

NOVEMBER 2024

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NOVEMBER 2024

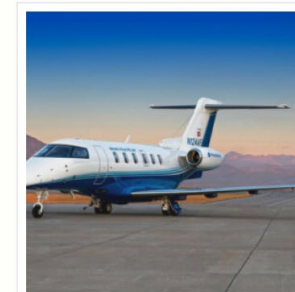
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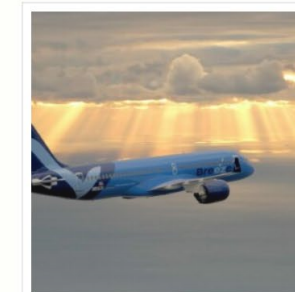
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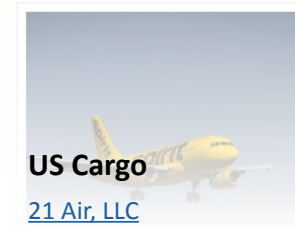
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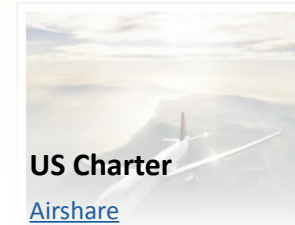


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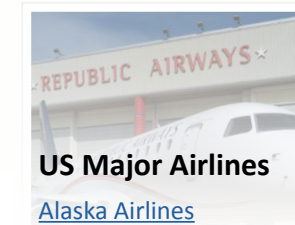


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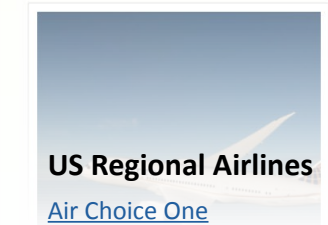
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The Grid (contract comparisons, pay charts, company details, etc.) has moved online. Click on the airlines above to go directly to that airline's information, or go to www.AeroCrewNews.com/go/thegrid.



Dear readers,

As we approach the end of the year, we are also getting closer to our 2025 photo contest! I'm excited to announce that TravelPro has agreed to give away a set of luggage to our first-place runner-up!

If you haven't yet voted for which Bose Aviation headset we should select as our grand-prize winner's gift, [click here](#) to vote.

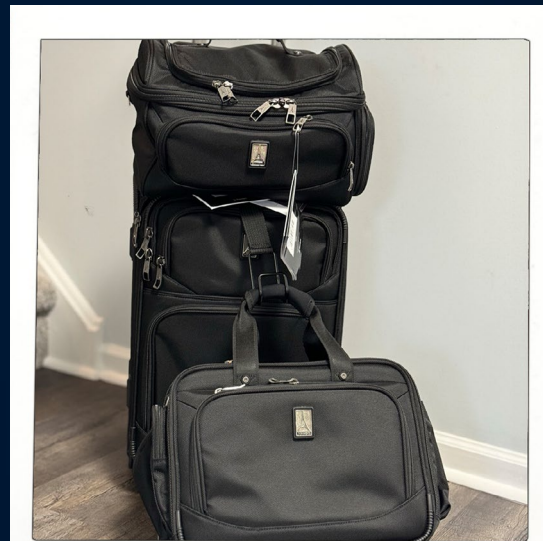
We are still accepting sponsors for our 2025 Photo Contest. If you are interested, please email us at info@aerocrewnews.com and use "photo sponsor" as your subject line. Every year, our photo contest garners more and more attention. We always look forward to it.

I encourage you to read this month's feature about the efforts of [The Pink Jet](#) to promote awareness and increase understanding of breast cancer.

Fly Safe,

Craig D. Pieper

Craig D. Pieper



Travel Pro Luggage
2025 Photo Contest Runner-Up Prize



About the Publisher ✈️

Craig Pieper is the Publisher and Founder of Aero Crew News. Craig obtained his Bachelors of Science in Aeronautical Science, along with a minor in Aviation Weather, from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in 2001. Craig is also a captain for a major airline with a type rating in the Boeing 737 & Embraer 145 and has logged over 8,000 hours of flying time since his introductory flight on November 14th, 1992.

October 2024

What you may have missed in October

Feature – Bravo Golf introduced three new commemorative watches.

Aero Medical – Mental health issues for military aviators has its own unique aspects.

Baggage – Tips to employ to ensure that your mindset is adjusted for growth.

Business Vector – Compensation is a complex subject, so we have an expert for you.

Coffee & Pretzels – This cartoon will elicit a relatable chuckle!

Fitness – Our guru examined the downsides, upsides and ough-sides of fitness and nutrition.

Grey Matter – The "disaster" series continued with a failed line check.

Knowledge Base – VMC and Angle of Attack are explained.

Money – Get some sound advice about prioritizing your retirement strategies.

Mortgage – Learn what the lender has control over as you shop for a mortgage.

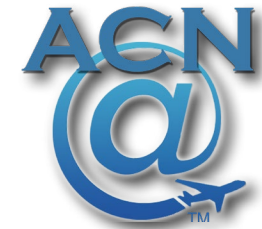
Perspectives – Making sound decisions to ensure your flight students success.

Product Review – Craig, ACN publisher, summarized his recent reviews of Bose headsets.



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Frontier Pilots Overwhelmingly Vote to Strike

Frontier Airlines pilots, represented by the Air Line Pilots Association, Int'l (ALPA), have concluded their strike authorization ballot announced on Sept. 30, 2024. With 97% of pilots participating, 99% of the Frontier pilots voted in favor of authorizing a strike if necessary, signaling their readiness to act should negotiations with Frontier... [Read More](#)



Southwest Airlines Reports Third Quarter 2024 Results

Bob Jordan, President, Chief Executive Officer, & Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors, stated, "It's an exciting time for us as we execute on our 'Southwest. Even Better.' plan outlined last month at Investor Day. The transformational plan represents a culmination of the dedication and hard work of our... [Read More](#)



United Launches Largest Winter Schedule Ever with a Focus on Africa, Southern Europe, & Latin America Plus Ski and Sun Destinations Across the U.S.

After a record-setting summer season with nearly 48 million customers traveling with United... [Read More](#)



American Airlines reports third-quarter 2024 financial results

American Airlines Group Inc. (NASDAQ: AAL) reported its third-quarter 2024 financial results, including: Record third-quarter revenue of \$13.6 billion, third-quarter net loss of \$149 million, or (\$0.23) per share... [Read More](#)



JetBlue Announces Third Quarter 2024 Results

JetBlue Airways Corporation (NASDAQ: JBLU) reported its financial results for the third quarter of 2024. [Read More](#)



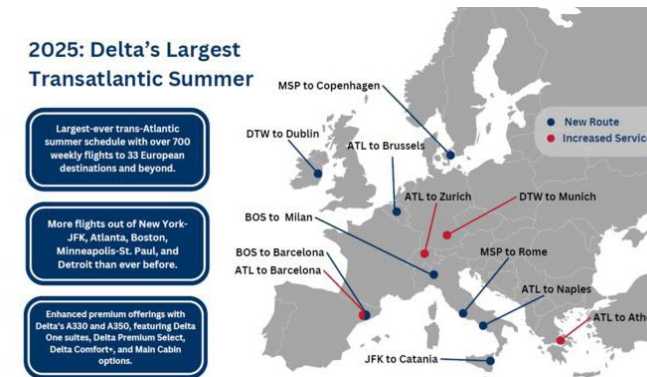
Boeing Reports Third Quarter Results

The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] recorded third quarter revenue of \$17.8 billion, GAAP loss per share of (\$9.97) and core loss per share (non-GAAP)* of (\$10.44)... [Read More](#)



United Airlines Announces Third-Quarter 2024 Financial Results: Exceeds Earnings Per Share Expectations

United Airlines (UAL) reported third-quarter 2024 financial results. The company had pre-tax earnings of \$1.3 billion, with a pre-tax margin of 8.7%... [Read More](#)



Scandi Summer: Delta launches first-ever nonstop Minneapolis-St. Paul to Copenhagen

Delta is increasing connectivity to Europe with the addition of a brand-new nonstop service from its hub in Minneapolis-St. Paul (MSP) to Copenhagen (CPH) starting May 2025, operating three times weekly... [Read More](#)



Delta Air Lines announces September quarter 2024 financial results

Delta Air Lines (NYSE: DAL) reported financial results for the September quarter and provided its outlook for the December quarter. Highlights of the September quarter, including both GAAP... [Read More](#)



Emirates SkyCargo to Expand Fleet, Capacity with Five More Boeing 777 Freighters

Boeing and Emirates SkyCargo announced an order for five more of the world's largest and longest-range twin-engine freighter, building on its earlier purchase of five 777 Freighters... [Read More](#)



United Express Carrier Mesa Air Flight Attendants Begin Federally Mediated Negotiations, Work to End Tiers in Aviation

Flight Attendants at United Express carrier Mesa Air, represented by the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA (AFA), are ramping up their fight for a fair contract as they enter the first session of federally mediated... [Read More](#)



Global Transport Workers Unite Against Single-Pilot Operations

This week, the world's leading transport authority, the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), joined the fight against reduced crew operations in commercial airline transport and committed to using all appropriate resources to advocate worldwide against safety regulators'... [Read More](#)



Southwest Airlines Comments on Elliott Management’s Special Meeting Request

Southwest Airlines Co. yesterday confirmed that Elliott Investment Management L.P. requested a Special Meeting of Shareholders to consider Elliott’s proposals, including to remove without cause eight members of Southwest’s... [Read More](#)



American Airlines celebrates tentative approval of nonstop flight between San Antonio International Airport and Washington Reagan National Airport

American Airlines received tentative approval yesterday to begin a round-trip daily flight between San... [Read More](#)



United Adds Eight New Destinations in Largest International Expansion in its History

United Airlines announced the largest international expansion in its history with service to eight new cities. Starting in May 2025, United will launch five new nonstop flights* from its hub in Newark/New York to destinations no other U.S... [Read More](#)



Alaska Airlines supercharges Mileage Plan for 2025 with enhanced benefits and choices including new ways to earn elite status faster than ever

The most generous loyalty program in the industry is about to reward our members with even more. Beginning in January, Alaska Airlines’ award-winning Mileage Plan is launching elevated benefits... [Read More](#)



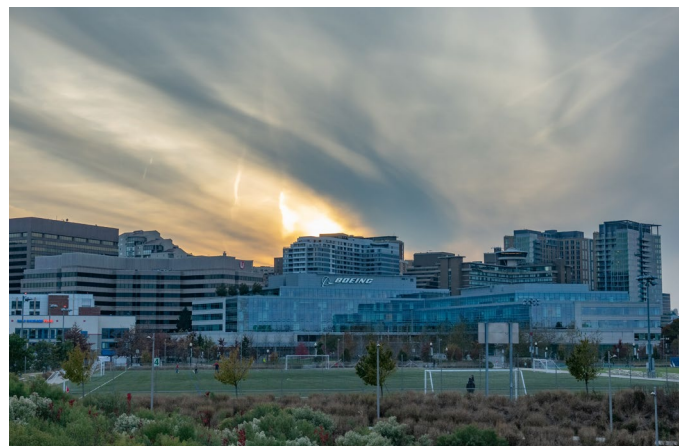
JetBlue Expands Caribbean Network with Flights to St. Vincent and the Grenadines Taking Off

JetBlue announced it has officially launched service between New York’s John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) and Argyle International Airport (SVD), with the first flight arriving in St. Vincent and the... [Read More](#)



“Huge Mistake”: Flight Attendants on United Airlines’ Stock Buyback Announcement

The Association of Flight Attendants-CWA (AFA) International President Sara Nelson and United AFA President Ken Diaz released the following statement on United Airlines’ stock buyback announcement... [Read More](#)



Boeing CEO Message to Employees on Positioning for the Future

Boeing President and CEO Kelly Ortberg shared the following message with all employees... [Read More](#)



Delta resumes Los Angeles-Shanghai nonstop service in June 2025

Delta will relaunch nonstop service between Los Angeles (LAX) and Shanghai (PVG) in June 2025*, using its state-of-the-art Airbus A350 equipped with the latest onboard amenities... [Read More](#)



Alaska Airlines inaugurates service on five new routes

Alaska Airlines is kicking off five new nonstop routes. Beginning today, guests can travel between Las Vegas and both San Diego and Santa Rosa/Sonoma County, and between Los Angeles and both Pasco, Washington, and Reno. We're also resuming our nonstop service between Portland and Atlanta. [Read More](#)



Captain Standard



Captain Velcro Closure



Co-Pilot Standard



Co-Pilot Velcro Closure

Thank you for your interest in Christmas Epaulets. John Knutson was a veteran of the United States Army, pilot for North Central, Republic, and Northwest Airlines who lost his battle with stomach cancer in 1997 at the age of 56. John's widow Mary got the idea to start making Christmas Epaulets. The money started to come in and she decided that all proceeds should go to the Chetek-Weyerhaeuser Scholarship Foundation in John's memory as he was a 1959 graduate of Chetek High School. As of 2015, recognizing John's patriotic sense of country and service, all proceeds will be shared between Snowball Express and the CWSF.

All epaulets are made locally and packaging is handled by the students at CW schools.

All profits go to Snowball Express and the general fund of the CWSF.

The Knutson family, CWSF, and Snowball Express, hope that you will bring yourself and many others smiles and happy thoughts with the spirit of Christmas as you wear this reminder of the season as a tribute to our military heroes and their families, a patriotic pilot, veteran, and a great man.



Epaulets are \$20.00/pair + \$5.50 shipping & handling



Chetek-Weyerhaeuser Scholarship Foundation

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www.christmasepaulets.com

Christmas Epaulets are available at Crew Outfitters stores at DFW and IAH airports Any questions? Please contact Tim Knutson at info@christmasepaulets.com



GARY SINISE FOUNDATION

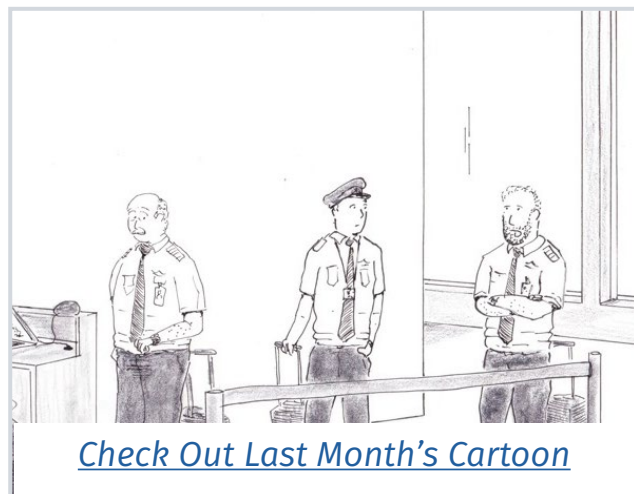
SNOWBALL EXPRESS

coffee & pretzels

Greg Kaley



What am I doing during our two-hour sit? Meh. I'm gonna swing by terminal 3 to look for Atlantic Gulf pilots that I can walk past and ignore.



[Check Out Last Month's Cartoon](#)



About the Author

Greg Kaley is a pilot with a major airline who also happens to be a cartoonist. He started the cartoon "Coffee & Pretzels" in 2016. After graduating from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (Prescott Campus), he flight-instructed and subsequently... [Read More...](#)



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Aviation as a Force for Good

Using unique skills and resources to benefit others

WRITTEN BY: JOHN McDERMOTT



Soon after Hurricane Helene rolled through the Florida panhandle, Georgia, and the Carolinas, I was relieved to see pilots along the east coast rush to the rescue. I am quite privileged to be in an industry filled with people so willing and ready to donate significant time, resources, energy, and talent to helping people in need after major disasters, during medical treatments, or in times of crisis.

Aviation is unique in that the shared experiences of people who fly push them to be present for others no matter the circumstances. I have routinely seen pilots, aviators, ground crew, etc. rush to others' aid to lift them up and support them in one way or another, whether it be donating flight time, contributing to fundraisers, or spreading the word on safety practices and procedural changes that emerge for the betterment of our profession and industry.

The freedom to fly is a privilege that I too often underestimate. While on an IFR-training flight, my student remarked on how few people alive today—and over the course of history, for that matter—have seen the tops of clouds. In an undeniable way, flying helps me appreciate the beauty of life, the world around me, and the relationships I hold dear. This appreciation is expanded greatly by my interactions with the aviation professionals around me. I am consistently impressed by the smiling faces of FBO linemen when I come through on training flights, the grace and flexibility of pilot examiners, and the welcoming hands of people from desk workers to professional pilots flying multimillion-dollar jets.

I think part of the reason all this is true is that understanding the implications of what aviation professionals do on a daily basis force everyone to appreciate the beauty of the world around them, too. I have yet to meet a

single pilot for whom the risk of flying does not instill a deep, fundamental respect for and love of life, thereby inspiring a strong desire to love and support other people in a deeper, more enlightened sense. The same is said for appreciating natural beauties and wonders—the privilege of seeing the world from a new perspective in many cases challenges pilots to protect and nurture their environments and beloved spaces.

I am very glad I have the resources and skills to participate in this culture. It is not often people get to use their passions to make the world a better place, and I am very lucky to have the ability to do so.

Equally, aviation has introduced me to a variety of people, all of whom have unique perspectives and skills, furthering the wide reach I see regularly in aviation. I find that my colleagues tend to take their skills far beyond the purview of flying; not only do people

use their flying to help others, but they also seek additional opportunities outside of the aviation world to continue their commitment to others.

Whether or not flying and aviation are involved in the support that aviators and aviation professionals provide others, I find that flying has a material benefit to how people see the world around them and how they use their skills and tools. I am greatly inspired by the genuine care I see people offer others, and I am looking forward to supporting those around me in greater ways throughout my life.



About the Author ✈️

John McDermott's passion for aviation began in a Michigan bookstore when he found a story about a chance encounter between enemy pilots during World War II. Soon, after watching countless hours of fighter jets and traffic from his home near O'Hare International Airport, he was hooked forever.. [Read More...](#)

Disaster on the Road, Pt. 11

Failed breathalyzer or drug test

WRITTEN BY: RICHARD SWINDELL



In October, we walked through what to do when faced with a failed training event or line check. This month, we are talking about something that truly might be career ending—a failed breathalyzer or drug test.

Before we get started, due to the sensitive nature of this article, we need to state a few things up front. First, we are not attorneys and this definitely does not constitute legal advice. Second, we are not medical professionals, so this is not intended to diagnosis nor treat. Third, this article is not meant to judge—we are pilots and have seen friends and colleagues lose not only their careers, but in some cases their freedoms, their families, and their lives. Please read this article for it might help you or someone you know.

In this industry, if we are involved in an incident or accident we can expect to

complete an alcohol and drug test (see [Grey Matter July 2024](#)). We also know that we are required to submit to random drug and alcohol testing via breathalyzer or urinalysis (UA). Typically, this event occurs just before or immediately after a flight where a badged company employee (or local law enforcement official) notifies you of the requirement to submit to a test. If you refuse, the company human resources employee will, per the U.S. Department of Transportation, immediately report this to management, who will in turn suspend you and notify the FAA of your refusal. If requested by law enforcement and you refuse, they will probably arrest you. Either way, the FAA considers a refusal a failed test and will issue an emergency revocation of your medical and pilot certificates. The airline will initiate a formal investigation and likely move to termination proceedings. Basically, the same thing will happen if you

blow positive or the specimen you provide for the UA is “hot.” Furthermore, if you are unable to provide a sample for a UA or not provide enough of a specimen within a certain period, (usually two hours), this will also be viewed as a refusal, initiating the same process.

Alcohol and substance abuse are not new to piloting, the airline industry, or indeed life, but the scope of this article is too short to dive into all of this. Yet from a 2022 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, following are a few relevant statistics.

- Nearly 62% of U.S. adults routinely consume alcohol.
- 24% of these reported binge drinking in the previous 30 days (defined by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism as having four or more drinks for a woman, and five or more drinks for a man, in about a two-hour period resulting in a blood alcohol content [BAC] of 0.08% or higher).
- 9.4% of those surveyed between ages 21-25 reported high intensity usage, which is double that of binge drinking patterns.
- 11.2% have a diagnosed alcohol-use disorder (AUD), where one in 12 are men and one in 25 are women.

If you missed it, a binge-drinking BAC of 0.08% is twice the “allowed” FAA limit of 0.04% for U.S. airline pilots—though you are likely to be in hot water at 0.02%. If you fly internationally, the allowance in many countries is much stricter, especially in the U.K. where they maintain a zero-tolerance policy for anything other than 0.0% BAC.

Though there is no evidence to suggest that alcohol use and abuse is either higher or lower for professional pilots than the national average, since 2017 the FAA has indicated a continuing upward trend for pilots testing positive for banned substances including alcohol.

For pilots who do drink (and as a reflection of the national population, this means most of us) we know the rules and consequences for non-compliance. So why do pilots drink at all and how does failing a breathalyzer happen?

For insight into why pilots drink, the answer is generally no different than for any other person (or professional) who chooses to do so—usually doing so responsibly: to socialize, relax, and cope. For these first two motives though, the piloting profession is unique in that flight-crew members often do not know each other or know each other well before being assigned to work together; thus, getting together on an overnight for a drink is a routine practice in the industry. Also, because of frequent disruptions to sleep and circadian cycles, some pilots may turn to alcohol to wind down and to help them sleep. As for coping, and despite any beliefs held by the FAA to the contrary, pilots suffer from stress, anxiety, and even depression, and as a result may, as many others do, turn to alcohol to numb them.

As for failing a breathalyzer, the surface answer is simple: the pilot drank to excess and failed to allow enough time for it to be metabolized out of the body and got caught.

Does it matter whether this was a routine night for the pilot or a one-off bad decision to over drink? To the FAA it doesn't matter.

Yet, this modest explanation does ignore a couple of issues. First, the FAA rule is "eight hours bottle to throttle" (with no residual effects, of course, which means no hangover). This little regulatory jingle may have inadvertently led generations of pilots down the path of, "As long as I stop drinking eight hours before my flight, I'm legal," which may or may not be the case. Depending on the timeframe and amount consumed, it is not only possible, but quite likely that eight hours is simply not enough to be at or under 0.04%, much less 0.0% in the morning, even for a non-binge-drinking pilot. This is why many airlines have shifted to ten, twelve, or more hours between drinking and flying. Not blaming the FAA here, but pilots should have a better understanding of the relationship between drinks-time-metabolism for their own bodies. But if you are regularly timing it down to the minute before stepping into the hotel van, you could be in for a surprise. Second, the pilot personality may actually be a contributing factor to overdrinking because professional pilots are really good at controlling their emotions, blocking anxiety, and suppressing fear—which are great for handling tense situations and emergencies, but their ability to recognize the warning signs of excessive drinking and even dependency might be subdued.

All this leads us to what to do if you have an untreated or unmanaged abuse disorder, or

if you just made a poor decision and drank to excess on the overnight and now there is a person with a badge and a clipboard pointing to you. (By the way, if this situation worries you in any way, then you know why, and you should seek assistance as soon as possible. See the end of this article for some helpful resources.)

Refusing a test will definitely put you on the path to career derailment, and possibly jail, depending on the circumstances. Announcing you have a problem and need help is a great first step, but this is not really the time nor place, and you will still have to take the test or refuse—but either way the path is the same. So, take the test and then call your union representative as soon as possible. Tell them about the test and that you need substance abuse assistance and need to speak with someone. They will get you in touch with the appropriate resources. Ideally, you do this before being confronted with a random drug test, but sadly, it does not often happen this way. The union can also connect you with an attorney because you will almost certainly need one.

The next several hours and days are going to be what they are, but if you have come to the realization that you have an abuse and dependency issue, and if your airline offers or provides access to a Human Intervention and Motivation Study (HIMS) program, this rehabilitation track can preserve your career and your life. With successful completion of this program, FAA approval for a special-issuance medical certificate, continued career-

long monitoring (drug testing), and after having re-earned all piloting certificates again, starting with private pilot (plus the associated costs to do so); you can be welcomed back as a professional pilot.

Note: Self-disclosure of an abuse and dependency issue in **advance** of a random test will not usually result in emergency revocation of pilot and medical certificates.

Finally, though this article focuses on alcohol, we have not forgotten about other drug use. Fortunately, hard drugs do not seem to be a widespread issue in the professional-pilot sector, however abuse of prescription pain medications has been on the FAA's radar for some time now. If you are found in possession of an expired prescription, a prescription that is not yours, or determined to be under the influence of one while on duty, expect to be prosecuted and the same issues and processes will likely apply.

A couple of other things you should be aware of before we close: 1) Cannabidiol (CBD - oil, chewables, vape, lotions, etc.) is considered a supplement by the FAA, and though not banned per se for pilot use, if you come up "hot" on a test, CBD is not a defense, and the FAA will proceed as outlined above. Remember, these are not controlled products and even if the product is labeled, "No THC," or "THC Free," there is no guarantee of this. 2) If you are considering having a joint during that month-long vacation away from flying, understand that THC is fat-soluble, which means it is absorbed by adipose tissue in

the body and may not necessarily clear your system in a week, two, three, or four. Although marijuana has become decriminalized in many states for medicinal and personal use, on a federal level and thus in the eyes of the FAA, it remains illegal. Best to avoid it until after you retire.

Thanks for reading and we'll see you here next month for our final installment of our Disaster on the Road series.

- For a more in-depth discussion of drugs and alcohol along with abuse and dependency disorders review the associated chapter in our book *The Airline Transition Manual* (www.airlinetransition.org).
- For assessment and dependency support contact your pilot union or pilot group for assistance.
- For ALPA and Canadian pilots, confidential support is available at 309-777-2572
- Alcoholics Anonymous www.aa.org
- Narcotics Anonymous www.narcotics.com
- Birds of a Feather International www.boaf.org
- Human Intervention Motivation Study (HIMS) www.himsprogram.com
- US Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) www.samhsa.gov / 1-800-662-HELP (4357)
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 800-273-8255



About the Author

Richard Swindell left active-duty military service and transitioned to the airline industry where he flies and works as a line check airman for a major airline. [Read More...](#)

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Understanding The Mental Health in Aviation Act of 2024



WRITTEN BY: SHANNON TORRES

In an effort to improve mental health support in Aviation, Congress Representatives Sean Casten (D-IL) and Lori Chavez-DeRemer (R-OR) have introduced [The Mental Health in Aviation Act of 2024](#). This proposed bi-partisan bill addresses the need for better mental health care in aviation, particularly for pilots and air traffic controllers. Mental health issues can affect anyone, but for those of us in high-stress environments like aviation, the stakes are even higher.

Despite this, many of us hesitate to seek help due to concerns about medical and career impact. Congressman Casten's goal with [The Mental Health in Aviation Act](#) is to break down those barriers.

Key Goals of the Act

The Mental Health in Aviation Act of 2024 is designed to encourage pilots and air traffic controllers to prioritize their mental health

by addressing several key areas based on the [recommendations](#) put forward by the Mental Health and Aviation Medical Clearances Committee on April 1st of this year:

Revising FAA Regulations & Ensuring Confidentiality

The bill calls on the FAA to update its regulations so that aviation professionals who disclose a mental health condition are treated fairly and don't have to fear losing their jobs. It ensures mental health care stays confidential and non-punitive, encouraging pilots to seek help without worrying about automatic grounding.

Annual Review of Policies: It asks that the FAA conduct yearly reviews of its mental health policies, including which medications can be safely prescribed to pilots and ATC. They will also look at improving the special issuance process to make it more supportive and efficient.

Increased Mental Health Training for Aviation Medical Examiners: The bill would provide funding to recruit and train more AMEs, including mental health specialists, with a goal of \$13.74 million allocated annually from 2025 to 2028.

Public Awareness Campaign: To combat the stigma around mental health in aviation, the bill would dedicate \$1.5 million a year from 2025 to 2028 to public campaigns. The campaign would educate aviation professionals on the importance of mental health care and highlight available resources!

Consultation and Collaboration: Lastly, it would also require the FAA to consult with stakeholders including pilots, ATC, AMEs, and Aviation Organizations. By working closely with these groups, the FAA would create regulations that not only protect aviation safety but also support the mental well-being of the workforce.

Why It Matters

Aviators face minor and significant stress on a fairly frequent basis. When left unresolved or untreated, even the most minor of stressors can lead to mental health issues that, if left untreated, could affect safety. But many pilots avoid seeking help for fear that one "wrong" word could end their careers. The bill seeks to change this, by encouraging openness, protecting confidentiality, and ensuring that mental health care IS accessible without unnecessary career consequences. In short, [The Mental Health in Aviation Act](#)

[of 2024](#) aims to ensure that mental health care is no longer a career barrier but a necessary and supported part of being an aviation professional. With this act, we are acknowledging the importance of mental health and taking meaningful steps to protect those who protect us.

Call to Action

Your voice matters!! Take a moment to support The Mental Health in Aviation Act by sending a direct message to your legislator via the following link: [My Voice Matters](#). Together, we can help create safer and more supportive skies for everyone!

Need Someone to Talk To?

If you ever need someone to talk to, I'm here to support you. With a background in counseling and aviation, I offer a safe, confidential space, and coaching is 100% medically non-reportable! Feel free to email me at Shannon@aviationconversations.com or schedule a *FREE* 15-minute Consultation at <https://calendly.com/aviationconversations/consultation>.

Because everyone deserves a safe space to land, including you!

Blue skies,
[Shannon Torres](#)



About the Author ✈️

Shannon Torres, a former CACREP-Accredited Counselor, embarked on a unique career journey by transitioning to aviation in 2019. During her tenure with a 121 carrier, she became acutely aware of the unseen struggles and stressors faced by pilots. [Read More...](#)

5 Tips and Tricks to Improve Learning Effectiveness

WRITTEN BY: REINI THIJSSSEN



Whether studying for recurrent training, learning a new maneuver, preparing for an interview, or seeking personal development, employing effective learning methods can significantly boost your retention and comprehension. Learning is a dynamic process that can be improved through various techniques and strategies. Here are five research-based tips and tricks to help improve your learning experience.

1. Learning Through Personalization

One of the most effective ways to deeply understand and retain information is to relate it to personal experiences and interests. Research has shown that personally relevant information is better remembered because it is tied to existing neural networks in the brain. When learning something new, try to connect it to things you already know or find ways to apply it in your own life. For example,

if you are learning a new language, practice by describing familiar places or situations. Or, when learning new aviation regulations, contextualize them by linking them to past flights or specific operational challenges you have faced. This approach improves comprehension and makes the learning process more engaging and memorable.

2. Undivided Attention: Quality vs. Quantity

Undivided attention is essential for effective learning. In today's digital age, distractions are everywhere, posing a significant challenge to maintaining focus while studying. To maximize productivity, carve out dedicated study periods free from digital distractions such as your phone, social media, or other interruptions. Research highlights that concentrated, uninterrupted study sessions, even if brief, have better results than longer sessions fragmented by multitasking.

In addition to phones and social media, numerous other distractions can hinder effective studying:

Background noise can significantly disrupt concentration. Whether it's the television, nearby conversations, or street sounds, these noises can distract attention from study materials. Using noise-canceling headphones or relocating to quieter study environments can effectively mitigate these distractions.

A cluttered study environment is another potential pitfall. Visual distractions from disorganized desks or scattered materials can divert attention. Keeping your study area tidy and organized promotes clarity of thought.

Notifications from emails, messaging apps, or device software updates can interrupt concentration. Temporarily disabling or silencing these notifications helps maintain an uninterrupted focus on studying.

Eating and drinking proactively is essential to prevent breaks that can disrupt concentration. Having readily available snacks and water minimizes the need to stop studying.

Social Interactions, whether from family members, roommates, or friends, can disrupt concentration. Communicating the need for uninterrupted study time can help minimize interruptions during critical study sessions.

3. Use Flashcards!

Flashcards are a powerful tool for active recall—a learning technique that helps with memory retention. Instead of passively reviewing notes, actively engage with the material by quizzing yourself using flashcards. On one side, write questions or prompts; on the other, provide detailed answers or explanations. This approach tests your understanding and reinforces key concepts through repetitive practice. Recalling

information from memory strengthens neural pathways associated with that knowledge, making it easier to retrieve in the future.

Implementation Tip: When studying a complex topic, create flashcards with questions on one side and detailed answers or explanations on the other. Quiz yourself regularly to reinforce memory and understanding. Alternatively, organize study groups where you take turns explaining concepts to each other, encouraging discussion and clarification.

Pro Tip: Whether you prefer traditional methods or digital tools, you can create flashcards manually using index cards or utilize free websites that offer customizable templates for creating digital flashcards. This flexibility allows you to tailor your study materials effectively to suit your learning style and preferences.

Digital flashcard apps like Anki or Quizlet offer additional advantages with features such as spaced repetition algorithms. These algorithms optimize learning by presenting flashcards at intervals scientifically designed to maximize retention over time.

4. Location Matters

The environment in which you study can significantly impact your learning outcomes. Create a space that is conducive to learning by minimizing distractions, optimizing lighting and temperature, and organizing study materials efficiently. Understanding your preferences for lighting, noise level,

and comfort can help create an optimal study environment. Additionally, studying in different locations for different subjects or tasks can prevent monotony and increase information retention by associating specific environments with specific types of learning.

Implementation Tip: Experiment with different study environments to find what works best for you. Some people prefer quiet libraries or dedicated study rooms, while others may thrive in coffee shops or outdoor settings.

5. Other Effective Techniques

Beyond specific strategies like using flashcards or finding the right study environment, several general techniques can improve your overall learning experience:

Pomodoro Technique - Use the Pomodoro Technique to structure your study sessions. Work uninterrupted for 25-30 minutes, then take a five- to ten-minute break. After completing four Pomodoro cycles, take a longer break of 15-30 minutes to rest and recharge fully. Adjust the timing based on your concentration levels and study goals.

Interleaved Practice - Mix up different topics or types of problems within a study session instead of focusing on one subject exclusively. This technique challenges your brain to make connections between related concepts and promotes deeper understanding and retention.

Active Learning - Engage with the material actively by summarizing, teaching others, or applying concepts to real-world scenarios.

Review and Reflect - Regularly review what you have learned to reinforce memory retention. Take time to reflect on your progress, identify strengths, and pinpoint areas that need improvement. This reflective practice helps to understand and encourages continuous learning and growth.

Seek Feedback - Actively seek feedback from instructors, peers, or through self-assessment to gain insights into your understanding of the material. Feedback helps you identify misconceptions, clarify doubts, and prioritize areas needing further attention.

Final thoughts

Studying is a highly personal experience that varies from person to person. What clicks

for one person might not work for someone else, so staying patient and trying different approaches is essential. By embracing this process of self-discovery and consistently evaluating what works best for you, you will steadily improve your ability to absorb and retain new knowledge.

Emerald Mental Health offers therapy and coaching sessions designed to enhance your skill set and personal growth, particularly tailored for individuals in the aviation industry. Contact Emerald Mental Health for a free consultation via email at reini@emeraldmentalhealth.com or visit www.emeraldmentalhealth.com to learn more.



About the Author ✈️

Reini Thijssen is a licensed mental health counselor (LMHC, LPC) and a certified life coach specializing in supporting pilots and individuals in high-demand professions both within and outside of aviation. She has been a writer for Aero Crew News since 2019 and covers various aviation-related topics... [Read More...](#)



It's Fall and It's Time to Layer Up

WRITTEN BY: ERIC RAY



In case the cool weather hasn't hit you where you live, it's definitely fall season where I am. When it comes to fall, it's the start of layering season and I don't just mean clothes. If you are a frequent reader of my articles, you know that I am a big advocate for making changes, setting goals that are short term (six months to a year), long term (one to five years), and reassess as necessary. It all begins with making a change followed by getting busy. What I haven't really discussed is the need to break down your efforts into manageable pieces and then layer upon your approach. Let me back up a bit.

Recently, a good friend of mine and his wife started a program that eliminated all sugar, dropped their alcohol consumption (which wasn't high to begin with) to zero, and started a twice-per-day workout routine. This is a hard task for anyone to undertake as the body will

go very quickly through a massive adjustment period which often leads to burn out. Though they both have been very successful, I would like to propose something more moderate.

Make one change at a time for lasting effects.

During this same period, I decided to do a 30-days-no-alcohol challenge (booze-free September?). I managed to do it for six weeks and then gave in for a birthday cocktail or three. I am back on the alcohol reduction plan again (taking it 30 days at a time) and have since added a more intense workout program to my routine. I also adjusted my protein intake over the same time period. This layering approach has allowed me to focus on a single massive change at one time.

Break down your efforts into "bite-sized" pieces.

An old proverb asks the question: "How do you eat an elephant?" Answer: "One bite at a time." When it comes to making changes in your life, layering your efforts or making small incremental changes will have a more lasting effect on your life. This applies to nearly everything you undertake. (Think beyond fitness; think nutrition, finances, etc.) Formulate a plan and then work the plan slowly.

I think in this age of "I need it now," we get caught up in the desire to make the change today and see results immediately. If you aren't where you want to be today, the chances are that likely you didn't get that way in one day; it took time. The reverse is more truthful, you make the change today and work through it to see the results in the future. It takes time!

When you want to make a change, success comes down to a few key elements. Be aware that results take time to manifest, make small incremental changes to improve your life over time, formulate a plan, and then work the plan!! If you find areas or changes aren't working, rethink the plan and keep moving forward. Like managing your outerwear in the colder months, layer on when necessary and remove layers when appropriate.

Comments, questions and topic suggestions are welcome. Email me: Ericray4470@gmail.com



About the Author

Eric Ray is a certified personal trainer and nutrition coach. He is the co-creator of the Hii360 Coaching Method and current president of Hii360 Coaching. [Read More...](#)

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On the Current Compensation Environment and the Nebulous Line Between Captain and Senior Captain

WRITTEN BY: CHRISTOPHER M. BROYHILL, PH.D., CAM

My brain has been into a lot of different topics over the last month and that leads me to contemplate a few separate, but somewhat related, areas in this installment. So, let's get to it!

On the Current Compensation Environment

One topic I'm repeatedly asked about is the state of the current compensation environment, particularly for pilots. We see the news releases on a daily basis about airlines cutting back on hiring, Spirit possibly filing for bankruptcy, Wheels Up furloughing pilots, etc. I've heard several people opine that the pilot shortage is over, and that the aviation industry can "take a breath." As I've said previously, I don't agree.

We are in the eye of the pilot-hiring storm, an eye largely created by delays in aircraft

deliveries to the airlines. Have you taken an airline flight anywhere recently? The terminals are packed with travelers. I'm an American Airlines Admiral's Club member and there have been times when it's been standing room only in some of those club facilities. Here's the takeaway—the demand is still there and it's not going away. Several of the major airlines have expansion plans and aircraft orders that are still pending. They also have retirement issues to deal with as the Boomer generation continues to age out of the workforce. At the moment, the airlines are working the personnel queue generated in the post-COVID-19 hiring frenzy. Eventually, that queue will be exhausted and pre-COVID-19 hiring levels will likely resume.

In a recent forecast on the business aviation side, deliveries of new aircraft are predicted to total nearly 12,000 units in the 2024-2033

timeframe, with over 1,000 delivered this year alone (McMillin, 2023). No matter how you do the math, that's a lot of additional personnel required to operate them.

If you've been following my articles, you've seen the substantial increases in compensation that occurred over the 2023-2024 timeframe for business aviation personnel, an average of greater than 9%, over twice the rate of growth for all personnel in private industry. Higher compensation growth is a function of higher demand for personnel.

There are two ways in which aviation managers and organizations will respond to this environment. One approach is to recognize the temporary nature of this condition, be aggressive in their approach and focus on doing the right thing for their personnel. The other is to take advantage

of the perceived lull and ride it out, not stay ahead of the trend and bet that their people will stick around out of sheer loyalty. Good luck with the latter.

On the Nebulous Line Between Captain and Senior Captain

Another question I'm asked on a regular basis is how to differentiate between captain and senior captain. My answer to that question is somewhat non-committal. I usually say: "What do you want it to be?" The rationale for that statement is the nebulous nature of the distinction. But don't take my word for it, let's read what the surveys have to say.

First, here are the associated job descriptions from the NBAA Compensation Survey:

Captain: *The captain (pilot in command) is responsible for the safe conduct of flights to which they are assigned while ensuring compliance with all federal, state, local and foreign regulations, as well as the policies and procedures specified in the company operations manual. When assigned to a flight, the captain has the final authority in the operation of the aircraft. Captains report directly to the chief pilot.*

Senior Captain: *The senior captain may have a limited supervisory role of other flight crew in similar makes and models and may be qualified in multiple company aircraft. This position might be responsible for flight operation standardization in assigned makes and models. The senior captain may also have a role as mentor within the flight department. (BDO, 2024)*

Now, here are the same job descriptions from the Gallagher Survey:

Captain: *Serves as Pilot-in-Command. Responsible for the safety of passengers and crew and the comfortable, timely operation of the aircraft. Supervises the flight crew and ensures that all flight and ground operations comply with FAA Regulations. Determines flight routes, speed, and takeoff and landing times to fulfill scheduling requirements. Makes decisions regarding possible delays, rerouting or flight cancellations. May perform other general department duties when not flying.*

Senior Captain: *Serves as Pilot-in-Command. Responsible for the safety of passengers and*

crew and the comfortable, timely operation of the aircraft. Supervises the flight crew and ensures that all flight and ground operations comply with FAA Regulations. Determines flight routes, speed, and takeoff and landing times to fulfill scheduling requirements. Makes decisions regarding possible delays, rerouting or flight cancellations. May manage other functions in the flight department such as Safety Manager and/or Standardization Director. May perform other general department duties when not flying. (Gallagher, 2024)

Notice how closely the two job descriptions for both surveys resemble each other. The only thing that differentiates the two are the duties that a senior captain *may* have, not *will* have. This means that use of the job title is totally at the discretion of the organization or manager that bestows it.

One of the reasons the job title exists is due to the nature of HR base-pay structures. In order to justify paying someone more, that person needs to be promoted to a higher pay band, and that requires a different job title. While the job descriptions can be similar, the different job title allows for greater compensation since it lays in a higher band. Don't think about it too hard. It will make your brain hurt.

After I get past my initial response to the question about captains and senior captains, I typically discuss the pay-band argument, but then I also offer the realities of what I've seen. Some organizations differentiate

between captain and senior captain based on managerial responsibilities, which can be about leading people or being responsible for job areas, like standards, safety, etc. Other organizations use tenure with the company, experience in the particular aircraft, or experience in the industry as a differentiator.

Keeping in mind that senior captains typically make 10-15% more than captains, the use of the former title should be primarily about compensation levels, not status, but the two are obviously related. The aviation manager should be prepared for pilot angst from all the captains who believe they too should be senior captains but aren't awarded that title. Happens all the time.

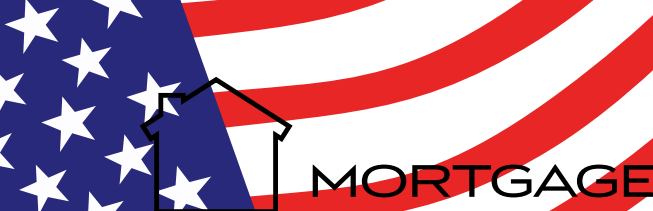
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About the Author

Dr. Chris Broyhill is an industry veteran with over 40 years in aviation. He graduated from the United States Air Force Academy in 1982, served with distinction for over 20 years in the Air Force and flew multiple aircraft. [Read More..](#)



VA Loan Gouge— What You Need to Know

WRITTEN BY: SPENCER WARTMAN



Since a decent percentage of airline pilots are veterans, this month we'll discuss the VA loan. The VA loan offers an incredible opportunity to secure a mortgage with favorable terms. As a veteran, reservist or active-duty member of the armed forces, you may qualify for this unique home loan, which can provide significant advantages compared to conventional mortgages. In this article, we'll break down the details of obtaining a VA loan, including what sets it apart, who qualifies, and what you should know about important components like funding fees, appraisals, and beneficial refinancing options.

What Sets the VA Loan Apart?

1. Qualification for a VA Loan

The VA loan is designed exclusively for veterans, active-duty service members, and in some cases, their surviving spouses. To qualify, you need to meet specific service requirements, that typically include:
181 days of active service during peacetime
Serving 90 consecutive days of active service during wartime
Six years in the National Guard or Reserves

Pilots with prior military service often meet these eligibility criteria, making the VA loan a fantastic option if you're looking for a home loan with favorable terms.

2. VA Loan Rates

VA loans often come with lower interest rates than conventional mortgages. This is due to the government guarantee that backs VA loans, reducing the risk for lenders. As a result, even in a fluctuating market, VA loans tend to offer more stability—a huge plus for pilots whose income can vary with fluctuating schedules or time away from flying.

3. Funding Fee and Exemptions

One unique aspect of the VA loan is the **funding fee**, which helps support the program for future veterans. This fee varies based on several factors, such as your down payment amount and whether it's your first time using a VA loan. You can find the most recent **VA funding-fee tables** on the [official VA website](#) or through your lender. Keep in mind, some

veterans are **exempt from the funding fee**, particularly if they have a service-connected disability rating. If you're exempt, make sure to confirm your status when discussing loan terms with your lender.

4. No Down-Payment Requirement

One of the biggest draws of a VA loan is the **no down-payment** requirement, meaning you can purchase a home without the need for upfront cash. This is a huge advantage compared to conventional loans, where a 20% down payment is often required to avoid private mortgage insurance (PMI).

VA Appraisals: Understanding the Process

The VA loan program requires a VA-specific **appraisal** to ensure the home meets certain standards. Unlike a typical appraisal, the VA appraisal includes not only an assessment of the property's value but also a check to ensure it meets **Minimum Property Requirements (MPRs)**. This can sometimes

result in additional repairs being necessary before closing, so it's essential to be aware of potential costs and timelines involved.

Refinancing with the IRRRL

If you already have a VA loan, you might want to explore refinancing through the **Interest Rate Reduction Refinance Loan (IRRRL)**. The IRRRL is designed to make it easier for you to refinance to a lower interest rate with minimal hassle. There's typically no appraisal or credit underwriting needed for the IRRRL, making it a fast and streamlined option. The IRRRL does not become eligible on your current VA loan until **210 days** after your first VA loan payment, and the new rate must be **at least 0.5% lower** than your current rate.

The Certificate of Eligibility (COE)

To qualify for a VA loan, you need to obtain a **Certificate of Eligibility (COE)** from the VA. This document confirms your eligibility and is a crucial step in the loan process. Most lenders can request your COE electronically, but you

can also apply for it directly through the [VA's eBenefits portal](#).

One common question among pilots and veterans is, **“What if I’ve used my COE before? Can I still use it for another VA loan?”** The answer is yes—your COE can be used multiple times, if your previous loan has been paid off or if you meet specific circumstances allowing for a second VA loan. For example, you can have **more than one VA loan** at a time under certain conditions, such as using your remaining entitlement. This could be particularly useful if you’re relocating due to a new assignment or simply upgrading your current home.

Final Thoughts

For airline pilots who are also veterans, the VA loan offers incredible flexibility and benefits that are difficult to match with conventional loan options. From lower interest rates to no down payment, and the potential for refinancing through the IRRRL, the VA loan is an invaluable tool for securing a mortgage. Take the time to ensure you understand your eligibility, funding-fee exemptions, and how your COE works to get the most out of this opportunity. Working with a lender who specializes in airline-pilot pay and VA loans is crucial to ensuring you get the best deal for you and your family.

Trident Home Loans (Equal Housing Lender, NMLS 65716) is an airline industry leader for securing the right mortgage for you. Contact Spencer Wartman (NMLS 2109932) at spencer@mythl.com

or spencerattrident.com and let him help you secure your future home! Also, feel free to reach out to Spencer directly if there’s a topic upon which you’d like for him to report.

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About the Author

Spencer Wartman is a Loan Originator at Trident Home Loans, a veteran-owned and operated mortgage lender located in Pensacola, FL. [Read More...](#)



Plan and Prepare for the Unexpected; My Personal Lessons Learned from Hurricane Helene

WRITTEN BY: CHARLIE MATTINGLY

As I wrote this article it was almost exactly one week earlier that I drove through the night to pick up my daughter from Furman University in Greenville, S.C. The evening before I left, my daughter and I had chatted about her driving home from school since there was no power, very little access to food, or fuel.

Even after that conversation, I wasn’t quite sure the extent of the damage from Hurricane Helene in the western Carolinas. My daughter mentioned that she was going to make her way to a friend’s house or a hotel in the Greenville area. However, the power was out at both places. There was literally nowhere to go to get food, water, or electricity.

After that conversation, I realized my daughter wanted out of there and she might be crazy

enough, like her dad, to start driving just to make something happen. I really wanted to get there before she decided to leave for home that Saturday morning. That is what really motivated me to get up at 2:00 a.m. and start my four-hour trip from Maryville, Tenn. to Greenville, S.C. Parts of Interstate 40 from Tennessee to North Carolina had washed away in the flooding and was closed, so I took a famous path of mountainous roads call the [Tail of the Dragon, aka Highway 129](#). I’m sure that stretch of highway is exciting under different circumstances and with a different vehicle than my Toyota 4-Runner!

I still didn’t know the full extent of the damage I’d encounter, but I knew there was the possibility of flooded roads, downed trees, closed roads, areas with no cell service

and limited fuel at gas stations. In fact, all these conditions existed and more! The damage, especially to the Asheville, N.C., area was far worse than I had imagined. Even now, the death toll is rising, and there are ongoing search-and-rescue operations for missing individuals who live in remote and mountainous areas.

After witnessing only a small portion of the damage from Hurricane Helene, I've apologized to my Florida- and other coastal-living friends for my lack of empathy and understanding of the true devastation hurricanes can inflict on communities and human lives. I've often read that knowing something to be true and having the experiential knowledge of that something are vastly different. I came to experience that principle firsthand after the short rescue operation of my daughter from college. Clearly, what I witnessed was just a fraction of what was happening to those who live in the areas affected by Hurricane Helene.

Get a Plan and Change Your Mindset

What are some steps we can take to prepare for a catastrophic event of any kind? Catastrophic events take many different forms; disability, untimely death, loss of employment (see the latest news for Spirit Airlines), etc. However, as with flight planning, having a strategy in place for the unexpected can bring security, confidence and reduced stress, but we must do the work.

The most important part of any plan is to have

the right mindset. I've certainly been guilty of the mindset of, "...that (hurricane, earthquake, tornado, etc.) only happens to other people and it won't happen to me."

Furthermore, put aside the idea that you'll be labeled a crazy "prepper" if you have a generator and fuel source in your basement. Get one asap!

As we have already discussed in this article, we don't know what the next event will look like. We do know it may look very different from what we have experienced in the past. Remember 2020? Also, like you, I'm a bit skeptical of the electromagnetic pulse (EMP) grenade that your captain told you was going to happen soon, but that you'll be prepared for anyway!

Create a "Go Bag"

One of our Leading Edge team members, Amelie, shared with us a time when they lived in an area in California prone to wildfires. She mentioned that they prepared a couple of duffel bags they could grab quickly and run out the door to escape the fires. The bags might contain the items below, but you may decide to include other items as necessary for your area. [Click here to get more ideas from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.](#)

- Cash! (More on that to follow.)
- Short supply of non-perishable food and water
- Maps with evacuation routes. (Like mine,

your cell phone may not be the latest and greatest that still provides GPS directions without a Wi-Fi or cell phone signal.)

- I learned after my trip that the iPhone 16 has satellite connectivity features that allow you to send and receive messages, request roadside assistance, and share your location when you don't have cellular or WiFi coverage. That would have been nice!
- Necessary prescriptions or medications
- First aid kit and sanitation supplies
- Flashlight and battery-powered radio with extra batteries
- Copies of important documents like birth certificates, passports, insurance policies, etc.

Another one of our Leading Edge advisors, Mark, currently living in Asheville, said that he was caught off guard by the near-immediate switch to an all-cash system. He also mentioned the long lines at the ATM machines made it very difficult to obtain cash. Ensure you add cash to your "Go Bag" or your fireproof safe at home.

Financial Considerations for Preparing for Emergencies and Natural Disasters

1. Understand your homeowners insurance and what it covers. [Replacement cost value is one of the most important elements in a home insurance policy.](#) If your house is destroyed by a problem covered by the policy, your dwelling insurance policy pays to rebuild it.

If your house costs more to replace than your coverage limit, you'd have to pay for some of the work yourself or reduce your rebuilding budget.

2. A standard homeowners insurance policy covers your home against wildfires, tornadoes, hurricanes, hail, and other common storms, but not flooding from bodies of water. (Florida residents, pay particular attention to the differences in your policy that apply to hurricanes.)

Furthermore, if you have flood insurance, ensure you understand the difference between flood damage and water damage. Under the vast majority of homeowners insurance policies, flood damage is not considered a form of water damage. Since standard homeowners insurance doesn't cover flooding associated with hurricanes, storms and heavy rains, it's important to have protection from the floods that often accompany these types of disasters and to understand how your insurance company defines a "flood."

[From Investopedia](#); *You may need different types of insurance to mitigate disaster risks in your area. The precise types of insurance are region- and hazard-specific. The amount of coverage you will need can vary significantly depending on the location, the type of natural disasters prevalent, and home prices in your area.*

Homeowners in hurricane-prone areas might need windstorm insurance, while others may require flood insurance.

Build a Robust Emergency Fund Using a Taxable Brokerage Account

In almost any emergency, whether it's a natural disaster, personal disability or financial catastrophe, quick access to money without being penalized (e.g., from IRAs, 401ks) can provide the most security and peace of mind.

We love it when our clients put forth the extra effort to build a large savings balance in a [taxable brokerage account](#). A taxable brokerage account is very flexible and can be used for any purpose from retirement or funding college to paying for living expenses in case of a disability.

You can use a brokerage account to purchase investments, such as stocks, bonds, mutual funds and ETFs. A brokerage account doesn't have limits on how much you can contribute or what you can do with the money.

We've seen the peace of mind and other emotional rewards pay off for someone who has a healthy balance in their taxable brokerage account. For example, in 2020 when our world was turned upside down by the COVID-19 pandemic, many dipped into their 401k and withdrew large amounts or borrowed from them because of temporary government rules. Those who had built a large savings balance had no need or desire to dip into their

401k in order to weather the COVID-19 storm of 2020. I realize this is not possible for everyone as there were many brand-new first officers who were furloughed or were not hired as planned due to the pandemic.

Currently Spirit Airlines is considering filing for bankruptcy. A friend of ours at Spirit has absolutely zero debt and a very healthy emergency fund. Although losing his job at Spirit Airlines is a disturbing possibility, he and his family are not nearly as stressed as they would be without a strong balance sheet.

Finally, catastrophes and emergencies come in many forms. Although it may not be practical to be prepared for every possible scenario, there are many steps we can take so that we can weather the inevitable storm with less stress and more peace of mind. And, as we are seeing in the areas affected by Hurricane Helene, if you are prepared, you can quickly be of service to the neighbors in your community and lend a helping hand like our Leading Edge teammate, Whitney.

A resident of Inman, S.C. near Spartanburg and Greenville, S.C., after a day in Charlotte, N.C. to avoid the worst of the storm, Whitney and her husband returned home to help in any way possible. At one point they were helping to coordinate helicopter airdrops in remote areas of the hard-hit western Carolinas.

I'll conclude this article with a few of comments she texted our team while she and her airline-pilot husband George were working with Operation Airdrop to help hurricane victims.

From Whitney:

"All is well here, just still very disconnected - no power, no hot water, no gas and VERY spotty cell service. Thankfully we had minimal damage to our house/property and by some airline miracle, George was home for all of it. We spent Sunday night in CLT for a little moral boost (yay hot showers and wifi!) but there were several reports of looting near us so George didn't feel comfortable leaving the house unattended, so we headed back to the darkness on Monday morning!"

The past two days have been incredibly tough. I've been working with an organization called Operation Airdrop coordinating helicopter drops into very remote areas! They had tons of helicopters and planes loaded with supplies but were having a hard time finding SXS (side by sides) to help unload and distribute once they landed in these remote areas. I did what any good military/pilot wife would do (haha) and asked the Pilot Wives Facebook group if they knew anyone! Within 2 hours we were able to coordinate 2 drops full of medical supplies and food! Attaching one of the photos (see below) to this because how awesome are people! We have three more drops going out as we speak—all coordinated via the Pilot Wives on FB! Wild.

They need pilots on the ground to help with OPS and flight planning, etc. so we are heading back to Concord this afternoon. George will be working with the flight operations team and the boys and I are loading supplies.

Also, if anyone you know is asking for a reputable organization to donate time or resources, I can personally recommend [Operation Airdrop](#). I don't work for them obviously and they don't know me from any other volunteer out there, but they are truly saving lives and getting supplies directly into the hands of those that need it most!

Hopefully this [message] sends and hopefully my hotspot will get me into the meeting this morning!"

-Whitney



They made it!

Amazing!!

Thank you for your help

in less than two hours from your initial contact pretty amazing



About the Author

Charlie Mattingly a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ professional, is a first officer for Southwest Airlines based in Atlanta. [Read More...](#)



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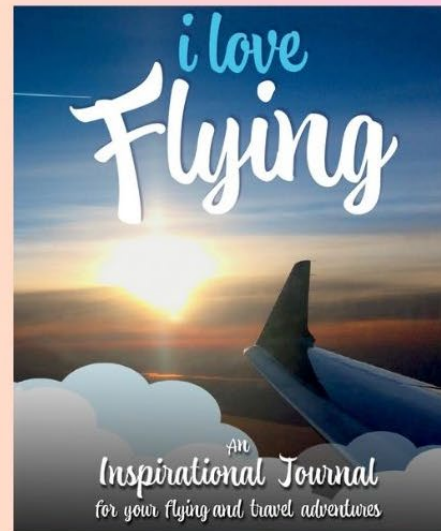
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The Pink Jet

WRITTEN BY: ROBIN LEABMAN



Photo credit: Mike Rollinger

Before we can talk about a pink jet, we must first know a thing or two about the jet-that-would-be-pink.

The L-39 Albatross is a cost-effective, high-performance jet trainer that is also capable of performing ground attack missions. Today, it is still produced by Aero Vodochody in the Czech Republic and has been exported to countries across the world both as a trainer and a light attack aircraft. By the end of the 20th century, more than 2,800 L-39s had served with over 30 air forces. Their popularity led to a purely L-39 Jet Class being introduced at the Reno Air Races in 2002. (Wikipedia)

Several airshow performance teams use the L-39, including the Black Diamond Jet Team that operates five, plus the Patriots Jet Team operates six, and the Breitling Jet Team operates seven.

This particular L-39, N368LA, was forged in 1979 in the former Czechoslovakia, while behind the Iron Curtain and served as a Russian fighter-pilot trainer. In the late 90s she made her way to the United States and has been under several private owners over the past three decades. While her engine, the heart and soul of this old girl, is strong, she was badly in need of a bit of a makeover.

That's where Aerial Angels came in. This non-profit, helmed by Steve and Jamie Oakley, has orchestrated many to prepare this airplane for the most important mission of her storied life. This accomplishment is credited to a vast network of companies and pilots volunteering resources.

In June of this year, I ferried her from Camarillo, Calif. to Grissom Air Reserve Base in Indiana. The keys were figuratively handed over to Dean Baldwin Painting, a civilian-operated business on the base with a behemoth painting facility big enough to fit two Boeing 737s and two 747s at the same time. Dean Baldwin's CEO, Barbara Baldwin, had suffered her own personal family loss due to breast cancer, so with an opening in one of their smaller bays, she volunteered their incredible team to transform our Albatross into a beautiful swan.

Aerial Angels is proud to introduce to the world The Pink Jet, whose primary mission is to raise awareness of breast cancer detection and treatment. Breast Cancer Awareness Month is October, and we must be reminded that breast cancer can



Steve and Jamie Oakley with N368LA the day it left California to head to the paint shop in Indiana. Photo credit: Robin Leabman



L-39 pilot Robin Leabman (author, left) with friend and pilot Ryan Culver (right) upon arrival at Grissom ARB, Indiana. Photo credit: Robin Leabman



The Pink Jet on its birthday, after being rolled out of the paint bay. None of this would be possible without the expert volunteer work performed by the Dean Baldwin team. Photo credit: Robin Leabman

strike anyone at any age. The Pink Jet’s role is to keep the conversation going about this disease spanning 365 days a year—far beyond these 31 days in fall.

The Pink Jet made its inaugural public unveiling before an enthusiastic crowd at EAA AirVenture 2024. There, and at every airshow since, we have had hundreds of conversations with survivors of the disease, loved ones of victims lost, and those who are actively battling this disease.

We encourage everyone to visit The Pink Jet booth where all are invited to share their stories which we post on Instagram [@thepinkjet](https://www.instagram.com/thepinkjet). Because everyone’s story is unique while also hauntingly familiar, we appreciate all who share with us. A common

phrase we hear is “early detection,” meaning women (and men) should be tested well before the insurance companies are required to pay for testing, typically after age 40. Using age 40 as the benchmark for covered testing means thousands of people are not learning that they have developed breast cancer until after they turn 40.

It cannot be emphasized enough that this disease affects people of all ages. This year, at the Miramar Airshow, we met a young Marine MP who was diagnosed with breast cancer at 18. As a result of his diagnosis, this young man had a double mastectomy before his 20th birthday. Yes, this survivor is a man. Few realize that this disease does not discriminate by age, nor gender.

It has been only three months since the birth of The Pink Jet, and already the momentum of its primary mission has been dizzying, while the secondary mission has taken on a life of its own. Our first female Pink Jet pilot and influencer, Stephanie Goetz, is a beacon of inspiration to girls everywhere we go. The Pink Jet, along with our lady pilot in pink, aspire to inspire and empower young girls to dream big and achieve all they dream.

As the 2024 airshow season draws to a close, Aerial Angels and its volunteers will be busy this winter building the 2025 airshow schedule, upgrading the avionics to a glass cockpit, and recruiting additional female airshow pilots. We are growing the team to showcase The Pink Jet, keep the breast-cancer conversation going, and inspire the role models in us all.

To learn more about The Pink Jet, see its tour schedule, buy Pink Jet merchandise, and to donate to the cause, please visit <http://thepinkjet.org/> and follow [@thepinkjet](https://www.instagram.com/thepinkjet) on Instagram.



About the Author

Robin Leabman is a 12,000-hour pilot with seven type ratings, holds all instructor ratings for airplanes, seaplanes, helicopters, and gliders, and is a Boeing... [Read More...](#)

Pink Jet pilot Stephanie Goetz at the Girls in Aviation Conference at North Las Vegas Airport. Photo credit: Robin Leabman





NATIONAL CONVENTION 2024

Thank you to all the RTAG attendees who took the time to speak to me.

-Craig



Amberjack - Brett Oldfather, Blake Fenwick, and Himani Patel



Amerijet International - Mark Fitzsimmons — First Officer, Caitin Benda — Recruiter, and Matthew Macri — Chief Pilot



ALPA -
 CA Tradd Gralak FFT
 CA Nathan SMith ENY
 CA John Tabet SPA
 CA Taylor Hitson EDV
 CA Anthony Bailey DAL
 CA Kandy Bernskoetter FDX
 CA Erik Gott FDX
 FO Abi Ayorinde SPA



Aero Crew Solutions and Aero Crew News - Marcin Kolodziejczyk, Scott Rehn, and Craig Pieper



Aero Crew Solutions and Aero Crew News would like to congratulate Juan Jose Villa for winning our 21" TravelPro suitcase giveaway at RTAG! We would also like to say a big thank you to TravelPro for donating our giveaway prize to our deserving recipient. Enjoy your new suitcase Juan and safe travels ahead!



Atlas Air - Jacob Billups, Leslie Cambria, Kevin O'Reilly, Yovankha, Adam Ennis



BreakTurn - Francisco Costa, Nick Tursi, Jackson Wolsh, Sam Levander, Austin Roth, Landon Cheben Adam Enders, Jesse Fleming, Kaci Clark, Adrienne Huls, Julie Roth, Abbey Tursi, and Amy Humphries



Airline Transition Manual - Richard Swindell



Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University - Hannah Backus



Bose - Chris Wuerfl



CommuteAir - Madison Goodman, Mateo Moreno, Brittany Crews Andrew Nicholson, and Caleb Gembarowski



Avelo - Jone Haug, Hal Hinton, and Rhoshana Brown



Learn 2 Fly CT - Phillip Smith and Kat Jones



Odyssey Pilot Hours - Connor Efron and Randy Efron



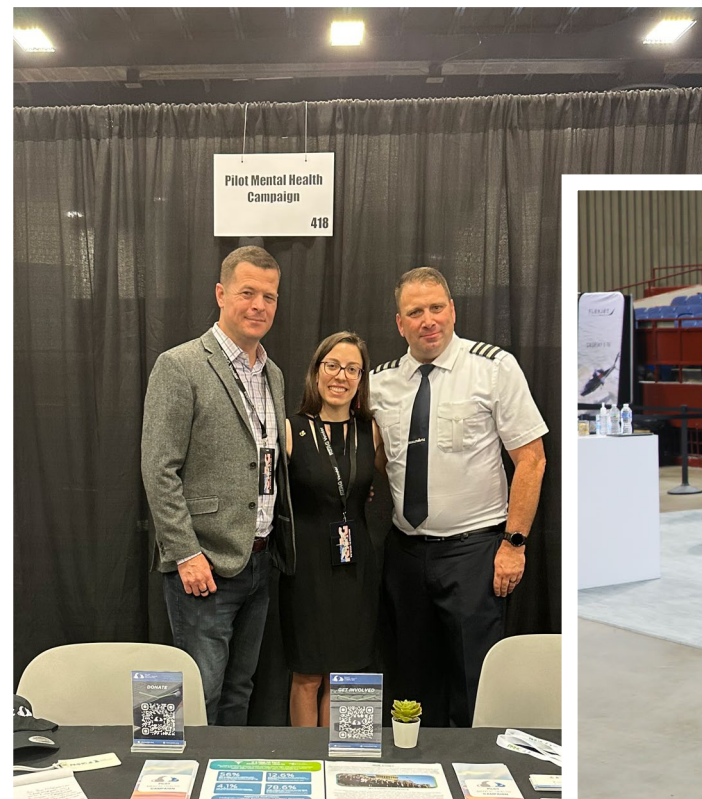
Jet Aviation - Justine Cayol and Penny Stocksdale



Horizon Air - A. Vens, J. Salazar, and W. Montgomery



Infinity Flight - Greg J, Dan T, TJ C, Christina M, Bronson, and John



Pilot Mental Health Campaign



Metro Aviation - Mel Clawson - Aviation Recruiter, Jerry Lingefelt - Assistant Aviation Site Manager, Britney Ratcliff - Director of Human Resources, Daniel Graugnard - Regional Maintenance Manager, and Joseph Abshier - Aviation Recruiter



FlexJet - Pilots: Nick P., Ivan R., Lonnie K., Jerry W., Aaron T., Stu M., Ryan K., Jake V., Anthony W., Zach D., and Jeff J. TA Team: Kari J., Courtney C., Sandy C., Reagan D., and Ellen M.



StrongBags - Ethan Fisher



Republic - J.B. Davis, Janice Sullivan, Natalie Braunecker, Brook Hamilton, and Eric Vetro



Pray Aviation and Savannah Aviation - Talia Forcina, Courtney Morin, Aaron Barr, Mike Awad, Christian Rushing, and Matt Pray



RAA / Allworth Airline Advisors - Shannon Bourque, James Risalvato, Josh Garcia, and Alyse Dominguez



U.S. Customs and Border Protection: Air and Marine Operations - Alan Kellogg, Jamie St. Dennis, Mario Sanchez, Mike Nanoff, and Gabe Saldana



Southwest Airlines



Silver Airways - Matthew Foley, Maria Labriola, Geoffrey Jacobs, Caden Mazzu, and Patricia Mejia



Spirit Airlines - Eric Thornburg, Katherine Hershberger, Steven Flak, and Mitchell McMahon



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Savannah Aviation - Courtney Morin, Mike Awad, Aaron Barr, Talia Forcina, and Christian Rushing



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