

September 2021 Volume 19, number 3

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The October MSP Airliner Show is back!

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Investing now to ensure we can continue to keep sharing the tales of the Northwest Family

Our mission:

To preserve and display the memory of Northwest Airlines' colorful history.

To tell the stories of carriers merged and allied with NWA, and the stations and regions they served.

To show how the legacy of NWA carries on into the future.



An impressive line of the Northwest fleet at Minneapolis-St. Paul taxiing out for departure on Sept. 6, 2001. Only a few days later these aircraft would be parked in the aftermath of the Sept. 11th attacks. Photo by Frans-Banja Mulder via Wikimedia, CC 3.0 license.

Twenty years later...

Aftershocks from the September 11 attacks never stopped. They directly shaped the path NWA would complete, and haunt us still. —by Scott Norris

The current COVID-19 crisis shares a number of parallels to 9/11 and the time afterward: the travel industry was brought to a stop while government restrictions and passengers' fears and uncertainties caused demand to disappear. Landing strips would soon fill with idle aircraft, and thousands of staff would find themselves out of work. The geographic spread and relative invisibility of the threat was unknown for some time, and it would become clear that early warning signals were ignored and safety protocols had become lax. And it would take immediate and massive government assistance to keep airline infrastructure functional until the public felt it safe enough to return to flying again.

A common saying today in business and technology is that COVID took existing trends and "pushed us ahead five years." In retrospect we can look at the post-9/11 days and say the same thing. Both periods of suffering and uncertainty spurred advancements and fundamental changes to the travel industry.

We'll share a selection of staff memories from twenty years ago, and review some of the fundamental adaptations Northwest and the industry undertook, in the pages ahead.

NEVER FORGET to page 8

Preflight Checklist

The Northwest Airlines History Center, Inc.

We are an independent, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation registered in the State of Minnesota, volunteer-staffed and volunteer-managed. We have no organizational or financial tie to Delta Air Lines.

Founder: Henry V. "Pete" Patzke (1925-2012)

Directors:

- Executive Director and Collections Manager: Bruce Kitt
- Museum Director: open position
- Directors: Bruce Kitt, Fay Kulenkamp, Bill Marchessault, Vince Rodriguez, Jeff Schwalen, Mike Vetter, Scott Norris
- Director Emeritus: Jerry Nielsen

Museum Address:

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REFLECTIONS is published quarterly by the NWAHC and is a membership benefit. Submissions are welcomed, and are subject to editing for content and length.

Advertising in REFLECTIONS is accepted to help us defray expenses and tell more stories to more people! Ad placement does not imply endorsement by the NWAHC, and ads need to be respectful and relevant to readers.

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Visiting the Museum

The NWAHC Museum is located inside the Crowne Plaza AIRE Hotel in Bloomington, MN, just south of MSP International Airport.

Current schedule: Thursday - Saturday, 11 am - 5 pm Closed for major holidays.

Admission and parking are FREE. (Special events may incur a charge.)

Directions:

From the airport: Use METRO Blue Line light rail from either Terminal 1 or Terminal 2 southbound and exit at the American Boulevard station. The Crowne Plaza AIRE is immediately east, across the street from the station. Trains run every 10 minutes and fares are \$2.50 peak / \$2 off-peak. Tickets are good for 2.5 hours of unlimited travel, so depending on the length of your visit, a separate return ticket may not be necessary.

From the Mall of America: Take the METRO Blue Line light rail outbound; American Boulevard is the third stop.

In the Twin Cities Metro area: Head toward MSP International Airport. From Interstate 494, exit on 34th Ave. S. and go south one block to American Blvd. Turn left (east) on American and then immediately right into (and under) the hotel. The parking ramp is on the left - follow the signs for free hotel parking on the ground level (do not use spaces not reserved for the hotel.)

The museum is located on the third floor, above the pool area on the second floor, and across from the Fitness Center.

Annual Membership

Membership is the main source of funding for the NWAHC; please join!

\$30 level - receives REFLECTIONS digital edition early access via email

\$35 level - receives REFLECTIONS print edition by U.S. Postal Service (U.S. mailing addresses only)

Boarding Announcements



From Director Bruce Kitt

The Northwest Airlines History Center resembles an actual airline in two ways. First, there is the museum's resemblance to the passenger cabin of an airline. As with the interior of a plane, the museum is a defined, closed environment. Museum docents = flight attendants; displays = cabin windows. Both offer flights of imagination, but the museum doesn't require TSA screening.

The second side is the non-public side, like an airline's maintenance hangars seen from their cabin windows, but here substitute the NWAHC's office. It's here the not-so-glamorous but necessary details are tended to - the bill paying, author requests, researchers' queries, archive storage, etc. This is the side of the NWAHC you normally don't see, where the NWAHC's board of directors work to keep the museum flying. Right now, the directors are wrestling with a vexing problem.



From Editor Scott Norris

Experience may be the best teacher, but just the same I'd rather have learned the lessons from 2001 and 2020 in some other manner. Too many experiences in each year were paralleled: family health issues, and being unable to work; inability to travel; and the resurfacing of ugly ignorance and racism. The utter silence in the clear sky, and being shaken awake in fear by the sound of an aircraft far overhead - what this avgeek finds most comforting instead was terrifying.

Shop online to support the NWAHC!

- Treasure hunt! We offer surplus materials and new apparel and pins for sale on **eBay** under the handle "cyberglitz" the assortment changes every week!
- Buying on amazon.com? We all learned how convenient is can be this year. Sign up for Amazon Smile and 1/2% of every purchase is contributed to our museum. Use the link at <u>smile.amazon.com/ch/41-2020975</u> to specify the NWAHC!

While everything seems to be going its way, the NWAHC doesn't have a business model to ensure its survival. Current and former board members have been good stewards, but we have not been able to grow our airline history business. Past efforts have been piecemeal or unsuccessful, and COVID-19 has highlighted the need to future-proof the museum. Realizing this, the board has hired a museum consultant firm, Access Philanthropy (AP), to work with us using a more hands-on, structured approach.

The contract means AP will be a true partner, taking a leadership role in some areas and working together as we implement agreed actions and recommendations. The cost of the contract represents a monetary investment in the future that is felt be warranted and necessary to prevent the previous 19 years of work from following its namesake into oblivion.

We expect this effort to produce results that will emulate the structure of other successful smaller museums. These smaller museums have been able to withstand time and changes in leadership while meeting the vision of their founders and having the continued support of their public. Thank you for being passengers with us on this flight. CAVU.

Transitioning from uncertainty to a new normal takes time and practice, and I hope at least that's one positive lesson we learned in 2001 that we can apply to our situation today. As Bruce mentions above (with more in the next section,) building resiliency and the capacity for growth at the NWAHC will help us to continue not just inspiring, but involving, the next generations of flyers, fixers, and fans. As a Gen X'er still ten years before retirement, so that this organization is around when I'm ready to hang out <u>every</u> day, I need more Millennials and Zoomers bringing their talents and passions to bear!

We are about to start testing an e-commerce application we hope will help us significantly boost both memberships and cash flow to power creation of new media and exhibit projects to appeal to new audiences. These changes are good and exciting - hope to see you on board!

Interested in donating materials?

Please contact our collections manager, Bruce Kitt, at <u>bruce.kitt@northwestairlineshistory.org</u> with details of your items, photos if possible, and how we can reach you.

We are especially interested in items that help us tell stories or demonstrate concepts and procedures; records and correspondence; video, audio, and photos; training materials; and union communications. Items from Hughes Airwest & its predecessors, and Southern are especially appreciated.

Compass Readings

UPDATE: Redevelopment of the Crowne Plaza AiRE

By the time this issue lands in mailboxes, work should be underway to convert the upper floors of the NWAHC Museum's home, the Crowne Plaza AiRE Hotel in Bloomington, MN, into micro-apartment housing. (View the June 2021 REFLECTIONS for details on the proposal.) As we speculated, management has confirmed to us they will be marketing the units heavily to MSP Airport employees and flight crews - transit right outside the front door makes car-free commuting easy, and both Building D and Delta Cargo are an easy walk. Lodging operations are expected to continue under the Crowne Plaza banner.

The hotel's owners are taking an incremental approach to converting rooms into housing - going just a couple floors at a time, given the rapid recovery of room-night demand in the Twin Cities. Per a report on KARE-11 TV, metro lodging occupancy rates which had cratered to just 3.4% in April 2020 had grown to 37.7% in July 2021 and 42% in the first half of August. On August 14, a Saturday, the metro-area rate hit 69.5%, the highest since the pandemic started.

A concern for the Museum was the possibility that construction-related safety protocols would require us to close while work was underway. We have been reassured that in fact our operations may continue normally.

The South Loop neighborhood is developing quickly, with McGough Company's 50-acre master development bringing over 1,000 units of upscale and market-rate housing on stream this year, and with the old Northwest Airlines Federal Credit Union building being razed this summer to be replaced by a six-story, 146-unit seniors' high-rise overlooking the Minnesota River. And ground is expected to break next year on a multistory housing complex on what is now a surface parking lot one block east of our Museum. We look forward to meeting all our new neighbors!







Photo by Bruce Kitt.



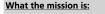
E-commerce is inbound for the NWAHC website

Development and testing is underway for the Phase 1 rollout of online commerce on our website, using the well-regarded Shopify platform to host content and handle payments.

Initially we will offer the ability to easily sign up online for memberships and donate extra funds. We will also offer a selection of feature-length videos for download (which we currently sell at our Bloomington, MN museum and on eBay in physical DVD form.) We hope to have this phase running by late October.

Phase 2 will involve changing the inventory files and cashier hardware at our Bloomington, MN museum, by years' end. And Phase 3 will involve creating dozens of exclusive new logo items for our online shop, such as clothing, drinkware, stationery, and travel gear, using "print-on-demand" technology and direct shipping to shoppers.

Watch for updates on our website, Facebook, and Twitter!







NWAHC inks contract with Access Philanthropy for long-term development consulting

2022 will mark the 20th year of the Northwest Airlines History Center, one of the very few airline-history nonprofits not tied to a publicly-funded museum or university, or sponsored by the airline it focuses on. Our allvolunteer operation has largely operated over the past two decades with a small core of directors and museum docents, mostly drawn from the ranks of former Northwest and Republic employees. While collectively we have the know-how to run an airline, and have the joy of sharing NWA's history, over the past year we've determined we need to add the specific skillsets of museum organization, fundraising, and facility management to our team - because we'd like to be around another 20 years!

Over Winter-Spring 2021 our Directors identified several dozen organizations in the Twin Cities involved in nonprofit museum consulting, and sent requests for proposal to those we felt most likely to have experience in organizational development. We reviewed the proposals which came back, and determined Minneapolis-based Access Philanthropy offered the depth of experience and breadth of connections we needed.

After meetings with the AP team on Zoom in June and July, we signed a contract in August and had our first in-person meeting with several of their principals and much of our Board on August 26th at our Bloomington museum and Eden Prairie archive/administration office. For initial work, AP will be conducting a financial review and helping us profile our current Membership and audiences, as well as identify who we want to attract and how we can connect with them.

Over the next 6-12 months, AP will help us create a "Ramp Up" plan to tap into corporate and institutional giving, create more connections with local nonprofits, expand our talent set, and increase perspectives so that the NWAHC can be an enduring, treasured institution.

Tables are SOLD OUT for the Minneapolis Airline Show in October!

We hope to see you at the Best Western Plus in Bloomington, MN on Saturday, October 9 for the eagerlyawaited return of the Minneapolis Airline Show. By mid-August all 27 vendor tables for the event had been committed, and organizers were trying to fit in one or two more tables in response to sellers' interest. This event is an important fundraiser and awareness-builder for the NWAHC; a strong turnout bodes well for our future!

The successful but constrained Airliners International show in Tempe, AZ this July convincingly demonstrated airline enthusiasts' desire to resume face-to-face gatherings and sales. While the spread of the "Delta" COVID variant adds concern, commonsense safety measures recommended for attendees, like vaccination and wearing masks, will help visitors and vendors remain safe and ready to have fun.



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Photo Gallery

Phoenix Rising

Art and aviation history combine for travelers' enlightenment

Joining the accredited institutions at San Francisco and Las Vegas, the City of Phoenix Aviation Department has recently established and funded its own museum program, serving its three key airports at Sky Harbor, Deer Valley, and Goodyear, and dedicated to promoting Arizona's cultural and artistic heritage.

While the main gallery in Terminal 4 at PHX (handling American and Southwest) was closed both for updates as well as COVID, numerous installations there as well as in Terminal 3 (Delta, United, Frontier, Spirit) featured the work of dozens of current local artists, and also historic crafts and folk art.

The subject of air travel of course is also part of the Phoenix Airport Museum's mandate. As we traveled through while attending July's Airliners International conference in Tempe, three installations caught our eye: the first two being photographic series "Fly Back in Time" and "Historic Fly-In Weddings at Sky Harbor."

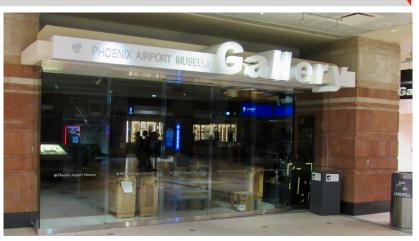
The Northwest Family of carriers was well represented in the largest installation, "Style in the Aisle", situated in two large glass booths in Terminal 4's central ticketing lobby (pre-security), flanked by American's counters on one side and Southwest's on the other.

TWA, American, and Pacific Southwest Airlines (PSA) are represented in the booths with iconic and exotic uniforms, literature, bags, and cabin equipment. But in our opinion the stars of the show are the uniforms, posters, and gear from Bonanza, Air West, and Hughes Airwest!

"Style in the Aisle" is scheduled to remain on exhibit through November 28, 2021.

The NWA History Center has been in contact with the Phoenix Airport Museum, and we plan to arrange transfers of some surplus materials, including uniform pieces, to help them continue to tell more stories about air travel in the region.

For more and higher-resolution photos of this exhibition, including the non-RW carriers, click to our blog on northwestairlineshistory.org.









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Feature Article

Gander, Newfoundland famously took in more stranded travelers than the town's entire population. 38 aircraft in total landed there with over 6,000 passengers, and it took a full week to get everyone back on their way. (Gander Airport image)

Grounded

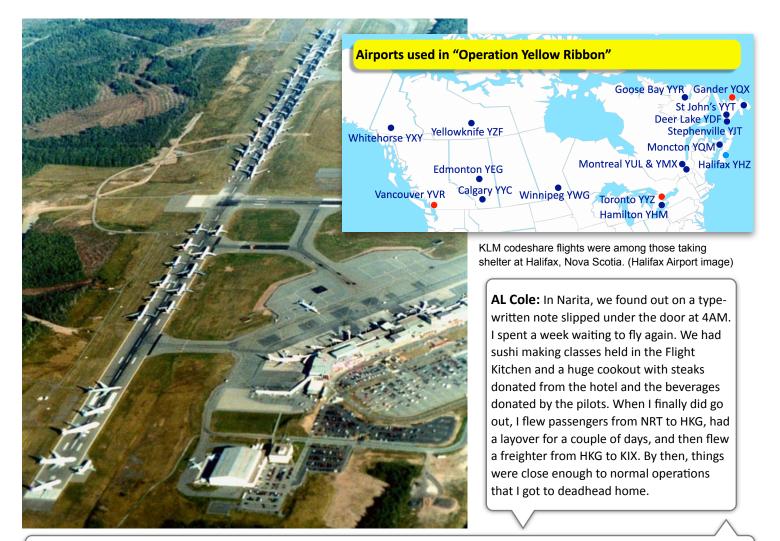
U.S. airspace was shut down at 9:25 am Eastern time, which was 3:25 pm in Amsterdam, and 10:25 pm in Tokyo. Much of the KLM westbound trans-Atlantic fleet was already well over the ocean, as well as a handful of NWA craft; these were primarily diverted to Gander, Halifax, and Toronto (Hamilton, Ontario even took one DC-10!) The bulk of the red-tail fleet would have departed in the early afternoon, but as the world watched horrified, airline dispatchers proactively cancelled flights. Eastbound departures to Europe were all scheduled for the afternoon, so none had to turn around.

On the Pacific side, due to the early hour there were no westbound flights. However, all of Northwest's eastbound flights had already crossed into North American airspace. As the Canadian government implemented its "Yellow Ribbon" emergency procedures, airport staff in the country's west were just waking up to the awful news. After some initial confusion, Vancouver took most inbound NWA aircraft (Flight 88 from Beijing to Detroit had an earlier departure than the Tokyo-originating flights and was already in American airspace, ultimately landing at Grand Rapids, Michigan, and three 747s were able to land in San Francisco.) Over 235 U.S.-bound aircraft ultimately were safely diverted to Canadian airports.

Northwest's Minneapolis hub, meanwhile, took in three Korean Air 747s, and Detroit handled a pair of ANA-All Nippon 747s. NWA's Memphis hub handled 45 diverted aircraft; only Indianapolis took in as many. While some priority flights were allowed beginning Sept. 13, general resumption of service did not begin in the U.S. until Sunday the 16th. (Washington-National airport was closed for three months as its proximity to key government buildings was deemed too significant a risk.) Nancy Waltrip: We had arrived in Shanghai that day. We'd gone shopping and got massages at the Blind Institute, and we were exhausted. It was bedtime for us. I remember thinking I must have turned to HBO instead of CNN because it looked like a Bruce Willis movie. When I realized it was CNN I called another FA who was crying. At this point they still thought it was a small airplane, not commercial. I was shocked the next day that outside the hotel front desk, no one at our haunts in the city seemed aware of what happened. We had left Detroit on Monday, 9-10, arrived PVG 9-11, and were on a 6 day. We came home as scheduled on Saturday to the great unknown.

Patti Gonzalez: I was in NRT. Received a letter under my door from hotel stating that they were sorry to inform me that the United States was under attack. I still have the letter. Needless to say I turned on the television, saw the news, got dressed and headed downstairs to be with other crew members. I was there for 5 or 6 days. We had daily briefings and there was a lot of camaraderie. Since I couldn't be home, being in NRT wasn't so bad because we had a lot of support from all the crews that were there. One night there was a big cook out/dinner by the pool. Hotel was good to us also.

Linda Good: I was in Narita, just got back to the hotel after a terribly delayed Saipan turn. Turned on the tv, CNN had the towers on fire, I called home, Honolulu, and woke up husband. We watched the second tower crumble live...I was stuck there for 3 extra days waiting for flights to start back up.



Mary A. Sansom: With the planes grounded for a while, the air space around the airport was so quiet and eerie! The only planes heard were the fighters overhead on patrol. I remember ramp employees getting fingerprinted several times, security definitely was increased and airplanes (not just red tails) parked everywhere on the ramp and outside the hangars. Airport employees came together to support and honor their American and United Airlines coworkers.

Joseph Babb: Had just taken the controls on NW18 NRT-JFK. Received the bad news and reroute to Vancouver. Spent the next 3 days in Vancouver wondering what the ultimate outcome would be.

Jane Schwarz: Joe, I was on your crew. Hard to believe it's going to be 20 years! I remember being in the cockpit after landing in Vancouver and trying to call home to see if my brother was okay (he was FDNY). He passed away 10 years ago from the lung damage he sustained that day and the following months working on the pile. Hope you are well, so many fun memories of layovers!

Vancouver was a small station for NWA, handling just three daily A320 departures for Minneapolis and one for Detroit per the September 1, 2001 timetable. On 9/11 YVR accepted 10 Northwest 747s and one DC-10 among 34 diverted aircraft in total, carrying 8,500 passengers. Photo by Rob Rindt / Edge to Edge Photography via <u>airliners.net</u>

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DSM Smith: I was CISM (Critical incident) trained by Northwest as well as being a hospital chaplain--- I was called out/activated to CLE airport which had been 'evacuated' due to a DL flight landing with suspected bomb on board- people were walking on the freeway- as no one was allowed to get their car. I was cleared in with my Clergy badge/Airline ID as I had been 'activated' by Northwest... I worked with United/ American/ and Northwest employees at the Airport and did the Crew Briefing for those in the layover hotel--- they weren't going anywhere for at least 72 hours... The following day, we rented a 15 passenger vanpicked up whatever crew and brought them to our house for a BBQ and some 'downtime'...

Mike Cagley: My wife and I were at the gate at MSP waiting for a flight to DTW. All we knew was our flight was "delayed". The CNN monitors were orange; I had never seen that before. All of a sudden I clearly heard my name called over the PA system. Scared the hell out of me! I was told to go back to the ticket counter where I checked in. When I got there I found the same agent I'd worked with earlier. She turned around and handed me our luggage on the conveyor belt behind her. The belt had stopped the moment she put our luggage on it. She called me because it would be easier to reclaim our bags there than if they had joined the 1000s at the baggage claim area. I thanked her profusely.

Distribution technology steps up

Practically overnight the traditional ticketing distribution model through travel agencies became obsolete, as mom-and-pop storefronts that had survived the CRS battles and commission drawdowns of the 1990s were unequipped to handle new PNR security requirements. And while Northwest and other carriers had deployed new City Ticket Offices in key markets, the only way to handle millions of transactions was through the Internet.

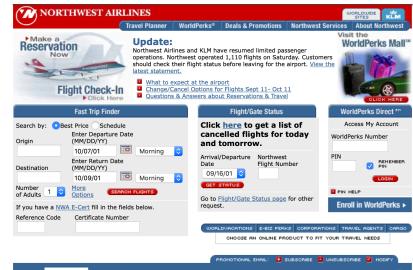
NWA.com had been a thoughtful marketing experiment but now became the airline's primary service channel. As Northwest incentivized travelers to go first to the website with WorldPerks miles and secret fare sales, they started to prefer it to telephone interactions. Check-in kiosks with early touchscreens were soon rolled out, and frequent flyers with basic luggage needs found this superior to waiting in line at ticketing counters. Of course, this also meant the company did not need to retain as many phone and counter agents.

With small travel agencies closed, corporate-focused agencies began merging for scale to capture company-wide contracts and provide complete cost management tools. Northwest/KLM likewise aggressively pursued global corporate agreements with their integrated sales force, strong website tools, and cross-network premium services like WorldClubs and the new World Business Class. Judith Long: We landed in Grand Rapids from Beijing. We had a full ship and we put the passengers on buses to Detroit with the crew. I stayed in Detroit in my commuter room until the following Friday and went back to Beijing. I will never forget that day or our great crew.

Debb Longworth Rumpza: Judith, I had forgotten you were on that trip with me. So you were one of the flight attendants assigned to a bus??

Judith Long: Yes, it wasn't bad. I felt bad for the agents because there wasn't much they could do. And no rooms available. I stayed in DTW in my commuter room. Went to visit Sandy in Ann Arbor. Then on Friday went back to PEK. Hope you are well.

Debb Longworth Rumpza: I stayed at least 5 days in GRR. Just happened to hear about a ferry flight going to MSP. Couldn't contact scheduling, got on & made it home in time for flights to shut down again. A nightmare.



ABOVE: screenshot of the Northwest website on September 15, 2001, via <u>archive.org</u>. The web design team simplified the landing page to core functions and set the standard for airline web and app interfaces for decades to come.

RIGHT: NWA stock photo promoting kiosk check-in at Minneapolis.



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Fleet overhaul

Northwest had already set the foundation for fleet modernization at the high end with its January 2001 order for Airbus A330s, at the midpoint at the same time for Boeing 757-300s, and at the low end in 1999 for Bombardier CRJs. But the transformation accelerated after 9/11 as the company implemented a 20% reduction in seat-miles, responding to demand loss from terrorism fears and the rollout of the new Transportation Security Agency and its odious screening lines.

The first-wave DC-10-40 fleet was mothballed even before A330s were delivered, replaced with 757s which in turn were replaced with new A319s. A319s were supposed to replace many DC-9s, but that fleet stayed mostly intact as it was paid for and could be stored and redeployed at low cost.

Avro RJ85s and CRJs supplemented mainline service to maintain schedule frequency - a key selling point for those important corporate contracts - at lower labor and maintenance cost.

And so the stage was largely set for what the NWA fleet would look like for the rest of its life. In the COVID era we see similar radical aircraft retirement and replacement plans in play at Delta, United, and American. The painful experiences from 2001 created a playbook today's carriers could look to for responses.

NORTHWEST Mainline Fleet			nwa
	April 2001	July 2003	July 2005
Boeing 747-400	14 + 2 on order	16	16
Boeing 747-200	21	18	7
Boeing 747-200 Freighter	10	12	13
Airbus A330-300	24 on order	14 on order	10 + 10 on order
Airbus A330-200		10 on order	7 + 5 on order
Boeing 787-8			18 on order
McDonnell Douglas DC-10-40	21		
McDonnell Douglas DC-10-30	24	22	20
Boeing 757-300	20 on order	10 + 6 on order	16
Boeing 757-200	48 + 5 on order	56	56
Boeing 727-200	30		
Airbus A320	70 + 12 on order	76 + 8 on order	78 + 2 on order
Airbus A319	24 + 50 on order	63 + 14 on order	74 + 7 on order
Douglas DC-9-50	35	35	34
Douglas DC-9-40	12	12	12
Douglas DC-9-30	115	112	102
Douglas DC-9-10	10	8	
TOTALS	434 active	440 active	445 active





way to Ecuador to briefly serve with AeroGal; however by mid-2003 it was already being parted out in Guayaquil.

LEFT: Photo by Dan Paluska of the central screening checkpoint for Denver International Airport, March 1, 2009. Creative Commons 0.0 license.

ABOVE: Boeing 727-251 Advanced N295US (delivered in Sept. 1978) taxis at Miami, June 16, 2001, in this image by Konstantin von Wedelstaedt. GNU 1.2 licensed image.

Northwest withdrew this airframe in July 2002 and it made its



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The 2021 Minneapolis Aviation Collectible Sale & Get-Together. Saturday, October 9, 9 am - 4 pm.

At the Best Western Plus Hotel in Bloomington, MN, across from the Mall of America.

Admission only \$5 (kids under 12 free); proceeds support the Northwest Airlines History Center. Free parking. Free shuttle from MSP Airport. Or use METRO Blue or Red lines to the MOA. Hotel reservations: (952) 854-8200 - let them know you're attending the show!