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December 2023 Volume 21, number 4

In this issue:

Northern California memories of Pacific Air Lines

Evolution of our museum's Board of Directors

Retiree income and medical funding updates

MSP Collectible Show recap and photos

Holiday Gift Guide featuring fresh finds from our website store

Our mission:

To inspire interest in commercial aviation and our community's unique role in it.

We will preserve and present the history of Northwest Airlines and its associated carriers and partners, and show how they contributed to and still influence the development of science and technology, and the economic and social growth of Minnesota and the Upper Midwest.



Mike machat artwork from his time as an artist for McDonnell-Douglas, used in presentation to NWA. Mike recently discussed DC-10 stretches on his YouTube channel, sparking the idea for this issue!

Paper Airplanes

NWA collaborated on aircraft design points, but didn't see the results by Scott Norris

Right from the days of 'Speed' Holman, Northwest, North Central, and other predecessor carriers contributed to aviation progress and safety with their own inventions as well as collaborations with equipment suppliers and airframers. This even led on occasion to Northwest being the launch customer for several aircraft types including the Lockheed 10-A Electra, Martin 202, Douglas DC-10-40, and the Boeing 747-400.

But there were other aircraft projects where NWA was consulted substantially, or even initiated with a proposal, that for various reasons never came to fruition as originally concepted. We've found and created artwork to show 'what could have been' for several modern-era jets.

McDonnell-Douglas MD-100

After the introduction of the DC-10, MD engineers and sales staff continued to explore stretches and range enhancements, just as they had with the venerable DC-8 first generation jetliner. In 1981, MD leased a DC-10 from Continental for winglet research with NASA while also talking with Pratt & Whitney about their new PW2037 higher-bypass engine. The performance improvements from both projects led to a new DC-10 derivative they called the MD-EEE (Ecology, Economy, Efficiency) later rebranded the MD-100. This would have stretched the DC-10-30 by 20 feet for 333 passengers in mixed classes and allowed for comfortable trans-Pacific range. NWA, being a loyal DC-10 customer with Pacific route growth in mind, and first-generation 747s that could be replaced, was consulted at length on maintenance, cabin, and flight deck improvements, as well as cargo handling through 1982 and early 1983. **MISSED FLIGHTS to page 6**

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:

- Directors: Bruce Kitt, Fay Kulenkamp, Bill Marchessault, Vince Rodriguez, Jeff Schwalen, Mike Vetter, Scott Norris, Bill Flatley, Kimm Viebrock, Tim Haskin
- Directors Emeritus: Jerry Nielsen and Wayne Snyder

Museum Address:

Crowne Plaza AIRE Hotel

3 Appletree Square, Bloomington MN 55425

(952) 876-8677

Archives and Administration:

10100 Flying Cloud Drive, Ste A-306, Eden Prairie MN 55347

(952) 698-4478

Online:

Web	www.northwestairlineshistory.org
Facebook:	NorthwestAirlinesHistoryCenter
LinkedIn:	Northwest Airlines History Center
Instagram:	Northwest_Airlines_History
Bluesky:	NorthwestAirlines
Threads:	Northwest_Airlines_History
Twitter / X:	@NW_Airlines
YouTube:	Northwest Airlines History Center
Email:	info@northwestairlineshistory.org

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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Editor: Scott Norris northwestairlines@comcast.net

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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. Or, call for the free hotel shuttle from either terminal.

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 uppermost level (do not use spaces not reserved for the hotel) and cross into the hotel's second floor. You may need to buzz the door for entrance, as a safety protocol.

The museum is located on the third floor, above the pool area, 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

October 2023 marked the 21st anniversary of the Northwest Airlines History Center (NWAHC). Since 2002, the NWAHC has seen many changes and we're proud of all we have achieved. While the board has focused

on its operations, state statutes and museum industry best practices have also evolved since we opened. The board follows these requirements because we want to be associated with the best of museum governance. The NWAHC does this to demonstrate to potential donors and supporters that we take our responsibilities seriously and that our future is built on solid research and grounded in full transparency.

The NWAHC's Governance Committee has updated our Bylaws and advised the full board of impending changes that will occur in December. The major change pertains to term limits. In 2023, Minnesota State Statute 317A.205 was enacted, limiting non-profit board service to no more than ten years,

with a 12-month hiatus before re-applying as a board candidate. Four current board members have exceeded those limitations. Consequently, Directors Fay Kulenkamp, Bill Marchessault (who is the last original founding board member), Vince Rodriguez, and I will step down as board members. The six remaining board members will continue the search for new board members and forge ahead with the campaign for our future museum.

I intend to spend these next 12 months focused on two tasks. First and foremost, I am driven to see the new museum campaign to its successful "Grand Opening" and will help in every possible way to realize that vision. The second task is to use my freed-up time to get back to what I originally volunteered to do: manage our archive, which has grown exponentially in the past 21 years.

I have enjoyed guiding the museum, with the help of the Board of Directors and our loyal group of volunteers, for the past 16 years. Thank you for your support. CAVU.

Join our Board!	To ramp up our operation and create new community connections, we're looking for people with broad personal experience and effective communication skills to head efforts in areas such as school & college coordination; marketing, social, & media relations; exhibit design; fundraising; and corporate & government outreach. No airline employment experience is necessary - just a love of travel and history. Our all-volunteer board meets monthly for about 2 hours, but corresponds frequently offline. Many of us work full-time; there is no minimum time commitment but each of us fits Board duties and interests into our schedules flexibly. Our ideal Board will have 11-15 members, so there is room for you! If you are interested in coming aboard, please email willyt2144@gmail.com .		
Donor Thanks	The Board and all the volunteers at the Northwest Airlines History Center would like to thank our donors for their contributions. Donations enable our ongoing operations, outreach efforts, and work to design and gain approvals for our new permanent museum.	\$5,000 - \$9,999 Wayne Snyder Sharon O'Toole	\$100 - \$499 Jillayne Reeder William Werdin
Check your basements and storage boxes!	Do you have materials to contribute to our museum? Please contact our archive manager 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 reference items; and union communications. Items from Hughes Airwest & its predecessors, Southern, and the Airlink partners are especially appreciated - few items found their way to Minnesota to survive corporate purges & transfers.		
Buy wise to support the NWAHC!	Visit our online store, with world-exclusive designs on a - from shirts to mugs, travel gear to puzzles, and more, shop.northwestairlineshistory.org. Or scan this QF store directly. We also offer surplus materials and new apparel and pi	at code to jump to our	

under the handle "cyberglitz" - the assortment changes every week!

Compass Readings



Medicare and Social Security: What's new for 2024?— by Shelly Sullivan, Secretary, ITDR

I joined the Insurance Trust Board after 23 years with Delta/Northwest. My career started in reservations at

the Iron Range Reservations Center in Minnesota, where I was involved in the training department, work environment committee, spirit committee, relay for life, health, and safety team, RUAware, and Hiring. I held a key position on the Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) committee and Passenger Inquiry Center (PIC) for Reservations, creating online training materials and redesigning an activation plan in the event of an aircraft incident.

Key changes and updates impacting most Medicare beneficiaries next year:

Social Security

Social Security benefits for more than 71 million Americans will increase 3.2% in 2024.

Medicare Part B Premium and Deductible

Medicare Part B covers physician services, outpatient hospital services, certain home health services, durable medical equipment, and more. In 2024, the standard monthly Part B premium will be \$174.70, an increase of \$9.80. The 2024 annual deductible for Medicare Part B will be \$240, an increase of \$14.

Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Coverage

Currently, Medicare beneficiaries with a high annual prescription drug spend enter what's called the Catastrophic Benefit Phase, where they have to pay 5% percent of their prescription costs, regardless of the amount, for the rest of the year, with no maximum limit. Beginning January 1, 2024, the 5% prescription cost-sharing obligation in the Catastrophic Phase for Part D will be removed.

2023 MSP Aviation Collectible Show Recap

October 14 marked the most successful Twin Cities aviation sale event in NWAHC history! Attendance, sales, and vendor participation all reached new records.

Thirteen vendors set up shop, including four from out-of-state.

New vendor Jack Greenbaum had been at the San Francisco fall show just the week before and told us the MSP operation had a bigger crowd, more energy, and netted him much better results - he has already signed on to return next year!

Exhibitors at MSP and other events this year note strong and growing collecting interest from folks in their teens and twenties, starting with diecast models but growing to everything from timetables to flatware! One such collector, "JJ Skippy," posted a video on YouTube showing his experience at our event and some of the finds he bought at **https://bit.ly/MSP-show-2023.** The videographers at MSP Airport Live also shot footage that will appear on future broadcasts on their YouTube channel.

We will return to the Best Western Plus next year in our traditional second Saturday in October. We hope to see you for an even bigger event on October 12, 2024!

ADVERTISEMENT

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Group Medicare Benefits you will not find anywhere else.

Did you know that **all former Northwest employees** (regardless of length of service), and their spouses, survivors, and former spouses are eligible for exclusive group Medicare plans through The Insurance Trust for Delta Retirees (ITDR)? ITDR was created *exclusively* as a non-profit organization to provide insurance products and services for the Delta family, including entities acquired by or merged with Delta, and subsidiaries.

The average Medicare beneficiary has a choice of **close** to 60 individual Medicare plans for 2024. It can be overwhelming!

At ITDR we are committed to making Medicare easy. You won't have to worry about finding a new doctor, the hassle of shopping plans every year, or network restrictions. With a Group Medicare Advantage or Supplemental Plan from ITDR, you have options with low or no copays and out-of-pocket costs, including a \$0 Premium Medicare Advantage and Prescription Drug Plan!

Premiums don't increase based on your age and you can change your options each year with no proof of health and the same benefits in every state!

Open Enrollment is through December 31st. Learn more at <u>www.itdr.com</u>, or call the Retiree Service Center at (877) 325-7265.



New Museum Architecture and Fundraising Update

It was a busy autumn for our "Go Big" initiative!

- We have met with principals at RSP Architecture and Pope Design Group, both on our short-list of Twin Cities-headquartered building design practices. HGA is the third firm on our list, and we aim to meet before year-end. From these meetings we expect to see competing design concepts in early spring 2024.
- Donor-contact software system Bloomerang was adopted. We are testing its capabilities and getting ready to transfer the NWAHC membership database over. You'll be seeing more regular and informative messaging and task management will be streamlined on our end!
- A new contract with our consultants at Access Philanthropy was signed last month, for their service in conducting a fundraising & attendance feasibility study in the 1st half of 2024. This work will help us identify obstacles, allies, and key initial and ongoing donors.



Scott Norris demonstrating the "Vision 2026" museum concept model at the MSP show. Photo from J.J. Skippy.

Feature Article

PAPER PLANES from page 1 —> Despite the encouraging technical data and ease of integrating the MD-100 into existing operators' fleets, the lack of current DC-10 orders and cash crunch at the company led its officers to shelve the project in November 1983.

By the time MD resumed development work and were ready to launch the MD-11 program in December 1986, Northwest's order for the Boeing 747-400 was already a year old, and after generous terms given on Airbus' A320 narrowbodies, were evaluating widebody A340 and A330 jets, which would be ordered in April 1987. MD could have won a major order, but lost by waiting...

British Aerospace BAe 146-NRA (New Regional Airliner)

With widebody fleet decisions concluded in 1987, and orders for the A320 and Boeing 757 covering the 150-180 seat range, the 1990s focused on the question of how to replace the DC-9 fleet.





BAe had re-established British jetliners as a serious option, and had placed large fleets of their four-engined model 146 at Air Wisconsin and PSA. In the late 1980s the manufacturer was already talking with engine maker CFM about using their higher-thrust CFM56 (already used on the 737-300 and A320) on a stretched 146 with a new wing. Per *Airliner World* magazine, It was at this time that Northwest reached out to discuss its needs for regional lift (under 1500 mile stage length). By 1991, NWA and BAe had firmed up a design for a 120-seat, five-abreast layout using an electronic flight information system (EFIS), flat panel displays and sidestick input, with fly-by-wire controls. The expected order would have been for about 100 frames.

However, between the Gulf War and a concurrent financial crisis in Britain, BAe tried to sell half of its jetliner operation to Taiwan Aerospace during 1992-93. These talks wasted a year of development but ultimately failed. BAe shut down factories and sold its executive jet program to Raytheon, abandoned the NRA effort, and went back to four-engined jets, ultimately creating the RJ85 which would find a home at Mesaba in the mid-1990s.



McDonnell Douglas MD-95

MD failed to win sales volumes in the late 1980s for the scaleddown version of the MD-80, the too-heavy and overpowered MD-87. This led the company to re-imagine a DC-9-30 sized fuselage and wing, much lighter, with full digital control and newest-generation engines. This concept was put forward at the 1991 Paris Air Show, and from 1992-1994 (per *Aviation Week* and the author's own experience) MD engineers and designers were frequently seen in the Twin Cities as they consulted with NWA, the world's largest user of the DC-9 and the most important potential buyer.

During this time, MD changed the design's engine from updated Pratt & Whitney JT8Ds, to the Rolls Royce Tay, and finally the BMW BR700. Assembly was originally slated in 1992 for China, then "not China" in 1993, Texas in 1994, and Long Beach in 1995.

During research, MD came up with a "life extension program" called DC-9X in 1993 calling for engine swaps to existing frames. The MD board finally approved the design to offer in July 1994, but with a long development phase that would see first flight in Sept. 1998.

NWA, using the DC-9X study, compared the cost of buying new against simpler refurbishing and engine modifications, figuring they could get 15 more years of life out of DC-9-50 and -30s and saving \$14 million per airplane versus buying a new MD-95.

Boeing pitched 717s to Northwest again in 1999-2000, but math still favored flying paid-off DC-9-50s - which would stay in service through the Delta merger.

The program eventually became the Boeing 717, and Delta picked up the ex-AirTran fleet at a bargain - flying them on the same routes that NWA would have, had they ordered them!

Bombardier CSeries

As a significant operator of Bombardier's CRJ 50- and 90- seat jets, NWA was involved in advisory boards in 2004-2005 to set operational and passenger-experience expectations for the CSeries family under development. Bombardier had a difficult time getting engine manufacturers to offer options needed to meet fuel efficiency and thrust targets, and slowed the program in January 2006. Northwest's own bankruptcy in September 2005 put further new-aircraft orders off the table. Despite development troubles, causing Airbus to assume the line, the now- A220



Tales from the Line

Eureka/Arcata Memories

– by Dan Veenstra, via Pacific Airlines Portfolio



My experience with Pacific Air Lines, in my mind, started prior to arriving in ACV (Humboldt County Airport, serving Eureka, Arcata, McKinleyville, and Trinidad in northern California.). I was just discharged from the Air Force and stayed with my parents in Bellingham, Washington for a few months before deciding to look for

employment in the Bay Area. I drove down and stayed with my aunt & uncle in Belmont. One thing that was necessary was I needed to print resumes. My aunt & uncle offered their new family car for transportation. When leaving the printer, with resumes in hand, I got into the car and drove forward not noticing a cement post in front of the car. Yup, I creamed the front bumper and grille. Unable to return the car in that condition I managed to get a body shop to replace everything that day.

I had an interview set up with Pacific Air Lines main office at the airport and was hired as a Station Agent in McKinleyville, California. McKinley where? Two days later I was heading north. I now only had about \$100 in my pocket because the other \$300 was spent to repair my uncle's car. I remember eating rice for at least a week. The cheapest place I could find to live was the Clam Beach Tourister Court. My room was right next to the bar. All night long, boom, boom, boom of the juke box base reverberating through the walls. I guess I must have been young enough in the early 1960s to deal with basically no sleep because within two days I showed up at the airport and met the Station Manager, Brody Tyler.

I really liked the diversity of the job. Ticketing, reservations, baggage handling, refueling, etc., etc. Refueling was not a problem as that's what I did in the military. However, refueling a Martin 404 was much different than refueling KC135's & B52's. I thought it was unusual that 5 gallons of oil had to be dumped into the plane's engines each and every time. But then, when the engines started the reason became obvious. Lots of smoke. One time a passenger came to the front counter asking me "when's the next smoker coming in?" I laughed as I knew what he was referring to.



The restored N636X demonstrating its "smoker". Photo by Terry Wall, used with permission, via Pacific Airlines Portfolio.

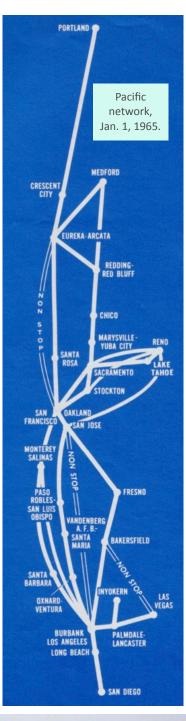


Clam Beach County Park. Photo by Don Forthuber, courtesy Humboldt County Convention & Visitors' Bureau (redwoods.info)

The Navy built the runways at ACV during World War II to test fog dispersal equipment because it was consistently the foggiest place in the United States. I always felt sorry for everyone in other stations because we were often fogged in. I suspect folks in San Francisco, with sunny skies overhead, were often waiting for flights from ACV. I'm sure we changed the whole schedule for downstream locations the entire rest of the day. We often had folks waiting an hour or more while planes circled overhead. Eventually the passengers on board were offloaded in Crescent City (CEC) and arrived at ACV in limousines or rentals. In the meantime, our passengers enjoyed complimentary dinners at Merriman's restaurant at Moonstone Beach or were put up at the Eureka Inn.

I remember one time working the ramp and releasing an F27 without making sure the rear air stair was up and locked. I ran to the operations and quickly told Terry Middleton to stop the plane. I looked out the window and saw the plane on the runway revving the engines ready for lift-off, stewardess pulling on the rope, hair blowing 90 degrees . . . then, engines came down to an idle and up went the air stair door. Normally we hear from the pilot about 15 minutes after leaving but this time "silence". When they were near Santa Rosa (STS) we got a call and the pilot said, "well, you should have checked the door before releasing us, and we should have checked our instruments as well. I think it would be good to forget this happened". I remember Bill Thoma, a Station Agent, bought a new Ford Cobra. He parked it by the ramp. I think he inherited some money. I remember he said he paid \$20,000. It would be worth over \$500,000 today.

By the way, yes, after a week I ended up moving out of the Clam Beach Tourister Court. I decided living on the beach was the thing to do. I decided to knock on every other door along the beach starting at Arcata up to the redwoods until I found a place. I ended up renting a home on a cliff overlooking Moonstone Beach for \$75 a month. For a 3 bedroom, two garage, balcony over the cliff, I thought it wasn't bad. Also, a big plus was Moonstone Beach was the preferred Humboldt State College hangout. A couple of Pacific employees and I would often run cars back from SFO for Avis & Hertz. As you can imagine, business people couldn't always wait for the fog to lift and rented cars to get to SFO. We'd catch the last flight to SFO and drive the cars back for \$15 plus gas. A great benefit of working for PAL was getting tickets for something like \$2 each direction. I remember sometimes the flights would be full so the stews arranged for me to sit in the 3rd seat with the pilots. One time the 3rd seat was occupied so the stew said "How about sitting in the restroom on takeoff? I'll be busy with serving when we're off the ground so you can sit in my jump seat to SFO". Worked for me. Later, Jim Wells replaced Brody Tyler as the Station Manager. Just prior to the merger of Pacific/West Coast/Bonanza I was transferred to Seattle and worked in the Sales Department for a couple of years.



Working for Pacific Air Lines was a wonderful experience. I'll never forget the people and the camaraderie.



Pacific Martin 404 interior, mid-1960s. Photo by Mike Haywood, via Pacific Airlines Portfolio.



N40422 at ACV, photographer unknown. Via Pacific Airlines Portfolio.

Holiday Gift Guide

Just the ticket!

We continue to add designs to our online store at **shop.northwestairlineshistory.org** - now sporting over 140 unique logo items! Our exclusive designs can be found nowhere else - and highlight our heritage from 1926 to the 2000s. We've made a sustained effort to highlight all the branches of our family tree - Bonanza and Hughes Airwest; Southern, North Central, and Republic; and NWA in all its eras.



These print-on-demand items typically take 1-2 weeks from when you order to delivery at your mailbox - so now is the time to explore our virtual shelves to find gifts for all your aviation-enthusiast friends and family (and yourself as well.) Remember, domestic ground shipping is free when your merchandise order is just \$50 or more - and you can even gift our video downloads and memberships, too!

Scan this code with your phone to jump directly to our online shop



REFLECTIONS, December 2023



Chibi Culture

Cute, squishy characters and vehicles are all the rage for kids, teens, and young adults. We've created a whole fleet of adorable pudgy 'planes and put them on vinyl stickers, mugs, clothing, travel gear, and much more.





Double-sided luggage tags, \$24

nwe

IRL



11-ounce ceramic mugs, \$16.99 Vinyl stickers, two sizes: \$14.99 or \$18.99 / sheet

Seasons in Japan

Northwest was the first air carrier to introduce overseas tourists to postwar Japan, and the country's natural beauty has captured our imaginations ever since. You may be inspired to travel there again with our Sakura (Cherry Blossom) and Koyo (Fall Leaves) designs on a variety of clothing, travel, and home gear products. Passport covers, \$27.99



Fabric zipper pouches, \$14.99 - \$16.99

REFLECTIONS, December 2023

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Short-sleeve shirts, S to 3XL, \$33 to \$42

Crewneck sweatshirts, S to 3XL, \$39 to \$49



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