

N.A.P.P.



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No. 6



Born to fly:

Priest pilot shares amazing story of Hobie's goal to solo on 16th birthday

**By Fr. Bill Menzel
2nd Vice President**

Sometime around the turn of the century (remember, old-timers, when that used to mean around 1900?) I witnessed the wedding of Jimmy Lippold and his wife Sara at St. Vincent de Paul Church in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin. On August 31, 2003, having moved to Kentucky, Sara and Jimmy welcomed into the world their first-born, a boy they named Hobie James. Apparently, an extra chromosome was inserted into one of Hobie's genes. He wasn't born with wings, but he was born to fly.

I think it was in the spring of 2008 when Jimmy and Sara brought the family to Wisconsin Rapids to visit Jimmy's parents. Hobie's grandpa Tim contacted me with a request. He had this 4-year-old grandson who was absolutely crazy about airplanes, and

would I be willing to show him the Comanche that I was flying? Soon we all met at the airport so that Hobie could see and sit in a real airplane.

A couple of years later, Jimmy and Sara moved the family back to Wisconsin Rapids. We would run into each other occasionally, and often the conversation turned to flying and how Hobie still remembered that visit back in 2008 and still was obsessed with anything

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President's column:

Time to rejoice for priestly ministry in a time of pandemic

**By Fr. Joe McCaffrey
NAPP President**

My friends, congratulations are in order for two of our officers. First, Msgr. John Hemann, the "General" and our Treasurer, who is celebrating 60 years of priesthood this year. I understand he got his celebration in before the whole country shut down because of the COVID-19 pandemic! He never ceases to amaze us!

Congratulations also to one of our longtime members, Fr. James Secora, who celebrated his 45th anniversary

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Hobie Lippold with Fr. Bill Menzel after soloing on his 16th birthday, August 31, 2019.



2020 NAPP Convention moved to 2021

The NAPP leadership team met via video conference on April 30 and unanimously decided to postpone the 2020 NAPP Convention until July 2021, given the uncertain situation surrounding the COVID-19 virus.

However, the team decided we will have a virtual annual business meeting at 9 a.m. CDT on Wednesday, July 8, 2020. It will be a video conference with an option to dial in by phone.

In addition, there will be a virtual social hour at 5 p.m. CDT on Tuesday, July 7, 2020.

Details will be provided in an email closer to the meeting date.

The 2021 NAPP Convention will be in Dubuque, Iowa.

- Arrivals: Monday, July 12
- Convention activities: July 13-14
- Departures: Thursday, July 15

Remembering Rudy Frasca

Editor's note: The following note from George Gratton was included in my email to the NAPP membership on May 16:

Rudy Frasca, avid pilot, aviation enthusiast and former NAPP associate member, died May 11th of natural causes, aged 89. He was guest speaker and host of the Champaign/Urbana IL National Convention of NAPP. As an aviator, inventor, and founder of Frasca International Simulators, he was indeed a great man of aviation. Rudy is survived by his wife, 8 children, and 18 grandchildren. Please keep them in your prayers. [Funeral home obit](#)



As an aviator, inventor, and founder of Frasca International Simulators, he was indeed a great man of aviation. Rudy is survived by his wife, 8 children, and 18 grandchildren. Please keep them in your prayers. [Funeral home obit](#)

Here are some articles about Rudy: [Frasca corporate website](#); [News-Gazette AVweb](#); [AOPA](#)

NAPP Dues – U.S. \$25.00
2021 fiscal year begins July 1, 2020

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

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**Mail to: Msgr. John Hemann, NAPP Treasurer,
 481 N. Shore Dr., Apt. 301, Clear Lake, IA 50428-1368**

FOR SALE: 1965 Comanche 260, fresh annual, 840 hours since major overhaul, new WAS approach-approved Garmin 175, ADS-B out transponder, latest spec ELT, new Michelin tires, Concorde battery, seat upholstery. Age and RG insurance-driven sale; I still love to fly. \$70K as per insurance valuation. Clergy discount applies. Four-place, fixed-gear trades acceptable.

George Gratton, ggratton@gmail.com, 912-433-3330.

NAPP Leadership Team
 President: Joe McCaffrey
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 Secretary: Allen Corrigan Treasurer: John Hemann

Regional Directors
 East: Al Ruschman Midwest: John Hemann

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

Deadline for the August edition: July 31.



Bishop Michael Jackels ordains Fr. Nick Radloff for the Archdiocese of Dubuque on May 23.

A new priest for Dubuque — and NAPP

Fr. Nick Radloff was ordained to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Dubuque on May 23. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the private Mass was livestreamed on the internet.

An Air Force veteran, Fr. Nick is 1st Vice President of the National Association of Priest Pilots.

Archbishop Michael Jackels has assigned him as pastor of Christ Our Hope Cluster in Iowa. It consists of St. John Nepomucene Parish in Fort Atkinson, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Lawler, Assumption Parish in Little Turkey, Holy Trinity Parish in Protivin, St. Luke Parish in St. Lucas, and St. Mary Parish in Waucoma.

Nick Radloff studied aerospace engineering at St. Louis University and was in the Air Force ROTC program. He earned a bachelor's degree and was commissioned as an officer in 2008, becoming a navigator in the 79th Rescue Squadron. He was deployed three times with the 79th. He left the Air Force when his commitment was complete in 2015 and began seminary the following January.

"My path to the priesthood took a bit longer than others, so there's a certain amount of relief because what I've worked toward and felt called to for so long is finally here," Nick said in a story in [The Witness](#), newspaper of the Archdiocese of Dubuque, before his ordination.

"Before joining seminary, even though I had my dream job, I always felt like something was missing. After these years of seminary and approaching ordination, what I felt before is replaced with complete joy and contentment."



Fr. Jim Secora celebrates 45th anniversary, retires in July

By Fr. Jim Secora

Archbishop Michael Jackels of Dubuque has accepted my letter requesting retirement from active ministry upon reaching age 70 this past December, effective July 14. On May 31, I celebrated the 45th anniversary of my ordination as a priest.



While not an official "non-pilot" member of NAPP until about 20 years ago, I have been associated with the "Hemann Pilots" during my 45 years of priesthood. I took my first flight with John while a transitional deacon in the parishes in which he served back in 1974. I flew with Ev to Indiana for the diaconate ordination of a future priest of the archdiocese in 1977. And then in my years in Cedar Falls, Mel graciously invited me to the fall and spring gatherings of NAPP at which time I joined. While not a pilot, I have learned many things about flying and have enjoyed the company of all of you.

My priestly ministry has been a full one with many varied assignments: associate pastor, Catholic priest serving Catholic students at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, full-time high school religion teacher at Wahlert Catholic High School in Dubuque, master of liturgical ceremonies and driver to Archbishop Daniel Kucera, O.S.B., member (and later chair) of the worship commission of the archdiocese,

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Check out Fr. Jim's video blog, ["Fr. Jim's Neighborhood."](#)

Sky Ranch for Boys made quite an impression

By Fr. Mel Hemann

The news release read: Sky Ranch for Boys will close after 50 years of operation. It caught my attention because Fr. Don Murray, founder of Sky Ranch for Boys, attended the 1968 NAPP convention in Rapid City and joined NAPP. He attended a couple other conventions and became one of our NAPP financial recipients.



In 1961, Fr. Murray started the camp 100 miles or so northwest of Rapid City, located on a 3,000-acre ranch in Hardin County, Camp Crook, South Dakota, near the Wyoming/Montana state line.

The camp was intended to assist 10- to 18-year-old troubled boys. He said, "I take those who are too tough for any other facility."

Because of our NAPP connection, he asked me for assistance. In the next three years, I flew three very troubled young boys to and from Sky Ranch. There was always an armed police officer in the back with the troubled youth. They were tough, very macho and never asking for help was a badge of honor.

Early in Don's therapeutic program was a ride in his Cessna 172. At 7,000 feet, Don would turn the controls over to the boy and let him fly straight and level. After a few minutes, Don would have him kick the right rudder, which resulted in a spin. As the plane hurtled downward, the frightened youth would for the first time in his life ask for help. That was the beginning of a path to recovery.

On my last trip with an armed officer, we flew to pick up a lad at the end of the school year. When we arrived, the place was in chaos. Three youths had gotten hold of some firearms, shot and killed two faculty members in the breakfast serving line, stole a car and were on the loose. When we arrived, they turned our lad over to us and said, "Get out of here. At least we'll have one less to worry about."

When one of the boys joined the Church, Fr. Don flew him to an airport restaurant for a celebratory dinner. The evening of October 14, 1975, I got a call informing me Fr. Don and one of the students had been killed during takeoff at a Wyoming airport and could I please come as they coped with the tragedy. What follows was a total surprise.

As the grief-stricken group commiserated in seeking an answer to what shall we do now, someone turned to me and asked if I would be willing to take over. Totally stunned, I told them I'd have to think that one over. I met with my Archbishop and, to my surprise, ended up with his blessing and authorization to move forward. Following several days of prayerful reflection, I returned to Sky Ranch and assured them I was honored and thrilled with their proposal. I loved the flying part, but the rest I felt was a bit above my pay scale. A Presentation Sister was offered the job and did very well. She was replaced in the early 1980s by a lay person and Sky Ranch has been under lay operation to the present.

One of the things Fr. Don did was connect with the alcohol beverage industry. They have financially supported the Sky Ranch for Boys throughout the years and pretty much ran the operation for the past 30-plus years. The main reason for shutting down now is the fact they have so few boys seeking assistance. Less than 20 this year. Makes one wonder. Are we doing so well or are we much more tolerant?

Don did a remarkable job with those toughies. After 50 years, another of our NAPP ties leaves happy memories and the knowledge the financial and moral support we offer goes far beyond our wildest dreams.

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member of the priest continuing formation committee, and for the last six years the archdiocesan Catholic School Board, pastor of four parishes in the archdiocese, and instructor in the permanent diaconate program of the archdiocese. All these assignments have been growth-filled for me.

Newly ordained Fr. Nick Radloff was a summer deacon intern (#14 by my reckoning) with me last summer. His assignment to the Christ Our Hope Cluster includes my home parish of St. John Nepomucene in Fort Atkinson. So, in a sense, we come full circle.

I will be residing here in Ames following my retirement and plan to assist, especially in this area, as needed.

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Peace to all!
Jim Secora

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sary of ordination on May 31. Cheers to Jim and all our members who are celebrating special anniversaries this year. My apologies if we have left anyone out. I'm not aware of any others but maybe at our Zoom gathering in July we can toast all of our special jubilarians!

Also, congratulations to Fr. Nick Radloff, our 1st Vice President, who was ordained on May 23. I believe this may be the only time in the history of NAPP that the President and the Vice President share the same ordination date of May 23 – even if it is 33 years apart!

No one can deny that these are strange times. Some may even call them surreal, others outrageously unusual. But the fact remains, God always brings about good even out of bad.

The daily barrage of bad news brought to us courtesy of the media relentlessly encourages us to consume the misery of life. But we are men and women of the good news! It is not only our responsibility; it is our salvation to proclaim the gospel. Not just the gospel that took place 2,000 years ago but also the living gospel of Jesus Christ that is unfolding in our own surreal time! We, through the power of the Holy Spirit, are to have the eyes to see and ears to hear and the voice to proclaim what God is doing in our time.

Fathers John and Nick, as they celebrate 60 years of priesthood and one month of priesthood, respectively, give us all something in which to rejoice.

Yes, we may not be able to gather for the first time in the history of NAPP for our National Convention this July. But that does not mean that God is not at work redeeming His people and bringing about good out of this bizarre pandemic!

I must laugh when I think that the very first National Convention that I would preside over as your President would have to be this year! What is God trying to tell me? Now, I know with that question I just opened the door for many of you to spiritually interpret for me what God is trying to say! I look forward to your guidance.

I think one message from the good Lord might be for us to see just how tenacious we truly are. Just because we are not going to be able to gather in person does not mean that we can't find a unique way to communicate and stay connected.

The officers have already decided that we will use technology to our benefit and provide all of you with an opportunity to join us for a "social Zoom encounter" on Tuesday, July 7, at 5 p.m. CDT.

Our official business meeting will be a livestreaming Zoom gathering on Wednesday, July 8, at 9 a.m. CDT. Details on how to log on and participate in these events will be forthcoming. Please check your email for this information closer to the dates.

Our next National Convention will be Monday, July 12, 2021 (travel day) through July 15 (departure day) in Dubuque, Iowa. God willing, of course!

Thanks to Fr. Phillip Gibbs for his willingness to host us in 2021.

The good news might be that we can now plan for who will host us in 2022! We always seem to be behind the eight ball in booking for our next convention. Wouldn't it be nice to be at least two years out in our planning?

One final thought. God is good. And when we cooperate with the

prompting of his Holy Spirit, He truly does take amazing care of us. In the early days of this organization, Mel Hemann, with others, developed and promoted this newsletter. During recent years in the transition from paper to digital technology, there was a danger the newsletter might go away forever. Thank God for the generosity and talent of Tom Enwright, our newsletter editor, or NAPP would be no more under these current circumstances. Or if not extinct we would, at least, be in a "heap of trouble."

My gratitude to all of you who contribute to this newsletter, sharing your stories and wisdom. With Tom's dedicated and expert editing, we have a newsletter of which we can all be proud! It not only keeps us informed and up to date, it also serves as a necessary mechanism to keep us "alive" as NAPP!

Speaking of staying alive, I pray God's grace upon all of you. If you are blessed to get in the sky, as I have on a few occasions during this pandemic, then rejoice and give thanks to God for the freedom to enjoy this precious gift of flight.

Looking forward to seeing you, or at least speaking with you, come July 7-8.

Blessings on you and yours,

Fr. Mac



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having to do with aviation.

I can't remember if I initiated it or Jimmy did, but at some point in late 2014 we agreed that I would take Hobie up for a ride in the Comanche. So it was that on a relatively warm December day, 10-year-old Hobie and I hopped into the plane for a trip to the Jet Room, a restaurant on the field at the Dane County Regional Airport (MSN) in Madison, Wisconsin. It's a really fun place to have a meal and watch the action from restaurant windows that look right out onto the general aviation ramp. Hobie loved it. On the way back to Wisconsin Rapids I let Hobie take the controls. He did amazingly well, his face expressing both confidence and joy.



Hobie Lippold, age 10, in the Comanche on the way back from Madison, December 2014.

Over the next few years, we made that trip again—and many others, including some Angel Flight missions. More and more frequently I began to turn the controls over to Hobie. He learned quickly, absorbing just about everything about every flight—weather, ATC communications, planning ahead, watching for traffic, crew resource management, navigating with charts and GPS.

Since I'm comfortable flying from the right seat, sometime in 2018 I started letting Hobie fly from the left seat on many flights. It wasn't long before I started letting him fly the traffic pattern and set up for landings. Then, on October 2, 2018, I watched from the right seat as Hobie plopped the mains onto the runway and gently lowered the nose gear. His first landing. (He has since made many more in the Comanche. Now-a-days most of his are better than mine.)

It was Hobie's dream to solo on his 16th birthday, August 31, 2019, so a couple of months before his birthday, he began taking lessons in a Cessna 172 with Dick Rodencal, a local instructor. As I knew he would, Hobie adapted quickly to the 172. Under Dick's tutelage and with stage checks from the owner/chief pilot of the flight school, Hobie made final preparations for his first solo. The morning of August 31 dawned a beautiful day, with a high overcast and light winds.

Hobie's family and many of us from our local EAA Chapter 706 gathered at the airport, somewhat to the displeasure of the chief pilot. He would be giving a final stage check before signing Hobie off for solo

flight, and he felt that the presence of too many people would put a lot of pressure on Hobie. I suspect that he was more concerned that it would put a lot of pressure on him, especially if he decided that Hobie wasn't ready to solo. I understand that. After a seemingly endless series of takeoffs and full-stop landings, the chief pilot finally climbed out of the cockpit and sent Hobie off by himself back to the end of the runway.

I'll never forget that first takeoff. As Hobie climbed off of runway 20 and made his cross-wind turn, my eyes welled with tears, as I'm sure was the case with many others present that morning. Happy Birthday, Hobie!

Of course, all of this has just been the beginning

of Hobie's story. He has fulfilled one dream, but he has many more. Lots of them have to do with flying, and some of those will come true. Some of them will give way to other priorities. But thanks to Hobie's hard work and that of our EAA Chapter 706, his dream of obtaining his private pilot certificate on or shortly after his 17th birthday has just been given a great boost. Through the EAA, he has been awarded a Ray Aviation Scholarship. Chapter 706 has been given \$6,000 to pay all expenses related to Hobie's training for the private pilot certificate, so he is now well on the way toward achieving that dream.

It has been—and continues to be—a joy mentoring Hobie. Yes, he already is a good pilot. Better yet, he is a very good human being, thoughtful, generous and kind. As an example of his thoughtfulness, I'll conclude with this. After Hobie completed his first solo, and after much of the excitement had died down and some of the folks were leaving, he called me over to the Cessna. He took out the flight bag that had flown with him that morning, opened it, and pulled out a framed picture. It was one taken by his dad a few months earlier of Hobie and me standing together in front of the Comanche in the hangar. He wanted me to know that he had taken me with him that morning as he made his three takeoffs and landings.

I get it, Hobie. Thanks!

To get a feel for his love for flying, you can check out Hobie's Instagram account: <https://www.instagram.com/hobiepilot16/>

Over the Alps: Non-stop from England to Venice in a Piper Arrow

By Fr. Peter Geldard

If Venice is "the most beautiful city in the world" (Lord Byron), then the claim on the airport's website of **Giovanni Nicelli Airport, Venice (LIPV)** (quoting the BBC) that "this is the third most beautiful airport in the world" must add, for pilots,



a reason to visit – if they still need one.

I had long waited for the oppor-

tunity to make the trip: I had the airplane; I had the qualifications; and I'd done the planning. All I wanted was the excuse to go! Therefore, when I received an invitation to join a fly-in at Venice in May 2019, I decided the time had arrived.

The notes below give information that will be obvious/familiar to most. But I write them hoping that they might encourage some newly minted IR's (and even some well-briefed and carefully planned VFR pilots using the GAFOR routes through the Alps, which are clearly shown on SkyDemon, a UK electronic flight programme very similar to Foreflight) to make the trip; demonstrating that you do not need an overly sophisticated airplane or equipment — just careful planning, attentive flying, and watchful navigation.

Airplane: N2CL is a standard Piper PA28 Turbo RT Arrow with a basic Century 21 Autopilot and a simple S-TEC Sixty Alt Hold. It has three useful additions:



- GAMIjectors, which result in a very balanced and economic fuel-burn.
- A JPI 830 engine monitor, which, as well as giving one reassurance with monitoring 24 parameters four times a second, has a phenomenally accurate fuel-flow meter.
- And thirdly, considered by some to be rather old now, a Garmin 430W. For IFR, one must have the current database installed.

I am basically an **EFB** (Electronic Flight Bag) person, using an iPad with SkyDemon (with a back-up of the

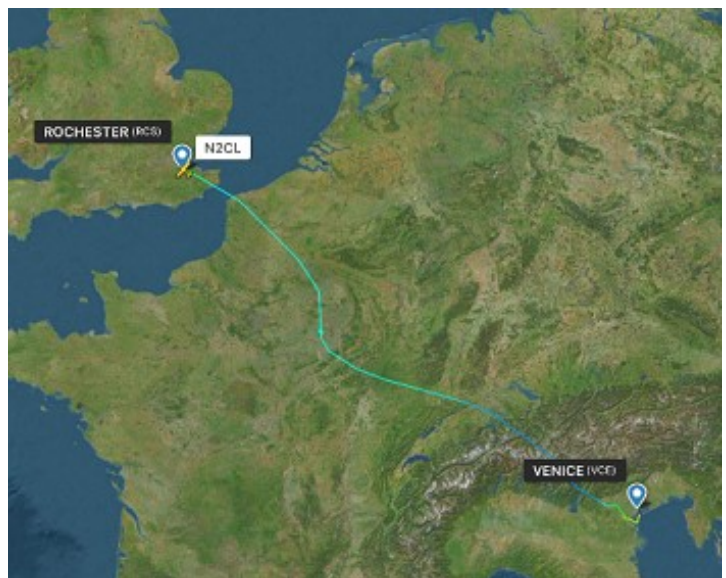


Over the Alps at 17,000 feet

programme on my iPhone). In SkyDemon, one can easily move from IFR to VFR charts whilst continuing to show waypoints. It makes planning a diversion, especially over the Alps, very practical. The only papers I carried were Jeppesen low-level charts 3/4 and 11/12 and printouts of my landing plates at my destination and alternate. I carry an Icom 8.33 kHz hand-held radio since I have only one 8.33 kHz radio via the Garmin 430W; a battery back-up plus "cigar" lighter-lead for the iPad especially as it was doing a phenomenal number of calculations over such a long flight — not least, constantly updating the PLOG. I used a Bad Elf plug-in for GPS source, which never failed me.

Fuel: With long-range tanks of 284 litres, even after 5 hours flight, burning 32 litres an hour LOP, I still had

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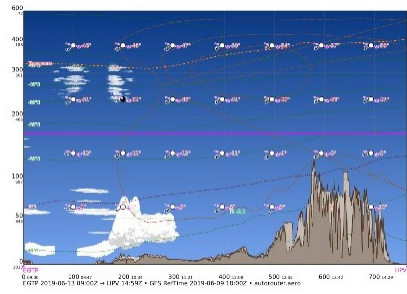
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1 hour 40 minutes left. (Remember also your own tanks: Although I always carry a bottle, perhaps because of concentration I didn't need to use it!)

Flight planning: From Rochester, England (EGTO) to Venice-Lido (LIPV), a distance of 641 miles, I used Autorouter, a European flight plan programme. Flight plans. There are usually at least three: That which you file; that which you receive a few hours before take-off, which is the one put into the Garmin and SkyDemon; and the one which you actually fly! The latter, hopefully, has some shortcuts.

Gotcha: Normally, the waypoints you are given by ATC are already in your PLOG, but occasionally one is thrown "googlies," which you haven't heard before, and even with the good search engine of SkyDemon, you can't seem to find. These can easily be misunderstood; especially if the controller has a strong accent! For example: BILDO for BILGO. "When in doubt, Spell it out!"

Weather: If checking the weather is important for any flight, it is absolutely VITAL for flying over the Alps, especially if your plane, like my PA28, is **NCFFIKIC** (Not Certified For Flying Into Known Icing Conditions) and therefore IMC with icing was an absolute no-go. Although I used the normal sources for weather information, the GRAMET page from Autorouter (right) is a great reassurance. It shows clearly the freezing level and the forecast of VFR on top at FL170. It fulfilled its predictions. Although at times the OAT got to -18°C , and a couple of times there was misting on the screen (which the de-mister quickly eradicated), we remained VMC for the whole trip.



Oxygen: Although regulators (FAA/EASA) state 12,500 or 13,000 feet as the required height for the compulsory use of oxygen, I always use it if above 10,000 for a reasonable time. Clearly at 17,000 feet it was essential. Like many GA pilots, I use the Mountain High oxygen system with a cylinder on the back seat: It is simple, economic and automatic. With the O2D2 Portable Pulse-Demand regulator feeding two cannulas, it gives a puff of oxygen each time you breathe above a pre-set level, e.g. 5,000/10,000 feet. With 10 hours of use, only 10% of the tank was consumed. One also needs a simple finger oximeter. Checking every 15 minutes, it showed my oxygen sat-

uration remained at 96%. (In a PA28, the back-up safety gear extender is density altitude sensitive, so it needs to be "locked up" above 15,000 feet.)

Descent: Although ATC is usually very good at giving one a descent ("Descend when ready"), they sometimes forget that a PA28 doesn't quite have the characteristics of a Learjet! It is useful to have worked out your descent point and, if not given one, to ask for it.

Distance to begin descent: Height distance between levels in thousands $\times 3$ e.g. $17(000)' - 2(000)' = 15 \times 3 = 45$ miles before waypoint. **Rate of descent:** Hopefully known by all who fly instrument approaches! Ground speed (obtainable from your GPS) $\times 5$; or, for a simpleton like myself, Ground Speed $\div 2 \times 10$ e.g. $130 \text{ knots} \div 2 = 65 \times 10 = 650$ feet per minute. With these two calculations, I arrived exactly at PZS3 (Porto Di Malamocco) at 2,000 feet for a straight-in 6-mile final for **05 Venice-Lido**.



Straight in for 05 at LIPV

Four warnings:

1. Even after you have filled in the website for Customs at LIPV, allow at least half an hour arriving/departing for Italian bureaucracy to inspect your passport.
2. Being an island, the cost of fuel on the Lido is always going to be prohibitive and, also, often in short supply. For ALL Italian fields, if I am desperate for avgas, I always double check by phone/email that they have a supply.
3. The grass runway is perfectly adequate for those who are used to such surfaces, but the field is not very good at losing water after a heavy downpour. The fire truck had to pull a couple of planes out of the mud whilst I was there, plus it was very wet underfoot when doing the pre-flight.
4. The run-off from the grass to the apron is LETHAL. Ensure that you use the white gateway.

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The rest of the edge of the grass is a deep hidden ditch, which could easily result in a prop-strike for the unwary.



Venice on port side on final

The Lido: Nothing is cheap in Venice, but the Lido is far more reasonable than the city itself. Above all, it is far more crowd-free than the main island, which made the evenings/eating/relaxing far more pleasant.

I stayed at [Hotel New Reiter](#), which is in the main thoroughfare Gran Viale Santa Maria Elisabetta 57. It was about a 15-minute walk from the airport, and only a few minutes to the end of the street to get the Vaporetto into Venice.

If you want to get directly to the main city of Venice from very close to the airfield, the [Car Ferry](#) goes hourly. Foot passengers can travel for the price of an ordinary Vaporetto ticket.

At the other end of Gran Viale Santa Maria Elisabetta is the famous seashore immortalised in Thomas Mann's novel (and film) "Death in Venice." The Grand Hotel des Bains is now a sad sight, but it still resonates with its iconic grandeur.

If you get sight-seeing overkill from Venice, I can recommend the Lido as a wonderful antidote: Nice walks/beaches/space. Bicycles can easily be hired and the whole of the island can be leisurely explored.

If you have had too much of pasta, I recommend the Indian(!) restaurant [Buddha Soul Resto](#) right opposite the Hotel New Reiter.

I sat on the terrace of **Giovanni Nicelli Airport (LIPV)** with a cold beer in my hand reflecting on a "flight well done" and a long-planned adventure completed. As I watched a beautiful sunset descending over gorgeous Venice, I contemplated – for a pilot – "What could be better than this ...?"

About the author:

Peter Geldard (b. 1945) grew up in southeast England and joined the Anglican (Episcopal) Church at the age of 17. He studied at London University and was ordained as an Episcopal priest by Archbishop Michael Ramsey.



He was National Secretary of the (English) Church Union specialising in Anglican/Roman Catholic unity. This brought him many times to the United States, Rome, as well as other parts of the world. He converted to the Catholic Church in 1994 together with 35 members of his parish. He was one of the first married men to be ordained in the world by special permission of Pope John Paul II (whom he had met frequently).

He was appointed Catholic Chaplain to The University of Kent UK (20,000 students) where he served for 24 years until his retirement two years ago.

He flies a Piper Turbo Arrow IV (N2CL). He has 1,800 hours in his logbook. Twice while visiting the States, under the wise tutelage of Fr. Mel Hemann, he obtained his instrument rating and commercial pilot's license.

He has attended two annual gatherings of NAPP (and hopes to do so again in the future).

Email: fatherpetergeldard@gmail.com



Giovanni Nicelli Airport website showing N2CL on the grass

NAPP member is enlisted for Eucharistic flight during pandemic

Fr. John Schmitz, former NAPP president, was the pilot in command for a Eucharistic fly-over blessing in Missouri as people prayed for an end to the COVID-19 pandemic in March.

Fr. John's Cessna 177 Cardinal rose to the occasion for the flight over a dozen parishes covering three counties in the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

Fr. John, a priest of the Diocese of Jefferson City, Missouri, was approached by Deacon Tom Gerling of Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in House Springs.

"The idea for the flight came through a member of our parish named Mary Meyer," says Deacon Tom. "The Italian Air Force was performing the blessings over Italy. She reached out to me because she knew that I had experience in aviation. I served as a Navy plane captain with an A4 squadron on two aircraft carriers during Vietnam. In recent years, I did some volunteer work for Wings of Hope. I contacted a corporate pilot and he referred me to Fr. Schmitz."

So, on March 25, the feast of the Annunciation of the Lord, Fr. John flew the Cardinal to Spirit of St. Louis Airport in Chesterfield. Deacon Tom boarded the Cessna with the Blessed Sacrament and they took off



for a nearly two-hour flight. Also on the flight was Deacon Tom's grandson, Daniel Ryerson.

With public Masses suspended because of the coronavirus, the Eucharistic blessing from above made a big impression on the faithful.

For example, about 70 people gathered in Deacon Tom's home parish parking lot. Some of them parked their cars to form a cross.

"I am a retired public school superintendent who loves aviation, but I never found time for flight lessons," Deacon Tom said.

"I do have friends who have let me take controls after being airborne and under close supervision. I love flying in all size planes. At 74, I am probably a little old for flight training."

Deacon Tom notes that his parish did livestreaming Masses when it was not possible to gather for public celebration of the Mass in church. "We also had a Eucharistic blessing by having the people drive by the front door of the church and the pastor and I took turns blessing the families."



Deacon Tom's grandson, Daniel Ryerson, documented the flight on video. These still images are from the video files.



CFI Corner: Major aviation ‘gotchas’ can ruin your day

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

So what does one do if during the lock-down quarantine when you don’t own a plane and rentals are not available?

Besides watching lots of aviation YouTubes on flying exotic aircraft, I also study accident statistics from which I build situational models that help me to understand and teach how a pilot can get into such a bad way so quickly.

My reading and watching have lately focused on accidents and the “chain of events” leading up to an accident. Concepts like that are helpful understanding errors in judgment and how quickly one error can lead to another. Some of the breaks in the chain are what I call major “gotchas” that can ruin a perfectly good flight.

From the broad perspective, accident investigators say that CFIT incidents top the list of major gotchas. Controlled Flight into Terrain certainly got Kobe Bryant, his daughter and the onboard guests invited for a seemingly short and uneventful flight back to his luxurious home. A professional and experienced pilot was onboard. The pilot was intimately acquainted with the route having traveled it often.

After examining and listening to the ATC tapes of the incident, novel routing through different control zones seems to have confused them, causing a loss of directional orientation in deteriorating weather conditions. Flight into rising terrain in low visibility was a major gotcha that ended a brilliant basketball career as well as major loss of life and the total destruction of a \$72 million helicopter (Black Mamba).

It’s because of incidents such as this that the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has classified CFIT as one of the highest threats to flight.

The most lethal major gotcha is VFR flight into IMC. I have written on this extensively in my last few articles because it continues to be so insidious and annually claims so many lives. Pilots get lulled into often considering that the latest in digital avionics will prevent such things. But it does not. The way to keep this from happening is recurrency training that always includes a scenario of accidental VFR into IMC.



Flight Safety Foundation

Knowing how to do a standard rate instrument turn as well as a current and ongoing situational awareness of prevailing weather in other areas you can get ATC vectors toward are always advisable. Also, being humble enough to accept your limitations as a pilot and having a good margin of safety can help to prevent this gotcha.

Another one is loss of control-in flight (LOC-I). The Air Safety Data Base I studied detailed 27 fatal LOC-I accidents in the last five years. This pertains to accidents involving loss of situational awareness and control of the aircraft during flight at a low speed, low pitch and high bank angle. Overturning the aircraft from base to final is a famous and continuing example of a LOC-I gotcha! Others include hard landings, over-stressing the aircraft flying into turbulence and aircraft icing.

The last major gotcha on my study list is mechanical/engine issues. This is a big issue for me since all of my flying is done in rental aircraft. I try to fly the same aircraft so I can get to know all of its quirks, but these aircraft are flown by student pilots. You would think that instructing students to be careful about flying aircraft that other students use would be a major part of instilling safety aware-

ness, but it typically is not. Students might check the log for squawks, but in the press for lesson time, many pass these concerns off to the “maintenance guy who is supposed to take care of those things.”

I learned this lesson the hard way. One of my gotchas occurred when I lost rudder control on a rented Cessna 172 during takeoff. I chalk up the save to my guardian angel and a strong headwind since I was able to get it back on the runway before the pavement ended.

What I learned was that with only one pilot, it was difficult to do a positive control check of the elevator and ailerons like we do in gliders before taking off. Since many gliders often have to be assembled, it takes two people to check for positive control to ensure all the controls are locked in and functioning correctly.

The cable broke after takeoff because of corrosion missed during the last annual inspection.

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