

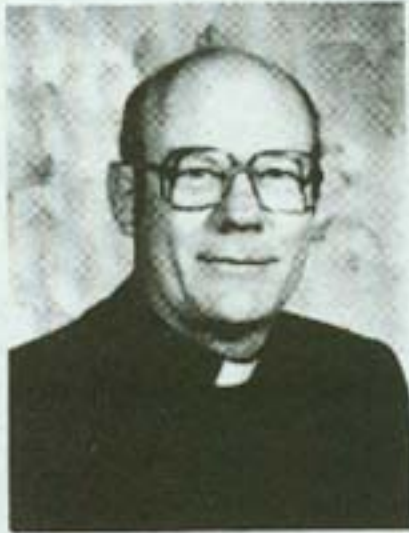
N.A.P.P.



VOLUME XXXV

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NO. 3



### FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings brother priests and fellow pilots!

Advent, the season of joyful expectation, is just about spent. It is about to lead us to the celebration of that great day of Christmas, when God gave us the greatest gift ever, His Son - our Savior. A holy Advent and a blessed Christmas!

Our prayers are with our brother-priest pilot Jack Lawler. Sorry about your mishap Jack. Hang in there! We hope your recovery will continue to move forward.

Looking at the December issue of Extension, the back cover immediately caught my attention. There you have a picture of a plane, looks like a Cherokee 140, with a picture insert of Archbishop Francis T. Hurley along with a few words explaining the help Extension gives in the work of the Church in Alaska. The words of the opening paragraph also got my attention, "In Alaska, they call them circuit riders--priests who travel from parish to parish by means of clear skies and reliable prop planes."

Opening the magazine, and in the very center, whose face stares right at me? None other than our own Father James Kelley's. Jim, I'm sure you will have no problem getting to heaven. Alice will be offering plenty of prayers for you for being so kind to her. Keep up the good work in Alaska.

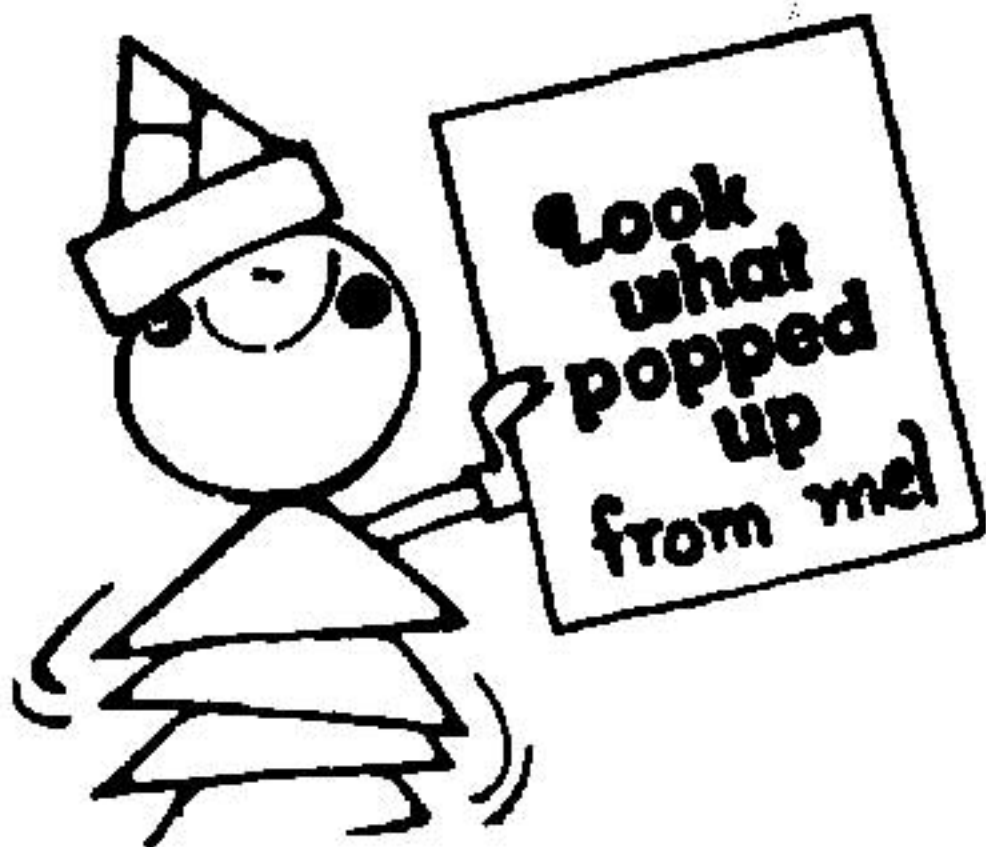
Mark your calendars for July 7 & 8, our 1998 annual convention on Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada.

A blessed and happy Christmas to all of you.

Fly safely!

Al Werth





Member Charlie Teufel called me from West Virginia on the 13th. Among other things he informed me that charter member Stephen Wolan died on Friday, December 12. It has been some years since Steve was at a meeting. Charlie said he had been battling cancer for a number of years but Friday he died of a heart attack or some other complications. The Lord does work in strange and mysterious ways.

Steve, may you rest in peace!

Included in this issue is an interesting letter I received from a priest pilot, Denis Kitenge, in Venice, Florida. Denis comes to Florida via the Congo, Africa. In his initial letter he stated his bishop sent him here to learn to fly so he could better serve the people in his country. In the letter you will read he shares with us the joy of not only soloing, but also of having passed the private check ride. He's now working on his instrument rating. Welcome to the group Denis! If any of you just happen to be in Florida I'm sure a visit would be appreciated.

President Al makes reference to the last issue of the *Extension* magazine. I'm sure most of us get it as I've had several E-mails, phone calls

and copies of it sent to me. So I won't bother including it in this newsletter. I would add only a word to Al's remarks. In addition to the pictures and stories of Archbishop Hurley and Jim Kelley there is also a wonderful story of Bishop Kaniecki of Fairbanks. Alaska did well on publicity this month.

I have the latest up-date on Jack Lawler in the Briefs. He's still on a ventilator while he fights infections. I hope the picture turns out so that you get an idea of Jack's plane.

In preparing the directory I noticed I didn't have the place of Leo Weinzapfel's death so I called his brother Tom. Tom retired in January and in the conversation found out something of his background. I never cease to be amazed at our members. He is one of 4 boys in the family, all pilots, as well as a few of their sisters. One brother was in service and was killed on a flight returning to Hawaii on Dec. 9, 1941 from a mission looking for Japanese subs, ships or planes. Tom & his 2 brothers owned a plane together which they flew all over the western hemisphere, both North & South America. As the sole remaining owner of the plane, Tom said, "I started flying in 1941. After 56 years of accident free flying I thought I'd probably used up all my lucky breaks so I sold it."

Tom O'Neill, our Vancouver Island host, continues to send me information about the island. Beginning with the February issue I'll have put together some kind of listing of all the possibilities available to us when we meet there. The reservations will go to Tom; room reservations will be made directly with the Inn that will serve as our gathering spot. Suffice it to say at this point there is everything from hiking, biking, golfing, swimming, to just layin' around all day. Meanwhile get the dates in your book. July 7 & 8, 1998. Nainamo, BC is the place. Vancouver should be wonderful that time of year.

**ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:**



**REV. MEL HEMANN**  
20245 ST. JOSEPH DRIVE  
RICKARDSVILLE, IA 52039

319-552-2233



## BRIEFS FROM HERE AND THERE

Two E-mail messages from Bert Pepowski contain the following information.

Dear Mel, (November 10, 1997)

It's been a while since I've been in contact. I'm going to be away for some 4 months doing some missionary flying down in the Galapagos Islands starting December 9th. It is going to be on a rotation basis, and originally I'm to stay there and fly a Piper Aztec to and from 3 islands in the Galapagos. The plane is down there already and is in service. The pilot that is down there now is getting things set up. The different protocols and manifest forms, etc. It should be pretty much set by the time I get there. Initially my primary task will be to simply fly, but as I learn some Spanish, some ministry is certainly going to be a part of this. But initially this flying is a kind of sabbatical and I'm looking forward to it.

I just received the NAPP news and was surprised to hear of John Dompka's final flight, and also about Jack Lawler's accident. I would like to run down there to visit him. At the moment my time is quite limited because of preparations for this flying stint in the Islands.

When I get down there, I'm taking a Laptop with me and hope to have access to some kind of E-mail service.

The corporation that we (The Franciscan Secretariate of the Missions) and the Wagner Foundation (as in Dick Wagner of Wag Acro) have formed around this Aztec is called "ALAS FRANCISCANAS LTD".

The Wagner foundation was formed by Dick and his wife Bobbie to preserve aviation artifacts and memorabilia. It quickly branched out into missionary work in Belize and New Guinea helping to finance flying and medical service.

(December 9, 1997)

My dear and precious friends,

This is a general letter, wanting to wish all of you a very blessed Christmas. Indeed may the Grace and love and peace of Jesus permeate your lives powerfully and deeply.

I'm going to be celebrating Christmas in the Galapagos Islands and will be there doing Missionary flying till June.

My new address is:

Fr. Bert Pepowski, O.F.M.

Alas Franciscanas. Ltd.

Prefectura Apostolica de Galapagos

Madreselva 121 y Avenida el Inca

QUITO, ECUADOR

Phone: 011-593-2-459-436

Fax: 001-593-5-520-372

E-Mail: bertpepo@mail.icongrp.com

Remember me in your prayers. I'll be doing the same for you. This is a new endeavor for us and so this first segment of the flying service will have it's ups and downs literally.

I'm looking forward to the challenge.

Love and prayers to all of you.

Bert

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From Father Peter Geldard, Catholic  
Chaplain, University of Kent at Canterbury

17th November 1997

Dear Mel,

You should receive an E-mail from me saying that this letter is on its way. The purpose is two-fold: to enclose \$30 for subs nor NAPP and to request that my E-mail address be added to the Directory, if and when it is being revised. [My home address as shown in the directory is accurate].

Do give my regards to all in NAPP and assure them that *someday* I will be with them in the flesh at one of their gatherings; but I am



the flesh at one of their gatherings; but I am always with them in Spirit whenever they meet. The number of priest pilots this side of the pond is rather small and so we don't have any equivalent organisation so it is good to have fellowship with you all over there.

As mentioned in my E-mail, do encourage the brethren to make contact with me if ever they are vacating this side of the ocean. I have a Cessna 172 and if any of them would like 'to go foreign' I am more than happy to take them over to France for lunch one day!

With every best wish to you and all,

*Peter*

Peter

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From Fr. Don Eder in Fishers, Indiana  
August 26, 1997

Dear Mel,

I am enclosing a li'l note to try to keep up to date. I never did get my canceled check from last year's notice for dues, so I am enclosing enough to cover both years this time. In case I'm short, please let me know.

I had to sell my Bonanza V35 and give up the left seat for a long time. I had, unknown to me, a heart attack that showed up on a wellness program with the diocese. I went thru all the hoops the FAA wanted with the treadmill and stress test, but that was not good enough in view of the meds that I have to take, so I'm grounded for at least two years and then after that the big chunk of money to meet requirements for a medical. I don't know right now what I'll do, since I'm now old enough for social security. I'm into some international travel now with pilgrimages so that may take up the time and interest that flying had for me previously.

I hope to keep in touch with the NAPP though, and as I get a chance hope to make a gathering of the brethren. Anyway, it is good to get the news letter and know that the gang is still active and keeping a bird or two in the air.

Peace!

*Don*

Don

*Latest update on Jack Lawler 12-14-97 via phone conversation with his niece Donna.*

About the time you received the last newsletter Jack was airlifted to St. Elizabeth Hospital in Brighton, MA. Donna said he has his 'ups and downs' medically. He continues to have fevers which is mystifying the medical personnel. A couple of weeks ago they took the ventilator off for a couple of hours. Donna placed her finger over the incision in his throat and he was able to speak briefly. He said he remembers the accident. He did not run out of gas. He says the autopilot didn't go off or disconnect. Since that time he has been on the ventilator but remains alert. Donna said she read the last newsletter to him and he smiled when some of the names he recognizes came up.

John Bellon sent me a copy of a picture of Jack's plane at the accident site at the Purdue University airport. I don't know how well the copy of a copy will reproduce but we'll give it a try. Jack's present address:

St. Elizabeth Hospital  
Cambridge St. Unit M6  
Brighton MA 02135

Merry Christmas and loads of prayers and good wishes from all of us.



**CRASH SITE:** A small plane flies over the wreckage of John T. Lawler's single-engine plane Sunday night.

Father Denis Kitenge  
Epiphany Cathedral  
310 Sarasota Street  
Venice, FL., 34285

Venice, November 12, 1997

REV. MEL HEMANN  
St. Joseph Church  
20245 St. Joseph Drive  
Rickarsville, IA 52039  
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Rev. Mel Hemann,

I am writing to give you thanks for your prompt answer to my request. As you guessed, I do not have money; but I send you a check from my poor deposit just to show you how happy I am to be Member of The National Association of Priests Pilots ( NAPP ).

Also I have a good news to let you know: last Oct. 19th, I did my Check Ride. I got my Private Pilot License. Please, tell the other Brothers Priests Pilots that Denis is already Pilot.

Considering the poor weather conditions that exist back in the Congo (Africa), I am obliged to take a Instrument training. I do not know if I will be able to finish considering its cost. It is very expensive for my Bishop and I. But I believe, God knows what I need to fly safety in Africa, and therefore he will provide!!!

I send you my picture to give you an idea of my person and I hope I will visit you before going back to the Congo.

I look forward hearing from you again.

Happy Landing !

In the name of Jesus,

Father Denis KITENGE

= Missionary Pilot =



*Epiphany Denis*



# 1998 NAPP CONVENTION

July 7 - 8



CONVENTION LODGING  
and HEADQUARTERS



Just one of the many  
things to do

Vancouver Island's  
Premier  
Golf Destination



Look for more details next time



## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PRIEST PILOTS MINUTES

Annual Meeting - Wednesday, July 9, 1997

Our worthy President, Fr. Tom Geelan, functioning in great form (belying his lame-duck status) opened our 34th meeting with a prayer on Wednesday, July 9th, at 3:30 PM. We were using the facilities of the Chapel at Cherry Point, N.C. Marine Corps Air Station. This was the first time we had convened at a Marine military base. Our fly-in base was the civilian airport at New Bern, North Carolina. Our admirably performing Convention host was member Fr. Mike Mikstay, Chaplain at the MCAS. We were all pleased with our housing at the New Bern Sheraton Hotel. Grateful acknowledgement of Fr. Mike's outstanding performance was expressed by President Tom accompanied by spontaneous applause by the membership. Formal acknowledgement with much appreciation was made of the marvelous hospitality we enjoyed as extended by the entire Base and which was personally arranged by the Base Commander, Gen. Kara Markovich through the agency of Fr. Mike Mikstay. At one point the entire Base Flight-line was closed down for fifteen minutes for our "tour." As conscientious taxpayers we were very proud and pleased as to how our 'contributions' to the IRS were being put to good use at the Cherry Point MCAS!

40 persons were in attendance: Of our 14 remaining Charter Members (veterans of 34 years) 5 were present: Reverends John Bellon, John Hemann, Mel Hemann, Bob Kirsch and Phil Schmitt; 26 Regular Members: Reverends Tony Attea, Tom Ayoub, Bill Bevington, John Dompka, John Esquibel, John Friederick, Tom Geelan, Everett Hemann, Dave Hogan, Jim Kelley, Dino Lorenzetti, Bill Martin, Mike Mikstay, Ed Murray, Gene Murray, Frank Nemmers, Jack Paisley, Bill Roche, Nick Rossello, Al Ruschman, Owen Shanley, Pete Sweeney, Charlie Teufel, John Walsh, Al Werth and John Wolesky; 6 Associate Members: Jack Boyle, Bill Browne, Ron Cervantes, Tony Facciolo, George Gratton and Fred Wright; 3 Guests: Jeffrey Bryant, Ted Keller and Mike Macklebust.

**MINUTES:** Copies of the Minutes of our 1996 Angola, N.Y. Meeting (courtesy of Newsletter editor Fr. Mel Hemann) were distributed and reviewed. Motion: For acceptance of the Minutes was made, seconded and passed unanimously.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Treasurer, Fr. Pete Sweeney, reported that former Treasurer, Fr. Ev Hemann, continued in service until Christmas 1996. We have a Reserve Fund with the Diocese of Dubuque at \$6,725.00 which includes \$725.00 interest for two years. This Reserve Fund is not to be touched. Our Newsletter mailings cost approximately \$1,000.00. Motion: That the Report be accepted was made, seconded and passed unanimously. It was understood a detailed report will appear in the Newsletter.

**NAPP, INC:** Fr. Al Ruschman has again personally paid the fee so that NAPP, INC. continues to be legal under the laws of the State of Kentucky.

**1998 CONVENTION:** We will convene on Tuesday, July 7th and Wednesday, July 8th, 1998. Three sites were proposed: 1) Anchorage, Alaska (we have a standing invitation from member Archbishop Frank Hurley); 2) University of Dayton, Ohio (proposal from Fr. Tom Schoene) and 3) Nanaimo, Vancouver Island, British Columbia. This invitation being made by member Fr. Tom O'Neill. Fr. Tom is pastor of an ecumenical church. We would be at the Retreat House; there is 1 1/2 hour ferry ride to the mainland; there are two airports on the island. Motion: Fr. John "Knobby" Walsh/Fr. John Esquibel: That we convene at Vancouver Island; passed unanimously.

**1999 CONVENTION:** The Dayton University proposal by Fr. Tom Schoene is still in place. For 2000 we still have the tentative offer by Fr. Ev Hemann at Ames, Iowa for a "tete-a-tete" with a developmental single engine civilian jet.



**REGIONAL MEETINGS:** The midwest Regional Meeting will be held on Sept. 29th and will be hosted by Fr. Ev Hemann. Fr. Bill Martin proposed the formation of a Northeastern Region.

**NEWSLETTER REPORT:** Editor Fr. Mel Hemann reported that the postal and printing costs continue to go up and that we only have a 5% return on our money now. Fr. Mel suggested \$20.00 for dues. **Motion:** Fr. Jack Dompka/George Gratton: That the dues now be \$20.00; unanimous passage. (Our fiscal year begins with July 1st which makes us more in line with Convention time). There was further discussion about our investments. Fr. Bill Roche spoke of investigating Money Markets; Fr. Ev Hemann spoke of Mutual Funds; That an Ad Hoc Investment Committee be appointed: Passed unanimously. President Geelan then appointed Fr. Pete Sweeney, Fr. Everett Hemann and Tony Facciolo. (Fr. Pete Sweeney continues as Treasurer).

**MEXICO REPORT:** Fr. Bob Kirsch gave his annual report on the continuing flights of the SAN MARTIN FLYING MISSION, Inc. C-210, the "Mission Queen": the latest efforts are to identify the more remote areas of the Tarahumara indigenous peoples, evaluate needs, check on possible 'airstrips', etc. Fr. Francisco "Pancho" Chavez (who was with us in 1996) is still flying the Tarahumara Diocese's Cherokee Dakota 260 XB-ETB covering a vast area of some 56,000 Tarahumaras. The Indian orphan lad, Braulio (also with us in 1996) is now in training as a pilot/mechanic at Aldama, Chihuahua and Fr. Bob expressed his appreciation for our continuing support.

**DONATIONS:** **Motion:** Fr. Bob Kirsch/Fr. Ev Hemann: That our donation of \$1,000.00 for this year go to member, Bishop Tommy Lobsinger, OMI, Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, Canada. Passed unanimously.

**ELECTIONS: President:** Fr. Bob Kirsch nominated Fr. Al Werth; **Motion:** Fr. Tony Attea/Tony Facciolo: That the nominations be closed; passed unanimously. Congratulations to our new **President** Fr. Al Werth. **Secretary:** Fr. Jim Kelley nominated Fr. Bob Kirsch; **Motion:** Fr. Tony Attea/Fr. Bill Roche: That the nominations be closed; unanimous. Fr. Bob expressed his appreciation of the continued confidence of the members. **2nd Vice-President:** Fr. Mel Hemann nominated Fr. Jim Kelley; **Motion:** That the nominations be closed; passed unanimously. Congratulations to Fr. Jim.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:** of Fr. Tom Geelan, outgoing President. Well done, good and faithful servant!

**NEW BUSINESS:** 1) Call for prayer for our member brothers in ill health: Msgr. Bob Sennott, Msgr. Alex Sigur and Fr. George Schneider; 2) Remember to use our "N" numbers for our E mail, etc.; 3) Prayers requested for member Joe Murray. A "Get Well" card was signed for Joe; 4) Fr. Tony Attea can supply update disc for the Garmin GPS 90; 5) Fr. Al Ruschman requested a history of NAPP in our Directory; 6) Fr. John Hemann mentioned contact with Our Sunday Visitor and upcoming NAPP article. Tracie, the photographer with us these days, has been hired by OSV to supply pictures; 7) Archbishop Hurley sends his regards and is still recruiting retired priest pilots for perhaps a short tour in Alaska; 8) Fr. Jim Kelley mentioned a parish which the Maryknollers have in Magadon, Siberia with pastor Fr. Frank Moselin; 9) Fr. Bob Kirsch and Fr. Mel Hemann talked about the need for a new NAPP brochure.

**ADJOURNMENT:** **Motion:** Fr. Ev Hemann/Fr. Phil Schmitt: That we adjourn; Unanimous. Adjournment at 4:20 PM; meeting duration: 50 min. (Miracles never cease happening!).

Remorsely submitted 'lately'

*Bob*

Fr. Bob J. Kirsch, Secretary