

## Mesaba Reaches Five Years at Detroit!

During the Summer of 1988, American Airlines struck a deal to purchase Simmons Airlines, a regional airline which was providing American Eagle service to American at Chicago and Northwest AirlinK service to Northwest at Detroit. Northwest had six months to find a replacement for its regional feeder operation at Detroit, it's largest and most important domestic hub. No small feat.

Northwest entertained proposals from both existing AirlinK partners and other regional carriers to replace its feeder system and eventually selected Mesaba based on "the successful history between the two carrier's relationship." That decision sparked Mesaba's most aggressive growth period in the history of the company. Within four months, Mesaba secured eleven additional aircraft, hired over 300 new personnel, established a base of operation at Detroit Metropolitan Airport and launched its first Detroit AirlinK flight on December 15, 1988. Wow!

Today, five years later, the Detroit start-up memories are somewhat faded, but the effects on the company from that expansion are very real. In 1993, Mesaba carried nearly 1.5 million passengers (ranking it among the 15 largest regional airlines in the country). Over two-thirds of those passengers were carried on the Detroit system. Much of the company's recent growth has occurred on the east side of the airline's system.

"Our Detroit expansion was a huge undertaking," said Rob Swenson, Mesaba's president. "Our entire group of employees pulled together to make the new system work. I remember assigning the task forces to make sure that all of the details,



Pictured above are Detroit Staff; Supervisor Michael O'Connor, Customer Service Agents Sally Gedelian and Tony Schippa

training, systems and hiring were completed. It was truly an example of people pulling together to achieve a common objective."

The new service at Detroit was staggered. Starting in late 1988, Mesaba began service to four cities in December, four cities in January, two cities in February and several additional cities in April and October. The entire initial expansion at Detroit included 12 cities. Since then, Mesaba has added an additional two

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*"It was truly an example of people pulling together."*

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cities to its Detroit system. During the start-up phase of the operation, Mesaba leased two separate, existing maintenance facilities at the airport -- on opposite sides of the field -- to perform maintenance. "It was challenging," said Bill Shepherd, assistant director of maintenance at

Detroit. "Due to logistics, we used to work on both aircraft types at one of the facilities. When we pulled the F27 inside the hangar, the tail used to stick out the side of the building." In 1991, the company constructed a new 45,000 s.f. maintenance hangar at Detroit, the first such new building built at Detroit Metro in nearly 20 years. Bill said, "It's been great working in a facility with the proper lighting, clean floors... and being able to shut the doors!"

At the airport, Mesaba assumed the former Simmons gate operation located on the G concourse. Initially, Northwest ramp and counter personnel handled Mesaba's operation and ticketing functions. In late 1989, that function was turned over to Mesaba. Today, the company has nearly 90 flights a day which operate from the various gates located on the concourse. "It was a very interesting time," recalls Pete Johnson, a Manager in Flight

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## From The President:

I hope that the New Year is a healthy, safe and happy one for you and your family members.

I want to thank you for your great efforts day in and day out over the past year, especially during this difficult period of extreme cold weather. The past twelve months have been challenging, to say the least, and I'm glad that 1993 is behind us. Together, in spite of all the turbulence we have flown through, we have achieved a number of successes and I am grateful for your continued commitment and dedication.

As you know, we have worked hard to refine our schedule and reduce expenses over the past several months so that we might operate profitably. We have also decreased capacity in many of our traditional markets as a result of Northwest not offering as many discounted fares and seat levels as they have historically. They have chosen to interpret our contract differently than has been done over the past seven years and we have been working with them to resolve these pricing issues. We hope to be able to increase capacity seasonally in many of those affected cities. I am aware that our schedule refinements have created a number of scheduling, hiring and operational challenges for our operating group and your efforts to help strengthen our Company are greatly appreciated.

One of our challenges has been to be as efficient as possible by balancing appropriate staffing levels with the constantly changing operational schedule. Because of limited system growth and our Fokker fleet departing, we will continue to evaluate and add personnel when necessary to ensure proper staffing levels.

Through our 20/20 cost savings program this past year, we have reviewed a number of fine suggestions and we are working to put many of those in place today. I want to thank those who participated for their input

and encourage everyone to continue to provide feedback and suggestions on how we may operate more efficiently.

This past September, as you know, Minneapolis businessman Carl R. Pohlad invested \$10 million in AirTran and became the largest Company shareholder. Since then, there has been some speculation by the media and others about our plans for using the new capital for expansion purposes. Let me first say that I feel more comfortable about having a reserve of capital in place for us to weather any potential downturns which might affect our company, or the industry. In addition, we have publicly stated that we are evaluating opportunities for acquisition or expansion in the airline business. I firmly believe that we need to diversify AirTran's base of business in this rapidly changing airline environment. As we make progress in these areas, I will keep you updated.

This past summer was a very difficult period of time for our Company. Due to the delayed payments to us from Northwest and the risk of their filing bankruptcy, we were forced into contingency planning for massive furloughs and major route realignments. Thank goodness the monies owed Mesaba were eventually paid and Northwest now appears to be making good progress.

Further, due to Northwest's exclusion of many of our historical markets from fare sales, we saw our Company's profitability fall along with passenger traffic and load factors.

As a result of these actions, we have been forced to reduce the number of available seats in many of our markets and restructure the way we schedule parts of our system. Since Northwest controls the fare levels, seat inventory by fare class and the promotional and marketing of our product, we have been forced to reduce available seats in many of our historical markets where Northwest has not been adequately



selling the seats we provided.

Over the course of this period of time, I have been focussed on protecting our Company, our employees, our customers and our shareholders. To that extent, I believe: our schedule restructuring will help return us to historical levels of profitability; Carl Pohlad's investment has strengthened our financial resources and staying power; and further diversification will be a benefit to us all.

Due to the difficult events of the past summer, we were not in a position to give pay increases to our management employees and although all hourly employees still received longevity pay increases, we were unable to adjust the overall hourly pay scales. I am hopeful that 1994 will be a better year for our Company and that we will once again return to enhancing the quality of life for our employees with pay increases through a normal pay review process.

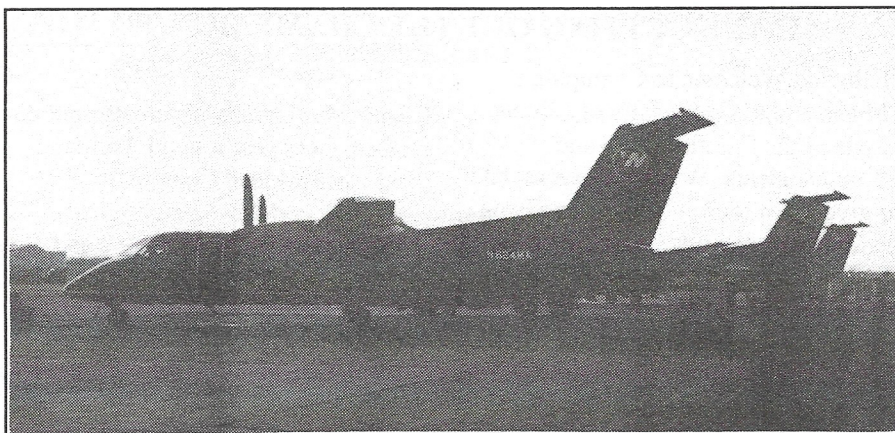
I'm proud of the fact that in 1994, our Company will be celebrating 50 years of providing aviation service under the name Mesaba. One definition of the name Mesaba is the "Sleeping Giant" and I believe that after 50 years, the Giant is awakening. To help commemorate this awakening and our golden anniversary, we will be hosting a special Company event in both Detroit and the Twin Cities

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Operations who was hired as MIII Chief Pilot for the Detroit expansion. He moved to Detroit for two years to assist the company in establishing a Detroit base.

The new Detroit flight department operated on its own initially and much of the work involved hiring and training. New pilots for the expansion were hired from all over the country, whereas historically, most new Mesaba pilots were living or working in the Upper Midwest. The new pilot group received their initial ground training in MSP and most were sent to simulator training centers around the country for flight time in the Metro or F27 aircraft.

"I remember that we had training going on for over two years," Pete said. He said that creating a new schedule and staffing was challenging. "At first, we were rewriting



schedules on a daily basis and our pilots bent over backwards to accommodate our growing schedule," Pete said. Today, there are over 150 pilots based in Detroit, many who have been there since the initial expansion.

The Detroit expansion gave Mesaba a whole new look and feel to its route system. Regions such as the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, Ohio Valley,

and Lake Erie add a more geographically diverse group of employees and customers to Mesaba. With recent service added to Washington, D.C., passengers on Mesaba can even get to the nation's capital on the former northern Minnesota puddle jumper. And, although "Mesaba" is harder to pronounce the further east one goes, the company continues to be successful in today's airline industry.

Steve Hanifl joined Mesaba as Detroit Station Manager in October of 1988 as Mesaba was ramping up for DTW's initial operation. Prior to joining the company, Steve was a manager at MKE with Express Airline's training department. Below are excerpts from a recent conversation with Steve.

*Q: What do you feel are your greatest accomplishments since 1988 and service start-up?*

*A:* I would say putting in place the quality staff we have today has been one of our greatest accomplishments. When we began in 1988, we had a total of nine employees. Northwest handled both our ramp and ticket operation and the nine of us were able to coordinate our entire operation. In 1989, when Northwest turned the operation over to us, we had to hire over 90 persons immediately. Today, we have nearly 150 employees. It is an excellent group concerned about giving great service.

### *Detroit Close-up*

I also think that we have developed a great working relationship with Northwest. We got to know the key players early with Northwest and that's been helpful as we have had to deal with issues.

*Q: What challenges do you face at Detroit from a customer service standpoint?*

*A:* Clearly, our facility presents some problems. We are strapped for space on the ramp. Some days, we literally have no additional room for airplanes. Our split Metro/Dash operation has been helpful. In fact, some of our passengers actually enjoy taking the shuttle to the Metros to avoid walking to the airplane.

We have done quite a bit of work on the G concourse since we began our operation. To the customer, however, the long walk down the G concourse connector will continue to be perceived

as negative.

*Q: How much communications do you have with outstations?*

*A:* Our counter personnel have a good working relationship with outstations. Particularly in the event of flight interruptions, we work together to try and coordinate passenger travel.

*Q: How about the issue of Mesaba working with Northwest in the Operations Tower?*

Beginning in mid-January, we will begin to have a supervisor working with Northwest in their operational control tower. That's important because it will help Northwest and us better coordinate the flow of flights, luggage and passengers. Until now, Northwest has had to communicate to us via telephone. Our person will actually be working face to face with Northwest on operational issues as they are occurring.

# STATION HIGHLIGHTS

## WE ARE GETTING OUT THE CHAMPAIGN, SO WHY DON'T YOU COME VISIT!

Hello and Welcome to Champaign/ Urbana and the University of Illinois, Home of the Fighting Illini and 35,000 students. We have been asked to give you a tour of our town so hang on and enjoy the ride.

The University of Illinois offers a wide variety of events and places to entertain you. One large attraction is our athletic department. The U of I is a member of the Big Ten Conference hosting both men's and women's sports. In the fall, people really turn out in big numbers to tailgate and watch our fighting Illini football team (especially when they beat Michigan and Minnesota). When winter rolls around, the emphasis turns to basketball. January 23 vs. Michigan and March 9 vs. Minnesota - but there is much more to the U of I than just sports. The Assembly Hall, which is the world's largest edge support dome, hosts more than just basketball. Frank Sinatra, Garth Brooks and U2 have all graced the stage at Assembly Hall. This last Christmas season The Nutcracker on ice featuring Randy Gardner and Tai Babilonia were at the Assembly Hall.

For those of you interested in the arts, The Krannert Center for the Performing Arts is the place for you. The Krannert Center has 4 theaters which host 350 student and professional performers annually. This winter, the play *What Every Woman Knows* is being performed by the Illinois Repertory theater. There are also classical music events such as The San Francisco Symphony Orchestra and the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. Along with classical music events the Krannert center hosts jazz, and contemporary groups such as Lavin, Gold, McDonough and Fingerett in *Buy me, Take me: Don't Mess My Hair!!!!!! Life according to four B....in' Babes*.

There are also several other theaters in

*By: Jody A. Stary*

Champaign/Urbana which also put on performances year around. Parkland theater at Parkland Community College is performing an original musical this winter about love and romance called *5 Golden Rings*. The Station Theater, Virginia Theater and The Sunshine Dinner Playhouse are a few more.

The University has a variety of museums and galleries for your viewing pleasure. The Krannert Art Museum is the second-largest art



museum in Illinois. It features a superb collection including Old Masters, Oriental works, modern painting and photography, and sculptures plus the Moore Gallery of minor arts which displays ceramics and glass works of art. Traveling exhibits from some of the country's top galleries rotate through the museum in addition to student and faculty displays. The World Heritage Museum, Museum of Natural History, Illini Union Art Gallery and the William M Staerkel Planetarium at Parkland College are just a few of the many others.

If you enjoy the outdoors, Champaign County offers 80 parks with something for everyone. Nearby are three Champaign County Forest Preserve areas, the University of Illinois' Allerton Park of the Woods Park and Kickapoo State Park. Within a hour's drive of Champaign/Urbana you'll find scenic Lake Shelbyville and Clinton Lake. There is

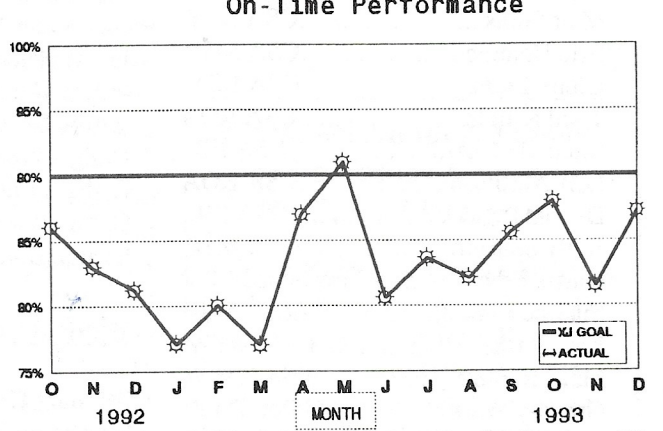
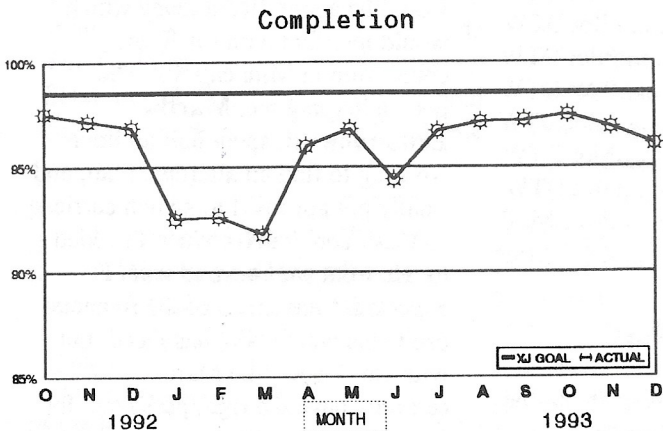
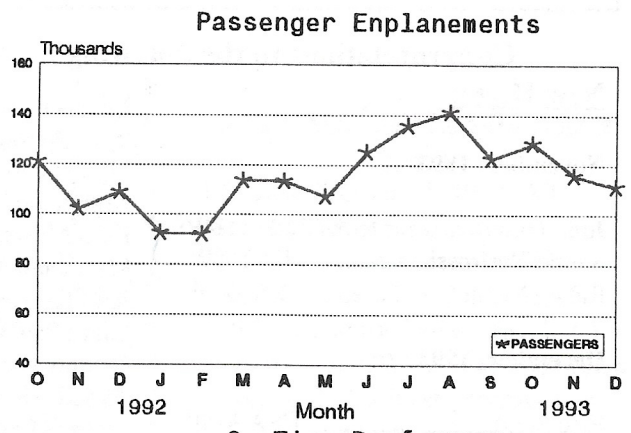
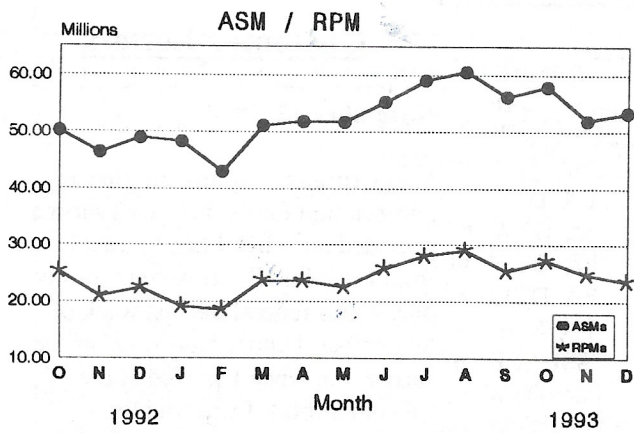
also the fascinating Rockome Gardens in the heart of Amish country about 40 minutes from Champaign. If you're in the mood for apple picking Curtis Orchard is only minutes from the airport.

For those of you who are looking for some evening entertainment we have quite a bit to offer. On the U of I campus there are over 15 bars in a 5 block area. Mable's is know for having live bands each night, REO Speedwagon is said to have gotten their start there. Another great place for live music is The Blind Pig which features live blues, jazz and reggae music. If you are looking to go dancing, Chester Street has the best dance floor in town. Joe's Brewery is also a good place if you're wanting to go dancing. If country is your style, Bradley's is the place to go to kick up your heels, they even have free dance lessons three nights a week for those of you that want to learn. We also have our own comedy club, Guffaws. Mark Roberts who has been seen on the Tonight Show with Jay Leno still performs at Guffaws. They even have an amateur night if you are looking to tell some of your best jokes or airport stories. If gambling is what you prefer we even have The Winners Circle off track betting parlor.

If you are looking for it, Champaign/ Urbana probably has it and the best part about C/U is that the maximum it takes you to drive from one end of town to the other is 25 minutes. Also, it is sometimes easier to get tickets to the big shows like Frank Sinatra or Cats here in Champaign than in the bigger cities.

All in all, Champaign and Urbana are nice places to visit. So if you have any questions or just want to come down for the evening to go dancing with our fun bunch in CMI give a call.....we would love to have you.

# System Performance



Excludes Weather & ATC. Goal is 98.5%.

Excludes Weather & ATC. Goal is 90%.

Traffic Results	Nov '93	Nov '92
Pax carried:	115,847	102,163
ASM	52,087,038	46,421,173
RPM	24,785,233	20,981,842
Load Factor	47.6%	45.2%

	Dec '93	Dec '92
Pax Carried	111,311	109,041
ASM	53,304,723	48,951,967
RPM	23,518,233	22,516,355
Load Factor	44.1%	46.0%

**January 7** - Mesaba files application with U.S. government to fly Ottawa, Ontario to Detroit service. On December 10, 1993, Mesaba learned that the Canadian government denied our request to provide service. Airline service between both counties is governed through bi-lateral treaties and, in certain cases, can be denied by either government. Mesaba can reapply to serve Ottawa at a later time.

**March 12** - New service to Thunder Bay, Ontario service begins. In the case of Thunder Bay, due to the smaller size of city, service is automatically approved. Passengers arriving at MSP go through customs at HHH Terminal and take shuttle to main terminal.

**May 4** - Mesaba announces and

## 1993 At A Glance

celebrates 20 years of scheduled airline service. The company's first scheduled service was between Grand Rapids, MN and Minneapolis in 1973.

**August 16** - New service to Escanaba begins, joining Marquette and Hancock/Houghton as Upper Peninsula cities served by Mesaba. Escanaba was formerly served by Express II until they dropped the city earlier in the year.

**June 30** - Northwest misses regular payment to Mesaba as pending NW bankruptcy issue approaches. Later in July, Northwest missed a second payment, although in both cases, payment was made prior to the end of the ten day grace period stipulated in the Airlink contract. Later in the year, Northwest reaches a \$900,000,000

concession with employee groups which appears to alleviate any future bankruptcy questions.

**July 1** - Mesaba begins service to St. Cloud, its sixth city in Minnesota. Located just two hours down I-94 from MSP Airport, St. Cloud had not had scheduled airline service. Mesaba's four daily MIII flights help change the face of airline service in St. Cloud and rapidly builds a successful traffic level.

**July 2** - Champaign/Urbana, Illinois is added to Mesaba system with service to Detroit. In January of 1994, Champaign would receive three additional flights to MSP.

**August 2** - Mesaba officer John Frederickson is promoted to Senior Vice

See "Recap" ...Page 10

# EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

## Congratulations to the following Mesaba employees

### New Hires:

#### November, 1993

John Gundy ..... Stock Clerk DTW  
 Samie Corirossi ..... FA DTW  
 Ranay Nahas ..... FA DTW

#### December, 1993

Eric Sund ..... CSA MSP  
 Matt Stans ..... CSA MSP  
 Eric Hemme ..... CSA MSP  
 Glenn Lutts ..... CSA LEX  
 Todd Knight ..... CSA ROA  
 Michelle Guard ..... CSA ERI  
 Lori Atkinson ..... CSA ROA  
 Dennis Breck ..... CSA PIR  
 Kelly Sharping ..... CSA MSP  
 Kurtis Etherton ..... Crew Sched MSP  
 Luanne Botkin ..... Acct. MSP  
 Ken Staske ..... Pilot DTW  
 Mark Radloff ..... Pilot DTW  
 Gregory Walk ..... Pilot DTW  
 Daniel Ruckman ..... Pilot DTW  
 Hugh Thomas ..... Pilot DTW  
 Edward Rognerud ..... Pilot DTW  
 Craig Botko ..... Pilot DTW  
 Glenn Johnson Jr. .... Pilot DTW  
 Jan Dedeuwearder ..... CSA FNT  
 Tracy Brumfield ..... CSA HTS  
 Samantha Click ..... CSA CRW

#### January, 1994

Deborah Pedziwol ..... CSA TRI  
 Matthew Bailey ..... CSA TRI  
 Robin Kitts-Berry ..... CSA TRI  
 Marlon Brose ..... CSA TRI  
 Timothy Lussier ..... CSA GPZ  
 Tammy Benson ..... CSA YNG  
 James Clawson ..... CSA TRI  
 Jeff Saniat ..... CSA CMI  
 Robert Primmer ..... CSA CMI  
 Joshua Staten ..... CSA TRI  
 Angela Jones ..... CSA TRI  
 Donna Beam ..... CSA SCE  
 Vincent England ..... CSA ROA  
 Michael Mussett ..... CSA SCE  
 Tim Thompson ..... CSA SCE  
 Derek Huber ..... CSA LAF  
 Heather Shedlock ..... CSA SCE  
 Carol Campbell ..... CSA DTW  
 Michael Dillon ..... CSA SCE

Michael Paschen ..... CSA LAF  
 Irene Albright ..... CSA SCE  
 Michelle Rose ..... CSA FNT  
 Antoinette Heard ..... FA DTW  
 Kelli Meyers ..... FA DTW  
 Mari Gutierrez ..... FA DTW  
 Jennifer Sherrill ..... FA DTW  
 Laura Patten ..... FA MSP  
 Cynthia Rosborough ..... CSM SCE  
 Timothy Ronholm ..... Pilot DTW  
 Richard Lamb ..... Pilot DTW  
 John Freier ..... Pilot DTW  
 James Heidemann ..... Pilot DTW  
 Jeffrey Daley ..... Pilot DTW  
 Jeffrey Goeschel ..... Pilot DTW  
 Craig Anderson ..... Pilot DTW  
 Barbara Ellenbecker ..... Pilot DTW  
 Curtis Rubald ..... MIS MSP  
 Bonnie Borchard ..... ACCT MSP

### Birth Announcements:

**Michael Gregory** and his wife on the birth of their daughter Jessica.  
**Brian Lindsey** and his wife on the birth of their daughter Emily.  
**Tim O'Keefe** and his wife on the birth of their daughter Margaret.  
**John Phelps** and his wife on the birth of their daughter Reillie.  
**Jim and Shelley Ritchie** on the birth of their son Jeremiah.  
**Karen Skarolid** and her husband on the birth of their son Zachary.  
**Jill Wanous** and her husband on the birth of their son Robert.  
**John Wise** and his wife on the birth of their daughter Lauren.

### Marriage Announcements:

**Mary Genovese** on her marriage to Derik.  
**Renee Henderson** on her marriage to Scott.  
**Perry "Duff" Smith** on his marriage to Amy.

## Customer Letters

November 15, 1993

I am writing to express my sincere appreciation for the help your airline provided me when I had to travel from Lincoln, NE to Atlanta for my only aunt's funeral the last week of September. I chose Northwest as the carrier, but when I arrived at the Lincoln airport, I was told there would be a significant delay which would interfere with my flight connection in Minneapolis. The person helping me, **Martin Lewandowski**, spent half an hour working to find an alternate plan, and finally got approval to switch carriers so that I could arrive when I needed to. He went well beyond what I expected. I have read of the financial problems which NW has faced, but with employees like Martin, you certainly have the right personnel for success.

Thank you again! I look forward to flying with Northwest in the future.

Sincerely,  
 Jody Spalding

November 15, 1993

I would like to express my appreciation of the courteous and intelligent co-operation I received this morning from your employee Miss **Elizabeth Costa**, at your London, Ontario Airport counter.

In issuing senior coupons to me, Miss Costa took the time to delve into the tax ramifications and completed the documentation to my complete satisfaction.

I thought you should know of this interest shown by one of your staff.

Sincerely,  
 J.F. G.

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# PASS BUREAU NEWS

## Winners of the 1993 Pass Drawing:

Donna Socha-Williams.....	Paradise Island Air	Tim Young.....	Finnair
Don Lepley.....	Paradise Island Air	Kathy Mollenauer.....	Island Air
Mike McCabe.....	Delta	Mark Vosmek.....	Island Air
Lori Nystrom.....	Delta	John Wentzel.....	Lone Star Air
Todd Ginsbach.....	TWA	Kathleen Turner-Lamontagne.....	Hawaiian Air
Brad Jacobson.....	TWA	Dennis Smith.....	Trans World Ex
Norma Langdo.....	USAir	Gaylene Gilbert.....	Trans World Ex
Marlin Roseland.....	Aloha Air	Chris Ellenberger.....	Trans World Ex
Larry Strozyk.....	Sky West	Pam Fields.....	Trans World Ex
John Gundy.....	Air Nevada	Arlen Randgaard.....	Mesa Airlines
Tim Callahan.....	Continental	Jeff Braun.....	Mesa Airlines
Steve Fetzek.....	Continental	Bill Peterson.....	Great Lakes
Jeanne Gingrich.....	Southwest	Bob Baughn.....	Great Lakes
		Jill Dotson.....	Horizon Air
		Tom Phillip.....	Horizon Air
		Doug Tinaglia.....	Mark Air
		Linda Riski-Lundeen.....	Jet Stream
		Doug Pacholke.....	Crown Air
		Laurie Archbold.....	Big Sky
		James Angelici.....	Big Sky
		John Benson.....	Big Sky
		Brad Osborn.....	Big Sky
		Bill Smith.....	Canadian Regional
		Phil Burke.....	Mark Air
		Christy Lampi.....	West Air
		Lisa Nealy.....	SkyWay
		Brenda Hale.....	ERA Air
		Dean Fugleberg.....	GP Express
		James Zachariason.....	GP Express
		Lonnie Crabtree.....	Air Manitoba
		Jerome Hagar.....	Chicago Exp
		Todd Hess.....	Chicago Exp
		Jim Drieman.....	Air Ontario
		Janie Billups.....	Canadian Air
		Kelly Burke.....	America West
		Perry Walker.....	Alaska Air
		Doug Henke.....	Finnair
		Robert Juneau.....	Continental
		Kevin Wendland.....	Delta
		Reid Nolte.....	Delta
		Tim Strand.....	Cayman Air
		Gary Kottki.....	Viasa Air
		Doris Krook.....	TWA
		Frederick Herbert.....	TWA
		Jeff Jones.....	NWA
		Mary Schaar.....	KLM
		Kippy Stuhr.....	KLM
		Wendy Prince.....	British Airways
		Chuck Voeghtly.....	British Airways
		Lisa Leake.....	British Airways

**The following are the new  
NWA pass rates effective  
February 1, 1994**

**Domestic**

**Contiguous 48 States**

Coach	\$ 50
First Class	\$100

**Canada**

**Montreal, Toronto,  
Winnepeg**

Coach Class	\$ 55
First Class	\$105

**Edmonton**

Coach Class	\$ 58
First Class	\$108

**Alaska**

Coach Class	\$ 56
First Class	\$106

**Hawaii**

Coach Class	\$ 96
First Class	\$186

**International-Atlantic**

Coach Class	\$150
Executive Class	\$200
First Class	\$300

**International-Pacific**

Coach Class	\$200
Executive Class	\$300
First Class	\$400

## Employee Listing Change on NWA

Effective February 1, 1994, All Mesaba employees (management as well as non management) will be listed as either a "5W" or a "2W". "5W" will be used when traveling for pleasure and "2W" will be used when traveling for business. Priority will be based on seniority date.

## **Personnel Adopt A Family For Christmas A Success**

*By: Linda McElmurry*

In the spirit of giving, this Christmas the Personnel Department decided to adopt a needy family from Hennepin County Social Services. Hennepin County would then supply us with a family and a list of items on their "wish list". We were given a family of four: a mother, and three children for whom we were to provide gifts and food. We shopped, wrapped and gathered food together for our family. Not only was it fun to do but it was also gratifying to know we helped someone have a brighter holiday. Following is a letter from our adopted family:

*Dear Benefactor;*

*My children and I were your adopted family and we wish to thank you for your generosity.*

*Ted loved his jeans and boots. Sonora was overjoyed when she unwrapped her doll. Mariah can not be pulled away from her dream phone game. I personally am grateful for the pair of pants you gave me. They are the only pair I own without holes.*

*As for the food and turkeys, you couldn't have been more generous. Again let me thank you for your kindness. We hope you had a wonderful Christmas and a Joyous New Year.*

*Sincerely,*

# POINT OF INTEREST

## Metro Boarding System Aids Disabled Passengers

In December, Mesaba's customer service department initiated a new boarding system for passengers with disabilities on the Metro III aircraft using a specially designed boarding chair and aircraft stair. The new system, which was put in place at over 48 cities, was designed and implemented by the company's customer service team.

The Metro III has always been a challenging aircraft for passengers with mobility limitations due to its steep stairs and narrow aisle. In 1990, the federal government issued a new set of regulations (Part 382) which specifically required airlines to adhere to certain operating procedures designed to allow disabled passengers more "mainstream" services. This rule implemented the Air Carrier Access Act of 1986.

Our company put together a program for review by the DOT that ensured our compliance with these regulations. Our F27 and Dash 8 aircraft could continue to accommodate passengers of all disabilities. The Metro, however, because of its smaller size, design and the lack of available boarding equipment, was excluded by regulation from needing to provide boarding services to disabled passengers who would need to be carried onto the aircraft by hand.

Mesaba was convinced, however, that the airline should develop a system for "efficiently and safely" accommodating persons with disabilities. Denny Ofstedahl, Director of Stations for Mesaba, said "We were concerned about not being able to provide unrestricted air transportation to all of the members of communities we serve. We also know that today's marketplace includes a significant number of disabled passengers. In order to compete and achieve more seamless product integration with Northwest, we needed to offer service that would meet customers' expectations, irrespective of the regulation."

Denny led Mesaba's team effort to research a system which could be used on the Metro aircraft. The team started their research in October of 1990,

working with a number of regional and national stair and chair manufacturers. Denny, who has attended three "Access to the Skies" symposiums over the past several years, organized Mesaba's own symposium to which airline, manufacturer and aviation officials were invited.

Throughout the ensuing year, Denny worked with Mike Wind (Vice president of Customer Service) and Don Winnie (Manager of Ground Services) on design work. The team asked and tried to answer design, use and efficiency questions throughout their research.



Ultimately, the approach to the system led to the development of a separate stair and chair system.

*The Stairs:* A prototype for the boarding stair was developed with the assistance of Dale Wennberg whose Thief River Falls based company had made other customer support equipment for us. The stairs needed to be solid and stable, but mobile enough to be positioned by one agent. The stair also needed to fit over the top of the integrated aircraft stair and operate in the harsh northern climate. "We needed to design a stair system which would function reliably even when it is used infrequently," said Denny.

Eventually, a stair system evolved that could angle around the spinner cone of the aircraft so that it could meet the door of the airplane without harming the

engine. The final stair was manufactured by Watkins Aircraft Support Products in Glenwood, MN for a cost of \$1,500 each.

*The Chair:* Over the years, a number of vendors proposed straight back chairs that were purported to have been designed to fit the Metro. "None of them had all of the features we felt necessary" said Denny. Mesaba's team felt that one thing the chair needed was an easy-to-use roller system to allow agents to safely move passengers up or down the stairs. "One of our primary objectives throughout this whole process was to design a system which was safe for passengers as well as employees," Denny said. He says he even remembers looking at the back of refrigerator dollies to find the names of companies who specialized in that type of moving device. "We were exploring every option," he said.

Ultimately, a lightweight chair was developed that could easily be moved up and down the stairs and fit down the tight 12" aisle that is found in the Metro. The manufacturer chosen was California-based Aerostar and the cost to produce each chair was \$750.

While Denny doesn't have an estimate for the number of passengers who will use the stairs each year, he said that early feedback suggested that the new system is getting used quite often. Since the stairs are designed for access by anyone, Denny said that many elderly (as well as blind) passengers have been accommodated with the stair.

"This was a team project," said Denny. He said that a lot of credit goes to the many people who had input on this project and to Dee Punton and Nancy Rasmusson of the Station Training department for their efforts in training the employees in the use of the new system. Also, Denny said, "The flight crews who are asked to help enplane and deplane passengers in certain situations have been extremely cooperative and helpful."

Mesaba is one of the only regional airlines currently to develop and implement

See "Stairs"  
...page 10



## Welcome to University Park

*By: Eric Hanson*

Located in State College, Pennsylvania. The airport is located in the center of Pennsylvania in Centre County. About 90% of the land area in Centre County is forest and farmland, so from the bustle of downtown State College, you can be in the country or the wilderness in just ten minutes. That's what makes living in State College so enjoyable to so many. The climate agrees with most people -- not too hot, not too cold. Mean annual temperature is about 50 degrees, with July averaging 72 degrees and January averaging 28 degrees. Population of the Centre Region is over 75,000. State College is also home to Penn State University, making Mesaba and Northwest now the official airlines of the Big 10 -- serving every Big 10 destination!

On January 31, Mesaba will begin operating three daily flights to University Park Airport (SCE) using Dash 8 aircraft. The airport serves a 14 county market area including the Pennsylvania State University. In 1984, the airport enplaned 42,000 passengers; by 1992, this number has more than doubled to 88,952. Nonstop service from SCE is currently provided to Washington, Baltimore, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, and Philadelphia. The market is served by both United Express and USAir Express.

The station will be staffed with 1 full time and 7 part time employees. Cindy Rosborough has been named station Manger. Cindy previously worked for Atlantic Coast Airlines as a full time agent. She also has several years experience as a travel agent. Our part time staff includes Donna Beam, Irene Albright, Mike Dillon, Heather Shedlock, Michael Mussett, Jon Connor, and Tim Thompson. We wish them much success and welcome them to the Mesaba team.

## Mesaba Goes To Tri-City Airport

*By: Angela Novelo*

On January 31, 1994, Mesaba Aviation will begin service to Tri-City Regional Airport in Tennessee. The airport serves the cities of Bristol, Kingsport and Johnson City, Tennessee with close proximity to the states of Virginia, Kentucky and North Carolina. The three daily non-stop flights will be operated with the 37-passenger Dash 8-100 aircraft.

A few of the features at Tri-City Airport include the three level main terminal building that houses a restaurant and lounge area, car rental, gift shop, bank, game room, ground transportation and travel agencies. Five airlines currently offer over 60 daily departures to six major hub airports, bringing that total to 4 carriers and 7 hubs with Mesaba's January 31 arrival. Some future plans for Tri-city airport include a Customs Station Port-of-Entry expected to be in place early this year.

A familiar face at Mesaba, Dixie Carruthers, will lead the staff as station manager. Dixie's career with Mesaba began as a CSA in Moline in 1989. She has served as Manager in Lexington since that station opened in June of 1991.

The beauty of the region with its mountains, lakes, rivers, four state parks and the Appalachian National Scenic Trail should make Tri-City a popular destination with Mesaba employees as well.

We would like to extend a big welcome to Dixie and the staff of Tri-City and wish them much success.

## Tragic Airlink Crash Occurs at Hibbing

On the evening of December 1, a 19-seat Express II aircraft, operated by Express II (dba Northwest Airlink), crashed at Hibbing, Minnesota killing all 16 passengers and two crew members onboard the aircraft. The flight had departed Minneapolis and was scheduled to stop in Hibbing and continue on to International Falls, Minnesota. The aircraft crashed while on approach to land at the Hibbing airport.

Details about the accident emerged slowly at first and Mesaba's dispatch department relayed information as it was available to all stations providing Express phone numbers for the media and concerned citizens to call. Since the media initially reported only that a Northwest Airlink aircraft had crashed, a Mesaba team assembled to work throughout the night to field phone calls from the media as well as employees who thought that Mesaba might have been the airline involved. A team of Mesaba mechanics in Grand Rapids traveled to Hibbing to assist at the crash site.

"Our thoughts and prayers go out to the deceased, the families, friends, relatives and all of the employees of Express II after last night's accident," wrote Rob Swenson to Mesaba employees on December 2. He also sent a letter to Express President Mike Brady offering any and all of Mesaba's "facilities, equipment, and personnel" for assistance.

Officials from the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), the federal agency responsible for investigating airline crashes, is reviewing the crash and will likely not release an official explanation for the accident until late next year.

For those of us in the industry, our feelings go out to the victims and to our Northwest Airlink partner Express.

**"President" ...continued  
from page 2**

during the year. Look for more information on that in the next few months.

To achieve the success in our careers that we all desire, we must continue to focus on "Safety, Reliability, Profitability and People" in all that we do here at Mesaba. I thank you for your continued support and confidence in our Company. Working together, we have tremendous capabilities and on our 50th Anniversary, now is the time for the "Giant" to awaken.

Best regards,

Robert D. Swenson  
President & Chief Executive Officer

**"Stairs" ...Continued  
from page 8**

such a boarding system for smaller aircraft. And, in fact, several industry publications have featured stories about the new system. The company has invested nearly \$125,000 in this project to provide service to passengers who would otherwise need to drive or use an alternate airport.

**"Recap" ...continued  
from pg 5**

Vice President, replacing Pat Thompson who left Mesaba to join a group of investors running Air Wisconsin operations at Appleton, Wisconsin.

**September 2** - Mesaba discontinues service at Hamilton, Ontario after 18 months of unsuccessfully building traffic levels to DTW.

**September 20** - Eighty Employees who contributed the top 20 ideas in the "20/20" program were announced and presented with their share of \$20,000. "20/20" was unveiled earlier in the year as a program designed to solicit cost saving ideas. Nearly 400 suggestions were submitted by employees.

**September 28** - Twin Cities Carl Pohlad invests \$10 million in AirTran through a private stock placement to become largest shareholder of the company. Among other investments, Mr. Pohlad owns the Minnesota Twins and owns a large Twin Cities banking concern. He is the former chairman of Continental Airlines Board of Directors.

**October 1** - Evansville, Indiana and Knoxville, TN are added to route system. EVV is the first city on Mesaba's route system where Express II handles our airline counter and operations functions. At Knoxville, Mesaba's operations are handled by Northwest.

**Company Safety Committee  
Formed**

Mesaba has formed a safety committee, chaired by Bart Schmidt, manager of operations audit. The committee has been charged with evaluating Mesaba's operating procedures and implementing safety programs throughout the airline's operation.

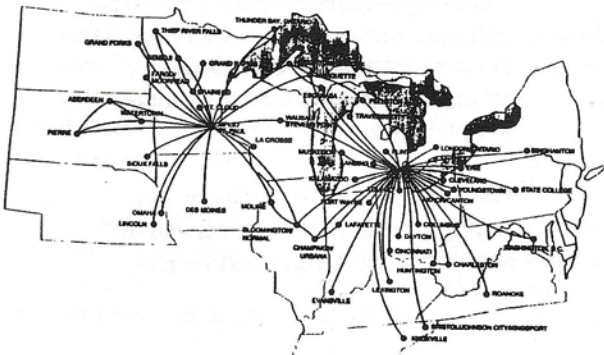
Serving on the committee are a variety of operation personnel including; Pete Kienzel (Minneapolis audit), Dale Mitchell (DTW flight operations), Steve Hanifl (DTW stations), John Benson (DTW maintenance), Kim Fredette (DTW inflight services), and Mark Loken (Detroit stores).

The committee plans to meet quarterly with meetings scheduled for February, April, July, and October. Employees who wish to provide feedback or raise safety issues should contact Bart at MSPGOXJ in COMAT or x392 at MSP.

**November 1** - Mesaba adds Washington, D.C. to route system. Representative James Oberstar, chairman of the House Aviation Subcommittee, and native of Hibbing, Minnesota, can now fly from work to his home town -- all on Mesaba. His routing would look something like this: IAD-DTW-CWA-MSP-GPZ (take taxi 30 miles to HIB).



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