



---

**VOLUME XLIX**

**FEBRUARY 2011**

**NO 4**

---



**THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

This time of year, we read a lot about the problems of winter flying. I have found the perfect solution to starting and flying an airplane in cold weather---go where it is warm. Recently while visiting family in San Jose, my nephew Dave offered to take me flying around the bay area. That was an offer I couldn't refuse and so on Monday Jan 31 we rented a 150 hp Citabria at the Reid Hillview Airport. It was a beautiful clear day and after preflighting the plane, we got in the air about 10:30 AM.

The first leg was to Watsonville, a flight of about 30 minutes, on Monterey Bay. It is a non-towered airport with lots of GA activity and a restaurant on the field. It is a good place to go for a \$100 hamburger. When we arrived I was surprised to see a large number of airplanes tied down outside even though there were large numbers of hangars

on the field. I was left with the impression that GA is alive and well there.

Next stop was Hollister airport, a flight of about 20 minutes inland from Watsonville. It also seemed to have lots of GA activity with planes tied down outside. There were several notable things about Hollister; They had a lot of sailplanes on the field and a small private museum. There also seemed to be a lot of restoration activity. Some of the planes we saw included a Ryan STA (Military designation), PA 22; Stearman; Travelaire; AT 6; Replica Curtis Flyer; We also found out they have a shop there that specializes in Rolles Royce engines. Dave and I were fortunate to get a special tour of the Museum pleading that I had to return to Iowa in a couple of days and could not come back on the weekend when it was open. After an interesting tour and a hamburger and fries at the local restaurant, we headed back to Reid Hillview.

It was a day we both enjoyed immensely and a perfect solution to Iowa winter time blues. So if your personal sky is a little overcast and you are looking for something to brighten your winter and you know somebody out West, I suggest you try flying around the bay area. It'll cheer you right up.

I am looking forward to the summer convention at Clear Lake/Mason City. Sounds like John Hemann has been busy lining up a good convention for us. Hope to see you all there.

Fr Gene



*Bishop Don Kettler writes from  
Fairbanks, Alaska  
January 23, 2011*

Dear Mel,

Thanks for your nice letter and very kind and generous gift for airplane fuel. This is of great help to us. I continue having lots of travel. I just returned from St. Mary's, Alaska. It's about 75 miles from the Bering Sea.

Your instructing in Florida offer your students many important experiences.  
Thanks for your prayers and support.  
God bless.

Bishop Don

---

Knobby Walsh has some words in the BRIEFS section about a plane he used to fly. It crashed in 2005 at Scott Field, (3Y2) West Union, IA 3Y2 is about 25 miles from my home base, Waterloo, IA (ALO). I remember the accident well and had occasion to fly into the airport a couple days later. The burned wreckage was still there. At that time little did I know about its NAPP historical connections

---

**Two important bits of information**

*The 2011 Spring Midwest Regional meeting in La Crosse, Wisconsin*

Monday, May 9, 2011

La Crosse Airport

**KLSE**

(See the reservation/info sheet for details).

---

**2011 NAPP CONVENTION**

**Best Western Motel**

**Clear Lake, Iowa**

**July 12 – 13, 2011**

**Airport: Mason City, IA**

**MCW**

**Hosts: Hemann Brothers**

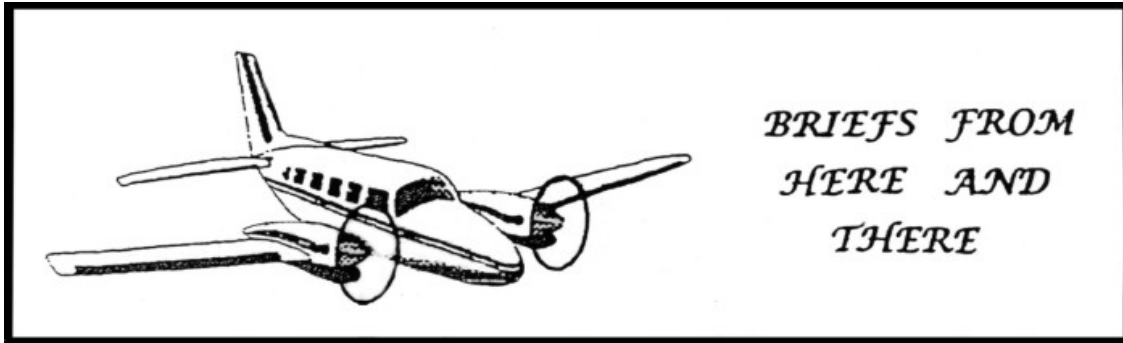
**INITIAL DETAILS ARE ON THE  
RESERVATION/INFORMATION  
SHEET**

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

REV. MEL HEMANN  
127 Kaspand Place  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613-1683  
319-266-3889

email: [N298MH@cfu.net](mailto:N298MH@cfu.net)





*Ron Teufel sends the following about the radio station honoring Charlie Mel,*

Tx to all for the mention of the WLUX "Fr. Charles Teufel" Studio. If all goes well Bishop Bransfield will dedicate the studio on Feb 8. Just have to get the operating license from the FCC by that date. You know how that can go.

Peace and blessings in the New Year.

Ron T.

---

*Jack Fitzgerald writes from Pennsylvania*

Mel,

I just retired from PA Air National Guard after 23+yrs.  
This is what we did. The retirement check will help fuel the Cheetah!

God bless in the New Year.

Jack Fitzgerald

---

*Patti Pokorney is Fr. Ed Higgin's niece. She handles his business and included the following with Ed's dues*

Fr Mel,

Thanks for asking about my uncle and keeping him on your mailing list. He lights up when remembering his flying days. Uncle Eddie keeps a positive attitude even though Parkinson's has robbed him of his voice and the use of legs.

Patti

*The following is an edited version of a note from Knobby Walsh, Rochester, NY*

Dear Mel,

I am enclosing an accident report that George Gratton sent me  
In 1965 I was stationed in Auburn, NY and flying out of Skaneateles, NY. The FBO there had the state franchise for Piper. So I rented N8966W (less than 100 hours new and for sale) flew to Ithaca, NY with Frank Erb to pick up Don Cleary, over night in Chicago Meigs Field, then to Columbus, NE for the second meeting of the NAPP at Duncan, NE. In 1987 N8966W was owned by Gratton !!! And Bill Roche and I flew it to Pittsburg for the NAPP meeting. In 1989 Bill and I flew N8966W to the meeting in Boston.

I had many great trips with N8966W, and was sorry to see it in such an accident.

Sincerely,

Knobby  
Rev John T Walsh

*On March 27, 2005 Piper PA-28-235, N8966W, crashed at Scott Airport (3Y2), West Union, IA. . The father owner pilot and his new pilot son were giving rides to family members attending a family reunion. The son gave the 2<sup>nd</sup> ride with two passengers. He lost control on take off and he and one passenger were killed; the other seriously injured. The father and family members witnessed it all.  
A tragic end for a great plane and its occupants.*

**NAPP MIDWEST REGIONAL MEETING**

Monday, May 9, 2011

La Crosse, Wisconsin

**KLSE**

**HOST : John Swing**

*Please phone, e-mail or mail RSVP by Friday, May 6, 2011*

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

CELL PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

ARRIVAL DATE \_\_\_\_\_

By: Pvt Plane N \_\_\_\_\_ -ETA: \_\_\_\_\_

By: Car \_\_\_\_\_ ETA \_\_\_\_\_

DEPARTURE: \_\_\_\_\_

**RESERVATIONS TO:**

John Swing  
Sacred Heart of Jesus Church  
711 Prospect Avenue  
Nekoosa, WI 54457

[sachtnek@wctc.net](mailto:sachtnek@wctc.net) (B) 1-715-886-3422 (Fax) 1-715-886-4722 (C) 1-715-572-2513

---

**LA CROSSE TEMPORARY SCHEDULE**

**10:00 ish** Arrivals at La Crosse Airport  
Park at Colgan FBO

**11:00** La Crosse Queen Cruise  
Boat leaves dock at 11:00

**PLEASE NOTE:** *The early boat departure may require additional pre-planning for some.  
Please advise of your special needs, if any.*

**12:30** Return from cruise  
Lunch at to be determined site along with what ever????  
(If you can't make he cruise you can join us at this time)

**DEPARTURE ---- Whenever!!!!**

## Sky Ranch for Boys closing after 50 years

Posted: Wednesday, January 5, 2011 10:00 pm [Holly Meyer Journal staff](#)  
rapidcityjournal.com

Officials at Sky Ranch for Boys announced Wednesday that the group care center for troubled teens will cease operations in the next few months. A statement issued by the center's executive director Jodi Duttonhoffer cites an industry shift away from the center's style of residential treatment and toward a less expensive community-based alternative as the reason for the closure. "The Ranch is currently caring for less than 20 boys (down from 40 a few years ago) and that number is expected to decline sharply in the weeks ahead as states implement new budget policies. Although exacerbated by the recession, this does not appear to be a short-term trend," according to the statement. Located in Harding County near Camp Crook, Sky Ranch for Boys is a more than 3,000-acre facility licensed by the South Dakota Department of Social Services to take boys aged 10 to 18. The state also recognizes the on-site school as an educational provider that focuses on behavioral problems, according to the center's website. **The center began in 1960 under the guidance of Rev. Don Murray, a Catholic priest, who died in a plane crash with one of the boys in 1975.** In the early 1980s, the center was run by its first lay executive director, Scott Louks, according to the Sky Ranch Foundation website. The foundation owns the ranch and its supporters, primarily associated with the alcohol beverage industry, contributed more than \$20 million in the past 50 years to help the ranch. The foundation provided the facility and 25 percent to 30 percent of the annual operating budget of Sky Ranch since shortly after the foundation was established in 1961, according to the statement. The foundation was consulted on the decision to close the center and alternatives were considered before the decision was made. The foundation pledged to help care for the remaining boys until the program ends and will help the Sky Ranch board of directors in assisting the center's employees. After the closure of the ranch, the foundation plans to continue helping troubled youth by offering grants to programs across the country, according to the statement. "The decision to close Sky Ranch was extremely difficult for all concerned. For 50 years this program has been helping kids who others had given up on. We believe the positive spirit of Sky Ranch deserves to continue and to guide us in our efforts to help those in need," said foundation president, Ralph Aguera in the statement. "Our goal is to continue and expand the great legacy of Sky Ranch by supporting the very best programs for troubled girls and boys nationwide. "For more information, [skyranchfoundation.org](http://skyranchfoundation.org) or [skyranchforboys.com](http://skyranchforboys.com).

Contact Holly Meyer at 394-8421 or [holly.meyer@rapidcityjournal.com](mailto:holly.meyer@rapidcityjournal.com).

**EDITOR'S PERSONAL NOTE:** Fr Don was an NAPP member and attended the NAPP convention in Rapid City in 1968. I visited Sky Ranch on several occasions when I took and later picked up a couple of boys assigned there for treatment. Flying was part of Fr. Don's therapy for the hard core residents. After his death I was offered the position he had created. My Archbishop gave me the OK to go. After some consultation and careful prayerful reflection I came to the conclusion I could handle the flying part of the job but felt totally inadequate in coping with the other challenges so I declined. Sky Ranch had the reputation of accepting young people who "couldn't make it in other places." Fantastic place while it lasted..

# National Association of Priest Pilots (NAPP)

48<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and Convention  
Clear Lake, Iowa

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Airport of arrival (KMCW) Mason City/Clear Lake

(North Iowa Air Service will provide great hospitality  
to the private pilot - bring tie down ropes)

Delta/Mesaba/KLM Commuter Airline from MSP

(If you come by commercial airline you need to come through MSP)

## HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Best Western Holiday Lodge (Clear Lake)

1-800-606-3552 or 641-357-5253

Block of rooms reserved under NAPP

You **MUST MAKE** your own reservation and do so by JUNE 28,  
2011

Two beds in each room for \$79.00 plus 12% tax Restaurant and pool at the Lodge

## RESERVATION FOR MEETING and CONVENTION

John W. Hemann  
481 N. Shore Drive #301  
Clear Lake, IA 50428-1368  
641-357-4539 (h) 641-430-4413 ©

## HOSPITALITY ROOM #217 AVAILABLE at LODGE

Monday afternoon and evening (Pizza, etc.)

Tuesday and Wednesday (snacks & refreshments)

*If you have not paid your current NAPP dues  
we ask that you complete the form below  
and mail it with your check to:*

*Or*

*Use PayPal electronically.*

(Go to: [www.priestpilots.org](http://www.priestpilots.org) and click on **Pay Now**)

**REV. MEL HEMANN  
127 KASPEND PL  
CEDAR FALLS, IA 50613-1683**

*Any questions contact me at  
319-266-3889*

*Or*

*[n298mh@cfu.net](mailto:n298mh@cfu.net)*

**N.A.P.P. DUES -- U.S. \$25.00**

-----  
**Please fill out this form! Make check payable in U.S. Dollars to N.A.P.P., Inc.**

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**CITY** \_\_\_\_\_ **STATE** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email** \_\_\_\_\_

**Type of Member:** \_\_\_\_\_ Charter \_\_\_\_\_ Regular \_\_\_\_\_ Associate