



Photo by Kevin Campbell

President's Report

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Greetings Airmen's Members,
Hope you all are enjoying a nice beginning to the fall season. We're doing well at the Airmen's and preparing for the 2026 year ahead with several highlights in store. Happy to report that our 2026 Great Alaska Airmen's Gathering Raffle Plane is coming along well with Brad Sjostedt in Cordova, AK. We can't wait to see what Brad and team have in store for this amazing 4-place Super Cub, which will be a first of its kind for the GAAG Raffle Plane.
To kick off, we will meet in October and say farewell to one of our long-time board members, Steven Lewis. As Steven will remain a lifetime member with the Airmen's Association, we will miss him on the board. I've had the honor of serving with Steven over the last 6 years and have appreciated all he has brought forward for the betterment of the Alaska Airmen's. With the graduation of Steven from board member to life-time member, we will welcome our newest board member, Kelly Reynolds. We are all excited to have Kelly as a member of the board, as well as her connections to the interior of Alaska as a Fairbanks resident. Additionally, we will work through the



Stephen Ratcliff, President

election of officers at the upcoming October board meeting. Although I will remain on the board for 1 last year, I've made it known I will be passing on the torch to a new Board President for my last year. I've been honored to serve the Association in the board president role over the past 5 years. I'm excited to support our newly elected Executive committee and the Airmen's Association for my last year as a board of director. Thank you for the support, kind words of encouragement, and confidence in achieving

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Executive Director’s Report

As summer winds down, the Alaska Airmen’s has been buzzing with activity. From the weekend after the Gathering through the end of September, we’ve been part of 20 different events! Our outreach has stretched across the state, Fairbanks, the Mat-Su Valley, Kenai, and of course right here in Anchorage. A big thank-you to all the members who joined us along the way, your support and enthusiasm keep us going strong.

Our NextGen program has been in full swing, from the monthly Last Thursday Socials to our first-ever class at the Northern Lights Innovation Lab at Merrill Field. The kick-off class, Intro to CNC, taught by Airmen’s member and Tormach employee, Domenic Giunta. For those wondering, CNC (Computer Numerical Control) uses computers to guide machinery like lathes, mills, lasers, and routers to shape and create parts. We’re excited to offer this series of hands on classes, along with future access to CNC equipment and 3D printers, as a new member benefit. Keep an eye on your inbox for upcoming opportunities!

On the membership front, you’ll notice a few updates. We’ve adjusted our structure to better reflect our community’s needs. The NextGen program, which started as a space for students, has grown to welcome those beginning their aviation journeys at all stages of life. Now, members can choose Youth, Student, or Adult membership, and simply add the NextGen Group if it’s a good fit. We’ve also launched a Mentor Group add-on—free to join—so experienced aviators can help guide the next generation.



Speaking of member benefits, have you explored them lately? As I speak to members around the state, many do not know about these benefits. Some benefits are fuel discounts with Crowley and Spenard Builders Supply, plus special pricing at AIH, as well as our BWI-sponsored Alaska Airmen’s Member Courtesy Car? To see the full list, just open your digital membership card and click Pass Details. If you need help setting up your card, give us a call, we’re happy to walk you through it. And if you don’t have a smartphone, no worries, you can always access your card on the Alaska Airmen’s website.

We’re also excited to welcome a familiar face to our team: Wella! Many of you will recognize her from volunteering at our events. Wella brings great energy and fresh ideas, and we’re excited to have her on staff.

Finally, mark your calendars fun times ahead! Our Halloween Party is coming up on October 30th, and our Holiday Party & Annual Member Meeting is set for December 4th. I hope to see you at both gatherings as we wrap up another incredible year together.

Priscilla Ribic;
Executive Director

President’s Report from page 1

our goals over the last 5 years. Please watch for several updates on upcoming events for Q4. We continue to enhance member benefits, grow our effectiveness on advocacy, and strengthen our Scholarship and Next-Gen programs. As we approach the end of the year, I’m hopeful that all of our members will join us for our December Christmas Party at the Airmen’s building. Please bring a friend or family member along and encourage them to join the Airmen’s Association. Thank you for your support in the Alaska Airmen’s Association.

Fly safe,
Stephen Ratcliff; President
Alaska Airmen’s Association

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The Alaska Airmen’s Association assumes no liability for the information contained herein. Each reader is advised to individually assess the validity of the information presented.

Alaska Chapter of the 99s is Revitalizing!

The Alaska Chapter of the International Organization of Women Pilots is revitalizing. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and other factors the Chapter has been inactive for a few years. Several of us feel it is time to regroup and renew.

We support the International 99s Mission Statement promoting advancement of aviation through education, scholarships, and mutual support while honoring our unique history and sharing our passion for flight. An organizational meeting was held August 27, 2025 at Pipers Restaurant in Anchorage. Come join us at future meetings for camaraderie with other women pilots (students welcome!), order your dinner and get updates on aviation issues! For more information please contact either interim co-chairs: Jessica Cherry (jchenyc@gmail.com) or Betsy Nobmann (bnobmann@customcpu.com). We look forward to connecting!

Advocacy With Adam

by Adam White, Alaska Airmen's Association Government Affairs

We continue to work with Federal, State, and local officials on behalf of our members, ensuring Alaska Aviation remains accessible and a viable means of transportation and recreation. The following issues are just a few examples of how we work towards those goals.

Anchorage Class C Redesign

The FAA hosted two virtual public meetings to discuss the Anchorage Class C revisions on September 23rd and 24th. The deadline for public comment is October 24th. This is the time for the public to weigh in on the proposal and offer suggestions on the design. This issue has been addressed in several recent Advocacy With Adam YouTube updates, and we will continue to discuss it on social media as we approach the deadline. For more information, visit: https://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/community_engagement/ataaps

Other changes to the Anchorage airspace will need to occur when the Class C changes go into effect. The Class D airspaces in the Anchorage Bowl will also change to align with the Class C, and the VFR procedures will need to be amended to interface with the new airspace. Look for a few changes to the VFR Procedures to go into effect before the Class C redesign goes live in 2027.

Beyond Visual Line of Sight for Drone Operations Rule

The FAA's proposed rule for Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) operations for drones is available for public comment until October 6th. Our biggest concerns focus on right-of-way rules for drones and a potential backdoor ADS-B mandate. Drone will have the right-of-way over manned aircraft below 500' AGL. It is troubling that the FAA is saying in this proposed rule that "Electronic Conspicuity" (EC) devices might be a solution for right-of-way rules. EC is a low-power, portable, and anonymous ADS-B type technology that is in use in other parts of the world. This technology has not



been approved by the FAA and has been vehemently opposed by the FAA up to now. The FAA's rationale up till now has been that they want everyone to be equipped with ADS-B out and not use an EC solution. Our comment letter will focus on this issue and a few other problems with the proposal with respect to Alaska aviation.

DOT Title 17 Review

The Governor has issued an Administrative Order to reduce state bureaucracy by 25% by 2027. Alaska DOT is asking for input on sections of the State Administrative Code and Statutes that should be reviewed pertaining to aviation. We are building a list of areas to focus on. Do you have any areas you would like to see addressed? Send your ideas to adam.white@alaskaairmen.org

YouTube Updates

Be sure to catch "Advocacy With Adam" on the third Tuesday of every month at 6 pm on YouTube for more thorough and timely updates on what the Airmen's Association is doing to "Protect, Preserve, and Promote General Aviation in Alaska." Go to the Advocacy Playlist on YouTube: <https://tinyurl.com/2r3xb5bu>

If you would like more information on these topics or have any questions or comments, please get in touch with Adam White at adam.white@alaskaairmen.org or 907-245-1251. Additionally, please copy the Alaska Airmen's Association when submitting your public comments.

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WHAT is the Alaska Airmen’s Association?

We are the largest state general aviation group in Alaska, a non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization

“To Promote, Preserve and Protect General Aviation in Alaska”

WHO are the Airmen?

- All pilots, mechanics, air traffic controllers, airline employees, aviation enthusiasts and any individual or business that has an interest in flying or being involved in the aviation industry and community!
- Membership is open to everyone, including non-Alaska residents. We currently have well over 1500 members and are growing!

WHY should you join?

- Aviation advocacy - We advocate for general aviation and are part of the FAA Aviation Industry Council, the Merrill Field Airport Advisory Commission, and many more! We fight to keep airstrips open, Flight Service Stations healthy, the cost-of-flying low, and entry into our industry affordable and attractive.
- Benefits - We have over 30 member benefits for discounts on fuel, hardware, and maintenance. We also have fly-ins and social events, host America’s largest free entry aviation tradeshow, print a quarterly member newspaper, and have a member only web site and forum, including pilot alerts.
- Education - We have various youth outreach and scholarship committees and programs geared towards getting younger generations inspired, engaged, and employed within our industry. Our NextGen Aviators Group is a growing cohort of “millennials in aviation” looking to rally the next generation of Alaska’s aviation industry to and subsidize entry costs, reduce barriers, and inspire their peers. The Airmen works actively with statewide school districts & the University of Alaska, and others to strengthen our aviation industry!

MEMBERSHIP Benefits

The quarterly newspaper and bi-weekly email bulletins keep you up-to-date on Association activities such as safety seminars, special events, current issues needing input, aircraft and equipment for sale, and public meetings. Membership discounts are available around the state, including fuel (up to .15 cents per gallon), aviation parts, survival equipment, labor and much more.

WHERE are we?

We are a STATEWIDE organization, with our headquarters at 4200 Float Plane Drive on Lake Hood in Anchorage: Northern Region Satellite Office at 3788 South University Dr., Fairbanks, on the East Ramp FAI between CAP and FSS. Regional Directors are available in Fairbanks, Juneau, and McGrath.

The FAA’s New MOSAIC – What All Is In This Picture?

By John M. Dahlen

I am frequently heard joking about how the FAA and I finally found something we totally agree on. After my stroke and three or four heart stoppages, we all agreed that I should probably no longer exercise my flight privileges as PIC. It’s one thing when your prop stops spinning at 6,000 ft. But I suspect it gets a whole lot trickier real quickly at that altitude when your heart stops pumping or your brain goes on strike and you’re the only pilot on board! In truth, the FAA and I frequently agree on things, and they help keep an amazingly huge percentage of pilots and passengers alive in the air as surely as my Cardiologist and others help keep me alive on the ground, all for which I am thankful! The new MOSAIC rule is one such example of the FAA and others in the industry working to strike a good balance between accessibility to, and safety in the sky for those who dream of becoming a pilot someday.

The new Modernization of Special Airworthiness Certification (MOSAIC) rule in its final form, with some specific exceptions, becomes effective October 22, 2025. This article is not to be considered legal advice or reference material for legal evaluation of any aviation activity, even though it draws heavily from (read, “heavily plagiarizes”) the text of the final rule as published in the Federal Register. Not all the details are included here. This is intended only to shine the spotlight on, and inform you of, these new regulatory changes coming into effect so you can do further research to determine how they might affect your future aviation planning. My lawyer at Dewey, Cheatem, and Howe made me say that. And besides, it’s true!

Cutting to the chase, the MOSAIC rule establishes exciting new guidelines in several general areas. The three that seem to be most commonly asked details about are (1) It dramatically expands the kinds and qualities of aircraft that are allowed to be included in the light-sport category; (2) It greatly expands privileges for sport pilots; and (3) it expands the light-sport repairman certificate privileges. One important thing to note about these changes is that, as exciting as they are for many potential new pilots, they are promulgated based on safety data and considerations affecting the general public as well. This includes the safety record of light-sport category aircraft over the past twenty-one years since the category was created in 2004. Following are some of the

highlights of the new MOSAIC rule from its Executive Summary in the Federal Register.

- (1) of Light-Sport category Aircraft:** The MOSAIC rule aims to increase the availability of safe, modern, and affordable aircraft for recreational aviation, flight training, and certain aerial work. Generally, this rule provides broad regulatory relief to the public. That is, under this rule, manufacturers of light-sport category aircraft may design and manufacture a broader array of aircraft, including rotorcraft and powered-lift. The following is a list of some of the other provisions in this section. (CAS = calibrated airspeed; Vso = stall speed with full flaps)
- Allows increased capacities

- for passengers, fuel, and cargo (4 seats for airplanes now, 2 seats for others; max weight not prescribed. The FAA noted that removing 2 seats from a 6-seat airplane does not make it qualified, as the aircraft in question must be designed for a maximum of 4 seats.)
- Allows electric and other alternative propulsion sources
- Allows faster, higher performing aircraft that are more suitable for personal travel (Max airspeed 250 kts CAS; the type of engine, prop, & landing gear are no longer prescribed)
- Increases max stall speed for light-sport category airplanes and gliders (airplanes 61 kts Vso CAS; gliders 45 kts Vso CAS;

- unchanged for others)
- Removes prescriptive weight limits that hinder incorporation of safety-enhancing designs and equipment
- Adopts more performance-based rules to expand and enable innovation

- (2) Expanded privileges for Sport Pilots:** Sport pilot privileges are expanded to include the above-summarized broader array of aircraft, and new privileges. These new privileges for sport pilots are available via training and endorsements. New privileges for sport pilots include
- operating helicopters,
 - operating at night,
 - operating aircraft with retractable landing gear,

■ See Page 6, MOSAIC

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MOSAIC
from page 5

- operating aircraft with constant speed propellers,
- operating high-performance airplanes.
- Operating privileges for certain light-sport category aircraft are expanded to include certain aerial work.

(3) Expanded privileges under the light-sport repairman certificate: revises privileges for repairman certificate (light-sport) holders to

- align with the expansion of aircraft categories that will be eligible for light-sport category

- airworthiness certificates
- allow a light-sport repairman to conduct the condition inspection on amateur built aircraft that are of the same category and class, as applicable, of aircraft for which the repairman was certificated
 - This rule also revises the requirements for manufacturer-issued safety directives and revises requirements for performing repairs and alterations of light-sport category aircraft.

(4) Operations: This rule revises operating limitations for restricted category aircraft, experimental aircraft, and light-sport category

aircraft. This rule also codifies a Congressional mandate to enable certain aircraft with an experimental airworthiness certificate to conduct space support vehicle flights carrying persons or property for compensation or hire without an air carrier certificate or exemption. This rule also makes minor revisions to right-of-way rules and operations in the vicinity of airports in Class G airspace; primarily addressing traffic flow and conflict avoidance, especially between gliders and motorized aircraft, at uncontrolled airports.

(5) Experimental Aircraft: This

rule establishes a new purpose for which experimental airworthiness certificates may be issued to former military aircraft to improve alignment between certain operations of former military aircraft and the experimental airworthiness certificates that authorize their operation. This rule also increases the duration of certain experimental airworthiness certificates from one to three years.

(6) Restricted Category Aircraft: This rule enhances the requirements for the certification of former military aircraft in the restricted category by requiring the aircraft to have a service history with the U.S. Armed Forces. Under 14 CFR 21.25(b)(7), FAA has approved additional special purpose operations for which restricted category aircraft may be certificated. Currently, those additional purposes are only listed in FAA policy documents for type and airworthiness certification of these aircraft. This rule codifies special purpose operations that have already been published for public notice in the Federal Register.

(7) Noise: This rule enables persons to voluntarily establish compliance with part 36 noise requirements and provide a statement of compliance to FAA for a light-sport category aircraft.

As you can see, the MOSAIC acronym seems appropriate for this new rule. Many detailed pieces have been brought together and arranged into quite a broad-based piece of regulatory framework! Anyone wanting to develop a more detailed understanding of this new rule has a few resources available to do so. If you like to go straight to the source and read the very detailed (189 pages) evolution of MOSAIC, including the 1300+ public comments and how the FAA responded (many resulted in changes!), you can access the details in the U.S. Federal Register at <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2025-07-24/pdf/2025-13972.pdf>. If you are a student or are planning to become one, discuss your new options with one or more prospective CFIs as you develop your personal training plan and before you sign any contracts. I have also always found the folks at the local FSDO to be very helpful with an answer or a recommendation where else to inquire. Keep in mind that, with all this just coming online, many Instructors, and even some of the good folks at your FSDO might still be coming up to speed on this too and not yet have clear answers for everything. Our Government & Legislative Affairs Advocate, Adam White, might also be able to answer questions as this new MOSAIC rule comes online (Adam.White@

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No Martha Stewart Here

Dear Friends,
Martha Stewart will not be dining with us at my place this Thanksgiving. I'm telling you all in advance, so you won't be surprised. Since Ms. Stewart won't be coming, I've made a few small changes.
Our sidewalk will not be lined with homemade, paper bag luminaries. After a trial run, it was decided that no matter how cleverly done, rows of flaming lunch sacks do not have the desired welcoming effect.

The dining table will not be covered with expensive linens, fancy china or crystal goblets. If possible, we will use dishes that match and

everyone will get a fork. Since this is Thanksgiving, we will refrain from using the plastic Peter Rabbit plate and the Santa napkins from last Christmas.
Our centerpiece will not be the tower of fresh fruit and flowers that I promised. Instead, we will be displaying a hedgehog-like decoration hand-crafted from the finest construction paper. The little artist assures me it is a turkey.

We will be dining fashionably late. The children will entertain you while you wait. I'm sure they will be happy to share every choice comment I have made regarding Thanksgiving, pilgrims and the turkey hotline. Please remember that most of these comments were made at 5:00 AM upon discovering that the turkey was still hard enough to cut diamonds. As accompaniment to the children's recital, I will play a recording of tribal

drumming. If the children should mention that I don't own a recording of tribal drumming, or that tribal drumming sounds suspiciously like a frozen turkey in a clothes dryer, ignore them. They are lying.
We toyed with the idea of ringing a dainty silver bell to announce the start of our feast. In the end, we chose to keep our traditional method. We've also decided against a formal seating arrangement. When the smoke alarm sounds, please gather around the table and sit where you like. In the spirit of harmony, we will ask the children to sit at a separate table. In a separate room. Next door.
Now I know you have all seen pictures of one person carving a turkey in front of a crowd of appreciative onlookers. This will not be happening at our dinner. For safety reasons, the turkey will be carved in a private ceremony. I stress

"private" meaning: Do not, under any circumstances, enter the kitchen to laugh at me. Do not send small, unsuspecting children to check on my progress. I have an electric knife. The turkey is unarmed. It stands to reason that I will eventually win. When I do, we will eat.
Before I forget, there is one last change. Instead of offering a choice between 12 different scrumptious desserts, we will be serving the traditional pumpkin pie, garnished with whipped cream and small fingerprints. You will still have a choice: take it or leave it.
Martha Stewart will not be dining with us this Thanksgiving. She probably won't come next year either. For that, I am very thankful.
Happy Holidays!
John M. Dahlen
(Original author unknown)

MOSAIC
from page 6

alaskaairmen.org). And finally, according to the Federal Register, if you have technical questions concerning MOSAIC, contact James Newberger, Aircraft Certification Service (AIR-632), FAA, 800 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20591, Telephone: (202) 267-1636; e-mail: james.e.newberger@faa.gov.

So there you go. MOSAIC becomes effective October 22, 2025, except for amendatory instructions 3, 8, 9, 13, 15, 17, 21, 23 through 26, 71, 72, 75, 76, and 80, which are effective July 24, 2026.

As our seasons change, and the wet stuff becomes white stuff, remember to change your clocks back one hour on Saturday night, November 1st (technically at 0200 DST on Sunday morning) and enjoy that extra hour of sleep or whatever you use it for as we end daylight savings time a little early this year. Then, in the wink of an eye, we will be deep into our holiday season. I wish each and every one of our readers a safe, joyous, and warmly blessed holiday season. Happy Thanksgiving, and Merry Christmas to all. And to all, a good night!

John M. Dahlen is a life member and regular writer for the Transponder. He is a past Vice President of the association, and is the US/Russia Liaison for group VFR flights from Alaska to Russia when such opportunities can be safely resumed. He welcomes all correspondence related to Alaskan general aviation. Send e-mail to him at OneAlaskanGuy@hotmail.com, or call/text him in Alaska at (+1) 907.830.5889. (AKST is -9UTC after 01Nov2025).

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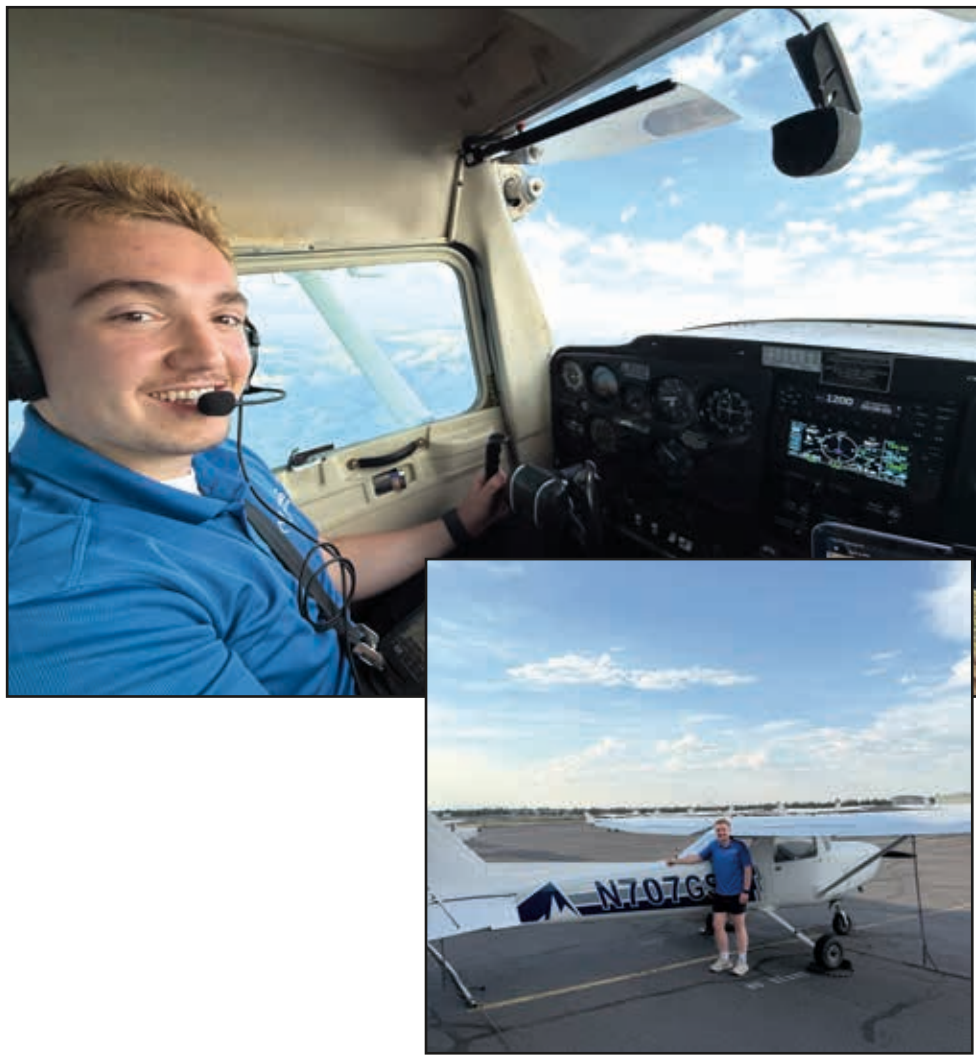
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NextGen Corner



Spotlight: Luke Hansen

Hello,
I received the Glacier Oil and Gas Scholarship in the amount of \$2,500. I have been accepted to the Alaska Airlines Ascend Academy and will be starting my training this fall at Hillsboro Aero Academy in Redmond, OR. I am beyond grateful to have received this scholarship and am excited to start building hours towards my dream of being a pilot for Alaska Airlines.

Aviation has always played a huge role in my life. Growing up in Nome, the only way to get in or out is via airplane so that is how I've always traveled. Alaska Airlines is also the only airline that connects Nome to Anchorage and that is what sparked my dream of becoming a pilot for Alaska Airlines. I also have aviation history in my family. My grandfather and Alaskan legend, Jim Hansen flew for Wein airlines back in the day and

also flew commercial bush flights in and out of Nome for many years. Growing up around him and hearing the amazing stories of flying has also helped grow my love for aviation.

In the future, when I get to Alaska Airlines, I hope to be based in Anchorage and fly all of the small town and village routes around Alaska. I want to be able to still see all of the people I know from my hometown while also doing what I love.

Thank you to The Glacier Oil and Gas Company for all of the support through the scholarship! Also a huge thanks to the Alaska Airmen's Association. Your organization is doing so much to make aviation more connected throughout Alaska while also helping get new pilots started on their journeys!

Luke Hansen


BOOST YOUR AVIATION CAREER

Volunteer with the Alaska Airmen's!


Dear NextGen Member,

Are you looking to strengthen your aviation resume and stand out in the industry? Volunteering with the Alaska Airmen's Association is more than just giving back – it's a powerful way to grow your network, gain hands-on experience, and demonstrate your commitment to the aviation community.

Here's why volunteering matters:

 **BUILD YOUR RESUME:** Whether you're aiming for your first job or applying to flight school, volunteer experience shows initiative, leadership, and teamwork — traits every aviation employer values.

 **CAREER CONNECTIONS:** Volunteering puts you face-to-face with industry professionals, mentors, and potential employers at our events, hangar, and community programs.

 **SCHOLARSHIP ADVANTAGE:** Did you know that volunteer involvement earns you bonus points during the scholarship scoring process? We recognize and reward those who actively support the aviation community.

 **BE A PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER:** From helping at the Great Alaska Aviation Gathering to assisting with youth outreach, your time helps reserve and grow general aviation in Alaska.

Current Volunteer Opportunities:

- CNC Class - October 16th 5-7
- Halloween Party - October 30th 4-9
- CNC Class - November 20th 5-7
- Holiday Party - December 4th
- CNC Class - December 18th 5-7

Ready to get involved?

Check out our Event page at alaskaairmen.org/events-3/ and secure.alaskaairmen.org/forms/volunteer for opportunities.



Thank you for being part of the NextGen crew — the future of Alaska aviation starts with you!

Commemorative Air Force Alaska

By Regan Tunstall & Wella Marie

Are you interested in learning more about the Alaska warbirds? The Commemorative Air Force Alaska Wing, founded by World War 2 Veteran Colonel Howard “Mike” Hunt, strives to uphold their mission of restoring and preserving combat aircraft in the US.

Col. Hunt started the Alaska chapter in the late 1990s with a large donation of a yellow Harvard MK IV, and later donated two more warbirds to the wing. He was actively involved by recruiting passionate members and sharing his love for these birds until his passing in 2019. You can learn more about Col. Hunts story and the history of the CAF Alaska Wing here: <https://www.cafalaska.org/our-story>



Last Thursday, the CAF hosted a fundraising event led by Mikayla Taylor, called ‘puzzles for props’. We successfully raised \$460 by having a

timed puzzle competition open to the public where participants were able to take home their puzzle.

We’d like to extend a huge thank you to everyone who participated and supported this event! We hope

to continue sharing Col. Hunts passion and knowledge for these birds for years to come.

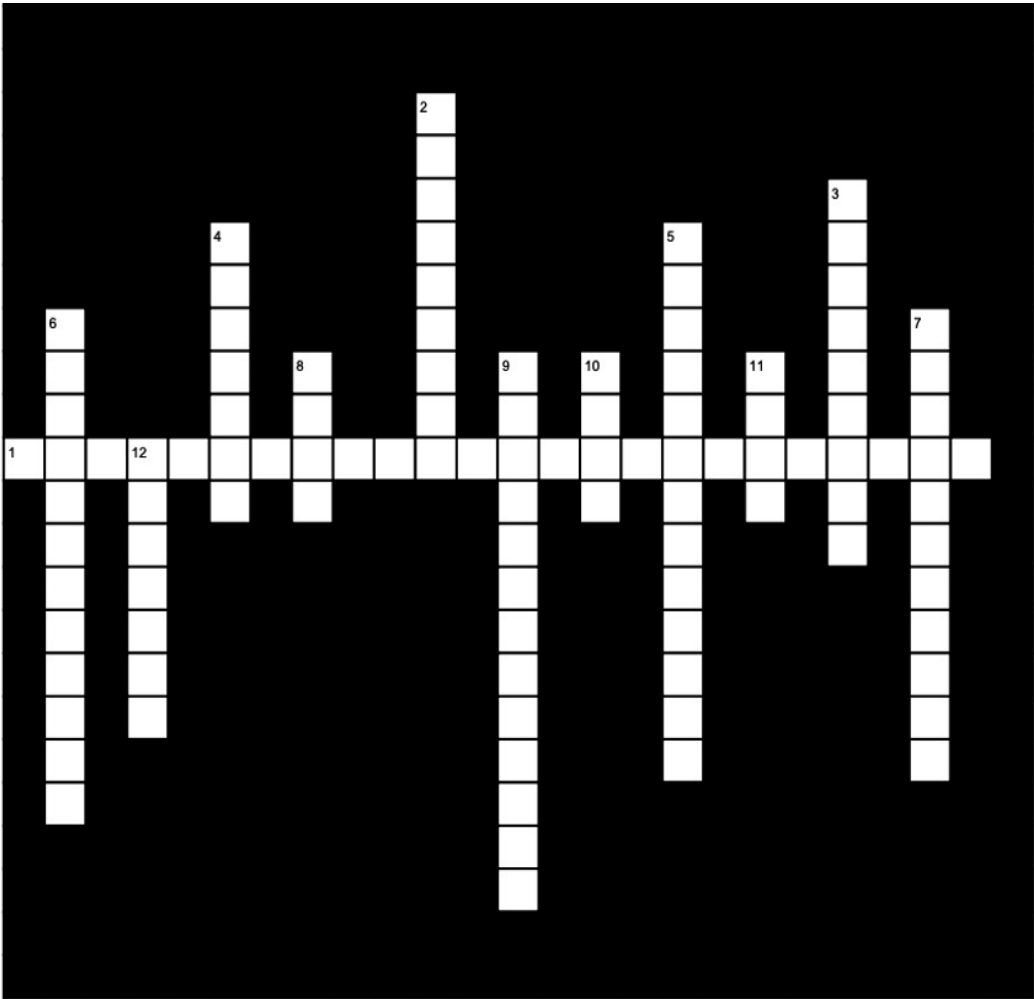
Sky Sisters of Alaska

Have you ever wondered if the conundrum gracing your mind’s beaches has washed ashore another’s mind? I would love to clarify that this question is for the inexperienced pilot; however, I believe that this occurrence does not discriminate by experience or age. For the extroverts, for the quiet at heart or in voice, for the knowledgeable, or for those curious about life as a bird, the Sky Sisters of Alaska is where you flourish.

Where knowledge and curiosity meet, with full bellies and passionate hearts. A place free of judgment or cost of attendance, this group meets once a month at the Alaska Airmen’s building. We have provided guest speakers, organized tours of ATC towers, led field trips to the Lake Hood Sim Center, and hosted aviation-themed creative nights. We are always open to ideas and are eager to incorporate your unique perspectives and knowledge into our community. Alongside our in-person meetings, we cultivate a well-fed WhatsApp community with multiple chats folks may opt into or out of based on their specific interests. When a topic or question becomes prevalent or is requested, our leadership team will make an effort to find a guest speaker in that field to come and share their knowledge with the group at an upcoming meeting.

This past year we have been lucky enough to enjoy a visit from Stacia Joyce, a current NTSB investigator and flight school owner; Clara Tefts, a National Guard pilot; and Pam, the Pathfinder’s Field Safety Director and helicopter pilot. We run a fairly informal group with a priority of participation and connection; that being said, each gathering is potluck-style.

The Sky Sisters of Alaska has been responsible for fundraising for five scholarships matched by the Alaska Airmen’s Association, totaling over \$11,000 in the past two years. Our group has grown to over 80 members this year, with members ranging from students, Bush pilots, airline pilots, DPEs, and CFIs. We cannot be more excited to continue building our community, with a passionate goal of making the journey to the sky more accessible for women in aviation! Reach out and join the Sky Sisters of Alaska by emailing us at: skysistersak@gmail.com.



Across

1. The Sky Sisters of Alaska paired with what organization to create three scholarships (\$2,500, \$2,500, and \$1,200) in 2025?

Down

- 2. How do the Sky Sisters of Alaska decide on dates and times for our meetings?
- 3. The changing of temperature of a body of air by cooling or warming through rising or descending without any heat exchange with the surrounding air.
- 4. How long do our group administrators hold their roles for?
- 5. The angle between the chord of the wing and the relative wind.
- 6. Each group meeting at the Alaska Airmen's Association is...
- 7. Mid-level clouds polkadoting the sky.
- 8. If you would like to go hiking or skiing with fellow female pilots and aviation enthusiasts, you should...
- 9. Who was the first American woman to obtain an international pilots license? (National Women's History Museum)
- 10. From Anchorage, the closest mountains are to which direction?
- 11. If the dew point and temperature are very close in number, what weather event should you expect?
- 12. What is a core value of the group?



Alaskan Women in Aviation: Hattie Schmidtkunz

By Regan Tunstall

Growing up in Sutton, Alaska, Hattie’s love for flying started when she was paragliding in her early 20s. One day when she was at Lake Lucille, she spotted a floatplane taking off and instantly knew she wanted to become a pilot. Hattie was working for the DOT most summers while pursuing her training in the winter to afford her

flight lessons. In 2018, she was thrilled to finally receive her private pilot license. Battling self doubt has always been a challenge throughout her journey, but she continues to overcome that obstacle and make big strides everyday. She recognizes all the women aviators before her who worked endlessly to create more opportunities

for women today. “I definitely appreciate all the women who’ve come before me and helped pave the way” Hattie said. Presently, she works as a certificated flight instructor (CFI) and office manager at Land and Sea Aviation. Her biggest joy is sharing love for aviation with others and having those experiences together.

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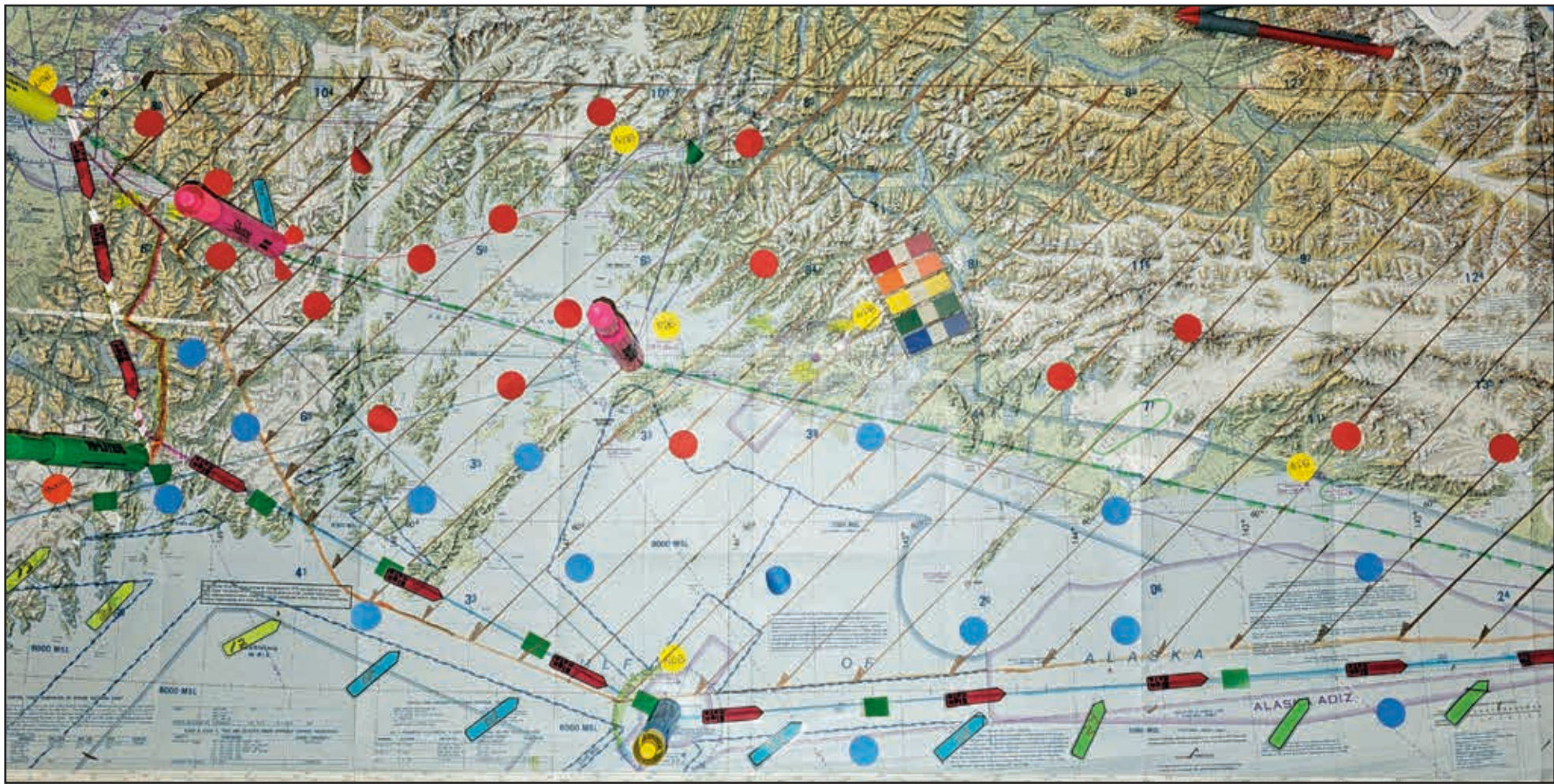
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Obvious and Logical

The Ice-Cold Case of N1812H

By Jim Gibertoni and Joan Skilbred

On October 16, 1972, a Pan Alaska Airways, Ltd. flight from Anchorage to Juneau, Alaska failed to make its destination and was never seen or heard from again. The plane N1812H, a twin-engine Cessna 310C, was owned by Pan Alaska Airways LLC. The pilot was Don Jonz from Fairbanks, and his passengers were United Congressman and House of Representatives Majority Leader Thomas Hale Boggs of Louisiana, United States Congressman Nick Begich, and his administrative assistant Russel L. Brown both of Anchorage.

I have been a Search and Rescue (SAR) Pilot flying with the Civil Air Patrol here in Fairbanks, Alaska for almost a quarter of a century, logging more than 250 SAR missions to date. What I am about to share is a robust educated guess, based on the facts, and my extensive experience in search and rescue.

It is important to note here that Don Jonz submitted an article he wrote to *Flying Magazine* a few weeks prior to the fateful flight that was called “Ice Without Fear.” This article was published in the October 1972 edition of the magazine.

The NTSB Accident Report in an unprecedented move, gave a full paragraph about the magazine article: “...it may be noted that previously he (Jonz) had authored several articles on the subject of flying under comparable adverse weather conditions. The article, among other things, advised pilots to be prepared for the situations that were likely to be encountered. For instance, he

advocated that one always maintains: (1) a mental picture of the weather ahead, (2) a reserve of altitude, (3) extra fuel, and (4) an alternate course of action. He advised against flying into obviously bad situations, such as dark areas or precipitation when the outside temperature was in the critical icing range. To avoid icing he recommended that a double check be made of the survival equipment aboard the aircraft and that the proper winter clothing be worn by all occupants of the aircraft.”

Focusing on the NTSB report and the “Ice Without Fear” article, we can gain some new insights into what might have really happened. Clearly in this case there is no way any of us are going to have entire certainty as to the full details of what happened to N1812H, but we can follow the information trail and possibly locate the crash site.

On October 15, 1972, the day prior to the loss of N1812H, Fairbanks pilot Don Jonz of Pan Alaska Airways, accepts a call requesting a flight to haul two United States Congressmen and an aide, from Anchorage to Juneau. Jonz is a commercial pilot, and this is a real opportunity for his aviation business. If he accepts this request, it will no doubt lead to further business opportunities for him. His plane had just come out of its annual inspection, so it was up for the task.

The NTSB report states a witness said Jonz agreed to the request. He would also be flying the passengers without getting paid. This means

the flight from Anchorage to Juneau will be classified under part 91 of the FAA flight regulations. He left

Fairbanks International Airport at 5:58 pm for Anchorage where he

■ See Page 12, Cold Case



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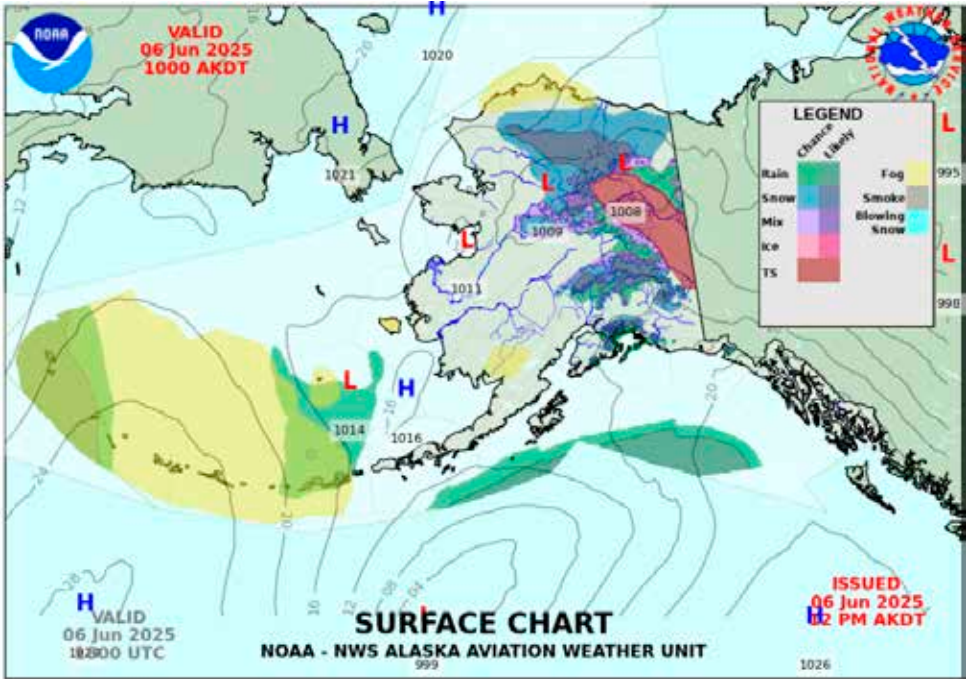
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Alaska Weather Chart Change Proposed

by Tom George, AOPA Alaska Regional Manager

The National Weather Service’s Alaska Aviation Weather Unit is soliciting feedback on planned updates to its Surface and Significant Weather charts. The public notice inviting feedback includes links to sample products so interested parties can see what the new charts would look like. In general, changes to the Surface Chart would add considerably more detail, showing the probability of different conditions occurring (including rain, snow, smoke, and other conditions). Weather fronts would be broken out into a separate Surface Analysis Chart.

The Significant Weather Chart would contain similar mapping units to what we see today, showing forecast IFR, marginal VFR, and other information, but with a small change to color-coded map units. The frequency



A sample of the new Surface Chart proposed for the Alaska Aviation Weather Unit. Note the increased detail in forecast conditions. Image courtesy of NWS Alaska Aviation Weather Unit.

of both sets of chart updates would remain unchanged. From AOPA’s initial inspection, the biggest changes are to the Surface Chart, which will be

much more detailed in the depiction of forecast conditions.

Feedback is invited through October 29, but don’t wait to review the proposed changes. To look at a sample, with the ability to toggle between current and proposed charts, visit the NWS website at <https://www.weather.gov/aawu/graphicupdate>.

Tom George serves as the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association’s Regional Manager for Alaska. He resides in Fairbanks and owns a Cessna 185. He may be reached at tom.george@aopa.org or 301-695-2092.

This article was originally published on AOPA’s website: <https://www.aopa.org/advocacy/state-advocacy/Alaska/>

Cold Case from page 11

arrived at 7:40 pm and spent the night. That flight was uneventful.

The next morning at 6:56 am on October 16th, Jonz called Anchorage Flight Services (FSS) for a routine weather briefing. He requested to be briefed on Juneau, Sitka, Yakutat and Cordova weather. He stated at that time that he would be flying a Cessna 310 under Visual Flight Rules (VFR) to Juneau. It is important to note here that he did not ask for the weather briefing for Portage Pass at this time. However, he was told that Portage Pass was closed as part of that briefing.

The National Weather Service’s surface weather chart that day compiled by the Anchorage Office showed “a warm front extending eastward from a point near Iliamna to a point about 50 miles south-southeast of Yakataga. A high-pressure system was entered off the coast of southeastern Alaska.”

“The surface weather conditions as reported on the 0600 sequence reports were, in part, as follows for the stations indicated: (1) Cordova – ceiling measured 2,500 feet broken, 5,000 feet overcast, visibility 7 miles; (2) Yakutat – 300 feet scattered, ceiling measured 700 feet overcast, visibility 1 ½ miles in fog; (3) Juneau – ceiling indefinite 500 feet obscured, one-half mile in fog; and (4) Sitka – clear, visibility 12 miles.”

The NTSB Report states on pages 4 and 5: “The later surface weather observations for the stations and times indicated were, in part, as follows: (1) Anchorage – 0900 – 4,000 feet scattered, ceiling estimated 6,000 feet broken, 8,000

■ See Page 13, Cold Case

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A Role for Rules

by Bernie Willis

A highly experienced, respected and accomplished European aviator said to me,

“Rules are for fools, but a guide for wise men.” Contemplating his statement my mind bounced like a ball in a hand ball court. Try following these thoughts!

Now, rules are for our safety. When followed we stay within safe guidelines. But have you ever flown overweight? Was the examiner for your private check ride small enough to not exceed the gross weight of your C-150? Did you actually weigh that moose quarter squeezed behind the seat in your Super Cub last Fall. Did I drive 65 mph or less to Anchorage last week? Just heard of a driver in Switzerland who was caught driving 48 in a 27 MPH or KMH zone. He was fined 100,000.00 Euro’s based upon, not the extent of the violation, but upon a portion of his net worth. So far these are rules based upon man’s judgement. Some rules are based upon physics.

Discovering the rules of physics that allow flight was one of the Wrights biggest accomplishments. The acknowledged wing proportions and the effect upon lift didn’t prove correct for the brothers so they built their own wind tunnel and started over to determine what was needed to lift them and their machine. These rules have been updated ever since. Assumptions have been made about the forces in turbulence that may be uncomfortable for us but not destructive to our aircraft. Just yesterday a friend at breakfast asked about checking over his Cessna after hitting some jets wake turbulence. He was flying perpendicular to the jets approach to PANC and two thousand feet below when all of a sudden, he was slammed against his seat belt with his head against the cabin ceiling. The jet was touching down on runway 15 at least 5 miles away. The horizontal “tornado” was still active. His question for the group was, “where do I look for hidden damage to my airframe?” There were several opinions, one related the story of an extended wing Cessna that had experienced similar



conditions and landed with twisted wing tips. The fine print on the STC says something about a reduction in strength rating from Utility to Normal. FAA guidelines for long ferry flights allow for significant overweight take offs, but require restrictions about weather, routing and performance figures.

Oh those performance charts are confusing! Even the best charts don’t seem to cover all the circumstances we can find ourselves in. How do you figure take off performance with a tail wind on a down sloping runway? Or the opposite with a stiff head wind on an uphill runway? Light twin performance on one engine is rather dismal. What would you consider safe? A turbo twin comanche with a single engine rate of climb of 260 fpm and a single engine service ceiling of 19000 ft. Or a normally aspirated twin comanche has the same single engine rate of climb but only a 5800 ft. ceiling on one engine. For this illustration let’s imagine we’re in Denver roughly 5000

ft. in elevation with a temperature of 70 f and an altimeter setting of 30.00. Would you take off without turbos?

Would you take the time to figure out the density altitude or just go for it. If you take the time to use them you’ll soon find performance charts are rather optimistic. Many manufacturers seem to be deliberately vague about what their aircraft can actually do. Aircraft certified under the Experimental Amateur Built category are even more susceptible to wide performance variations. The building and testing are not standardized. What do you know about the performance of the new four place Super Cub you’re considering building? Recently an experienced mechanic/pilot said to me as I was admiring his work, “Cub’s used to haul anything you could stick in them, but not this one, it huge in here.” His statement reminded me of the days flying a Dornier 28. It could haul 15, 55 gal drums. But only 5 of them could be full of fuel.

So what are we to do to remain safe? Perhaps to become an old pilot we should not be bold. But instead increase our performance understanding gradually. Always considering the various weather conditions that affect performance. Be wise and use the rules to keep from becoming fools.

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Cold Case
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at 2000 feet, at 9:00 am. This record is critical, because it was part of the controller’s job to record that information using binoculars for every single flight. The entry by ATC is an official record of fact as to the last time N1812H was seen.

As a SAR mission pilot and team member, we look at that official record as a “stake in the ground.” It is the important last sighting of the aircraft that points the SAR operations in the right direction. We need to look very carefully at that entry. The direction southeasterly is a 130° heading which takes you to Sunrise. The Portage direction would have been a heading of 090°, a directional disparity of about 40°.

N1812H was last heard from 9 minutes later, when Jonz made routine radio contact with Anchorage Flight Services. He stated there were four souls on board, they had six hours of fuel, and when asked if they had emergency gear on board, Jonz replied “affirmative.” The report states he filed the VFR flight plan was the V-317 Airway through Portage Pass. At the time of that last radio communication Jonz also received an updated weather report. That was the last time anyone heard from N1812H.

There is an anomaly in the NTSB Report regarding this last radio communication. Usually, the pilot will file the flight plan prior to takeoff. During the last radio communication, nine minutes into the flight, the pilot would have been busy, gaining altitude, watching for other air traffic and getting headed towards the intended course of flight. That is also the time when a pilot will usually activate the flight plan,

Classifieds
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which would have been previously filed with FSS at the time of the pre-flight weather briefing. It does not make sense for Jonz to file a flight plan after takeoff, much less a plan for a route that he knew was closed for VFR flight.

I suspect this bit about the filing of the flight on his last communication was assumed by the FSS operator, and later was mistakenly put into the report as a finding of fact. Most likely it was a result of the chaos and pressure from investigators desperate to find the missing Congressmen.

At 1315 hours the flight was deemed overdue, and the search began with a communications check, then full blown search and rescue operations were initiated. The massive search for the missing plane was the biggest and most expensive ever conducted in Alaska. They were gone without a trace, and after all that hard work by many very capable search and rescue specialists, and over 50 years of air

traffic, recreationalists and other human activity within the search area; I can only draw one conclusion: N1812H WAS NOT IN THE SEARCH AREA.

The route through Seward and Middleton Island is located just outside of the designated search area. No search was ever conducted along that flight path. If we consider this alternate route, a new theory presents itself.

As they flew further south toward Seward, the weather began to improve, and they probably saw the grandeur of the Kenai Peninsula beneath them. Hale Boggs was from Louisiana and was an important politician on a national scale. He was here on a whirlwind campaign fundraising event to help Begich during the upcoming elections. This was a real opportunity for Begich and his aide Russel Brown to show Boggs the greatness of Alaska,

which we purchased from Russia for two cents an acre.

The view along their route looking southwest, included the Harding Ice Field, which is the largest ice field in the United States. It is comprised of more than 40 glaciers and encompasses an expanse of 700 square miles. It is also named after United States President Warren G. Harding.

The allure of the Harding Ice Field was probably overpowering. Many pilots had flown over it. If Jonz took the route over the Harding, he would have a chance to make a real impression upon his important and influential passengers.

Commercial pilots are trained not to be distracted in the cockpit. The problem is that opportunity was knocking, the pressure on Jonz to deviate from his intended route must have been intense. We have all felt

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Upcoming events

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OCT 9

Scholarship Seminar
5:30 PM - 7:00 PM
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THU
OCT 16

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5:00 PM - 7:00 PM
940 Merrill Field Dr, Anchorage

THU
OCT 30

Halloween Party
5:00 PM - 8:00 PM
4200 Floatplane Drive, Anchorage

THU
NOV 20

Intro to CNC
5:00 PM - 7:00 PM
940 Merrill Field Dr, Anchorage

THU
DEC 4

Holiday Party
5:00 PM - 8:00 PM
4200 Floatplane Drive, Anchorage

THU
DEC 18

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Cold Case

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that kind of pressure, what would you have done? Say “no way” to the U. S. House Majority Leader? It would be so easy to fly up either one of the Skilak Glacier fingers across the vast expanse of the ice field and down the Bear Glacier into Seward. That is the obvious and logical route that most pilots would take to see what is up there. He had plenty of fuel, the passengers were excited, so why not?

The next radio check would naturally occur when they would begin exiting the ice field via Bear Glacier, checking in with Seward then continuing the flight to Middleton Island. But that never happened. If the plane had gone down anywhere else along that Anchorage-Seward route, it would have been found by now. I strongly feel the most likely place it went down was somewhere on the Harding Ice Field or one of its associated glaciers.

I have considerable experience flying SAR missions over glaciers and ice fields. The Harding Ice Field has its own weather due to the massive amount of ice. Altimeters don't always read accurately over these mammoth ice sheets and if the ceiling drops, you can suffer from spatial disorientation.

I cannot deduce what exactly happened to the plane, but it is obvious and logical that whatever happened was sudden and catastrophic because there was no call for help, and no other signal from the plane. If they had mechanical trouble, a call would have been made; if they were in severe icing, a call would have been made; if there was a disturbance or medical emergency inside the fuselage, a call would have been made.

What about an Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT)? At that time, they were not required by the FAA, but Alaska law required them as of September 6, 1972. That was one month prior to the fatal flight. In this case it is hard to say if that makes a difference or not. Back then ELT's worked maybe 1/2 of the time. If you go down in a glacier crevasse, an ELT won't help you at all.

The Harding Ice Field has chaotic

terrain concealed by a mantle of blowing and shifting snow across its surface. The glaciers are rippled with deep crevasses between steep mountain walls. The numerous terrain related hazards coupled with unpredictable weather changes make for higher risks of sudden catastrophic events when flying over it.

Another scenario for consideration would be a bird strike. If they hit a bird while ascending the glacier, it could cause loss of control of the aircraft.

So now what? If N1812H is in the Harding Ice Field or one of its glaciers, entombed in tons of ice and snow, how would we find it? Amazingly enough, there are existing examples of recent recovery operations of long-lost aircraft and passengers from glacial environments.

On November 22, 1952, an Air Force C-124 crashed with 52 personnel on board and was never heard from again. It went down on the Colony Glacier near Palmer, Alaska and then due to melting reappeared in 2012. Since that date most of the crash victims have been recovered and returned to their respective families.”

There have been a couple of planes recovered in the Swiss Alps that had been entombed in glaciers for many years. The melting back of these glaciers in recent years has exposed these old wrecks.

How would you recover N1812H in the Harding Ice Field? It can be done; in fact, it has already been done on another even bigger ice field

in Greenland. A group of pilots and aviation enthusiasts recovered a World War II P-38 Lightning plane from the ice after many years of entombment.

The loss of N1812H and its passengers on October 16, 1972, has haunted us long enough. We need to stop chasing our tails by clinging to the ridiculous notion that they flew through Portage Pass on the V-317 Airway on the fateful day. It is time to give some respect to Don Jonz for the experienced pilot he was, and to conduct a new search around the Harding Ice Field.

Obviously, we have the technology to do it, the logical question is when are we going to attempt to use that technology to locate N1812H?

DID YOU KNOW?

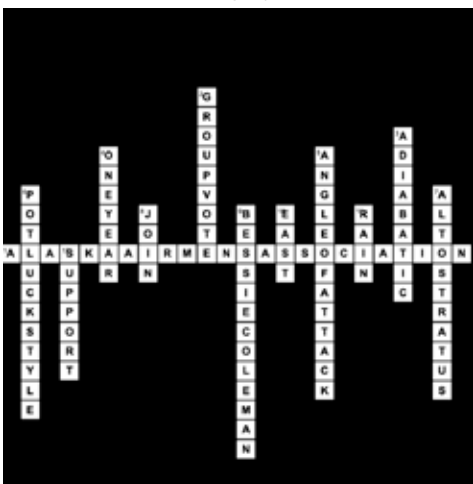
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ANSWER FOR SKY SISTERS
PAGE 10



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