

N.A.P.P.



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No. 3

President's column:

**Despite the pain of 2020,
take comfort in God's
goodness this Christmas**

**By Fr. Joe McCaffrey
NAPP President**

Wishing you all a very blessed and joyous Christmas and a much better 2021 than 2020!

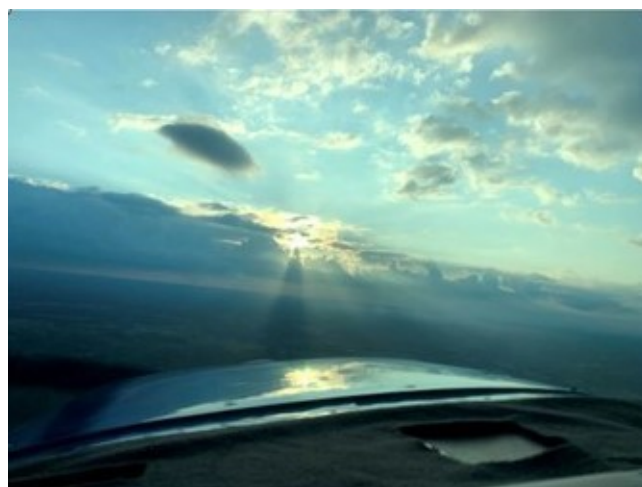


St. Augustine says that God shows forth his magnificence by bringing about good even out of evil. If we have the eyes to see and ears to hear and faith, we can realize that God has brought a lot of good out of this bizarre pandemic and political upheaval during 2020. The evil, the pain and suffering are obvious to everyone. But people of faith

can see the good God is able to bring out of all of this! I'll let you discern the good that you see.

But in my little corner of the world, I have noticed people making efforts to worship God not because they have to but because they desperately want to. I have noticed people helping others who in former times would have never thought to assist. I have noticed people going out of their way to help strangers, people of different faiths and different ethnic backgrounds.

Sure, politics can be annoying and the virus doesn't

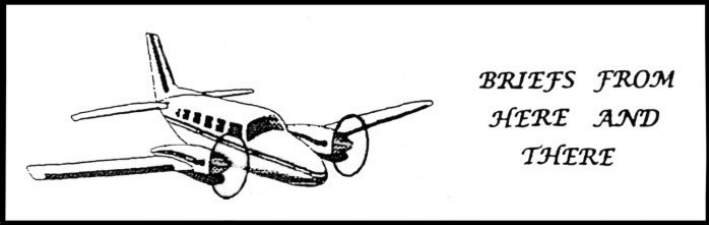


seem to quit, but the grace of God is powerful and active despite it all. It only takes a brief flight to renew our spirit in the love of God and his never-failing presence with us!

Recently I received a surprise phone call from a fellow named Tim Dugan. He was a flight engineer in the Navy and was impressed by our NAPP website, newsletter and my flight with the Blue Angels. We had a very nice chat and he also related that he was a very faithful Catholic all his life and now in his 60s is discerning what God may be calling him to do. I told him he was welcome to join NAPP and we will be praying for him during this time of discernment.

See, this amazing newsletter does reach people who are searching and are inspired by priest pilots! This is another good thing that has happened during these days when more and more people are on the internet. It's not all bad. Perhaps our NAPP newsletter is doing a little evangelization!

By the grace of God, 2021 is going to be an amazing year! Emmanuel! "God with us!" What greater news, what greater joy is there than that?



The tale of a C130 and a C150

Editor's note: Fr. Mel Hemann shared this note after the NAPP's virtual social on October 19.

Last night, some time was spent with Bob Lacey and his C140. My brother John made a reference to the C130. After we finished, I was reminded of a story Jim Kelly shared with us many years ago.

For those of you who never got to know Jim, he was originally from Massachusetts. He spent around 28 years as a Navy chaplain. In retirement, he went to Anchorage and made quite a name for himself and NAPP. He said he had the largest parish in the world. Area-wise, it would have stretched from Chicago to

Denver to Albuquerque to Memphis. He ministered at 24 sites – half one weekend, the other half the next weekend. The weekend began at noon on Saturday and he would finish Monday morning. He began his Palm Sunday weekend on Saturday, March 23, 2002. It was a windy day and even the airlines canceled all flights. Jim's path took him through a pass and a downdraft resulted in him being killed in the crash. Those of us who knew him recall the many stories he told. He was a great storyteller. Last night's sharing reminded me of this one:

Jim had one assignment in Ethiopia where, as he said, there was little for a Navy chaplain to do, so he took a part-time job as a pilot on a local commuter airline. One day, they were in the restaurant at the Addis Ababa airport. The waitress was waiting on a customer at the table next to them. He overheard her asking "Are you a pilot?" He answered yes. She asked, "What do you fly?" He asked her to look out the window. "See that plane taxiing in. That's a C130. I came in a C150."

Needless to say, she was duly impressed. Enjoy.

Mel

Cessna 182 is on the market

Editor's note: Fr. Jeffry Moore recently sent this message from Panama.

Sorry I haven't been able to send you anything for the newsletter. With all the COVID-19 stuff going on, I have only been able to drive to where I need to go, but that is not even possible all the time.

I would like to let the members know that I am selling my plane. It is located in Panama City, Panama, but I could fly it up if someone buys it.

If anyone is interested, they can make an offer. It is listed for \$120,000 but I could come way down on it. I am only selling it to get a gyrocopter in order to reach some places that don't have a runway. It is an excellent plane and just had its annual.



<https://www.magnicopa.com/page-1889886.html>

Padre Jeffry Moore

Editor's note: By the way, George Gratton still has his Piper Comanche for sale, which was mentioned in the [June newsletter](#). It's currently listed on [Control-ler.com](#).

NAPP Dues – U.S. \$25.00

2021 fiscal year began July 1, 2020

*Use this form to send your dues or use PayPal (go to priestpilots.org and click on **Pay Now**).*

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In addition to the \$25 annual dues, we encourage members to make a separate donation to the **NAPP Missionary Gift Fund**, which will be used to support the organization's charitable grants.

Donations can be sent to the same address or you can use PayPal. Go to priestpilots.org and click on the **Donate** button.



Flying priests, deacons, nuns and bishops!

End of an era in Alaska

Editor's note: The National Association of Priest Pilots donates to the Diocese of Fairbanks for aviation ministry. The following article, from [The Alaskan Shepherd](#) newsletter, fall 2020 edition, is reprinted with permission.

By Misty Mealey

Alaska is a state that has been transformed by aviation. Outside of Anchorage and Fairbanks, most villages and other settlements were so remote you could only reach them by boat in the summer or dogsled in the winter. While the territory's first commercial air service was started in 1927, the company serviced just a few coastal areas and none of the smaller, remote villages in the interior. As air service by "bush pilots" became more common in the 1940s and 1950s, rural Alaskans finally began to enjoy regular delivery of mail and supplies and were able to travel to other parts of the state for medical care, education, and jobs.

Planes also played an important role in spreading the faith in Alaska. Early missionaries had traversed the wilderness on foot to reach remote communities, suffering unimaginable hardships and even death to bring the Gospel to native people and gold rush miners. Air travel was a god-send, offering a far more efficient, safer, and cost-effective way to travel the hundreds of miles between village parishes.

Over the past 100 years, the Diocese of Fairbanks has relied heavily upon air travel to bring the Risen Christ to the faithful. At times, the diocese had its own aircraft and pilot clergy and even had its own small fleet of planes in the mid-1970s. Most recently, the diocese has relied on a single small plane, a donated Cessna 182, to bring the Mass and sacraments to its rural parishes. However, the Diocese of Fairbanks has decided it is finally time to say goodbye to *Yellow Bird* and clergy traveling for their ministry by small, private aircraft.



Evangelizing through aviation

The Diocese of Fairbanks' history of flying missionaries began in 1929, when donors from across the country helped Bishop Joseph R. Crimont, SJ, purchase a six-seater plane specially customized for arctic winter flying. As the first diocesan plane commissioned for missionary work in Alaska, the "Marquette Missionary" was supposed to have heralded a new technological era, in which missionaries could reach their flocks in a fraction of the time it would take to travel on land. Instead, the plane tragically crashed just one month after it arrived in Alaska, killing the pilot and two passenger priests on board.

The fatal crash had a chilling effect on missionary aviation in Alaska, and it would take another 25 years before Bishop Francis Gleeson began once again to use planes to transport priests and other religious between missions. Once reintroduced, however, air travel became the norm and by 1977, the diocese owned five small planes and had nearly a dozen pilot priests and deacons.

Then in the mid-1980s, Fairbanks gained its first flying bishop, Bishop Michael J. Kaniecki, SJ. Anxious to ensure his people received the

Mass and sacraments as often as possible, Fr. Kaniecki had become a pilot just a year before his ordination in 1965. In 1984, Bishop Kaniecki continued to fly to numerous villages during each of his short visits to the bush. In a 1992 travel journal, he wrote, "By having my own plane, I was able to cover two villages, bringing people the Holy Week and Easter services and attending the Alaska Christian Conference in Bethel and Stick Dance ceremonies in Nulato. By the time I landed in Fairbanks, I had made 18 take-offs and landings, had flown 12.8 hours, and had logged over 1,400 air miles."

Bishop Kaniecki flew across Alaska until his untimely death in 2000 at age 65. He had flown to the village of Emmonak and was about to celebrate Mass when he suffered a fatal heart attack. With no other pilot priests



Bishop Michael J. Kaniecki, SJ, received his pilot's license in 1964 and was ordained a priest a year later. He was ordained a bishop in 1984 and died from a heart attack in 2000.

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or deacons available, the diocese returned to its reliance on commercial air travel for the next decade to send clergy to its 38 most remote parishes.

That would change in 2014, when Ralph and Beverly Holzfaster of Nebraska donated a Cessna 182 to the diocese and Fr. Jim Falsey of Michigan generously offered to spend his “retirement” as a volunteer pilot-priest in Alaska. For six years, Fr. Falsey flew *Yellow Bird* to village parishes across the diocese, serving mostly Athabaskan Catholics in the interior region. In addition to serving parishes that only see a priest a few times a year, Fr. Falsey often flew to villages for pastoral emergencies—to anoint a dying parishioner or perform funeral rites. He brought the Mass and sacraments to thousands of indigenous Catholics, bringing hope and healing to remote communities often suffering high rates of unemployment, substance abuse, and suicide.

Mounting reasons to sell

While Alaska has avoided the civil unrest that has swept across many lower 48 states, our great state still has been profoundly impacted by COVID-19’s economic downturn. In 2019, Alaska emerged from the state’s longest recession on record, but that recovery was derailed by the pandemic. Tourism in particular, which accounts for one in eight Alaskan jobs and infuses nearly \$2.5 billion into the state’s economy annually, came to a screeching halt for most of the year.

Like the private sector, the Church has not been immune to the economic effects of coronavirus. With many supporters struggling with their own loss of income, donations dropped significantly after March and the diocese anticipates a 20% decrease in donations over the next year.

With tourism hobbled and travel still restricted by many villages, there has been less demand for air ser-

vice in Alaska and many carriers have struggled to survive. Not all have made it; some companies have gone under and the largest airline serving rural Alaska declared bankruptcy this past spring, laying off 1,000-plus employees.



Ralph Holzfaster (left) gifted the Missions with his Yellow Bird, a Cessna 182, in 2014. Retired priest Jim Falsey gifted the Missions with his generous offer to spend his retirement volunteering as a pilot. For the past six years, he has greatly increased the ability to bring the Mass and sacraments to the people of northern Alaska.

Even before the pandemic, rising maintenance costs had made it difficult for many companies to stay in the black. There is a national shortage of pilots and aircraft mechanics, and it can be difficult to lure these professionals to the far north, even with high salaries. Maintenance in Alaska also poses its own unique challenges...getting a needed part or sending someone with the expertise to install it to a remote village can be an expensive and logistical nightmare.

Flying in Alaska can be treacherous due to the rapidly changing weather, topography, and the extreme environment. Alaska, in particular, has seen an unusually high number of aircraft crashes in recent years and now has one of the highest fatal crash rates in the nation.

As commercial insurance premiums have become more expensive, Alaskan airlines have become even more conservative about risk. Pilots are newer, with less experience flying in arctic conditions, and with fewer mechanics, companies are grounding planes more often during inclement weather. Last year, up to half the flights the diocese’s priests and faith leaders in the bush were scheduled to take were canceled because of extreme cold, fog, or ice. Bishop Zielinski was even stranded in a village for five extra days due to bad weather.

The risks associated with flying a small private aircraft in our vast region, combined with a lack of priests who are pilots, and the diocese’s anticipated funding cuts, has led Bishop Zielinski to make the difficult but necessary decision to sell the diocese’s Cessna 182. Proceeds of *Yellow Bird* will be used to cover the costs of commercial air travel for our 16

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'Third Thursday' get-togethers are a tradition at Iowa airport

Editor's note: Msgr. John Hemann, NAPP treasurer, gets a gold star for perfect attendance at the "Third Thursday" gatherings at the Mason City airport. He's mentioned in this story in [AOPA Pilot](#). It is reprinted here with permission of the author. For more information: [Facebook.com/burgerburn](https://www.facebook.com/burgerburn).

By Dave Hirschman

There's no agenda, no officers, no speakers, and no budget. The unofficial "Third Thursday" gathering at Mason City Municipal Airport in northern Iowa happens around dinnertime, and it draws pilots, aviation enthusiasts, families, and airplanes from all over the Midwest.

"A few of us were standing around the hangar on a February night and decided that we really ought to get together every month or so just to get out of the house," said Doug Rozendaal, a general aviation pilot and FAA designated pilot examiner with a hangar at Mason City (MCW). "We decided it should be simple enough that it wouldn't seem like work. It was an excuse to get together on a somewhat regular basis, and it might even motivate me to tidy up the hangar."

After 11 years, the Third Thursday gathering has become a staple, and regular attendees know how to make it happen.

"The first ones to get here set up the folding chairs," Rozendaal said. "The last people to leave tear them down."

The gathering typically draws hundreds of visitors in the summer months, especially the July event, which takes place a few days before EAA AirVenture in nearby Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Scores of airplanes including antiques and warbirds park on the grass and a hard-surface ramp. Those who come bring food and drinks, and barbeque grills are abundant and expertly tended.

The event is centered at Doug and Kim Rozendaal's hangar, but it takes place whether the couple is there or not. (John Hemann, a pilot and retired Catholic priest, is the only person with a perfect attendance record.) "This event is all about fellowship," Rozendaal said.

"That's the reason it was started, and that's the reason people look forward to it. We just do our best to keep it simple."



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priests, about half of whom serve village parishes in the bush.

Having a diocesan plane offered a great advantage to the Church during its early efforts to bring Catholicism to Alaska, but air service between villages is consistent now, even if there are fewer flights because of the pandemic.

With the infrastructure in place to shift the burden of insurance and maintenance to the private sector, selling the plane and having priests travel commercial not only reduces risk but just makes the most fiscal sense, according to the diocese's Chief Financial Officer, Susan Clifton.

Most of the Diocese of Fairbanks' income comes from donations, adds Bishop Zielinski, and the chancery regularly receives letters containing checks from seniors on fixed incomes and from benefactors located in

the lower 48 who were in tears when they learned that some Catholics in Alaska go months without the Mass and sacraments.

"I'm sad we have to let *Yellow Bird* go; it's the end of an era," he says. "But it's the only way we can be good stewards of the limited resources we have and honor the sacrifices of the people who make our work possible."

From the NAPP archives:

[*A Christmas to remember: Priest pilot chronicles the challenges of reaching God's people in Alaska*](#) (February 2020)

[*Report from Alaska: 'Yellow Bird' gets an autopilot*](#) (February 2019)

[*Bishop Michael J. Kaniecki, SJ, 1935-2000*](#) (August 2000)

From the archives:

The story behind the iconic NAPP masthead



The colorful (and humorous) artwork that adorns the top of the NAPP newsletter is more than 50 years old, but the determined priest who is hand-propping the smiling low-wing aircraft is looking as great as ever.

The artwork, or masthead, was drawn by Nancy Johnson, who was a student at Iowa State University in Ames when Fr. Mel Hemann was associate pastor at the St. Thomas Aquinas Newman Center.

Nancy was active in the campus Catholic community and was recruited by Mel to do the layout for the

newsletter, which he edited. Those were the days before computerized layout programs. Everything was done by typing, cutting and pasting. Artwork was added by hand. Nancy's masthead first appeared in the [October 1969 newsletter](#).

Mel later taught Nancy to fly and helped her achieve her private certificate.

She had pursued a career as a teacher but took to heart a suggestion from Mel, who offered this comment while taxiing in one day: "You should get a

job up there and be a controller. You like talking on the radio more than you like flying anyway," he said, pointing to the control tower.

Well, she followed through and took the preliminary exam given by the Federal Aviation Administration. Very little time passed before she got a phone call offering her a job in the Cedar Rapids tower. The only problem was that she was bound by a teaching contract and couldn't start the program until June. No problem; the FAA waited for her.

She was assigned to the control tower in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Although she and Barry Brown, a corporate pilot for Collins, both lived in CR, they actually met at the Wichita, Kansas, airport. She was en route to Oklahoma City for ATC training and he was there to see his brother. She honked at his Bronco because it had an Iowa license.

"As a controller, I used to tell Barry where to go," she says with a laugh.

It turned out to be a good match. Nancy and Barry were married in September 1977, and Fr. Mel officiated.

"I give Mel credit for helping me find my husband," she says

Editor's note: Here is an excerpt of an article that Mel wrote in the [April 1970 newsletter](#). This is a photo of Mel and Nancy.

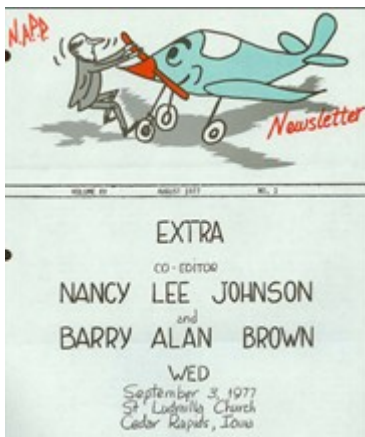


Putting out the newsletter ...

Putting out the newsletter each time is not a one-man operation, but the work of a number of people.

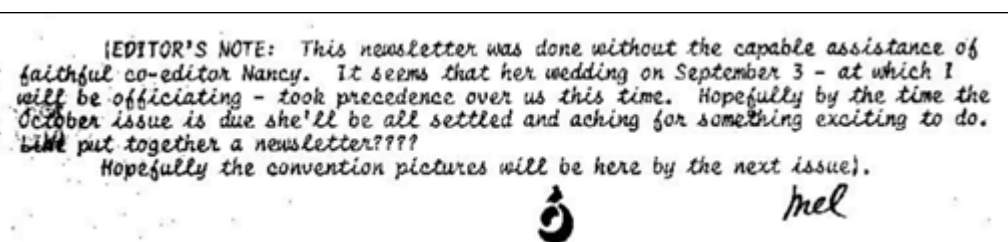
Jan Warren does the typing for the newsletter. After Jan has typed all the materials, the layout work begins – deciding

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Above: Mel announced the upcoming marriage of Nancy and Barry in the [August 1977 newsletter](#).

Below: At the end of that edition, Mel offered this personal note.



Nancy, the trainee controller, made it all work, with a little help from Barry and Dixie

By Nancy Brown

In the 1970s, air traffic controllers learned on-the-job after hours of textbook study (airspace, FAA regulations, and a huge 7110.65 manual of what you can say and how you must say it). A trainee's headset plugged in next to the trainer's headset, with the trainer's headset having override in case of mistakes or corrections. You progressed in check-out from flight data to ground control, local control (aircraft within 3 miles of the airport, or basically landing and taking off), and then after a few weeks of training in Oklahoma City, you learned approach control. I had reached approach control training.

My favorite story was an airline captain who was from the South and had a cigarette lighter that played music box Dixie when it opened. I know this because he came up to the tower to show me one night. Before 9/11, pilots only had to call the tower and could come visit, and women were few and far between in the '70s. I was one of the few, if not the first, in the Central Region. We had a data strip for all incoming IFR flights, and he was on the same route for a long time. My shifts rotated, but it got to be routine that if I was working approach control when he came in, instead of calling approach control, he would key his microphone and play Dixie.

Every night in Cedar Rapids, Collins had a Gulfstream G159 coming back from Addison, Texas, at the same time as a regular United Airlines flight from Chicago. It was a "dead tie" nearly every night. My trainer loved United and thought they should always get preference for landing. But I was dating Barry, who was frequently on the Gulfstream, and had the unique ability to know everything happening in the airspace. If I "had a deal" to work out, I could always depend on him to make it work, because he and his airplane were like "one" in the sky. I knew he could slip a landing, bend a tight base on a touch-and-go, or change runways at the last minute to make a sequence work, and

he always knew who was following him, not just who he was following.

So I frequently gave the Gulfstream the nod, to the consternation of my trainer. He said United was faster. I said if United is faster, then they are breaking the 250-knot speed limit under 10,000 feet. And Barry, who of course knew the story, made certain he followed all the rules. So when United crossed the landing threshold, I'd point out to my trainer that the Gulfstream was on the ramp and unloading, even though they had been the required 3 miles apart on final approach or on visual approaches controlling their own spacing.

And yes, that trainer did sign me off as an independent controller not long after I lined up three jets, 3 miles apart, on final to runway 26. And over 40 years later, I can still rattle off the initial contact information we gave pilots who called approach control.

Nancy Brown is a former pilot and air traffic controller, wife, mom of three, and NAPP supporter.



Nancy and Barry Brown with their dog Sophie.

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what goes where, printing the headings and placing pictures. Shown (on the previous page) are Nancy Johnson and myself putting the finishing touches on this issue. Nance graduated from Iowa State University in February with a degree in Spanish and will go to Purdue in the fall to begin work on her MA. Nance designed the masthead for the newsletter, the cover for the Directory and does all the fancy printing and lettering that appears in each issue.

Once it is all assembled, it goes to Tony Terrones, who operates our offset printing press.

There still remains the monumental task of addressing and stuffing 215 envelopes.

Please send newsletter articles, notes and photos to: Tom Enwright, napp.editor@gmail.com; 419 Chestnut St., Sauk City, WI 53583

Deadline for the February edition: January 31.

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CFI Corner: Advanced Qualification Program

By Fr. Ed Moran, CFI, CFII, AGI, AGII

If a good pilot should always be learning, a good CFI should always be learning and then figuring out how to teach it. Lately, I have had some great help with this by discovering the Aviation 101 and Flight Chops video series. They are put up by a 20-something CFI, Josh Flowers, and a 30-something CFI, Steve Thorne (“Flight Chops”), who both have a passion for teaching and making training videos. They are true General Aviation enterprising innovators in training.



The news with them is that they have taken the Advanced Qualification Program (AQP) given to professional pilots and adapted it to GA pilots. It’s a great way to focus on situations that are statistically known to kill GA pilots. Talk about a practical biennial review that will keep a pilot alive!

The latest data that summarizes 2018 and 2019 GA accidents shows a sharp increase in the number of GA fatal accidents. I like this new AQP because it is an emergent “grassroots sharing” on a volunteer basis among flight schools and CFIs, clubs, chapters, and pilots who want to be better, safer pilots. It uses aviation statistics to focus on teaching applied essentials in making recurrency practical as well as financially focused.

No more demonstrating turns about a point or chandelles! This kind of practical recurrency training saves lives by focusing on those areas and maneuvers that typically kill GA pilots! This new AQP is also a call to the GA community to work together to address specific areas of flight that kill pilots.

I found the checklist items on the pre-brief aspects of the lessons to be very effective in pre-planning takeoffs, dangerous VFR flight into IFR, as well as dangerous situations that occur in landings. The personalized training is meant to take advantage of a pilot’s level of flight expertise measured against areas that must be known and practiced. It connects because it uses scenario-based training to give realism to the training. It also helped me to sift, prioritize and integrate all the information from iPads and glass primary flight displays to derive essential practical information that will keep us safe.

Here is a link that can take you through the FAA’s endorsement of AQP: faa.gov/training_testing/training/aqp

The FAA requirement of completing a flight review only specifies “a review of those maneuvers and procedures that, at the discretion of the person giving the review, are necessary for the pilot to demonstrate the safe exercise of the privileges of the pilot certificate.” This implies that there is a lot of discretion for custom building your own training program unique to your own aircraft and your own type of flying. The FAA provides an **AC 61-89D** that encourages the custom design of an individual program: In most cases, pilots may integrate currency criteria with normal operations to reduce the need for separate currency flights. For example, pilots could incorporate additional takeoffs and landings, instrument approach procedures (IAP), or specialized takeoffs and landings, such as short or soft field, into a planned flight. In most cases, pilots should consider the need for currency beyond that specified by 14 CFR 61.

Here is Steve Thorne’s link that is very GA friendly:

**Relentless General Aviation airplane crashes: Air-
liner prevention applied to flight reviews**
youtu.be/4vINtDWE0f8

If you take a moment and pull up the AQP checklist at the end of the link, you will see the comparison between what areas GA pilots need proficiency in versus airline pilots. If you work to integrate the GA checklist into your recurrency training, you will improve all the safety margins in areas of where we are most likely to get killed. Also, AQP is voluntary! There is no requirement to participate. If you want to participate and train to an advanced level, you can have any CFI fly with you and use this guide for preparing and taking the AQP in your biennial flight review. It becomes even more effective if you plan to do it annually.

What happens if you fail? Nothing! If you fail any maneuver on an AQP annual flight review, you become aware of an area that you are deficient in, and you have the opportunity to do more study, practice, review and improve before taking the BFR! I think this is a grassroots attempt at keeping GA pilots safe and alive! You can adapt the checklist in your next currency ride to focus on the areas that will really keep you safe.

We need to get this word out on GA AQP. If we keep it “grassroots,” the FAA will not try and preempt it into another failed governmental program. Let me know your thoughts of GA AQP!

Don’t forget to send me your questions or ideas for future topics. **Email moranec13@gmail.com**