schools. I joined the Japanese military when I was 19 and fulfilled various non-flying jobs for 23 years. During that time, I met my husband, a U.S. Air Force member. His change of station to the U.S. made it possible for me to start pursuing my long-lost dream of becoming a pilot. With the certifications I get through this scholarship, I would like to fly as a corporate or airline pilot and make it my second career!



### Shanley Olson

#### ACADEMIC

*Phoenix Chapter, Southwest Section*

I grew up a little bit of everywhere but spent the most living on a small farm in Washington. I had my first flight when I was 12 with my dad on April 9, 2024, and nine years later, I obtained my Private Pilot Certificate. Currently I'm pursuing my Instrument Rating, which will give me the privilege to fly into clouds and I will be continuing my flight training. My two favorite things to do are flying



planes and volunteering at aviation events. I'm so grateful for this scholarship and for the wonderful people I've met from The 99s.



## Arián Perez

**IFR**

*Michigan Chapter, North Central Section*

I didn't come from a family of aviators so relying on the aviation community and mentors has been a beautiful part of this journey and I've loved connecting with other female aviators. I have

two wonderful kids and motherhood empowered me to believe in myself and gave me the confidence to begin this adventure as an adult. Looking ahead, I plan to become a career flight instructor, not just to teach, but to help others chase their dreams and to inspire new pilots the same way I was inspired – by the magic of flight and the freedom it brings.



## Tania Rivers

**IFR**

*San Diego Chapter, Southwest Section*

I grew up in Switzerland and Spain. As I frequently traveled between the two countries, I would find myself peeking through the cockpit door, captivated by the view of all the controls. In

2016, I moved to San Diego for love and decided to turn my childhood dream into reality. I'm a private pilot currently undertaking IFR training and aspiring to become an airline pilot. I proudly serve as Secretary and Webmaster for our San Diego Chapter, where I created and launched our new website. I'm excited to keep investing in this amazing chapter and community.



## Anais Rodriguez

**IFR**

*Aloha Chapter, Southwest Section*

My name is Anais and I'm a Private Pilot working on my Instrument Rating out of PHNL on Oahu, Hawaii. I joined The 99s in 2023 as a student pilot seeking community and support. Today,

I'm proud to serve as Vice Chair of the Aloha Chapter, where I strive to give back by encouraging and uplifting fellow aspiring pilots. Receiving the Amelia Earhart Scholarship is a tremendous honor and will greatly support my journey toward earning my Instrument Rating – a key milestone on the path to achieving my aviation dreams of working for a major airline.



## Terra Samson

**HELICOPTER MOUNTAIN FLYING COURSE**

*British Columbia Coast Chapter,  
West Canada Section*

Home is where the heart is, and for 16 years, my heart has been deeply rooted in mountain culture. Achieving the Certified Helicopter Mountain

Course is a thrilling gateway to my future as a search and rescue, wildfire suppression, and medevac pilot in Canada's mountains. I'm ecstatic about this opportunity to advance my flying skills and move closer to my goal of saving lives. I'm proud to work towards joining an inspiring team of professional pilots who provide essential safety for those working in rugged mountain terrain. Thank you 99s for making this journey possible.



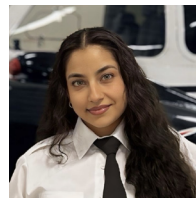
## Shanna Varela

**COMMERCIAL MULTI-ENGINE ADD-ON**

*San Gabriel Valley Chapter,  
Southwest Section*

Becoming a captain at a major airline has been the goal since my first day on the job as a flight attendant. Now, with the help of this

incredible scholarship, I will be able to quickly attain my Multi-Engine Commercial Add-On Rating and be that much closer to the captain's seat. Currently, I'm a flight instructor at College Aviation, the Mount San Antonio College Flight Training Association. I love this time growing as an instructor and getting to shape the next generation of pilots. Amazingly, the first student I signed off for solo is also a fellow 99!



## Trisha Virdee

**INSTRUCTOR**

*First Canadian Chapter,  
East Canada Section*

I'm a graduate of Seneca's Honours Bachelor of Aviation Technology program, where I earned my Group 1 Instrument Rating. I'm a naval

reservist with the Canadian Armed Forces, a piano teacher, and serve on the Junior Board of the Northern Lights Aero Foundation, where we support young women in aviation. I've always wanted to earn an instructor rating, and I plan to use the multi-engine flight experience I gain in the industry – along with that Rating – to become a multi-engine instructor and join the training side of aviation. I'm passionate about teaching and helping others succeed in this field.



## Kate Whipple

**ACADEMIC**

*Las Vegas Chapter, Southwest Section*

My name is Carolyn Kate Whipple and I'm a sophomore studying mechanical engineering at Colorado School of Mines. I earned my Private Pilot Certificate in April 2023, as a senior in high

school. At my university, I play on the softball team and participate in clubs such as AIAA. I plan to go into the aerospace/defense industry after college. I also plan to advance my aviation ratings whenever possible. I'm so thankful for this scholarship and the wonderful community of women I'm surrounded by.



## Mary Woody

**ACADEMIC**

*Appalachian Aviatrixes Chapter,  
Southeast Section*

As a Master of Science student in aviation and aerospace sustainability at Embry-Riddle, I plan to use my degree to shift my career back

into aviation, where my journey began. With a Bachelor of Business Administration from William & Mary and years of flying experience, I'm passionate about helping the industry navigate a more sustainable future. The 99s have supported and inspired me every step of the way, and I'm committed to giving back in equal measure. I hope to contribute meaningfully to the organization's future by sharing knowledge, supporting fellow aviators, and advancing our collective mission through sustainability and continual growth.

# CASEY RAYMOND

## Overcoming Obstacles and Soaring High

By Virginia LaFlame, UMA

Reprinted with permission of University of Maine at Augusta



Left: Casey Raymond (front) enjoyed upset recovery training with Judy Phelps, Venture County Chapter member and instructor at CP Aviation. | Right: Resting on the wing of the flight school's Beechcraft Sundowner, Casey takes a break between classes and flying.

Casey Raymond is, by all accounts, a remarkable young woman. At just 20 years old, she has earned her commercial pilot certificate and is a flight instructor at the newly formed WildShore Aviation, where she can instruct and inspire future pilots. She is involved in several aviation clubs and is currently Chair of the Katahdin Wings Chapter; employed at Mac Air in Portland, Maine; and is working toward a bachelor of applied science degree in Aviation at the University of Maine at Augusta (UMA). Casey's love of all things aviation knows no bounds. Casey has just finished a very busy July by attending The 99s International Conference in Burlington, Vermont, where she was a speaker during the "Triple-Feature Seminar," covering the many types of flying endeavors that are open to pilots, as well as helping her chapter raise funds at the Katahdin Wings fly market table. She also attended the AirVenture fly-in at Oshkosh, Wisconsin where she was a junior mentor for over 80 kids at GirlVenture, a program designed to give young girls a wide variety of aviation experiences to inspire and guide them towards what they may be passionate about.

### EARLY INTEREST, EARLY SETBACK

At 15, Casey knew she was going to be a pilot, though it wasn't her first career choice. "When I was younger, I wanted to be an aerospace engineer," she said. Casey had an aptitude for math and

was enchanted by the idea of space flight. However, when her high school guidance counselor suggested she attend a piloting workshop sponsored by UMA, Casey jumped at the opportunity. After her discovery flight in January 2020, her path became clear. Casey enrolled in flight school.

Casey's fledgling aspirations hit some bumpy air at the outset. She began her aviation studies, working hard to gain the knowledge and skills necessary for that first big milestone – solo flight. In March 2020, she went for the required Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) flight medical test and faced a setback. The doctors discovered Casey had type-1 diabetes, and the FAA requires one year of disease management data before granting flight approval. Though the setback was disappointing, Casey is ultimately grateful. "Flying saved my life," she said. This discovery coincided with the beginning of COVID-19, when access to medical care was severely inhibited. But Casey was given a plan and did what was needed to get her blood sugar under control and managed.

Casey persevered through the setback. Knowing she would eventually attend UMA, she earned college credits through AP high school classes and early college courses. In addition, through a partnership between UMA and the flight school Casey attended – Maine Instrument Flight based in Augusta, Maine – she was able to apply her flight training as credits toward her university degree.

## CASEY TAKES OFF

At long last, after a year of diabetes management, countless calls to the FAA, paperwork, and more than a little patience, Casey made her first solo flight in May of 2021. “My favorite thing about flying is the moment when you initially lift off the ground. That moment of separation; there’s no way to describe it until the first time you do it solo.” Casey has been unstoppable ever since. She earned her private pilot certificate in February of 2022, a seaplane rating in June 2023 — only a week before earning an instrument rating — and her commercial pilot certificate in July of 2024. She attained her flight instructor goal in April, 2025, and continues her studies at UMA Aviation Maintenance Technician School in pursuit of a bachelor’s degree.

Though Casey is the only female student in her cohort, she’s in good company. Maria Wilcox, aviation maintenance program coordinator and instructor at UMA, has worked in aviation maintenance for over eight years and serves as a role model for Casey. Despite the challenges she has faced, Maria finds fulfillment in her work. “I love what I do and can’t imagine doing anything else,” Maria says. “It isn’t easy being a woman in this field, but if there is anyone who can succeed at it, it’s Casey. She has a lot of drive and interest, and she fits in well with others.” Casey’s enthusiasm, curiosity and drive buoy her above stereotypes as she focuses on the work and the joy of doing something she loves.

When Casey completes the five-semester certificate program she can immediately take the exams required to become an FAA-certified Airframe & Powerplant technician/mechanic, allowing her to work on a wide range of aircraft including general aviation planes, airliners, and helicopters.

## GIVING BACK

Casey’s studies are important to her, but there is more to her life than just school. She’s involved in leadership roles in several aviation clubs and organizations in her area. She was a summer counselor in Bangor, Maine, at Aviation Careers Education Camp — a nationwide program co-sponsored by the FAA and the U.S. military. Geared toward high schoolers seeking aviation careers, the camp offers classes, hands-on projects, leadership training and, of course, flying. Though she never got to attend as a high schooler, Casey loved being a counselor, getting to see the behind-the-scenes planning, and sharing her love of flying with the campers.

Casey volunteers at the Owls Head Transportation Museum in Rockland, Maine, home to numerous functioning antique planes that require regular maintenance — and sometimes her smaller stature comes in handy. “The planes were not ergonomically designed,” she said. “They often call on me to get in a cockpit or to reach behind an engine.” Unfortunately, Casey hasn’t had many opportunities to fly the antiques. “Most are tailwheels. I’ve got my endorsement, but the museum requires 200 hours of tailwheel to fly their planes. I’ve got about three so far.”

Currently serving as the public relations officer of the UMA Aeronautical Society, Casey builds community within the aviation program through support and advocacy. “We’ll be at a fly-in and she will know everyone there. She has more connections in the aviation world than anyone I know,” said Cole Martin, president of the UMA Aeronautical Society. “Casey makes sure each student gets connected with an experienced pilot who shares the student’s interest and can explain career options,” he noted. “Flying is more than airlines and private jets. There are mail flights, crop-dustings, rescue and humanitarian work,” remarked Cole. “Our main things are showing people what’s possible and spreading the love of aviation. Casey is a huge part of that.”

Another strength Casey brings to the club is organization. “She organized an entire fly-in here in Augusta with pilots from all over Maine, coordinating everything with the airport and pilots,” Cole remarked. “Everyone knew where to park and she arranged for food. They all got to see the school. It was great!”

## FINDING COMMUNITY

Though Casey does not fit the stereotypes for either a pilot or a mechanic, she feels at home in the aviation community. “Aviation is a small, interwoven community and I find everyone to be really supportive and protective,” said Casey, who often brings her parents along to fly-ins. “People will sometimes walk up to my dad and start talking about planes. He’s a nurse and has never been into this stuff,” Casey mused. “When he tells them that I’m the pilot, they may be a little surprised and embarrassed but just shift the conversation over to me.”

## CHARTING A COURSE FOR THE FUTURE

For folks interested in aviation, Casey offers this advice: “Don’t think it’s not an option. It will take a lot of time and a lot of money, but everyone in the aviation community has been through the exact same thing, and they want to see you succeed. They have genuine enjoyment and passion for flying and want to share it, and there are many organizations that offer scholarships and support. I’m not going to pretend it’s easy, but there are a lot of people to help you.” Casey herself is one of those people. “What inspires me most about Casey is she never takes no as an answer,” says her mother, Carrie Raymond. “Instead, she’ll say ‘I can do this,’ and ‘let me show you how.’”

Casey has high hopes for her future after graduating from UMA. Her goal is to own her own plane and fly humanitarian missions. “Flights are a lifeline for remote populations. It’s a specific type of work, going onto their very small airstrips in challenging conditions. I’m studying maintenance because if something goes wrong on a mission, I will need to repair my own plane,” she wisely notes. Exactly what form her humanitarian service will take is still up in the air. “There are so many options. I want to help smaller communities thrive by flying in food and supplies or flying their goods out to more lucrative markets where they can fetch better prices,” she said. “But I’d also like to do work flying for Doctors Without Borders or aerial firefighting.” Whatever course she chooses, if Casey’s future is anything like her present, she will likely do it all — and do it with excellence. Mentor and flight instructor Jonathan Ward says, “Sometimes you meet people in life that you know are going to change the world. Casey is one of them.”



Casey Raymond with her mentor Jonathan Ward.

## What You Scan Is What You See: The Pilot's Guide to Mental Filtering



**Tammy Barlette**

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

to determine what's important and bring it to the forefront of your awareness. It decides what gets through the noise and what gets ignored. And that decision is heavily influenced by your thoughts, beliefs, and focus.

In the mental performance world, this means that what you focus on, you find more of. If you're always scanning for mistakes or thinking, "I hope I don't mess this up," your brain will filter the world through that lens. You'll spot every slip, miss every win, and unintentionally train your brain to expect failure. On the flip side, if you deliberately train your attention on learning opportunities, solutions, or areas for growth, the RAS will make sure those stand out.

For pilots, this isn't just mental fluff – it's mission-critical. Your ability to maintain situational awareness, respond under pressure, and recover from setbacks is all impacted by how your brain is filtering information. A pilot who fixates on what might go wrong could miss what's actually going right. And in a dynamic cockpit environment, the wrong focus can lead to missed radio calls, fixation on a single instrument, or even cascading errors.

Training your RAS is about programming your focus. Just like tuning a radio, you get to choose the station. You can train your RAS to seek out progress, patterns, or cues that matter most in flight. This might look like mentally rehearsing procedures with precision, visualizing success, or debriefing with intention – because what you emphasize repeatedly becomes what your brain prioritizes.

Here's a practical tip: Before your next flight or sim session, set a clear intention. It could be as simple as, "Today I'm focused on smooth power transitions," or "I'm looking for one thing I improved since the last flight." That cue helps your RAS tune into progress rather than perfection and performance rather than pressure.

In aviation, where precision matters, what you choose to see can make all the difference. Your eyes might be scanning the instruments – but it's your RAS that decides what your brain actually notices. Train it well, and it becomes one more tool in your cockpit. 🏹

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

## LEGAL CORNER

### Issues That Arise When Updating Chapter Bylaws

Many chapters update their bylaws every few years. Often, it's done to revise topics such as what constitutes a quorum or electronic voting procedures. A bylaws template has been updated and will be reviewed and approved by the International Board of Directors. This standalone document will be posted shortly in the Library of the 99s website, and titled Chapter Bylaw Template.

A chapter should get a legal review of its proposed chapter bylaw changes before voting on them. The legal team would like you to be aware of the issues we run into frequently while reviewing them.

Chapters must require membership in the International Organization in order to be a member of the chapter. International dues are the only dues that are mandatory. Chapters may suggest voluntary dues.

In addition, there are political limitations on 99s activities. These restrictions are required for the organization to maintain its tax-exempt status as a 501(c)(3) organization. Chapter bylaws should also recognize restrictions on signing contracts or agreements that would obligate International or sections. It's recommended that limitations regarding affiliation be reiterated for the chapter.

The legal team is always here to help you draft bylaws for your chapter that reflect the chapter's intent and remain in accordance with the requirements of International bylaws. Don't hesitate to reach out to us at [legal@ninety-nines.org](mailto:legal@ninety-nines.org).

### Help Needed!

The 99s legal team is requesting a person to help in reviewing contracts from a business perspective. A legal background is not necessary but someone who is detail-oriented with business sense would be wonderful. Essentially, the workload is a few hours a month on a consistent basis. The volunteer will be validating pricing schemes, ensuring consistency, and reviewing contracts for ambiguity. In addition, they would be providing an essential review at the national level, working with a great team of lawyers. What a wonderful way to contribute to The 99s

If you are interested,  
email [legal@ninety-nines.org](mailto:legal@ninety-nines.org)

# Weathering the Front: Breast Cancer Awareness for Female Aviators

By Dr. Rachael Ferraro, AME and Pilot Advocate, Intermountain Chapter

In the world of aviation, we're trained to stay ahead of the curve. From preflight planning to in-flight adjustments, pilots thrive when we anticipate challenges and mitigate risk. The same mindset applies when it comes to our health — especially breast cancer, the most commonly diagnosed cancer in women worldwide.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a time dedicated to raise awareness, encourage early detection, and support those navigating a diagnosis. For pilots, this month is a timely reminder to prioritize breast health both in and out of the cockpit.

## Why It Matters to Pilots

For female aviators, breast cancer isn't just a personal concern — it's a professional one. Health requirements for medical certification can add another layer of stress to an already complex diagnosis. But the good news is that early-stage breast cancer, particularly Stage 1, is not an automatic grounding. With appropriate treatment, documentation, and follow-up, many women can continue to fly.

## Understanding Breast Cancer Basics

Breast cancer begins when cells in the breast grow abnormally, forming a tumor that may or may not spread. The stage refers to how far the cancer has progressed, from Stage 0 (noninvasive) to Stage 4 (metastatic). Lower stages usually indicate smaller tumors and less or no spread, making them more treatable.

## What the FAA Says

The FAA does not automatically disqualify breast cancer. For pilots with certain pathology and staging, an aviation medical examiner (AME) may issue a medical certificate at the time of the exam, provided that:

- The pilot has completed treatment (typically surgery and/or radiation) and is clinically stable.
- No chemotherapy is ongoing.
- The condition has not spread beyond the breast.
- There are no significant medication side effects.
- Appropriate documentation from the treating physician is available.

If these criteria are met and there are no additional complicating factors, the AME can issue under Conditions AME Can Issue (CACI) guidelines, meaning no deferral to the FAA is needed.

However, if the treatment plan included chemotherapy or the cancer was more advanced, it may require special issuance. This involves additional FAA review and supporting documentation but can still result in a return to the cockpit.

## Prevention and Early Detection

While not all cancers are preventable, lifestyle choices and regular screenings can make a significant difference. Here's your pilot's preflight checklist for breast health:

### Schedule regular screenings

- Annual mammograms starting at age 40 — or earlier if you have a family history or genetic risk.
- Don't skip clinical breast exams during your routine check-ups.

### Know your normal

- Be familiar with how your breasts usually look and feel.
- Report changes like lumps, dimpling, or nipple discharge to your doctor.

### Maintain a healthy lifestyle

- Exercise regularly, eat a Mediterranean-style diet, and limit alcohol.

- Avoid smoking and manage your weight.

### Minimize radiation exposure

- Pilots are already exposed to more cosmic radiation at altitude. Stay proactive with screening.

### Take your emotional health seriously

- The aviation lifestyle can be isolating. Mental resilience supports physical resilience. Reach out and stay connected.

### In the Cockpit and Beyond

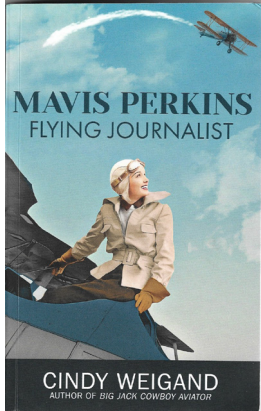
Breast cancer may temporarily ground a pilot, but with early detection and appropriate care, many women return to the sky stronger than ever. If you're facing a diagnosis or have concerns about screening, talk to your AME early. Knowing your medical path forward can ease anxiety and help you stay focused on healing.

As aviators, we're trained to respond — not panic. Apply that same approach to your health. With regular screenings, smart lifestyle choices, and a proactive partnership with your medical team, you can navigate turbulence and keep flying strong. ✈️



### Dr. Rachael Ferraro

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



### **MAVIS PERKINS, FLYING JOURNALIST**

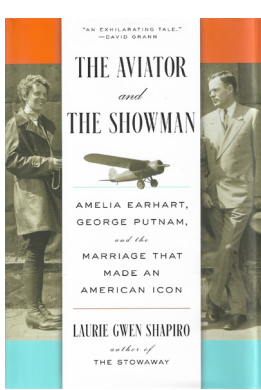
Author: Cindy Weigand (Friend of The 99s)

First, I've got to say, I love Cindy Weigand's writing. I read this book first, but the character of Mavis Perkins first appeared in another Weigand book, *Big Jack, Cowboy Aviator*. I can see why she then expanded and wrote an entire book about Mavis Perkins.

The vocabulary and literary approach are true to the era. Whether I liked some of the verbiage or not, it fleshed out the supporting characters and made the story come alive. This book is set in the mid-1920s, and Weigand uses a few familiar names in those roles, doing so with complete believability. We even get to witness the beginning of *The Ninety-Nines*!

Her Notes section provides great background into the development of the story and is a great addition to a book that's very nicely done. It's worth your time.

Publisher: Cindy Weigand | Copyright 2025 | Cover design and online formatting by Sweet 'n Spicy Designs | ISBN: 979-8987884881 | Available on Amazon



### **THE AVIATOR AND THE SHOWMAN: Amelia Earhart, George Putnam, and the Marriage that Made an American Icon**

Author: Laurie Gwen Shapiro

I was fortunate enough to receive an advance uncorrected proof copy of the book well before it came out on the broader market. When I got the regular copy, anyone who knows me well knows exactly where I went – to the back of the book! The Notes section, the bibliography, and the index are simply extraordinary. This is a story that will grip you from the beginning to the end, but it's also a phenomenal reference book. To say Shapiro has done her homework is an understatement.

Unfortunately, a couple of opinion pieces came out in major newspapers when the news hit about the upcoming book. The advanced reader copy was out, but to me, it was obvious that the writers of those opinions hadn't bothered to read the book. This is not a conspiracy theory about Earhart's last flight. It's an examination of who she was – and who she was in relation to George Palmer Putnam. The interplay of their personalities and life goals is absolutely fascinating.

I think it's an extraordinary piece of literary work, but I also think you need to read it for yourself. It shows Earhart in a light appropriate to her time in the world and doesn't diminish her fortitude, courage, and intelligence a bit. Read it – all 495 pages!

Publisher: Viking | Copyright 2025 | ISBN: 978-0593295908 | Available on Amazon



### **ELIANA WANTS TO FLY**

Author: Maya Komolafe | Illustrated by: Esila Karakuyu | Digital Illustrator: Yashini Nadeesha

This book was recommended to me through the British Women Pilots Association Facebook page. To say it's delightful is simply an understatement. It's written in rhyme, but not overdone or sing-songy. For instance:

"She wants to gaze at the sunset in awe of its beauty. Mesmerised by the iridescent colours as she flies across Djibouti."

The story is fun. The vocabulary is truly international, and the appeal is wide-ranging. Both the book and the coloring book are well worth your time – and would make a great gift for a younger reader.

Publisher: Maya Komolafe | Copyright 2024 | ISBN: 978-1036907327 | An accompanying coloring book is also available – ISBN: 979-8301185991 | Available on Amazon

# Milestones

**Emma Adam**  
CFII  
– Connecticut

**Jessica Arciero**  
Commercial  
– Bay Cities



**Emma Artigue**  
Private  
– Lake Charles Chapter



**Valerie Badoni**  
Commercial ASEL & AME  
– Florida First Coast



**Madison Barch**  
Instrument  
– Michigan

**Stephanie Baynes**  
Seaplane  
– Maryland



**Ella Bleffert**  
Solo  
– Idaho

**Yulia Bougouin**  
Seaplane  
– Connecticut

**Sara Cahill**  
Type 737 Rating  
– Orange County

**Gabby Cassettari**  
CFI  
– Oklahoma

**Sara Christian-O'Connor**  
Seaplane  
– Eastern New England



**Angela Clark**  
CFI  
– Mt. Shasta



**Reya Dila**  
Solo  
– Michigan

**Mina Gu**  
CFI, Multi-engine  
– Bay Cities

**Candace Hartjoy**  
Helicopter CFI, CFII  
– Orange County

**Alli Hinmon**  
Helicopter CFI  
– Orange County



**Lydia Hodgson**  
Solo  
– Michigan

**Jasmine Joy**  
Commercial  
– First Canadian

**Maggie Kerns**  
Seaplane  
– Connecticut



**Stephanie Kraft**  
CFII  
– Tennessee

**Sarah Krammen**  
Seaplane  
– Lake Tahoe

**Lauren LaFontain**  
Private  
– Wisconsin



**Dana Marshall**  
Multi-engine  
– Alberta

**Astrid Melms**  
CFII  
– Wisconsin



**Kassie Miller**  
B737 Type Rating  
– Michigan



**Rachel Morrow**  
CFII  
– Michigan



**Hannah Nakka**  
Private  
– Sutter Buttes

**Sumayah Rafi**  
Seaplane  
– Sugarloaf



**Mihar Raouf**  
ATP Licence  
– Atlantic

**Pamela Rolon**  
ATP  
– Chicago Area



**Jessica Salyers,**  
Commercial  
– Kentucky Bluegrass



**Abby Shah**  
Solo  
– Michigan

**Emily Smith**  
Private  
– Waterloo on the Grand



**Kim Snyder**  
Commercial  
– Mountaineer

**Toria Socolosky**  
Instrument  
– Eastern New England



**Carla Soplantila**  
Seaplane  
– Eastern New England

**Gabriella Tan**  
Private  
– All-Ohio



**Natalie Tevebaugh**  
Instrument  
– Oregon Pines



**Abigail Thibodeaux**  
Solo  
– Lake Charles



**Devin Wilson**  
Commercial  
– Keystone

# Places to Go & Things to Do

## BASIN HARBOR RESORT AND AIRPORT, VERMONT



Clockwise: Looking north up runway 02-20 at Basin Harbor Resort (BO6). | View of Basin Harbor from the porch of the main lodge. | The lobby of the main lodge. | The Red Mill restaurant and playground at the north end of runway 20.



**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)


While planning my flight from Florida to Vermont for The 99s' 2025 International Conference, a suggestion from Glenna Blackwell, a longtime resident of the Northeast, prompted me to check out Basin Harbor Resort, a must-see feature while I was in the area. Basin Harbor (BO6) is located toward the south end of Lake Champlain and, as it turns out, right on my route to Burlington International Airport (KBTV), my planned destination airport for the conference.

Basin Harbor Resort has a 3,000 by 90-foot grass, public-use airstrip. Although it has no instrument approaches, lighting, and fuel, what it lacks in those features, it more than makes up for in others. After all the planning for my flight, the remnants of tropical storm Chantal in the Southeast and heavy rain in the Northeast just before I was scheduled to leave convinced me that airlining would be the better option. After landing at KBTV, I rented a car and drove the 33-mile trip to stay the night at the resort before returning to Burlington for the conference. As it turned out, the sun appeared late afternoon on my arrival, and I had the opportunity to walk the runway and inspect its condition. Just as Mary Build, longtime New England resident and notable seaplane pilot/instructor, had told me, it was very well-kept, in excellent condition, and seemed to have recovered from the rain. She had warned that the south end can sometimes be a little soggy after heavy rain, and calling to verify the condition before landing is always good practice.

Right next to the north end of the runway is The Red Mill restaurant. Taxi up and enjoy the extensive indoor seating as well as service at picnic tables under the trees next to the

restaurant. There's a very nice playground with plenty of seating to watch the kids play, observe volleyball games, or spot planes as they land. Dogs happily ran about as well. Although there was little traffic while I was there, I'm told the restaurant is a favorite destination for fly-ins and for meals and meetings.

To the west of the runway, on the shore of Lake Champlain, is the resort and harbor. The resort has a classic lodge with rooms, a formal restaurant, comfortable lobby, bar, and gift shop. The best part is the large porch and lawn seating with classic Adirondack chairs overlooking the beautiful harbor. Sit and enjoy early morning coffee or a leisurely drink as the sun goes down. An extensive breakfast buffet is available in Ardelia's, the main lodge restaurant, in addition to The Red Mill for lunch and dinner. A food truck serving mainly burgers, snacks, and ice cream was also available. In addition to the main lodge, there are more than 30 cabins, each with its own unique design and location. Many cabins are right at the edge of the lake, and most have porches. There is a beautiful golf course and club, along with a swimming pool. The best part, in my opinion, is the harbor and all the activities centered around it. Swimming, canoeing, kayaking, and paddle boarding, are complimentary for guests. Also available for rental are bikes, a 21-foot motorboat, and pontoon and sailboats. Waterskiing, tubing, wakeboarding, and shipwreck tours can also be arranged. Basin Harbor also accommodates seaplanes.

The resort is closed for winter so make plans to enjoy it in the summer or fall when Vermont's colors are at their peak. 

## Careers

# Mastering the Art of Believing

By Donna Miller, *Colorado Chapter*



**W**e live in a crazy world and the future is so uncertain right now. It's hard to focus on your goals when you feel like you're constantly being pushed off track by an invisible force. Your inner voice tells you that your dreams are unrealistic or that you're not worthy of them. The noise is loud, and concentration on your dreams is


drowned out by thoughts that you're not brave enough or capable enough to make them come true.

So how do you change your internal narrative to create the life you envision? How can you install empowering beliefs to drown out the noise? Start today – right now – by identifying the thoughts and activities that are shaping your reality. Every choice you make is either bringing you closer to or farther away from your dream. Starting from scratch to create a career in aviation can be daunting, but it's an amazing journey. And it starts with believing that you can.

Once you start to align your thoughts and actions toward your goal, the momentum builds. I truly believe the universe helps those who help themselves. You meet amazing role models and mentors who inspire you along the way.

Last week, my pilot friend Kerri and I were in my favorite puzzle shop and factory. The last time I was there, I talked to a young employee about flying. This time, we learned that Regina had taken a second job to pay for her first lesson. Immediately, the CFI in Kerri kicked in, and she gave Regina a few websites to delve into before her first flight. I gave her my contact information and the link to The Ninety-Nines website. We can't wait to hear how it goes! It would have been a much different conversation if Regina had said, "I thought about flying but, it was too expensive." Yes, flying is expensive. But what we get out of it is worth the sacrifices we make to do it.

Have you ever had friends outside the flying world who know someone interested in learning to fly? "Will you talk to them?" they ask. Most of us would be happy to! What I suggest is telling your friend that the prospective pilot needs to reach out to you. They have to want it for themselves more than you want it for them. What I find is that about 50% of people actually reach out. Do they not believe they can? In my unbridled optimism, I imagine they do and just found alternate resources.

Once you're on a career track, it's important to keep up the daily habits that brought you to this point. Luckily, we have so many powerful role models and resources that can guide us in our goals. Nowadays, it's more realistic to envision ourselves in positions that were not always available to women. It's a magical journey, and it starts with believing that we can. 



*Lake Charles and NOLA members enjoying a day of 99s outreach and camaraderie.*

## LAKE CHARLES CHAPTER

Eight Lake Charles members attended the June meeting held in conjunction with "Rocking on the Runway," in Sunset, Louisiana. Pictured are Melissa Day of the NOLA Chapter with Cathie Cox, Abby Thibodeaux, Sydney Lavoi, Sandra Leder, and Margaret Ferguson. The NOLA and Lake Charles Chapters both had display tables about The 99s and enjoyed visiting with each other. This event has become a sell-out and is an excellent opportunity for the chapters to network and promote The 99s.

– Dr. Sandra J. Leder

# Grass Roots



## BRITISH COLUMBIA COAST CHAPTER

British Columbia Coast Chapter's annual Poker Run took place on June 8, 2025. Each year, we host our biggest fundraising event at Pitt Meadows Airport (CYPK). Poker pilots fly to five of the eight airports: Chilliwack Airport (CYCW), Langley Regional Airport (CYNJ), Boundary Bay Airport (CZBB), Abbotsford International Airport (CYXX), Victoria International Airport (CYYJ), Squamish Airport (CYSE), Delta Heritage Air Park (CAK3), and the Terminus at CYPK. The Poker Run headquarters are hosted by our supporter, the Aeroclub of BC Clubhouse. Prizes are generously donated by local businesses and the aviation community!

- Cindy Pang

## MT. SHASTA CHAPTER

### Happy 50th Anniversary!

Congratulations to current and past members! The Chapter celebrated its 50th anniversary on May 31, 2025, at Red Bluff Airport (KRBL) in Red Bluff, California. The celebration kicked off with an amazing party in a beautiful private hanger, highlighted by a duo T34 flyby led by Julie Clark! Robin Hadfield, our 99s International President, sent video greetings. Founding members Lee Agnew and Donna Taylor were honored, and our 2025 Scholarship Winner Ellysia Jackson was introduced. Members from Redwood Coast Flyers, Sutter Buttes, and Sierra Gold, along with 49 1/2s and friends, joined us for this great get-together.

Thanks to the Anniversary Committee for making the party sparkle: Barbara Boot, Barbara Crooker, Donna Harman, Leros Lane, Rita Limmer, Wanda Schuler, and Nancy Overton.

- Nancy Overton



Top: Mt. Shasta Chapter members celebrate the chapter's 50th Anniversary. | Bottom left: Mt. Shasta Chapter charter members Lee Agnew and Donna Taylor. | Bottom right: 50th Anniversary Committee Barbara Boot, Barbara Crooker, Donna Harman, Leros Lane, Rita Limmer, Wanda Schuler, and Nancy Overton.



Left: Business meeting at Casa de Aero. | Top right: Hosts Krista and Chris Coltrin. | Bottom right: Madeleine Monaco installs new chapter officers: Secretary Lisa Mitchell, Treasurer Susan Roe Musacchio, Vice Chair Larisa Kano, and Chair Vickie Szewczyk.

## CHICAGO AREA CHAPTER

### Chapter Meeting at Casa de Aero

The Chicago Area Chapter held a super fun meeting at Casa de Aero Park Airport (68IS), a fly-in community northwest of Chicago, Illinois. Hosted by Krista and Chris Coltrin in their hangar, the weather couldn't have been better! The day included plenty of flying, including Stearman rides. Awards were presented, new officers were installed, and everyone enjoyed a great potluck lunch. The event wrapped up with a pool party splash!

The following rewards were presented:

- Pilot of the Year: **Gail LaPook**, DPE, for her years of dedication to The 99s and her example of excellence in aviation.
- Student Pilot of the Year: **Jill Feldman** for her perseverance and commitment to becoming the best pilot she can be.
- Special Dedication Award: **Mary Lou Erikson** for surpassing every goal in support of the vendor program for Aviation Expo.
- Social Media Excellence: **Corie Wild** for photos, videos, artwork, and more.
- Chairman's Service Award: **Megan McArthur** and **Shelley Ventura** for outstanding support in so many ways.

Outgoing Chair Madeleine Monaco (and incoming International Director) swore in the new chapter officers: Chair Vickie Szewczyk, Vice Chair Larisa Kano, Treasurer Susan Roe Musacchio, and Secretary Lisa Mitchell. In turn, Madeleine received a thank-you gift from the chapter – a cuddle blanket with the chapter logo.

New chapter member Bailey Reiners arranged for the free Stearman rides, and many took advantage of the opportunity. Hangar, runway, pool – 99s heaven!

### International Conference

Eight chapter members attended The 99s International Conference in Burlington, Vermont, and had a wonderful time! Madeleine Monaco was installed as a new International Director. Former International Officer Leslie Prellwitz attended with her husband, Grant (our official photographer). Four members – Diane Cozzi, Cynthia Madsen, Ellen O'Hara, and Shelley Ventura (with her husband, Charlie) – attended the Past Presidents and Governors Reception as former North Central Section Governors. We were very pleased to have new member Bailey Reiners join us as a first-time conference attendee!

– Diane Cozzi



Vickie Szewczyk (top center); Bailey Reiners, Shelley Ventura, Cynthia Madsen, and Madeleine Monaco (middle row); Ellen O'Hara, Leslie Prellwitz, and Diane Cozzi (front row).



Left to right: Joe Mattress (owner of Front Range Heli), Isabella Whitmore (CFI/CFII at Front Range Heli), and Amanda Willson (Colorado Chapter Chair).

## COLORADO CHAPTER

The Colorado Chapter hosted a very successful Pilots and Pies scholarship fundraiser at Erie Municipal Airport (KEIK) on July 12, 2025. In addition to selling delicious homemade and locally donated pies to fly-in visitors and attendees of the Young Eagles event next door, the chapter partnered with Front Range Heli to offer \$50 helicopter rides. A highlight of the day was a talk by Isabella Whitmore, a CFI/CFII at Front Range Heli, on how to get your rotorcraft license, how to fund your training, and the mechanics of helicopter flight. Sixteen chapter members attended. More than 80 pieces of pie were sold, and Front Range Heli gave more than 50 helicopter rides!

- Kristin Smith

## MICHIGAN CHAPTER

Our Annual Meeting was held in person and over Zoom on June 14, 2025, at Mt. Pleasant Airport (KMOP) in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan. Fifteen members were in attendance. Chapter Chair Linda Langrill began the meeting with a recognition of the Anishinabek Indigenous peoples, the original inhabitants of the land around Mt. Pleasant. The Anishinabek Nation included the Odawa, Chippewa, and Mississauga tribal communities.

She also recognized three Michigan 99s Denton Traveling Trophy winners in attendance: Madison Barch (March), Olivia Arnold (April), and Alyson Galbraith (May). Linda thanked Chapter officers and chairs for their respective work on behalf of the chapter.

Members discussed ideas to keep student pilots engaged, given the large number of student pilots in our chapter. Airmarking Chair Sarah Haskett has been researching existing compass roses in Michigan and plans are being made to repaint those in need of touch-ups and explore new locations.

Following the meeting, in-person attendees enjoyed lunch at the Pixie Restaurant.

Some of the Michigan 99s attending EAA AirVenture gathered for a photo and joined member Nicki Acker with her and her husband, Dick, at their campsite in Camp Scholler to enjoy tacos, sodas, and, of course, some good ole' 99s camaraderie. Nicki is also a member of the EAA concert band.

Melanie McNicholas, Michigan 99s Aviation & Space Education Chair, provides great articles for our monthly newsletter. Recent articles have included noise abatement for general aviation (June) and safety tips for fly-in events (July). Melanie will be our speaker for our August meeting. She'll share information about upcoming changes to the FAA NOTAMs system planned to occur in October 2025.

Cherry Kan, Michigan 99s Scholarship Chair, provided an update to members on scholarships since application deadlines end soon. Cherry reminded members to allow enough time to obtain reference letters and offered help to anyone applying for scholarships.

We welcomed five new members: Katie Psotka, Cami Oblinger, Tonya Stamm, Lakithia Williams, and Kelley Rogers.

- Barb Vukits



Top: The in-person attendees of the Michigan Chapter's Annual Meeting held at the Mt. Pleasant Airport. | Middle left: Melanie McNicholas, Michigan 99s Aviation & Space Education Chair. | Middle right: Cherry Kan, Michigan 99s Scholarship Chair, keeps members informed of upcoming scholarship deadlines. | Bottom left: Nicki Acker is a member of the EAA concert band. Bottom right: Nicki Acker, Jen Little, Suzette Biela, and Linda Langrill.



Left: Katahdin Wings Chapter members with Beth White and her Habitat for Aviation “Modern Rosies.” | Top right: Katahdin Wings Chair Casey Raymond and Treasurer Lori Plourd inspect the wing skin project at Habitat for Aviation. | Bottom right: Casey treated Lori and Amanda McWhirk to a short flight after the three-and-a-half-hour road trip to Vermont.

## KATAHDIN WINGS CHAPTER

The Katahdin Wings Chapter has had “Visit Beth White and Habitat for Aviation” on our calendar since the beginning of 2025, but each attempt was postponed due to a string of 13 rainy weekends in the New England region.

Finally, the weather finally cooperated (partially) enough for chapter members Chair Casey Raymond, Treasurer Lori Plourd, and Membership Chair Amanda McWhirk to attend one of Habitat for Aviation’s Build Days at Franklin County State Airport (KFSO) in Highgate, Vermont!

Casey reports, “Though we weren’t able to fly all the way there due to some lower ceilings in and around the White

Mountains, along with some haze, we all decided to take a three-and-a-half-hour road trip to finally get to go see them. The main project was riveting the skin onto the frame of the wing, which was being done by the young trainees.”

We had so much fun. Many thanks to Beth White and Habitat for Aviation for making us feel so welcome.

A few weeks later, Mary Build got to make the flight from Eastern Slopes Regional Airport (KIZG) in Fryeburg, Maine, all the way to Highgate, Vermont, to visit Beth White and her “Modern Day Rosies” at Habitat for Aviation.

– Lori Plourd



Spaceport Chapter members are, from left: Sandy Parks, Donna Wilt, Bobbi Lasher, Becky Ritter, and Carol Gosling.

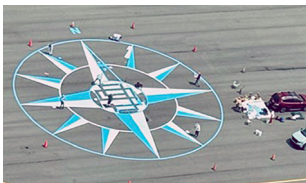
## SPACEPORT CHAPTER

Five Spaceport 99s met with 17 female students from 2Fly Flight School on June 24, 2025, at Merritt Island, Florida. These students were mostly from India, with others from Italy, England, Ecuador, Curacao, China, and the U.S. The 99s introduced themselves, talked about their flying backgrounds, and asked the girls to share about their flying interests and goals. We gave away numerous copies of the *Ninety-Nines* magazine and showed a video on the history of The 99s. Hopefully, the women are now aware of chapters near their homes and the importance of women’s organizations for mentorship, scholarships, and support for those who fly.

– Judi Oswald

# Grass Roots

## ALL-OHIO



Top: Eight members of the All-Ohio Chapter attended a tour of the Cleveland ARTCC on June 8. Left to right: Jun Oikawa, her son Lucas, Debra Henrichs, Mitzy Figueroa, Jun's son Jesse, Catherine Stritenberger, Kylie Gottman, and Gabriella Tan. | Middle left: In July, All-Ohio Chapter members painted a compass rose with the Scioto Valley Chapter members at Licking County Airport (KVTA) in Ohio. | Bottom left: Jun Oikawa and Debra Henrichs working on the compass rose at KVTA. | Bottom right: Compass rose painting crew from the All-Ohio Chapter: Debra Henrichs, Jun Oikawa with 49 1/2 Rich Wagner and their boys, Lucas and Jesse.

- Margaret Hazlett

## OKLAHOMA CHAPTER



Top left: Guest Elise McLendon, Allison Schlotthauer, Teresa Camp, and Holly Blunk attended the Oklahoma Aero Day (Aviation, Aerospace and Defense Day) at the state capitol on April 3, 2025. | Top right: Cindi Ice pulled double duty representing The 99a at the Altus Air Force Base airshow April 11-13 and serving the Commemorative Air Force as Col. Crew Chief for the A-26 Invader "Lady Liberty." | Bottom left: Volunteers, left to right: Holly's student, Holly Blunk, Cyndi Ice, and Stephanie Zimmerman during the IPG Aero Student Day at Enid Woodring Regional Airport (KWDG) on April 24, 2025. | Bottom right: Cyndi Ice, Leona McGee, Saralyn Patterson, Trina Southard (not present for picture) in June at the Chickasha, Oklahoma, Air Show held at Chickasha Municipal Airport (KCHK).

- Cyndi Ice



## NORTHEAST KANSAS CHAPTER

The Northeast Kansas Chapter hosted our annual hangar picnic with EAA Chapter 1535 at our chapter's Girl Scout Liaison Tammy Willits' hangar at Lawrence Regional Airport.

(KLWC). Tammy and member Joyce Parker shared their experience flying in the Air Race Classic this year – until their comm radio failed. Our friend Al Stuber gave several folks, including a new pilot, rides in his smoke-equipped Zenith CH-750 STOL.

- Sara Tompson

Top: Joyce (standing, left) and Tammy (standing, right) discuss the 2025 Air Race Classic. | Bottom: Friend of the chapter Al Stuber's Zenith CH-750 STOL.

## KENTUCKY BLUEGRASS CHAPTER



Top: In June the Kentucky Bluegrass 99s enjoyed a delicious lunch at Clamatos Mexican Restaurant, followed by a visit to the Aviation Museum of Kentucky in Lexington, Kentucky, where we toured the museum and explored the new women's display. | Center left: Our June meeting also included a tour of the Commemorative Air Force aircraft on display on the ramp that day. | Center right: Rachel Stivers-Bender checked out the Commemorative Air Force's Vultee B-13 Valiant cockpit, with the pilot serving as a guide. | Bottom: In July, Kentucky Bluegrass 99s were represented at The 99s International Conference in Burlington, Vermont. Left to right: Louise Bornwasser, Kaye Combs Moore, Terri Donner, and Sue Glisson. Thanks to the New England Section for an amazing visit to Vermont.

- Sue Glisson



## Our newest Life Members

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Jerrie Badger</b><br>Georgia Flying Belles<br>Chapter | <b>Cynthia Glenn</b><br>Bay Cities Chapter           | <b>Lorraine Vickers</b><br>Atlantic Chapter          |
| <b>Jacqueline Boyd</b><br>Rio Grande Norte<br>Chapter    | <b>Penny Hamilton</b><br>Idaho Chapter               | <b>Jean Wallace</b><br>Arkansas Chapter              |
| <b>Lois Bristol Young</b><br>Aloha Chapter               | <b>Martha Molina</b><br>Arkansas Chapter             | <b>Hui Wen</b><br>Quebec Chapter                     |
| <b>Jennifer DeEll</b><br>Atlantic Chapter                | <b>Linda Pirman</b><br>Santa Maria Valley<br>Chapter | <b>Wendy Whitsell</b><br>Columbia Cascade<br>Chapter |



## Our most recently enlisted Friends of The 99s

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Dr. Margaret Arnold</b><br>Beverly, MA  | <b>Eastlyn Igwemadu</b><br>Columbus, OH    |
| <b>Ayman Bajbar</b><br>Pompano Beach, FL   | <b>Susan Myers</b><br>Atchison, KS         |
| <b>Jack Boyd</b><br>Miami, FL              | <b>Chamini Reddy</b><br>Richmond, BC       |
| <b>Mark Coladonato</b><br>Los Angeles, CA  | <b>Kaniappa Reddy</b><br>Richmond, BC      |
| <b>Elizabeth Downes</b><br>Port Orange, FL | <b>Priya Reddy</b><br>Richmond, BC         |
| <b>Victoria Downes</b><br>Port Orange, FL  | <b>Saras Reddy</b><br>Richmond, BC         |
| <b>Shuya Huang</b><br>Winter Springs, FL   | <b>Duane Wallace</b><br>Havre De Grace, MD |



## 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>Linda Jackson</b><br>Oklahoma Chapter<br>May 12, 2025                            | <b>Janet Sarbou</b><br>Finger Lakes Chapter<br>June 30, 2025               |
| <b>Jane Kellogg</b><br>San Antonio Chapter<br>May 23, 2025                          | <b>Evelyn Shapiro</b><br>Life Member<br>Spaceport Chapter<br>July 12, 2025 |
| <b>Maureen Kenney</b><br>Life Member<br>San Fernando Valley Chapter<br>June 4, 2025 | <b>Anh-Thu Nguyen</b><br>Georgia Flying Belles Chapter<br>July 30, 2025    |

### CORRECTIONS:

#### Election Procedures Committee Correction

Due to a formatting error, the Election Procedures Report published in the July/August 2025 issue of the Ninety-Nines magazine lists the incorrect Election Procedure Committee members. The 2025 Election Procedure Committee consists of Chair Kathy Fox, Deb Henneberry, and Gretchen Jahn. The Publications Committee regrets the error.

#### Charter Member Phoebe Omlie

On page 10 of the July/August issue, in the story about charter member Phoebe Omlie, the editing team incorrectly stated that Phoebe was in the movie *Perils of Pauline* in 1914. Upon further research, sources state that in the early 1920s, Phoebe performed aerobatic stunts in the popular film series, *The Perils of Pauline* (which premiered in 1914).

# “SiriusXM helps me find the best tailwinds.”

Emmy Dillon, 777 Cargo & Air Race Pilot



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

#### Emmy Dillon

~3,000 hours, ATP, CFI, CFII, IFR, tailwheel, high performance and complex endorsements

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

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