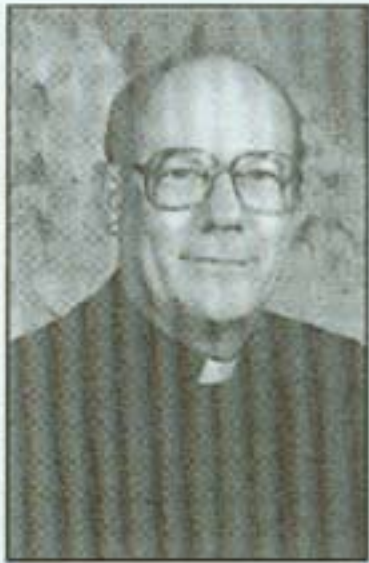


N.A.P.P.



**VOLUME XXXVII      APRIL 2000      NO. 5**



**FROM THE PRESIDENT**

A happy Easter Season and spring to all of you! I hope your celebration of Holy Week and Easter renewed you spiritually, while physically it might have been a little draining. But can there be anything equal to the Church's Easter Season coupled with Spring. Ah, what a time!

Well, our convention in Anchorage is approaching fast. The dates are July 12-13. I hope each of you will be able to attend and that you are making arrangements now.

I personally will be flying commercially. Can't quite bring myself to flying it with my plane. Also coming will be John Wolesky and a friend of ours, Fr. Merlin Kieffer.

At this year's convention we will be electing a new president. Please think about it and be

prepared. The term for the president is two years with the limit of two terms. My 2nd term ends this year. So that means I am out.

Our Midwest Regional group will meet Monday, May 8, in Pella, Iowa. Others, of course, are invited. Make your reservations.

Over Columbus, Ohio on a clear night with minimal activity I heard this on the air: United: "Approach, what's the name of the large university located in Columbus?"

Approach: "That should be Ohio State. Or could maybe be...no, it's Ohio State."

Unidentified voice: "Is that your final answer."

Approach: "Yes that is my final answer."

2nd unidentified voice: "She's just won one million dollars!"

Approach: "Just drop it off at my door and I'm out of here."

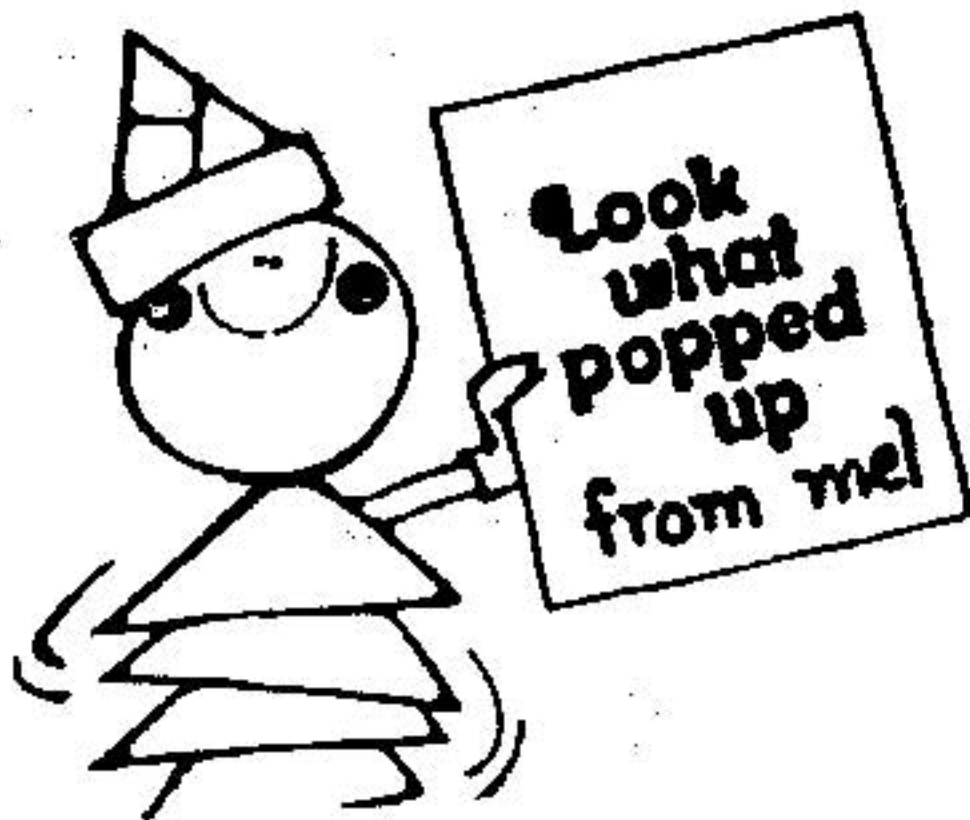
An American DC-10 was rolling out after a rather hot approach to Wichita. The tower advised as follows:

Tower: "American THREE FIVE FIVE, if able to turn, go right at the end. If unable, take Highway 101 and use the Guadalupe exit."

SAFE FLYING! Will see some of you at Pella, Iowa! Hopefully all of you in Anchorage this summer!

Al Werth





included in this newsletter.

I had a call from co-host Jim Kelley a couple of weeks ago. He informed me of some of the preliminary plans Archbishop Hurley and he are working on. It sounds like another first class Alaska adventure.

I am putting this together Passion (Palm) Sunday evening. I don't know if I'll get this page filled at this point so we may up with something we see all too often

#### **THIS SPACE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK**

In this issue you will find the following:

1. A picture of Tom Geelan after his F 16 flight last August.
2. Along with that the article about his event and NAPP in their diocesan paper.
3. Some corrections and additions for the 2000 Directory.
4. Plus a few more little tidbits

As Al mentions in his article we have two events coming up. One is the Midwest Regional gathering in Pella, Iowa. Please get your reservations for the Iowa event to Bob Gruss as soon as possible.

The other is the July convention in Anchorage. Whether you're making the trip on your own or going commercially, get busy finalizing those plans.

Reservation forms for both events are again

## **THIS SPACE**

## **INTENTIONALLY**

## **LEFT BLANK**

#### **REMINDERS**

**May 8, 2000 - Midwest Regional**  
Pella, Iowa  
Reservation sheet in enclosed

**July 12-13, 2000 - 37th Annual**  
Meeting  
Anchorage, Alaska

**ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:**



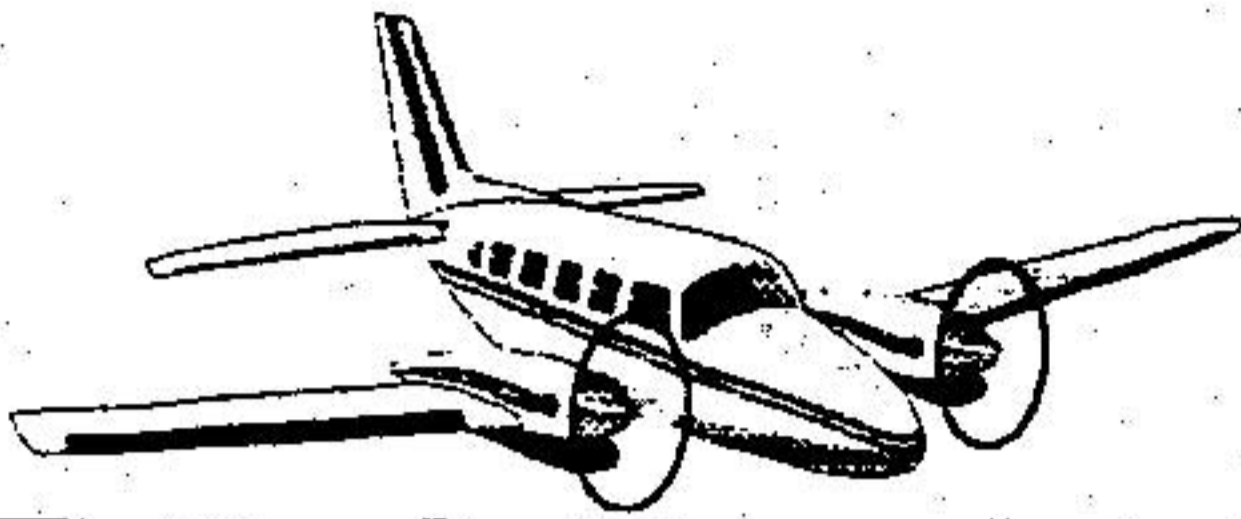
**REV. MEL HEMANN**

127 Kaspand Place

Cedar Falls, IA 50613-1683

319-266-3889

Email: DBQMHEMANN@impresso.com



## BRIEFS FROM HERE AND THERE

*Fr. John Birk writes from Pasco, WA*

Mel,

I took a 3 and one-half week trip to South Africa, Malawi and Kenya. A trip that would not be possible except thru aviation. I wanted to visit all the Marriage Encounter groups there in those countries which I was successful at doing as well as having a priest who went to Gonzaga U. in Spokane to give me a cultural experience in Malawi (one of the poorest countries in Africa) and visit my cousin who is a missionary in Kenya.

In Malawi I stayed two days in a village where one of the diocesan priests lived when he was growing up. He took me down a trail to another village and he told me the villagers were buzzing as it was the first white man they ever saw. It really opened my eyes up to the Third World. The people had so little but were so joy filled at their liturgies which included very reverend dancing that touched me very deeply.

The part of the trip that was difficult was a flight from Johannesburg, S.A. to Miami via a stop in Capetown whereby I had to be on the plane for 18 hours. Going down I had a non-stop from New York to Johannesburg. Can anyone tell me how you deal with those long trips? It was very hard on me physically. I find the air is not the best on the plane on those long trips.

I landed in Balantyre Airport in Malawi where the Pope came in and many of the villagers still had skirts on remembering that occasion. It was frustration in Kenya whereby three different vehicles I was on broke down. The roads that are paved (not many are) had so many potholes except for the main roads connecting the bigger towns. I wasn't physically fit for trip so hence am on a diet in which I have lost 27 pounds

*Fr. Denis Kitenge emailed me from Florida*

Dear Fr Mel,

I would like to share my joy with you and with all the Members of NAPP. I got finally my Instruments rating last Friday (end of February) in Fort Meyers. What a feeling! Thank you for your support and prayers.

Since I am not going home right now because of the war, I will start commercial in April. What do you think about that? Let me know your opinion when you get a minute in your computer. Thanks!

I let you go. God bless you!!

Denis / Instruments Pilot.

*Fr. Denis sent this message later*

Good to hear from you, Fr. Mel

Yes, I am ready to start my Commercial training in April. I will be here for awhile because back home it is still the same song (=WAR). It will be great if I can be in Naples for the next convention.

Fly high Father.

*More filler from Frank Nemmers*

\*The probability of survival is equal to the angle of arrival.

\*Always remember you fly an airplane with your head, not your hands. Never let an airplane take you somewhere your brain didn't get to five minutes earlier.

\*A helicopter is a collection of rotating parts going round and round and reciprocating parts going up and down - all of them trying to become random in motion. Helicopters can't really fly - they're just so ugly that the earth repels them.

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PRIEST PILOTS  
2000 Midwest Regional - May 8, 2000  
Pella Municipal Airport -- Pella, IA**

**Contact Person and Host:**

Bob Gruss  
St. Mary's Church  
1104 Peace Street  
Pella, IA 50219  
515-628-4262 (rectory)  
515-628-3078 (church)



**Try to arrive between 11:00 and 11:30  
A.M. on Monday, May 8, 2000**

**MEALS: Bob will arrange a  
Noon Luncheon  
and a wonderful  
Dinner before Departure  
at an exotic place to be announced**

**Airport:** Pella Municipal

1 mile west of the city

Identifier: **PEA**

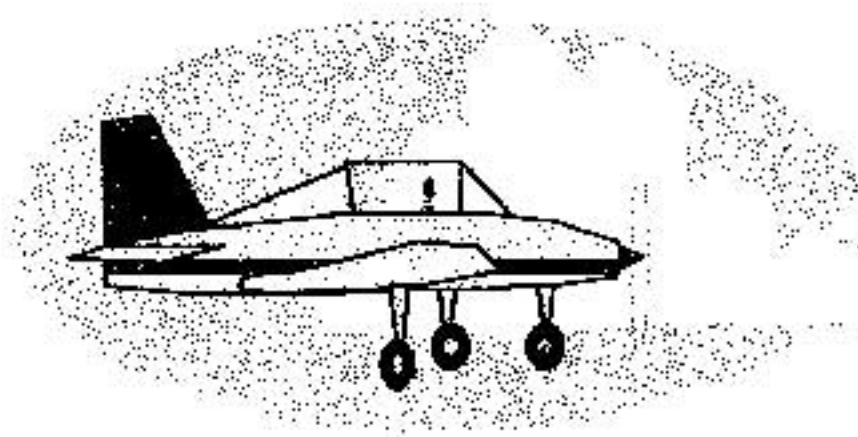
4000 ft runway 16-34

Com freq: APP Des Moines /123.9

UNICOM/CTAF 122.8

FSS: Fort Dodge 122.65

Airport Phone: 515-628-9393



**SPECIAL ATTRACTION**

**Pella is a community settled by the Dutch and  
features an annual Dutch tulip festival.**

We will arrive before the annual weekend festival allowing us to view  
and smell the tulips in the peace, quiet and solitude that precedes  
the arrival of thousands a few days later

*If you want to come early or stay late please let Bob know before arrival*

**RESERVATION FORM**

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

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

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

**ETA** \_\_\_\_\_

**ETD** \_\_\_\_\_

**PLANE**      **Number** \_\_\_\_\_

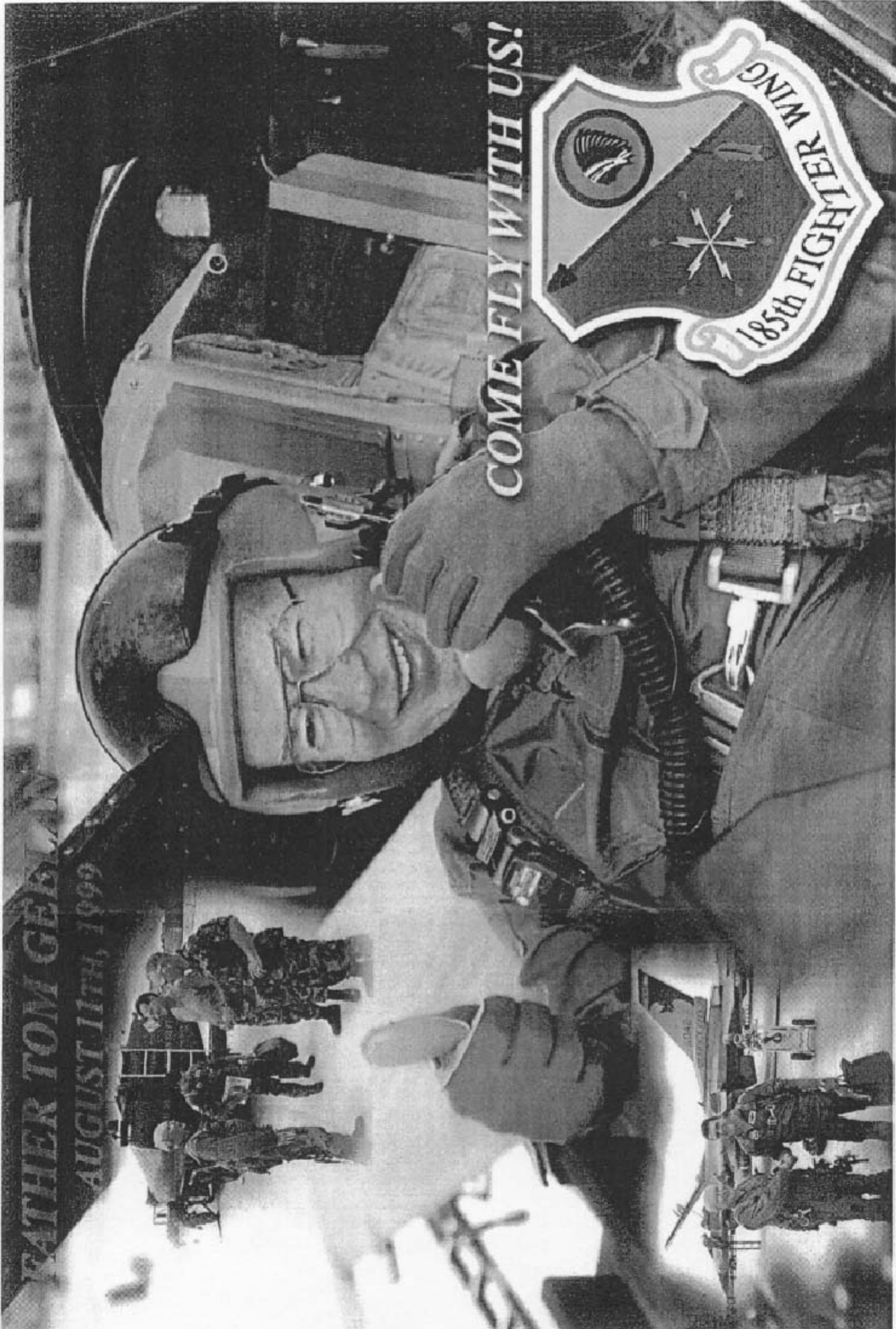
**CAR**

**MAIL TO:**

Bob Gruss  
St. Mary Rectory  
1104 Pierce Street  
Pella, IA 50219

**SEE YOU  
THERE**





COME FLY WITH US!



## FLYING HELPS PRIESTS EXTEND MINISTRY

by Kenny Keane, Globe Staff Reporter

Diocese of Sioux City Paper

Look - up in the air. It's a bird. No, it's a plane, but who's that flying it? Is that my pastor?

Yes, it's true - priests can fly, too. No, this isn't like the "Flying Nun." The priests who use air travel do so using airplanes, and although it is used as a recreational activity, there is more to it than that.

A group known as the NAPP, or National Association of Priest Pilots, was established in 1964 in Kentucky and it is still going strong today.

One of its members since the early '70s is Father Tom Geelan, pastor at Blessed Sacrament Church in Sioux City. Although Father Geelan admits he uses his ability as a pilot "mostly for recreational purposes," he says that one of the major objectives of the NAPP is to give support to those priests who are missionaries in various countries who must fly and do fly a great deal just to accomplish their missionary work.

"We send them money every year," Father Geelan says. "We send them support money, and we give them the help that they often need to carry out the work of spreading the Gospel among people in places like Alaska, South America and Africa.

"We have members from all over the world who are priest pilots. We have them in Mexico, Israel, New Guinea, England, Eastern Africa, Brazil and Belgium. Not all of them are able to attend our meetings, but they get the benefits of our efforts to help give them some financial support."

The group has met annually each summer since its inaugural year at various sites throughout the United States and twice in Canada. This past summer's meeting was held in Dayton, Ohio, and the group's 37th annual convention will be held next July in Anchorage, Alaska, where it has previously convened twice.

Father Geelan says that these meetings are very informal. The group shares the liturgy together, which he said is a very important part of it, but he said they also do something by way of promoting safe flying.

"We'll sometimes have speakers or tours of various facilities often times related to aviation,"

he says. "In Montreal one year, we went through a simulator factory. We were in Cherry Point, N.C. a couple years ago, and we got to tour the Marine Corps air base there. They showed us a lot of their technology."

A fascination with the technology of flying is what Father Geelan says attracted himself and most of the priests to this group and to flying in general. "There's a certain challenge to it, and there's a certain camaraderie about it too. I guess, when you get into flying," he says. "You meet so many interesting people of all different denominations and all different backgrounds besides the other priests who fly. There aren't that many of us who fly. There are probably only 140 members of the Priest Pilot Association active today."

Father Geelan says that for him, flying is "a wonderful escape," even though it does not happen very often. When he does get the opportunity to fly, he says that usually two or three of the priests get together and rent a plane. One occasion in particular was very memorable for him.

"Years ago back in the '70s, a couple of us flew a Cessna 175 all the way to Anchorage and back that wasn't just a trip. It was a real adventure - one that went very well, too," Father Geelan says. "We have a lot of good experiences and meet a lot interesting people.

"People are always kind of surprised. They don't think of priests as flying airplanes. For us it's not only a great getaway, but it's also been very helpful to us."

One of the charter members of the NAPP is Father Mel Hemann, a retired priest who is active in the group as a pilot and as the author of their newsletter for over 30 years. He also says that one of the big things about flying is the recreational aspect of it.

"For one thing, we're being told more and more the importance of taking a day off and all that business. Some guys go out and chase a little white ball...we feel like flying," Father Hemann says. "It's just a great thing to get up in the air and enjoy God's scenery and beauty from above and go somewhere."

However, Father Hemann, who was formerly a pastor in the Dubuque Diocese, also says there is the very practical side of things.

"I was in the diocesan family life office for a number of years, and I flew all over the country to all kinds of meetings. So it has a personal recreational aspect, but over and above that, it really is very valuable as far as extending your ministry far beyond what you can do with the car."

Father Hemann does admit though, that with the increase in speed limits on the highways and interstates, most of the priests have developed a rule of thumb. If something is less than 100 miles away, they can probably drive there faster than it would take to fly by the time they got to the airport and made all the necessary preparation.

So although there may be a sort of entertainment component to flying or being a member of the NAPP, the group also supports those who must fly, and as Father Hemann says, there is a practicality to priests having the choice to fly.

One more aspect of it though might be a spiritual high for those priests who fly. However, Father Geelan quips that the only time it becomes very spiritual is when you have a close call.

"I was a passenger in a plane one time that was totaled on takeoff. That was many years ago. I was just riding in the backseat, but fortunately no one got hurt. That kind of makes you stop and think," he says.

As for the over all experience of flying though, Father Geelan says he finds it "terrifically relaxing. I guess you could say there is a certain spiritual dimension to it."

---

#### A BIT OF FAMILY NEWS

On Sunday, April 9, the Hemann's gathered in Garner, Iowa to celebrate with hundreds of others the 40th anniversary of John's ordination. It was a grand event.

On Saturday, April 29, Archbishop Jerome Hanus, OSB will preside at the Mass of Dedication of the New and Renovated Space at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish and Student Center at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa.

Some of you will remember this site of our 7th annual convention in 1967 when I was stationed there. Ev is currently the pastor who has brought to completion plans we could only dream and hope about back then.

<sup>16</sup>**Congratulations to both of you.**

#### DIRECTORY CORRECTIONS & CHANGES

*As I suspected I did goof in some of the information in the last directory. So far the following have come to my attention. I'll begin with my own:*

Rev. Mel Hemann  
319-266-3889

(The last 4 digits of my phone number are wrong in the directory. I changed last year's program {I thought} but it still came out wrong. It's changed for next year.

Rev Edward Murray  
St Rose of Lima Church  
1008 2nd Ave S  
Denison IA 51442-0280  
712-263-2152 H  
712-263-2153 Fax  
Rosest@frontiernet.net

Rev Michael Schwarte  
St Catherine Catholic Church  
PO Box 508  
Petersburg AK 99833  
907-772-3257

*In the necrology section I skipped:*

March 17, 1998 **Rev Richard Skriba** Chicago  
Change:  
May 1, 1996. **Rev Joseph J Weinzapfel** instead  
of Rev. Leo.

*The following change is effective May 1, 2000:*

Rev. Mike Kerin  
Glenmary Home Missioners  
P.O. Box 465618  
Cincinnati, OH 45246-5618

---

**HAPPY EASTER  
MAY THE PEACE AND  
JOYS OF THE  
RISEN LORD  
BE WITH  
ALL OF YOU**



**NAPP  
NATIONAL CONVENTION**

**JULY 12-13, 2000**

**CONVENTION HEADQUARTERS**

HOLY SPIRIT CENTER  
10980 HILLSIDE DRIVE  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99516  
907-346-2343

**ROOM RESERVATIONS**

JOANN WHITE  
OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP  
225 CORDOVA STREET  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501  
907/297-7766

**SINGLE ROOM -- \$55.00 PER PERSON  
SHARED ROOM -- \$40.00 PER PERSON**

**RESERVATIONS IN BY 15<sup>TH</sup> JUNE**

**CONVENTION HOSTS:**

ARCHBISHOP FRANCIS T. HURLEY  
ARCHDIOCESE OF ANCHORAGE  
225 CORDOVA STREET  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501  
907/297-7766  
907/279-3885(FAX)

REVEREND JAMES F. KELLEY  
HOLY ROSARY CHURCH  
PO Box 810  
DILLINGHAM, AK 99576  
907/842-5581

-----  
**Return form to:** Joann White, 225 Cordova St., Anchorage, AK 99501

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

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

ETA(DATE) \_\_\_\_\_ TIME \_\_\_\_\_ ETD(DATE) \_\_\_\_\_ TIME \_\_\_\_\_

ROOM RESERVATIONS NEEDED: JULY \_\_\_\_\_ to JULY \_\_\_\_\_

ARRIVAL BY:

CAR \_\_\_\_\_

PLANE: MAKE \_\_\_\_\_ N \_\_\_\_\_ COMMERCIAL: AIRLINE & FLT: \_\_\_\_\_