

PCN Services – High Life *Newsletter, News, Events, Deaths, Illness Notices & PCN Ads & Calendar*. Note: Notices from major sections are distributed by separate email address to allow our subscribers the ability to customize and filter notices not desired.

Large web community for one of world's largest airlines

High Life

facebook

For all Delta people who have truly touched the *High Life!*

Off British Columbia view at dusk.

Group Section.....

Dear PCN (of over 2500 subscribers),

Mark's Remarks

100th issue!

Wow! Hard to believe this is the PCN's 100th HL. I didn't think I had it in me and I certainly didn't know if you had it in you, meaning whether you would stick with the network's effort or not. With over 2500 still actively subscribed that has impacted my thinking. Why do we stay connected? Because of the nice pictures on the HL header? Naw! Because of the rapid fire news dissemination? Nope. Sometimes the weeks are rather slow. Do we stay connected because of the future outcome of retirement issues? Well, partly! I think the real reason we stay connected with the PCN centers around the fact that we had a good job, some would say a great job. We are aviators at heart and enjoined by a company to accomplish a mission. What we did, with and for who we did it, keeps us together. And for that reason I am proud to serve this outstanding group of aviators and Delta employees.

When you stop and think about there are only a few things in life that you do a 100 times. There are only a relatively few things in life that I have done 100 times.

In our first 100 issues we have broken a few stories, highlighted a few important issues, shared a number of great posts, and had a few laughs. Here's to the next 100!

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Reminder for Email Changes:

I am happy to process your email change and keep you on our Google Group mailing list. Please be advised that Google Group has restricted my ability to manually ADD you to the group. Now all emails (whether new or updated) must be INVITED to the group. This is a similar way in which your are "invited" to Facebook and then must accept ad verify your email address. So when you change emails or a new member joins, be advised that you will now receive an invitation to join.

~~**PCN Ads — up and running!**~~
Temporary service suspension awaiting repair!

For all of you who have an item, service or offer to promote Ad packages as follows:

- FREE listings** - \$0 for 45 days.
Jobs offered, jobs wanted, Pets, items Wanted. Runs 45 days, includes images.
- Basic Listing** - \$5 for 60 days with multiple images.
- Silver** - \$10 for 120 days with multiple images.
- Gold** - \$25 for one year with multiple images.
- Platinum** - \$50 for 3 years with multiple images.

Every one submitting an Ad gets a private login and complete control over their ads. URL's and images are allowed and you will see it is a very nice format for entering online ads.

Check it out; just register and submit and get your item, thing wanted, service or house, posted. Its just that easy!

PCN Ads

Note: PCN Ads was developed to give our group and outlet to advertise in front of our exclusive and numerous members along with searchable on the www, and by so doing keeps our newsletter free from any profit or commercial link.

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Tools for our members:

- PCN Main Website: <http://pcn.homestead.com/home01.html>
- PCN Google Group archives: <http://groups.google.com/group/PilotCommunicationNet>
- PCN Ads – <http://pilotcommunication.net/Ads/> *Updates temporarily suspended*
- PCN Tool Bar (for IE browser) - <http://pcntools.ourtoolbar.com/>
- PCN Calendar - <http://pcn.homestead.com/Calendar.html>
- PCN specific emails: misc@pilotcommunication.net

pcn.calendar@gmail.com
signup@pilotcommunication.net
illness@pilotcommunication.net
death@pilotcommunication.net
ads@pilotcommunication.net
mark@pilotcommunication.net

News Section.....

Delta News (Recent stories of interest): [Yahoo](#), [AJC](#)

Delta to Fly Less in 2012

Zacks Equity Research, On Wednesday September 14, 2011, 10:45 am EDT

The second largest U.S. airline **Delta Air Lines Inc.** (NYSE: [DAL](#) - [News](#)) plans to trim its capacity by 2–3% next year followed by this year's capacity reductions. The cuts will be in markets where fare hikes are unable to deal with higher fuel prices.

The company's flight reduction strategy is well in force even this year. Management reaffirmed 4–5% capacity cut by the fourth quarter of this year. Domestic capacity will be slashed by 1–3% and international capacity by 4–6%. In the trans-Atlantic route, Delta Air Lines with its partners, Air France KLM and Alitalia, will reduce capacity by 7–9% by the end of the year.

Delta Air Lines is lowering its capacity to counter overall cost, including fuel price inflation. Further, Delta is trying to reduce its non-fuel expense by the end of the year and expects it to bring to the past year level. The company is offering voluntary buyouts to 55,000 of its workers. Moreover, Delta reduced its facility costs at 170 airport locations and 10 cargo locations with the aim of saving more than \$80 million annually.

The company will retire 140 less fuel-efficient planes from its fleet by the end of next year. Half of the expected fleet would be removed by this year, contributing \$250 million in maintenance savings in the second half. Besides, Delta will not replace new planes until 2013.

Last month, the company agreed to buy 100 planes from **Boeing Co** (NYSE: [BA](#) - [News](#)). The new planes will be delivered in 2013 and offers 15–20% extra fuel efficiency, keeping maintenance costs low.

Despite several initiatives taken to reduce fuel and maintenance cost, we believe Delta's growth remains restricted due to high unionization, leveraged balance sheet and competitive threats from its larger peers such as **United Continental Holdings Inc.** (NYSE: [UAL](#) - [News](#)), **AMR Corporation** (NYSE: [AMR](#) - [News](#)) and **Southwest Airlines Co.** (NYSE: [LUV](#) - [News](#)).

We are reiterating our long-term Neutral recommendation on Delta Air Lines. The stock retains the Zacks #3 (Hold) Rank for the short term.

Can The Airlines Continue To Fly High?

September 14, 2011

On Tuesday, US Airways ([LCC](#)) led a [major rally](#) in the airline sector as it announced positive September bookings and continued its plan to reduce seat capacity. CEO Scott Kirby said that despite what he hears everyday on television, he has yet to see any signs of a global economic slowdown. Bookings for the third quarter are flat to up over last year's period, and increased prices have the companies looking for mid single to low double digit revenue growth. On Wednesday, these companies continued to rise with the overall market, but that brings up a big question. Have you missed the rally, or is this just the start of a boom for the industry?

Below is a table that describes the rise we've seen over the past two days. Remember however, the Dow dropped 140 points off its highs into the close, so most of these airlines lost anywhere from 1.5% to 3% off their day's high.

Symbol	Monday's Close	Wednesday's Close	Change	52-Week Low	52-Week High
LCC	\$4.85	\$5.74	18.35%	\$4.68	\$12.26
AMR	\$3.27	\$3.55	8.56%	\$3.17	\$8.98
DAL	\$7.38	\$8.37	13.41%	\$6.41	\$14.54
UAL	\$17.96	\$20.13	12.08%	\$15.92	\$29.75
LUV	\$7.96	\$8.50	6.78%	\$7.79	\$14.32
JBLU	\$4.16	\$4.40	5.77%	\$3.86	\$7.60
ALK	\$54.28	\$59.54	9.69%	\$44.86	\$70.61

This quarter is looking good for the airlines, which may come as a surprise to many who think there is an economic slowdown. Also, Oil and Brent are still around the \$90 and \$110 levels, respectively, so airlines aren't getting any help there. This is fueled by the promise of top line, revenue growth. It remains to be seen whether or not these numbers can be translated to the bottom line, and I for one, do not think so. Just take a look at what analysts think. Despite revenues seen up 5-10% year over year for the quarter, most EPS estimates are down 30% to 50% from last year's period.

Read More: <http://seekingalpha.com/article/293753-can-the-airlines-continue-to-fly-high>

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Coming Soon: You Can Leave Your Shoes On

9/14/2011 @ 11:01AM

Starting this month, kids under 12 will no longer have to remove their shoes in airport security lines, saving time and hassle for their parents and the rest of us. Grownups may get their chance soon.

It's hard to believe that it's been almost 10 years since air travelers were mandated to remove their shoes for screening, after some dude - I'm not going to give him the satisfaction of mentioning his name - boarded a plane with plastic explosives in his.

Since then, "Have shoe bombs been used around the world?" asked the Transportation Security Administration's Administrator John Pistole. "No, they haven't." On the other hand, many travelers have come to view the shoes-off policy - and other screening procedures added since 9/11 - as a burden that causes delays with questionable payoff, particularly with children involved. Travelers in many other countries don't have to remove their shoes at all, and there hasn't be a single shoe-bombing in any of them either.

Read more: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/andrewbender/2011/09/14/coming-soon-you-can-leave-your-shoes-on/?partner=yahootix>

Finance Section ((Claims, PBGC, HCTC, Insurance, Planning, Tax, Estate) - section containing items with financial consequence to our group)):

From: [Patrick Virtue](#)

Date: 9/17/2011 11:03:10 AM

To: mark@pilotcommunication.net

Subject: 2007X

Hi Mark,

Thank you for your efforts. We all appreciate the newsletter.

Could you please post this or put me in touch with the guys who could help me. (Jim Munton, Jack Blaz, Dick Deeds, any others)

Thanks, Patrick Virtue pmvirtue@gmail.com 630-886-6973

Hi Guys,

Big Success!!!! then a reversal and AUDIT!!! on my 2007X amended return.

I filed my amended 2007X return in April through my own accountant and recieved a large refund in May. Then in August I was "randomly" audited for only the amended return. This agent reversed the earlier decision and is insisting on me returning the refund immediately. He also says that because this is a 2007 return the time to appeal is VERY limited.

I need your help. This agent demands supporting legal evidence or legal precedent or further reference to the tax code to support our case immediately. Maybe I missed something in my amended return. If I could at least get a copy of the letter Jim Munton got from the Western Regional Director's office, that would help. **If anyone can help, I would really appreciate it.** If I can fight and win this appeal it could help others with a new legal precedent for the future.

Please contact me at my email asap. pmvirtue@gmail.com

Thanks.

Patrick Virtue

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From: [Denis Waldron](#)

Date: 9/16/2011 5:19:00 PM

To: [Mark Sztanyo](#)

Subject: More on 2007 taxes

My Form 843 for 2007 (FICA and Medicare taxes on the medical settlement) done by Bill Whalen last January was denied by the Atlanta IRS District, and I appealed it myself when Bill Whalen stopped replying when he was ill (and since). The appeal was sent to a Plantation, Florida Appeals office. Speaking to the reviewing agent by phone yesterday (Betty R. Landau), she is turning down the appeal and sending a lengthy 7 page explanation as to why.

When questioned about how other Districts have accepted such appeals, the answer was they may have been below unknown dollar thresholds which did not get a review and were simply accepted. If this is true - congratulations to those who didn't get caught by the rough screen and received a rebate.

I don't know if this will hurt my chances on the year 2007 1040X Bill Whalen did last April to change the medical settlement from ordinary income to capital gains - no ruling either way on that, yet.

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From: [Phil Spivey](#)

Date: 9/12/2011 5:07:45 PM

To: [Misc PCN](#)

Subject: W.R. Whalen , irs

I am very happy to see that some pilots are getting their refund from the IRS. However, they dis allowed my amended return.

I have been trying to get in contact with Mr. Whalen for 4 months with no luck. I e-mailed, phoned, and faxed him and I have had no reply from him on what if any recourse I have now. Is there a way to get in contact with him?

Don P. Spivey

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Remaining financial items for retirees to watch:

After Aug 2007 these are retirement items remaining with financial consequence.

1. PBGC 2nd look re-calc at qualified annuity benefits - **completed 8/24/07**
2. PBGC make up lump payment for underpayments since termination: **most reported received 1/31/08**
3. **Final claim distribution by DAL through BSI – distributed at or around Mar 23, 2011.**

4. Class Action suit against DAL concerning 5-yr look back worth in excess of \$100 million - *withdrawn*
5. Final Benefit Determination Letters (BDL's) PBGC re-calc "determination" of qualified annuity (likely after claim stock sale) – *in process until end of year (only 45 days to appeal)* **Appeal extensions** generally granted in Nov 2010 now extended by our law firm for all to: revised to Feb 18, 2011 New Mar 18, 2011, April 29, 2011, July 29, 2011, Aug 29, 2011, **Oct 28, 2011**
6. Pension reinstatement/contribution request by DP3 representing the retired pilots. *very long shot....pending*
7. Roth IRA creation as per Worker, Retiree, and Employer Recovery Act of 2008—deadline June 22nd, 2009
8. Expiration of HCTC 80% premium subsidy will expire on December 31, 2010. *Action has continued 80% for Jan & Feb. Action expired and subsidy effective Mar 2011 is now back to 65%.*
9. Financial condition of the D&S Plan--a plan that pays benefits to eligible survivors of deceased pilots as well as to disabled pilots. A form 5500 for the D&S Plan is filed annually.
10. Formation of a VEBA Health Insurance plan by DP3 – VEBA has been created and in effect.

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Insurance (issues about health, life or disability that are of interest):

Pension:

DP3 Membership Drive Update 1

WE NEED YOUR HELP

September 18, 2011

We need your help contacting retirees who have not yet joined the appeals.

We don't have access to their addresses : Neither Delta or the PBGC will provide mailing lists or even names of the retirees who are not DP3 members. We have no way of contacting these individuals without your help.

Your help could save you money: There are at least 3500 retirees who have a great deal to gain from successful appeals. Their potential benefit increase conservatively averages \$1000 per month. Incredibly, only half of those 3500 are currently supporting the appeals. If we were to gain an additional 1000 members it would provide most, if not all, of the capital necessary to complete the appeals process. If additional dues were necessary in the coming years, the cost would be significantly less for each member.

Your help could strengthen our position in court: More members effectively conveys to the court the dissatisfaction of the retirees with the PBGC procedures.

You need to contact them now: We believe the October 28 date for formally filing the administrative appeals will hold. It is currently unclear whether these individuals will legally be able to join the appeals after that date.

Here is what you need to do: We will be sending out several letters over the next few weeks that will clearly state what is at stake for these individuals. We need for you to contact every retiree you can find an

address for and ask them to take the time to read the letters.

The first letter will follow this email: All you have to do is forward it. Or call retirees and read it to them. Or print it out and mail it to them.

We are contacted regularly by retirees who had no idea we existed or have been working on their behalf.

We are contacted regularly by retirees who are not supporting us because they are angry over issues that have nothing to do with the current DP3 board, the current DP3 legal team, or the current DP3 issues.

We have done all we can to contact retirees and explain what we are doing for them. Now we need your help to finish that job.

Sincerely,

Your DP3 Board of Trustees:

Will Buergey, Chairman

Wendell Lewis, Vice Chairman

Clarke Brant, Secretary

Roger Ross, Treasurer

Bill Caiazza

George Leatherbury

Rhea Nichols

Tom Seever

Kim Welch

Our web site address is www.dp3.org
Our fax numbers are **888-505-1242 & 678-493-8616**
Our email address for questions is contactus@dp3.org

All Delta Pilot Retirees Need to Read This Letter Before They Decide Not to Join DP3

FORWARD THIS LETTER TO EVERY RETIREE YOU KNOW

September 18, 2011

Dear _____,

Suppose in September of 2006 a man set up a scam that was costing you \$1,000 per month, every month for the rest of your life. That is \$12,000 a year that could be going to your grand children's education, or helping family members start a business, or just making your home more comfortable for your spouse and family. In ten years it represents \$120,000 not including interest. If you are 65 now and live to be 85 years old, it would represent \$240,000 in payments (plus \$60,000 in back payments for a total of \$300,000). That \$1,000 per month is less than the average reduction the PBGC is imposing on approximately 3,500 retired Delta pilots.

Suppose you were told that there were very solid legal arguments that could stop that man from taking that money away from your family - and that to join the multi million dollar legal action it would only cost \$1,500 initially, with the possibility that would be the total cost if all 3,500 of the people being scammed supported the court action.

Can you imagine not protecting your family's interest? Can you imagine not fighting to regain money taken from your family?

This is exactly where 3,500 pilot retirees find themselves. And only half of them have stepped up to join the action against the PBGC' policies that are taking that money from them.

It seems unfathomable that there would be that many retirees not stepping up on behalf of their families, and all the good they could do for them with that money - money they earned and was not taken from them by bankruptcy. It is solely due to PBGC procedures that many people, including DP3 and their attorneys, believe are clearly contrary to ERISA law.

It seems likely that these individuals are unaware of the following:

- 1- Your current DP3 board has worked tirelessly, and in some cases full time, for four years to prepare a legal challenge to the PBGC policies that are taking our benefits.
- 2- The best legal firm has been engaged to refine and present our arguments.
- 3- DP3 has studied past legal efforts made by airline groups and found two key flaws: in most cases they expected their professionals to gain an understanding of the complex issues involved without the help of pilots who had years of experience with those issues - and they all too often hired hungry attorneys who made promises that weren't commensurate with their skills. DP3 has carefully avoided both of these mistakes.
- 4- The DP3 attorneys are experts. They have argued cases before the Supreme Court. Yet they have worked with us to make it possible for you to be a named member of the appeals for little more than the cost of a single legal consultation were you to challenge your benefit alone. It is less than 1% of the potential gain if the challenges are successful.
- 5- Our arguments are very strong. We are confident they can be successful - if the courts will take the time and effort to understand the complex issues. That is the goal of our attorneys.
- 6- We cannot emphasize enough that the preparation that has gone into these challenges are unsurpassed. We have developed multiple challenges. We have applied pressure on the PBGC from several angles, and they are very aware of our potential for success.
- 7- If you are tired of the fight, we understand. We will do the fighting for you. All you need to do is join us, join the appeal, and sit back and enjoy your retirement.

So you can see why we find it difficult to believe that anyone who has taken the time to read this would forgo the opportunity to protect what has been taken from them and their families.

Sincerely,

_____ (sign your name)

Go to www.dp3.org for even more information about why you need to join the DP3 appeal.

As the PBGC appeals progresses the sensitivity of the information does as well. While the PCN has re-published many of DP3 general postings, we will refrain from re-publishing "private emails" in view of the nature of the process. So when there is a general update we will re-publish and when there is a private email we will help announce its existence.

To PCN subscribers these links are “hot” and will take you directly to the DP3 resource page or checklist for filing an appeal concerning your PBGC benefits.

Click for [PBGC Appeals Resource Page](#)

Or

[Appeal Checklist](#)

DP3 (login required)

Click to appeal your PBGC benefit

Call PBGC in DC- 1-800-400-7242

Link of explanation for BSW ([Benefit Statement Worksheet](#))

(Note: Must know your DP3 assigned passwords which cannot be shared in our newsletter!)

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Commercial Section.....

Investment (Legitimate firms that have helped our group are encouraged to contact PCN to add articles here):

Travel & Non-Revving (share a quick reco):

Life Section...

Misc Posts:

From: [George Chaudoin](#)

Date: 9/13/2011 3:40:21 PM

Subject: New Treatment for Hepatitis C

Dear family and friends,

On SEP 12th I was informed by the head of liver research at Mass.General Hospital in Boston that they have found a way to effectively cure Hep-C with a newly approved drug previously thought to be unuseable on liver transplant patients who have to be on immunosuppressant drugs (which I am) I expect to start the new drug regimen around the 1st of October. I was told that the first three months will be the worst and I shouldn't plan on doing much of anything.

By the New Year I hope to start feeling like a new man (in an old man's body) I may be on this new regimen for as long as 48 weeks, but hopefully less. This is really great news since the Hep-C virus has been trying to destroy my new liver, albeit slowly. Without this breakthrough, my new liver was destined to fail and another transplant was not an option.

Now that there is a way to cure Hep-C, millions of lives can potentially be saved and Hep-C patients will no longer have to get on a waiting list for a donor liver knowing that the odds of getting a donor liver are slim. This is going to be a lot harder for Lydia (a.k.a. Ima) than it is on me. But we both know we'll get through it.

Thought you'd like to know.

Best wishes,

Dick Eklund

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Michael Green

Email Skybear777@gmail.com

Issue Area - General

Comments - Regarding Capt. Phillips correction of Airlines to Air Lines. Who cares. Delta Air Lines died after the Bankruptcy This outfit is Dumpster Air Lines or Bus Lines Probably the worst airline benifit program in the US

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From: [C.D. Hurley](mailto:C.D.Hurley)

Date: 9/12/2011 11:30:16 AM

To: mark@pilotcommunication.net

Subject: Re; Bill Phillips letter

Bill,

You worry about the spelling of "Airlines". Come on!

You still fighting the war? I was happily employed before Delta came along, and MY COAT WAS THE COLOR MY EMPLOYER REQUIRED! Go bite a shrimp.

Dan Hurley (BOS)

Human Interest:

A Communication of the DAL MEC

September 17, 2011

This is Captain Buzz Hazzard, Communications Committee chairman for the Delta MEC on Saturday, September 17, 2011 with **one** item.

ITEM ONE: By now, many of you know of the terrible **crash at the 48th Annual National Championship Air Races**, also known as the Reno Air Races. At approximately 4:30 pm PDT yesterday, a P-51 Mustang crashed into a box seat area in front of the main grandstand for the races.

The National Championship Air Races are attended annually by a significant number of current and former Delta and Northwest pilots, and yesterday's crash was extremely close to an area occupied by many of our current and retired pilots and their families.

Miraculously, most of our pilots and their families were spared injury. Unfortunately, three of our pilots were injured (two active and one retired). One active pilot and one retired pilot have been hospitalized.

ALPA had a significant number of Critical Incident Response Program personnel on site, and they have been assisting in the aftermath of the crash for the last 24 hours.

If you or a family member attended the races and witnessed the crash and are in need of assistance (or if you know of someone in need of assistance), remember that you can call the Delta MEC Pilot Assistance Network (PAN) 24/7. The Pilot Assistance Network (PAN) was established to provide a source of support for pilots and families during difficult times. You can contact a pilot volunteer by dialing 1-800-USA-ALPA and asking the receptionist to transfer you to PAN. During non-business hours, press "7" at the main menu to transfer to a PAN volunteer.

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From: CaptGrumps@aol.com

Date: 9/17/2011 4:02:45 PM

To: btbairlines@bellsouth.net

Subject: Reno P-51

You can see in [this](#) pre-crash photo that the elevator trim tab is missing.

Good Read (Good book recommendation & [Community Author's](#) blurbs):

From: dbina <dbina@comcast.net>

Sent: Tue, Sep 13, 2011 1:55 pm

Subject: Read Please

Is Naval Aviation Culture Dead?

By John Lehman

The swaggering-flyer mystique forged over the past century has been stymied in recent years by political correctness.

We celebrate the 100th anniversary of U.S. naval aviation this year, but the culture that has become legend was born in controversy, with battleship admirals and Marine generals seeing little use for airplanes. Even after naval aviators proved their worth in World War I, naval aviation faced constant conflict within the Navy and Marine Corps, from the War Department, and from skeptics in Congress. Throughout the interwar period, its culture was forged largely unnoted by the public.

It first burst into the American consciousness 69 years ago when a few carrier aviators changed the course of history at the World War II Battle of Midway. For the next three years the world was fascinated by these glamorous young men who, along with the Leathernecks, dominated the newsreels of the war in the Pacific. Most were sophisticated and articulate graduates of the Naval Academy and the Ivy League, and as such they were much favored for Pathé News interviews and War Bond tours. Their casualty rates from accidents and combat were far higher than other branches of the naval service, and aviators were paid nearly a third more than non-flying shipmates. In typical humor, a pilot told one reporter: "We don't make more money, we just make it faster."

Landing a touchy World War II fighter on terra firma was difficult enough, but to land one on a pitching greasy deck required quite a different level of skill and sangfroid. It took a rare combination of hand-eye coordination, innate mechanical sense, instinctive judgment, accurate risk assessment, and most of all, calmness under extreme pressure. People with such a rare combination of talents will always be few in number. The current generation of 9-G jets landing at over 120 knots hasn't made it any easier.

Little wonder that poker was a favorite recreation and gallows humor the norm. In his book *Crossing the Line*, Professor Alvin Kernan recounts when his TBF had a bad launch off the USS *Suwanee* (CVE-27) in 1945. He was trying desperately to get out of the sinking plane as the escort carrier sped by a few feet away. Looking up, he saw the face of his shipmate, Cletus Powell (who had just won money from him playing blackjack), leaning out of a porthole shouting "Kernan, you don't have to pay. Get out, get out for God's sake." No wonder such men had a certain swagger that often irritated their non-flying brothers in arms.

Louis Johnson's Folly

By war's end more than 100 carriers were in commission. But when Louis Johnson replaced the first Secretary of Defense, Jim Forrestal—himself one of the original naval aviators in World War I—he tried to eliminate both the Marine Corps and naval aviation. By 1950 Johnson had ordered the decommissioning of all but six aircraft carriers. Most historians count this as one of the important factors in bringing about the invasion of South Korea, supported by both China and the Soviet Union. After that initial onslaught, no land airbases were available for the Air Force to fight back, and all air support during those disastrous months came from the USS *Valley Forge* (CV-45), the only carrier left in the western Pacific. She was soon joined by the other two carriers remaining in the Pacific.

Eventually enough land bases were recovered to allow the Air Force to engage in force, and more carriers were recommissioned, manned by World War II vets hastily recalled to active duty. James Michener's *The Bridges at Toko-Ri* and Admiral James Holloway's *Aircraft Carriers at War* together capture that moment perfectly. Only later was it learned that many of the enemy pilots were battle-hardened Russian veterans of World War II.

By the time of the armistice, the Cold War was well under way, and for the next 43 years, naval aviation was at the leading edge of the conflict around the globe. As before, aviators suffered very high casualties throughout.

Training and operational accidents took a terrible toll. Jet fighters on straight decks operating without the sophisticated electronics or reliable ejection seats that evolved in later decades had to operate come hell or high water as one crisis followed another in the Taiwan Strait, Cuba, and many lesser-known fronts. Between 1953 and 1957, hundreds of naval aviators were killed in an average of 1,500 crashes per year, while others died when naval intelligence gatherers like the EC-121 were shot down by North Koreans, Soviets, and Chinese. In those years carrier aviators had only a one-in-four chance of surviving 20 years of service.

Vietnam and the Cold War

The Vietnam War was an unprecedented feat of endurance, courage, and frustration in ten years of constant combat. Naval aviators flew against the most sophisticated Soviet defensive systems and highly trained and effective Vietnamese pilots. But unlike any previous conflict, they had to operate under crippling political restrictions, well known to the enemy.

Antiaircraft missiles and guns were placed in villages and other locations known to be immune from attack. The kinds of targets that had real strategic value were protected while hundreds of aviators' lives and thousands of aircraft were lost attacking easily rebuilt bridges and "suspected truck parks," as the U.S. government indulged its academic game theories.

Stephen Coonts' Flight of the Intruder brilliantly expressed the excruciating frustration from this kind of combat. During that period, scores of naval aviators were killed or taken prisoner. More than 100 squadron commanders and executive officers were lost. The heroism and horror of the POW experience for men such as John McCain and Jim Stockdale were beyond anything experienced since the war with Japan.

Naturally, when these men hit liberty ports, and when they returned to their bases between deployments, their partying was as intense as their combat. The legendary stories of Cubi Point, Olongapo City, and the wartime Tailhook conventions in Las Vegas grew with each passing year.

Perhaps the greatest and least known contribution of naval aviation was its role in bringing the Cold War to a close. President Ronald Reagan believed that the United States could win the Cold War without combat. Along with building the B-1 and B-2 bombers and the Peacekeeper missile, and expanding the Army to 18 divisions, President Reagan built the 600-ship Navy and, more important, approved the Navy recommendation to begin at once pursuing a forward strategy of aggressive exercising around the vulnerable coasts of Russia. This demonstrated to the Soviets that we could defeat the combined Warsaw Pact navies and use the seas to strike and destroy their vital strategic assets with carrier-based air power.

Nine months after the President's inauguration, three U.S. and two Royal Navy carriers executed offensive exercises in the Norwegian Sea and Baltic. In this and subsequent massive exercises there and in the northwest Pacific carried out every year, carrier aircraft proved that they could operate effectively in ice and fog, penetrate the best defenses, and strike all of the bases and nodes of the Soviet strategic nuclear fleet. Subsequent testimony from members of the Soviet General Staff attested that this was a major factor in the deliberations and the loss of confidence in the Soviet government that led to its collapse.

During those years naval aviation adapted to many new policies, the removal of the last vestiges of institutional racial discrimination, and the first winging of women as naval aviators and their integration into ships and squadrons.

'Break the Culture'

1991 marked the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the end of the Cold War. But as naval aviation shared in this triumph, the year also marked the start of tragedy. The Tailhook Convention that took place in September that year began a scandal with a negative impact on naval aviation that continues to this day. The over-the-top parties of combat aviators were overlooked during the Vietnam War but had become accidents waiting to happen in the postwar era.

Whatever the facts of what took place there, it set off investigations within the Navy, the Department of Defense, the Senate, and the House that were beyond anything since the investigations and hearings regarding the Pearl Harbor attack. Part of what motivated this grotesquely disproportionate witch hunt was pure partisan politics and the deep frustration of Navy critics (and some envious begrudgers within the Navy) of the glamorous treatment accorded to the Navy and its aviators in Hollywood and the media, epitomized by the movie *Top Gun*. Patricia Schroeder (D-CO), chair of the House Armed Services Committee investigation, declared that her mission was to "break the culture," of naval aviation. One can make the case that she succeeded.

What has changed in naval aviation since Tailhook? First, we should review the social/cultural, and then professional changes. Many but not all were direct results of Tailhook.

'De-Glamorization' of Alcohol

Perhaps in desperation, the first reaction of Pentagon leadership to the congressional witch hunt was to launch a massive global jihad against alcohol, tellingly described as "de-glamorization." While alcohol was certainly a factor in the Tailhook scandal, it was absolutely not a problem for naval aviation as a whole. There was no evidence that there were any more aviators with an alcohol problem than there were in the civilian population, and probably a good deal fewer.

As a group, naval aviators have always been fastidious about not mixing alcohol and flying. But social drinking was always a part of off-duty traditional activities like hail-and-farewell parties and especially the traditional Friday happy hour. Each Friday on every Navy and Marine air station, most aviators not on duty turned up at the officers' club at 1700 to relax and socialize, tell bad jokes, and play silly games like "dead bug." But there was also an invaluable professional function, because happy hours provided a kind of sanctuary where junior officers could roll the dice with commanders, captains, and admirals, ask questions that could never be asked while on duty, listen avidly to the war stories of those more senior, and absorb the lore and mores of the warrior tribe.

When bounds of decorum were breached, or someone became over-refreshed, as occasionally happened, they were usually taken care of by their peers. Only

in the worst cases would a young junior officer find himself in front of the skipper on Monday morning. Names like Mustin Beach, Trader Jon's, Miramar, and Oceana were a fixed part of the culture for anyone commissioned before 1991. A similar camaraderie took place in the chiefs' clubs, the acey-deucey clubs, and the sailors' clubs.

Now all that is gone. Most officers' and non-commissioned officers' clubs were closed and happy hours banned. A few clubs remain, but most have been turned into family centers for all ranks and are, of course, empty. No officers dare to be seen with a drink in their hand. The JOs do their socializing as far away from the base as possible, and all because the inquisitors blamed the abuses of Tailhook '91 on alcohol abuse. It is fair to say that naval aviation was slow to adapt to the changes in society against alcohol abuse and that corrections were overdue, especially against tolerance of driving while under the influence.

But once standards of common sense were ignored in favor of political correctness, there were no limits to the spread of its domination. Not only have alcohol infractions anonymously reported on the hot-line become career-enders, but suspicions of sexual harassment, homophobia, telling of risqué jokes, and speech likely to offend favored groups all find their way into fitness reports. And if actual hot-line investigations are then launched, that is usually the end of a career, regardless of the outcome. There is now zero-tolerance for any missteps in these areas.

Turning Warriors into Bureaucrats

On the professional side, it is not only the zero-tolerance of infractions of political correctness but the smothering effects of the explosive growth of bureaucracy in the Pentagon. When the Department of Defense was created in 1947, the headquarters staff was limited to 50 billets. Today, 750,000 full time equivalents are on the headquarters staff {*Sic – the Pentagon Web site says*

23,000 plus 3,000 contractors so maybe it's 75,000 Armed Forces wide?}.

This has gradually expanded the time and cost of producing weapon systems, from the 4 years from concept to deployment of Polaris, to the projected 24 years of the F-35.

But even more damaging, these congressionally created new bureaucracies are demanding more and more meaningless paperwork from the operating forces. According to the most recent rigorous survey, each Navy squadron must prepare and submit some 780 different written reports annually, most of which are never read by anyone but still require tedious gathering of every kind of statistic for every aspect of squadron operations. As a result, the average aviator spends a very small fraction of his or her time on duty actually flying.

Job satisfaction has steadily declined. In addition to paperwork, the bureaucracy now requires officers to attend mandatory courses in sensitivity to women's issues, sensitivity and integration of openly homosexual personnel, and how to reintegrate into civilian society when leaving active duty. This of course is perceived as a massive waste of time by aviators,

and is offensive to them in the inherent assumption that they are no longer officers and gentlemen but coarse brutes who will abuse women and gays, and not know how to dress or hold a fork in civilian society unless taught by GS-12s.

One of the greatest career burdens added to naval aviators since the Cold War has been the Goldwater-Nichols requirement to have served at least four years of duty on a joint staff to be considered for flag, and for junior officers to have at least two years of such joint duty even to screen for command. As a result, the joint staffs in Washington and in all the combatant commands have had to be vastly increased to make room. In addition, nearly 250 new Joint Task Force staffs have been created to accommodate these requirements. Thus, when thinking about staying in or getting out, young Navy and Marine aviators look forward to far less flight time when not deployed, far more paperwork, and many years of boring staff duty.

Zero-Tolerance Is Intolerable

Far more damaging than bureaucratic bloat is the intolerable policy of “zero-tolerance” applied by the Navy and the Marine Corps. One strike, one mistake, one DUI, and you are out. The Navy has produced great leaders throughout its history. In every era the majority of naval officers are competent but not outstanding. But there has always been a critical mass of fine leaders. They tended to search for and recognize the qualities making up the right stuff, as young JOs looked up the chain and emulated the top leaders, while the seniors in turn looked down and identified and mentored youngsters with promise.

By nature, these kinds of war-winning leaders make mistakes when they are young and need guidance—and often protection from the system. Today, alas, there is much evidence that this critical mass of such leaders is being lost. Chester Nimitz put his whole squadron of destroyers on the rocks by making mistakes. But while being put in purgatory for a while, he was protected by those seniors who recognized a potential great leader. In today’s Navy, Nimitz would be gone. Any seniors trying to protect him would themselves be accused of a career-ending cover-up.

Because the best aviators are calculated risk-takers, they have always been particularly vulnerable to the system. But now in the age of political correctness and zero-tolerance, they are becoming an endangered species.

Today, a young officer with the right stuff is faced on commissioning with making a ten-year commitment if he or she wants to fly, which weeds out some with the best potential. Then after winging and an operational squadron tour, they know well the frustrations outlined here. They have seen many of their role models bounced out of the Navy for the bad luck of being breathalyzed after two beers, or allowing risqué fore-castle follies.

‘Dancing on the Edge of a Cliff’

They have not seen senior officers put their own careers on the line to prevent injustice. They see before them at least 14 years of sea duty, interspersed with six years of bureaucratic staff duty in order to be considered for flag rank. And now they see all that family separation and sacrifice as equal to dancing on the edge of a cliff. One mistake or unjust

accusation, and they are over. They can no longer count on a sea-daddy coming to their defense.

Today, the right kind of officers with the right stuff still decide to stay for a career, but many more are putting in their letters in numbers that make a critical mass of future stellar leaders impossible. In today's economic environment, retention numbers look okay, but those statistics are misleading.

Much hand-wringing is being done among naval aviators (active-duty, reserve, and retired) about the remarkable fact that there has only been one aviator chosen as Chief of Naval Operations during the past 30 years. For most of the last century there were always enough outstanding leaders among aviators, submariners, and surface warriors to ensure a rough rotation among the communities when choosing a CNO. The causes of this sudden change are not hard to see. Vietnam aviator losses severely thinned the ranks of leaders and mentors; Tailhook led to the forced or voluntary retirement of more than 300 carrier aviators, including many of the finest, like Bob Stumpf, former skipper of the Blue Angels.

There are, of course, the armchair strategists and think-tankers who herald the arrival of unmanned aerial vehicles as eliminating the need for naval aviators and their culture, since future naval flying will be done from unified bases in Nevada, with operators requiring a culture rather closer computer geeks. This is unlikely.

As the aviator culture fades from the Navy, what is being lost? Great naval leaders have and will come from each of the communities, and have absorbed virtues from all of them. But each of the three communities has its unique cultural attributes. Submariners are imbued with the precision of engineering mastery and the chess players' adherence to the disciplines of the long game; surface sailors retain the legacy of John Paul Jones, David G. Farragut and Arleigh "31 Knot" Burke, and have been the principal repository of strategic thinking and planning. Aviators have been the principal source of offensive thinking, best described by Napoleon as "L'audace, l'audace, toujours l'audace!" (Audacity, audacity, always audacity!)

Those attributes of naval aviators—willingness to take intelligent calculated risk, self-confidence, even a certain swagger—that are invaluable in wartime are the very ones that make them particularly vulnerable in today's zero-tolerance Navy. The political correctness thought police, like Inspector Javert in *Les Misérables*, are out to get them and are relentless.

The history of naval aviation is one of constant change and challenge. While the current era of bureaucracy and political correctness, with its new requirements of integrating women and openly gay individuals, is indeed challenging, it can be dealt with without compromising naval excellence. But what does truly challenge the future of the naval services is the mindless pursuit of zero-tolerance. A Navy led by men and women who have never made a serious mistake will be a Navy that will fail.

Dr. Lehman was the 65th Secretary of the Navy and a member of the 9/11 Commission.

Event Announcements (Click here for [Calendar](#)): to post pcn.calendar@gmail.com

This is the PCN Calendar designed for you to publish your 2011 event dates. Please send them in to Kim.
Click here for our PCN [Calendar](#).

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Bum Lunch (DFW)
Wednesday September 21

Golden Corral
11AM
Good Food – Great Company
If you show up of course!

I can't make it as I have a "O" Scale National Model Railroad convention in IND that week,
But unless you're going to be in IND also or some other equally important event
No Excuse for missing the lunch

Roger Lewis

redsplitwindow@gmail.com

I am looking for.....” (Share a post of who you are seeking, if one sought answers....wallah):

Good Deal/Bad Deal (Share a quick good deal or bad deal you have found – no commercials here!)

Good Deal:

From: [Faunce John](#)
Date: 9/12/2011 9:26:56 AM
To: mark@pilotcommunication.net
Subject: FREE calls into USA
Mark,

I am an Apple iPad user (this works on iPad1 and iPad2) and there is an APP called iCall (FREE) that allows you to use your iPad as a telephone to call from any wi-fi connection in the world to a USA telephone number --- any USA telephone number.

We have used is successfully from Europe, Asia, and the Bahamas.

You load the APP call iCall.

You dial any USA telephone number (regular phone or cell phone)

You listen to a 30 second advertisement.

The phone rings, hopefully someone answers, and you talk through your iPad.

MAKE SURE YOUR VOLUME CONTROL IS SET TO HIGH...so you can hear the person on the other end.

John Faunce

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Bad Deal: (Seems to vary between stores. Can anyone help the Capt out how they got the Verizon Discount?)

From: [Bob Pike](#)

Date: 9/17/2011 10:16:37 AM

To: misc@pilotcommunication.net

Subject: Verizon Discount

Mark-

I tried to get a Delta discount from Verizon and after going through several levels of management was told that that there was NO discount for retirees, only for active employees. I did however produce a DD-214 and got a 15% veteran's discount.

--

Bob Pike

Hangar Flying (Share a bit of ole hangar flying with the net. Need a sim buddy? Use PCN for request) :

From: [Steve Rodmon](#)

Date: 9/14/2011 6:10:39 PM

To: mark@pilotcommunication.net

Subject: Fwd: FW: "Ode to Joy" in a jet fighter

....those were the DAYS, my friends, we thought they'd NEVER end, that they would last FOREVER and a day.....

Enjoy the ride and then try some of the other links for more on the daily thrills of flying a jet fighter.

This is a video depicting the pure beauty of free, unrestricted flying. To the pilots, you will love the familiar scenes. To those who aren't pilots, this may help explain why we loved flying so much.

As I watched this, I was reminded that it was never a "job". It was always a pleasure. There were

times when it was stressful, but overall it was pure love and joy -- even after the scary parts, because you either "lucked out", or you successfully managed the "issue"-- just more adrenalin in either case. It's hard to imagine another career as exciting, rewarding and satisfying.

When you go to this site, **[immediately go to Full Screen so the picture fills whatever size monitor you have](#)**. The music just adds more to the scenes.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_VtgDfL3Eg&feature=related

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From: [David L. Roberts](#)

Date: 9/13/2011 9:20:51 PM

To: [MY AVIATION PHOTO FANS](#)

Subject: Donald Trump's new airplane

Take a tour of Donald Trump's new Boeing 757

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UZq3iCn2y74&feature=related>

Nice digs.

+++++

From: Lorraine Morris <taildragger7w@aol.com>

To: dwskjerven <dwskjerven@aol.com>

Sent: Wed, Sep 14, 2011 7:46 pm

Subject: Ret Delta Pilots fly in pics

Here are a couple of air pics of the great lunch today!

Lorraine & Ken Morris

(great mow job!)





Political (food for thought):

Humor/Sobering or Fun (Share some humor with the net):

I think this has been around for awhile so perhaps you have received it before. In case you have never seen it, I didn't want you to miss it. Happy travels the next vacation on this airline!! Sherill

This one is pretty cute. <http://dauckster.posterous.com/Lutheran-airlines-fg-audio-only>

I think it is Tim Conway.

Thanks Paul:

A College Professor said, "If GOD really exists then let him knock me off my chair." Nothing happened. The class was quiet. He said, "I'll give it 2 more minutes."

A Soldier stood up, punched him in the face knocking him out and off the chair.

As the Professor came to he looked at his student and asked, "WHY DID YOU DO THAT?"

The soldier said, "GOD was busy protecting my buddies that are fighting for your right to say and do stupid stuff like this sooo... HE SENT ME!"

Mark

Mark Sztanyo (Stăn'yō), PCN Dir & HL Editor

[Pilot Communication Net](#) from Aug 2009

[Contact the Net](#)

Life on earth will soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last!

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Delta Museum & Fly-in information - <http://www.deltamuseum.org>
Delta Pioneers - <http://www.deltapioneersinc.com/>
Delta Golden Wings - <http://www.deltagoldenwings.com/>
Delta Retiree Connection - <http://www.dlretiree.info>
Delta Retirement Committee - <http://www.dalrc.org/>
DAL Pilots DDPSA - <http://www.ddpsa.com/>
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