



Connecting Generations

Reflections

The Quarterly Journal of the Northwest Airlines History Center



March 2026

Volume 24, number 1

In this issue:

Kids' Activity Day and new book shelving at the museum

Film & video holdings successfully transferred to our archive space

Field trip to the San Diego Air & Space Museum

Flight 537 crash review

Our mission:

We explore and celebrate the generational impact of commercial aviation by bringing together resources, experiences, and community.

Our values:

Welcome - We embody the encouraging and positive environment that has always been part of our story.

Preserve - Both the history and future of the industry

Educate - Learning comes in all forms, at all ages, in many methods. We encourage curiosity, exploration, discovery, and dreaming.

Connect - Just as air travel brings people together, we create spaces for those connections to happen.

Inspire - Flight shows us anything is possible.



N91DA being inspected. Location, date, original photographer unknown. From the Scott Norris photo collection.

Almost an Airlink

What might have been when Northwest focused on Tampa — by Scott Norris

Florida was the site of many entrepreneurs' airline ambitions from the dawn of commercial aviation, and the 1980s was arguably the most exciting and colorful time to witness the industry's evolution - certainly the most turbulent. With few roads linking the coasts and long driving distances between key centers, and no thought yet of introducing high-speed rail, commuter travel by air across the state was a compelling proposition.

Tampa-based Dolphin Airways (IATA code DV) began operations on December 15, 1981 by acquiring fixed base operator Tampa Air Center and laying down a comprehensive blanket of routes with new-build and relatively inexpensive Embraer Bandeirante unpressurized twin-turboprop 18-seat equipment.

While many third-level operators were trying their hand in Florida at that time, appearing and disappearing with every issue of the Official Airline Guide, few were trying to cover the entire state, with most either concentrating on linking their hometowns to Miami or flying short hops to the Bahamas or the Keys from Atlantic coastal centers. Major carriers were flooding the state with routes back to their emerging hubs and adding tag-on intrastate services (such as Orlando - West Palm Beach) to collect incrementally more passengers for the return trip or increase equipment utilization, but not setting up a state-wide network. Republic was still flying a heavy schedule Orlando - Miami but did not try to become Florida-focused. And Eastern, headquartered in Miami, had surprisingly few intra-state frequencies.

— *DOLPHIN DREAMS*, 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)

Management:

- Directors: Mike Vetter, Scott Norris, Kimm Viebrock, Tim Haskin, Jayne Stenstad, Ronn Lehmann, Gene Peterson, Don Moran
- Directors Emeritus: Jerry Nielsen and Wayne Snyder
- Collections Manager: Bruce Kitt
- Interim Museum Manager: Tim Haskin

Museum Address: *(do not send mail here)*

Crowne Plaza AIRE Hotel

3 Appletree Square, Bloomington MN 55425

NEW PHONE NUMBER (507) 208-1068

Archives and Administration: *(our mailing address; open for research by appointment only)*

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

(952) 698-4478

Online:

Web www.northwestairlineshistory.org

Facebook: [NorthwestAirlinesHistoryCenter](#)

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Email: info@northwestairlineshistory.org

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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: Thursdays - Fridays 11 am - 5 pm
Saturdays 10 am - 2 pm
Closed for major holidays.

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

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

From the Mall of America: Take 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. Patrons needing elevator access for mobility concerns must coordinate with the hotel's front desk due to security reasons.

For photo directions on navigating the hotel, please scan this QR code on your phone:



Memberships

Annual membership dues are the main source of funding for the NWAHC; we encourage you to join!

- \$35 level - receives REFLECTIONS digital edition early access via email
- \$40 level - receives REFLECTIONS print edition by USPS; US mailing addresses only

Boarding Announcements



From Chairman Mike Vetter

As we move into the new year of 2026, I am excited about the challenges and opportunities ahead for the NWA History Center. Celebrating what would have been the 100th year anniversary of NWA, we will have news and events throughout the year marking this

milestone at the museum. There is just so much history to be told and quite honestly, I feel that without the air connections NWA provided to the State of Minnesota, the MSP transportation, business, and cultural makeup would look very different (and much less vibrant) today.

Later in this publication you will find an article about the trove of NWA corporate films that has been in our archives since the Delta merger. Bringing them all in under one roof not only helps us organize the collection, but also to achieve our goal of digitizing them for easy access for research and posterity.

Here's where you can help. If you have ever converted your VCR tapes to DVR or digital, you know it can be an expensive and time consuming exercise. We have a link that will direct

you for this specific project to financially help support this endeavor. If you would like to physically help in the process, we also have a place for you here.

As always, it is a pleasure communicating our plans to you. With your help, we will continue moving forward towards our ultimate goal of a permanent home telling the NWA story and the history of air commerce in Minnesota.

—Mike



Donor Thanks

Donations enable ongoing operations, preservation & digitization, building new displays, outreach efforts, and work toward a new permanent museum.

\$1,000 - \$4,999

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Check your basements and storage boxes!

Do you have physical materials, recordings, or electronic files to contribute to our museum? Please contact our collections manager at bruce.kitt@northwestairlineshistory.org or (952) 698-4478 with details of your items, photos if possible, and how we can reach you. We can not accept materials without this vetting step. Also, please do not bring materials to our museum location in Bloomington as we aren't able to process them there.

Buy wise to support the NWAHC!

Visit our online store, with world-exclusive designs on a wide variety of items - from shirts to mugs, travel gear to pickleball kits, and more, at shop.northwestairlineshistory.org. Or scan this QR code to jump to our store directly.

We also offer surplus materials and new apparel and pins for sale on **eBay** under the handle "cyberglit" - the assortment changes every week!



Compass Readings



1st Kids' Activity Day a success

The weather was COLD on Dec. 13th but our first Kids' Day was a big hit with just over 40 visitors! Guests were invited to make (and fly!) their own NWAHC paper planes, add some colors to a large coloring sheet selection, decorate wooden airplane ornaments, get a temporary airplane tattoo, and receive their own Air Adventurer airport-style photo ID badge. We look forward to hosting similar events in 2026 - "connecting generations" is why we're here! Watch our social media feeds for upcoming dates.



New at the Museum

Our volunteer Jake Powell recently coordinated a donation by his family of several handsome bookcases to spruce up the retail area of our museum - showing off that we're now your first stop in Minnesota for aviation books both new and vintage! And our supply of vintage timetables, annual reports, and magazines is perpetually being updated for your collecting and research enjoyment.

Airline History Field Trip: San Diego Air & Space Museum

A quick Christmas vacation by your author and his family to San Diego included several enjoyable hours wandering through the SDASM in Balboa Park. The city's deep aviation heritage was well celebrated with dozens of full-size military aircraft and spacecraft arranged in action poses, large dioramas and models, and interactive displays stretching from mission control consoles to carrier conn towers; World War I airfields to full-motion simulators.

Kids and grownups alike enjoyed being immersed "inside the action" where many pieces of equipment and aircraft can be touched and looked inside. We took photos of exhibits & placards, and brought back examples of brochures and kids' activity literature to benchmark our own efforts.

Airline history has comparatively little exposure here, however, with about 300 square feet devoted to hometown Pacific Southwest Airlines, a 50-foot wall of signage and cases, four TV monitors playing history videos, and only one aircraft, a Ford Tri-Motor in Pan Am colors that was formerly with Scenic Airlines and restored in 1999. Mounted on a pylon in the central atrium, visitors can't look inside.

—> <https://sandiegoairandspace.org/>



Compass Readings

Moving the Recorded Media Collection into our archive space

As discussed in the December 2025 edition of REFLECTIONS, our museum inherited a significant mass of recorded media as NWA offices in the Twin Cities were being closed post-merger with Delta. These have been housed in an attic at the former Wings Insurance hangar on the north side of Flying Cloud Airport. With our lease of additional space in the ClubJet hangar on the south side, we can get those tapes, discs, and films into climate-controlled conditions in order to sort, catalog, deduplicate, and ultimately digitize what we can.

In frigid conditions on Saturday, Jan. 31, nine volunteers with a rented moving van and their personal vehicles transferred over 200 boxes to our archive! Now we can finally get started on identifying the many treasures and recoding formats & sketching out a plan to preserve and convert our holdings.



How can Members help right now?

- Your financial contributions help with everything from replacing storage boxes to hiring professional conversion services (which could be many thousands of dollars). We'll also need to purchase high-capacity data storage drives and storage racking. Visit <https://northwestairlineshistory.org/join-us/> to contribute.

Bob Mielke and Flight 537

— by Steve Garnaas

Part One of Two

In the predawn hours of August 28, 1958, Elaine Mielke flinched when she was awakened from the jangling rings of the rotary-dial phone on the nightstand.

Her first thought was that her husband, Bob, must be calling from the Northwest flight dispatcher's office at Wold-Chamberlain Field.

She knew that Bob Mielke wouldn't call and wake her up unless it was necessary. Elaine reached for the phone handset, greeting the caller with, "Bob?"

"Bob was in a plane crash." Click.

The caller hung up immediately before she could ask if he had survived. "Hello? . . . Who is this? . . . Is Bob okay? . . . Hello?" she gasped, praying the voice would respond. Or if the man would just call back. No, better, that Bob would call so she could hear his voice.

Her thoughts turned to a few hours earlier, when pretending to sleep, as she watched Bob donning his pilot uniform before heading to the airport for his trip. She smiled as he adjusted the NWA black pilot hat so it would be worn smartly tilted.

Elaine recalled of how excited he always would be preparing for the next couple days on the road, quite often he'd work most of his trips with flights from Minneapolis to Seattle-Tacoma or to Chicago Midway Airport.

She also was so happy for him achieving flight status as a flight engineer for the last three months. Bob had paid his dues for eight years as an aircraft mechanic since Northwest hired him in 1950.

She knew in her heart that no airplane could possibly crash with Bob monitoring and operating the aircraft flight systems, particularly with his knowledge as an aircraft mechanic.



LEFT: Unattributed photo of Captain Mielke.

ABOVE: Sister ship N572 at Minneapolis in 1957; NWAHC Borden Collection photo.

As she sat on the edge of her bed, Elaine was overwhelmed and frozen in complete disbelief, not knowing in the moment what to do next. The kids! She hoped the phone ring didn't wake up their young daughter and two older sons. She was relieved to see that they were still sound asleep. She headed for the kitchen to find phone numbers of Bob's Northwest contacts. But Elaine heard only busy signals to all numbers called.

Elaine contacted a next-door neighbor, also an NWA flight engineer. The crash news was the first he knew about it and that Mielke was working that flight. He told Elaine he would do what he can to find out any information about Bob's welfare.

Eventually, Elaine learned all 58 passengers and four crew members survived, escaping serious injury. By early dawn, a local television news station was reporting how miraculously they narrowly escaped just before a fuel-fed fire engulfed what was left of the fuselage.

After the boys woke up a couple hours later to watch their morning local TV children's shows, Elaine discovered that it too late to stop them because breaking news of the crash had already pre-empted their shows. The boys already were watching the news of their dad's plane crash.

Crash of Flight 537

The daily regularly scheduled "Silver Dollar" flight 537 originated in Washington DC, in the early evening of August 27, 1958. The all-coach class flight made connections and boarded passengers along the way in Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Ypsilanti/ Detroit, and Milwaukee before landing in Minneapolis about 3 a.m. The flight required a crew change in Minneapolis. Overnight flights were a good way to increase aircraft utilization and enabled lower-cost fares to meet booming demand.

Mielke joined the Seattle-based crew of Capt. Jim Wilkinson, First Officer/co-pilot Vern McGuinness, and stewardess Marge Gallagher. The crew checked in with the Minneapolis flight dispatcher and received the paperwork concerning the intended route to Portland and Seattle, the assigned altitude, weight and balance of the aircraft, fuel load and weather conditions en route, showing no active storm conditions. There were reports of light foggy conditions at the end of Runway 22, but it was of no concern to Capt. Wilkinson at the time of departure. However, fog on takeoff turned out to be a factor.

Flight 537, operated with ship #675, registration N575. was scheduled for takeoff at 3:30 a.m., with the heading of south-southwest, just west of Metropolitan Stadium (current site of The Mall of America.) When Flight 537 taxied up to the threshold of Runway 22 in preparation for takeoff, the captain did a "run-up" of full idle power to test the performance of the four piston-powered engines. Mielke determined all systems showing from instrument indicators were thumbs-up for flight.

During the takeoff roll and gaining the necessary takeoff speed of 132 miles an hour, Wilkinson pulled back on the yoke to get the 101,000-pound aircraft airborne. As the aircraft reached the altitude of 100 feet and gained flight speed, Wilkinson called out to retract the landing gear and wing flaps to reduce drag and improve flight performance.

Wilkinson, momentarily distracted from the brilliant fog reflection from the landing lights, turned them off. From this point, the fate of the aircraft deteriorated within seconds.

EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 1958

NORTHWEST ORIENT AIRLINES

10 FLIGHTS DAILY MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL — NEW YORK... Twice as much service as any other airline.

ONLY DAILY NON-STOP SEATTLE/TACOMA — NEW YORK... Choice of first class or economical coach on luxurious DC-7C's.

CHOICE OF 4 IMPERIAL SERVICES DAILY CHICAGO — SEATTLE/TACOMA... And 5 coach services daily.

5 FLIGHTS DAILY — WASHINGTON — MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL... More service than any other airline.

DAILY DC-7C FLIGHTS TO THE ORIENT... Choice of luxurious Imperial Service or thrifty Tourist.

3 DAILY NON-STOP MILWAUKEE — NEW YORK... Only Northwest offers non-stop service.

LUXURY ROYAL ALOHA SERVICE TO HAWAII... Fastest from Seattle/Tacoma — Portland, with complimentary champagne — delicious hot meals — two abreast seating — low-cost tourist fares.

THE SYMBOL OF SUPERIOR SERVICE

537 T	511 T	City Code
Silver Dollar Coach	Silver Dollar Coach	
		HPN EWR LGA
		IDL MIA ATL
8 20 9 25 9 50 10 37 11 00		DCA PIT PIT CLE CLE
10 46 11 15		YIP YIP MDW
	1 00	MDW ORD MKE MKE MSN MSN RST RST MSP
12 30 12 55		
2 25	2 42	
3 20	3 45	MSP FAR FAR GFK GFK YWG
	5 01	YXD YXD JMS JMS BIS BIS BIL
	5 30	BIL
	6 35	GTF GTF BZN BZN BTM BTM
	7 00	HLN HLN MSO MSO FCA FCA GEG
	7 30	
	8 00	GEG YKM YKM PDX PDX SEA
6 13 6 35 7 21	9 15	

ABOVE: NWA timetable in effect for August 1958.

THE MINNEAPOLIS STAR
Thursday, August 28, 1958

62 Escape in Airliner Crash Here

U.S. Urges Court: No Integration Delay

COCKET... like Stand... NWA Plane... on Issue... Fails on Takeoff... Not Clear

Passengers on Plane

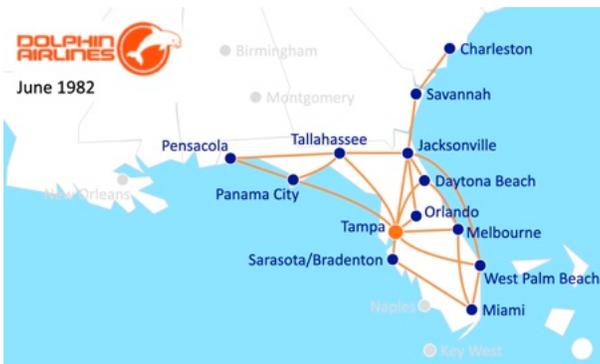
LADY YOU'D BETTER FORGET IT!
Lawmaker Awakens to 'Awful Jumble'

Quartermaster... Battle... Choose Wars

Beauff... Pilot Saw... Fire Streak

LEFT: Front page of Minneapolis Star for August 28, 1958.

Part Two will continue in our June 2026 edition.



DOLPHIN AND NORTHWEST ORIENT CREATE THE ONE-TICKET TRIP.

U.S., CANADA, EUROPE AND THE ORIENT.

Sarasota/Bradenton to The World On One Ticket
Where in the world do you want to go? Dolphin Airways will provide the ticket and the most convenient flight schedule you've ever seen. We've worked out superb connections with Northwest Orient and wherever they go, we'll start you off right.

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Dolphin's new Northwest Orient connections include shared airport gates to make your transfer a matter of just a few short steps. And full-service baggage checking so you won't have to lug your luggage between planes. Now we can get you to Minneapolis-St. Paul.

Money-Saving Fares
Because your trip is ticketed as a joint Dolphin/Northwest Orient flight, you'll love our competitive fares. Ask your travel agent how much you can save by flying this right way.

Make Your Reservations Today!
Your travel agent knows how to help you save time, money and aggravation by booking Dolphin/Northwest Orient connecting flights. Or you can call Dolphin for information. It's never been so easy to start a long trip from Sarasota/Bradenton.

1-800-282-2531

* Effective Dec. 1982

The January 1982 schedule was a complicated plan and gave a more ambitious marketing stance than its published timetable could support. Many of these routings only saw one or two daily round trips.

The network was simplified somewhat by summer 1982 as low-frequency services were jettisoned in favor of core routes that could support something closer to shuttle-style operations on key corridors. Another factor pushing toward route simplification was unpredictable Florida weather, where updrafts and massive cloud formations could quickly appear, and where the unpressurized Bandeirante could not ascend or descend quickly to avoid meteorological hazard without causing eardrum pain for passengers. This also meant the "Bandit" had to fly at lower altitudes which meant passengers felt more bumps - and they may not have been impressed by the type's 1 x 2 seating configuration with a cramped bench on the starboard side instead of separate seats. Weather-related flight delays or cancellations in a complex network would only amplify through the day, while an out-and-back system allowed for easier recovery.

The Bandit's slow climb and descent also created air traffic slotting issues, which also introduced delays and necessitated block-time padding. Faster, pressurized turboprops of similar size like the Metroliner would have allowed for more operations each day but also came with a higher price tag. And like many "commuter" carriers of the era, Dolphin's ownership did not have deep cash reserves to finance its operations with.

Dolphin was a low-bid winner for Florida state government staff service contracts which helped support services from the capital in Tallahassee (located far from the state's population and economic centers).

By December 1982, Dolphin was employing 250 people and fielded a fleet of ten EMB-110s. The company reported nearly 100,000 boardings in the year completed. In mid-December, the company announced plans to acquire another five Bandeirantes as well as five Fokker F-28 regional jets to broaden its network, plus the construction of a \$4.5 million hangar and headquarters facility and the hiring of 400 more staff - including its first flight attendants needed for jet service. The press releases and local coverage did not detail how this expansion would be paid for, however.

The Tampa Connection

The carrier signed an interline agreement with Northwest making DV the major airline's preferred commuter connecting partner in Florida on November 1st, 1982, and also moved into Northwest's ticket counter at TPA.

Dolphin's February 1983 timetable marked a subtle name change to "Dolphin Airlines" and was much thicker than previous issues - not only did DV add spokes from Tampa out to Key West, Naples, and cross-bay to St. Petersburg, they also started listing connections on Northwest Orient via Tampa and Miami to destinations such as Milwaukee, Boston, Minneapolis/St. Paul, and Chicago, and even as far afield as Copenhagen and Stockholm.

NOW, GOING TO 8 MORE FLORIDA CITIES IS AS EASY AS GOING FROM HERE



TO HERE

Fly Northwest Orient to Orlando, Miami, Tampa, West Palm Beach (or New Orleans). Then make a quick, easy connection with Dolphin Airways, serving these eight other Florida cities:

Bradenton	Melbourne
Sarasota	Panama City
Daytona Beach	Pensacola
Jacksonville	Tallahassee
Plus Savannah and Charleston.	

One ticket covers your entire trip on both airlines. When you check your baggage at Northwest Orient, it's checked through to your final destination. And when you change planes, the Dolphin Airways gate is just a few steps away on the same concourse. Together Dolphin and Northwest Orient offer money-saving joint fares. And schedules are coordinated so you spend your time in the air, not the airport.



Your best traveling companions to Florida are Northwest Orient and Dolphin Airways. For reservations call Northwest Orient at the appropriate reservation number in the back of this timetable. Or call Dolphin Airways toll-free at 1-800-237-5761. In Florida at, 1-800-282-2531.



THE WORLD IS GOING OUR WAY.

Northwest's city timetable editions in Spring-Summer 1983 (although not its system schedules) likewise listed connections to DV destinations.

Dolphin's high frequencies on core routes, plus the addition of new spokes, had created a thoughtful intrastate hub at Tampa that took advantage of that airport's efficient operations and central location - avoiding the congestion and costs of hubbing at Miami as well as the extra time and money needed to fly all the way to the far end of the state and back again. While Miami was the state's largest population and economic center and biggest source of origin-and-destination traffic, there was still plenty of business to be had connecting the rest of Florida to itself, especially if an airline didn't saddle itself with excess debt and oversized / older-generation / maintenance-heavy aircraft.

The partnership made strategic sense as NWA was finding Tampa to be a handy focus city for its Florida service. The coast from Naples up to St. Petersburg had become the preferred winter and retirement nesting grounds for citizens of the Upper Midwest (the Minnesota grocery chain Byerly's even had an outpost in Naples for several years). While Delta and Eastern built up their Atlanta hubs and Orlando & Miami concentrations; and United tried a focus city in Orlando, Tampa offered less intense competition for Northwest - especially as Pan Am had abandoned much of National's service there after those airlines had merged a few years earlier.



From TPA in Spring and Summer 1983, Northwest had double-daily nonstop departures to Chicago O'Hare (well timed for Tokyo connections), plus daily nonstops to Milwaukee (continuing on to Detroit) and Boston (timed for European connections.) A daily nonstop, plus a daily through-flight via Atlanta, connected with the Minneapolis hub. Chicago services were also timed to connect with that city's Tokyo nonstop.

Similar to how the other major carriers were approaching Florida services, these mainline departures were fed from short hops from Orlando, West Palm Beach, Miami, and Fort Myers in what we would today call a "scissor" connecting bank.

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ARRIVALS		DEPARTURES	
		7:00	705 to Atlanta and Minneapolis
		8:45	735 to Chicago and Seattle
750 from Madison and Chicago	12:36		
702 from Detroit and Milwaukee	12:36		
714 from Winnipeg and Minneapolis	12:37	13:10	750 to West Palm Beach
782 from Boston	12:40	13:15	714 to Miami
		13:20	782 to Orlando
		13:25	702 to Ft. Myers
703 from Ft. Myers	15:35		
751 from West Palm Beach	15:36	16:10	703 to Milwaukee and Detroit
783 from Orlando	15:40	16:15	783 to Boston
715 from Miami	15:44	16:20	715 to Minneapolis and Winnipeg
		16:30	751 to Chicago and Madison
72 from Seattle and Chicago	19:54		
754 from Minneapolis and Atlanta	21:55		

Similar to how the other major carriers were approaching Florida services, these mainline departures were fed from short hops from Orlando, West Palm Beach, Miami, and Fort Myers in what we would today call a "scissor" connecting bank.

Cover Story



Northwest needed four gates in the 12-1 pm and 3-4 pm banks, with two aircraft remaining overnight. This left plenty of physical space as well as excellent timing throughout the day for Dolphin's operations. And it is easy to see how NWA left itself the flexibility to expand Tampa by adding several evening-arrival flights that would go on to overnight elsewhere in the state, coming back in the morning to perform another scissor bank (likely focusing around the Chicago services).

Dolphin's utilization of Northwest's counters and gates was a clever way of leveling out staffing and resources across the day while keeping NWA's options open for further growth.

A good idea that started falling apart

Before even a full tourist season could get underway, however, the Dolphin operation started to struggle. Those growth and fleet ambitions announced in December 1982 were not finding funding in the next year, as traffic growth was not keeping pace with interest rates - commercial loans at that point had annual finance rates from 13% up to 20%! The headquarters building had not been started, staff hiring was frozen (with about 350 on board in July), and neither the additional turboprops nor jets were coming.

The Naples and St. Petersburg stations had already closed by July 1983, and by August the company had pulled out of Miami. A daily branch from Pensacola up into Alabama was attempted in August but found no traffic to support it.

In August 1983, Dave Keeton, VP-Sales, blamed cutbacks on European travelers avoiding high U.S. prices; and Leonard Blaylock III, Dolphin board chair, said Naples, Melbourne, and Key West service would resume in November 1983 (it would not).

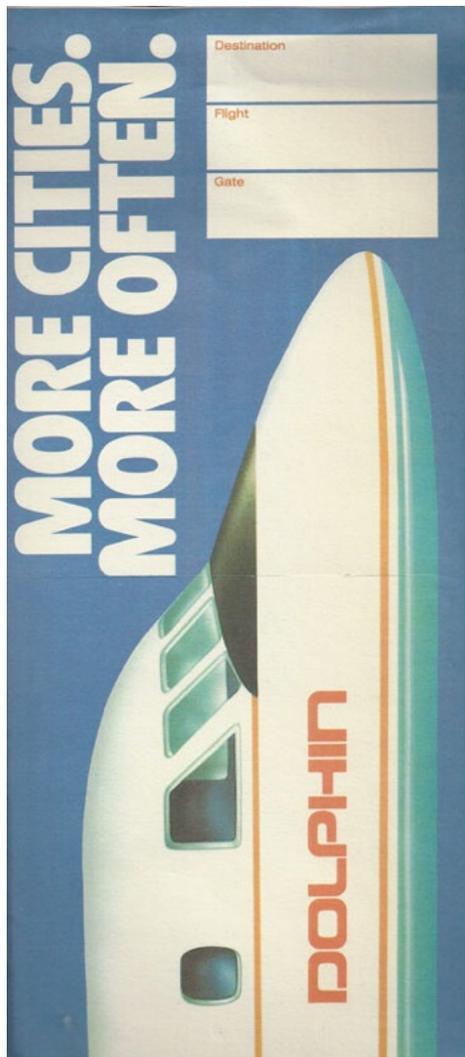
Without sufficient variety of destinations to feed Tampa, Northwest connections disappeared from both the DV-issued timetables as well as NWA city issues.

By fall 1983, the network continued to further retract. While the remaining routes were operated with high frequencies (Pensacola-Tallahassee with seven daily round trips, for instance), commuter competitors such as PBA and Air New Orleans were already encroaching, stealing market share and staff in a marketplace that could not support unlimited expansion. High-frequency services along Interstate highway corridors need either substantial feeder connections or very low fares to keep passengers in seats - Dolphin had forsaken the first case, and could not afford to support the second case.

Without new investors, Dolphin simply ran out of operating cash and ceased operations on January 20, 1984. Chairman Larry Goff remarked their operating income was only "a little better than breakeven" and acknowledged not being able to support their accumulated debt. "It seemed like the prudent thing to do. The payables which we have are of a magnitude where the airline cannot support itself and pay off its debts." Most of its fleet and remaining employees were picked up by PBA in a \$1.25 million deal as that carrier embarked on its own undercapitalized, over-ambitious Florida expansion.

Northwest continued its Tampa scissor operation, with second daily nonstops to Miami, Minneapolis, Orlando, and Fort Lauderdale added by June 1984, plus new daily nonstop service to Detroit. And by December 1985, NWA had 28 daily departures from TPA including nonstops to New York JFK, Cleveland, and Los Angeles. In fact, the LAX operation (operated with a brand-new Boeing 757) was given flight number #1 as the domestic leg of the LAX-Tokyo service!

NWA's commitment to Tampa would have been well-complemented with a financially stable Dolphin, and we could easily imagine DV being one of the initial Airlink operators right alongside Mesaba and Big Sky.



LEFT: July 1983 ticket jacket.

Route maps in article by author.

Bandit images on pages 8-11 created by Flightsim.to simulation software package.

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1926 - 2026
One Hundred Years of the
Northwest Airlines Legacy

Northwest Airlines History Center, Inc.
Archives and Administration Office
10100 Flying Cloud Drive, Suite A-306
Eden Prairie, MN 55347 USA

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GIVE WINGS TO YOUR HEART

We are looking for volunteers like YOU to help us with functions like:

- Greeting and guiding our museum guests
- Designing and building museum exhibits
- Growing our e-commerce functionality
- Grant application and fundraising
- Community outreach & event planning
- Scanning and indexing historic documents and photos



Many of our ongoing projects are flexible to fit your schedule. And airline experience isn't necessary - just a love of history, adventure, and storytelling!

Now boarding, all classes, all rows!



- Scan the barcode at left
- Visit northwestairlineshistory.org/join-us/

Let us guide your group or association in for a custom museum tour!

Group visits outside regular museum hours can be arranged with a couple weeks' lead time.

Tell us your desired dates and how many you expect to bring, so we can schedule volunteers. Also let us know if anyone will need mobility assistance.

We look forward to hosting you! Call us at **(507) 208-1068** to make a reservation!

