



Volume 61

June 2025

No. 6

President's column: Fr. Allen Corrigan

My convention journey includes Indiana flight memorial and ferry crossing on Lake Michigan

Dear members,

I hope you are joining me in anticipating our upcoming July convention. As requested, I have sent Tom Enwright my confirmation for the event, and I also sent a copy of my hotel registration. Please note Tom's important reminder that the deadline for our hotel room block is due June 15.



I'm looking forward to a road trip that will be significantly shorter than last year's 2,600-mile drive from Richfield, Ohio, to Fredericksburg, Texas, and back. I

mentioned in an [earlier letter](#)

that I will be stopping in Roselawn, Indiana, to visit the [memorial](#) for American Eagle Flight 4184, which crashed on October 31, 1994. My brother-in-law's brother, Kenneth Ernst, was on board that flight.

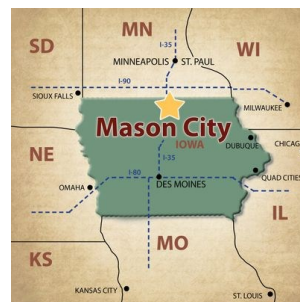
Since I related more of this story earlier, I will simply suggest for more information, please see the Wikipedia entry titled "[American Eagle Flight 4184](#)." My brother-in-law Jim, my sister Donna and some of their family visited the site on the 30th anniversary this past fall. Since I was busy at the parish, I was not able to accompany them, but I will make my pilgrimage to the sacred site a couple of days before our convention.

Following the convention, I will return to Ohio via a fer-



Deadline is June 15 for NAPP's July convention

This is the final call for the 2025 NAPP convention in Mason City, Iowa. Arrivals will be on Tuesday, July 15; convention activities will take place Wednesday and Thursday; and departures will be on Friday, July 18.



If you are planning to attend, please send in (or email) the RSVP form on Page 2. Deadline is June 15.

The convention hotel is the [Best Western Holiday Lodge](#) in Clear Lake. The hotel features complimentary full breakfast and an airport courtesy shuttle. Mason City Municipal Airport (KMCW) is two miles from the hotel.

In addition to sending in your RSVP form, reserve your room by June 15: Call the hotel directly at: 641-357-5253. To receive the special group rate, identify yourself as being with the "National Association of Priest Pilots Group Block" at the time the reservation is made. NAPP room rates are \$119 per night (plus tax) for either one queen bed or two double beds. Twenty rooms are being held until June 15.

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See CONVENTION on Page 2

CONVENTION continued from Page 1

[North Iowa Air Service](#) is the FBO at [KMCW](#). United Express provides commercial flights between Mason City and Chicago's O'Hare International Airport.

Our convention hosts are Fr. Nick Radloff and Mike Makelbust. The itinerary will be emailed to members when it is ready, but one of the highlights will be the [Third-Thursday Burger Burn](#), which is a popular mini-airshow and cookout. The Burger Burn happens year-round on the third Thursday of each month at Doug Rozendaal's hangar at KMCW.

The NAPP annual meeting and Mass will be at [St. Patrick's Church](#) in Clear Lake.

To learn about the Mason City area, go to [visitmasoncityiowa.com](#).

(Note that this year's NAPP convention is the week before EAA AirVenture in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, July 21-27.)

JOURNEY continued from Page 1



ry crossing of Lake Michigan. The [S.S. Badger](#) entered service in 1953. She is the last coal-fired passenger steamship in operation in the United States. The Badger can accommodate 600 passengers and 180 vehicles, including RVs, motorcycles, motorcoaches and commercial trucks.

I'm looking forward to the four-hour voyage on this historic steamship. In addition to free movies and outdoor lounging, I've read there is a Bloody Mary Bar in the Cabana Room; but since I will be driving in the evening from Ludington to Grand Rapids after disembarking, I'll have to take it easy.

Sincerely,

Allen F. Corrigan
President

2025 NAPP Convention Mason City, Iowa
Arrive: Tuesday, July 15 Depart: Friday, July 18
Our hosts: Fr. Nick Radloff and Mike Makelbust

[Best Western Holiday Lodge](#)

2023 7th Ave. N., Clear Lake, Iowa 50428

The hotel features complimentary full breakfast and an airport courtesy shuttle. (Mason City Municipal Airport is two miles from the hotel.)

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In addition to making your hotel reservation, please send this RSVP form to: Tom Enwright, 419 Chestnut St., Sauk City, WI 53583
You can copy and paste into an email: napp.editor@gmail.com

RSVP deadline is June 15.

NAME _____

CELLPHONE _____

EMAIL _____

How are you arriving?

☐ **Private plane at Mason City Municipal Airport (KMCW)**

N _____ Arrival time: _____

FBO information: [North Iowa Air Service](#); phone: 641-424-9366; email: info@northiowaair.com

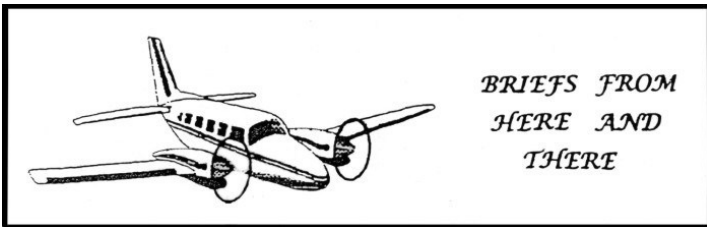
☐ **Airline at Mason City Municipal Airport**

United Express has flights to/from Chicago O'Hare

Flight number _____ Arrival time: _____

☐ **Arriving by car**

Other convention costs: In addition to paying for your own hotel, members can expect a convention fee to cover other NAPP expenses, including hospitality room, activities and tours. Details to come.



Pope Leo XIV and the pumpkin-pie connection

Editor's note: Associate member Nick Chapman, a seminarian for the Archdiocese of Hartford, Connecticut, shared this papal update from Rome. He is second from left in the photo.

"We have a new Pope! I went to St. Peter's Square on Thursday evening of the conclave, and the crowd's reaction when



smoke came out of the chimney was electric. There was a hushed gasp, a pause to see if it was white or black, and then cheers, yells, and all sorts of celebration. We have a Pope again! I was happy to be with three other priests from my diocese and my classmate.

"The now-Pope Leo XIV celebrated Thanksgiving Day Mass with us last year at the North American College and stayed for turkey dinner, taking home an

extra slice of pumpkin pie. No one knew we'd celebrated Thanksgiving with the next Pope."

Fr. Christopher Hoffmann, a priest of the Diocese of Jefferson City, Missouri, and a member of NAPP, has been appointed parochial administrator of Holy Rosary Parish, Monroe City, and St. Stephen Parish, Indian Creek, effective July 1. Since ordination in June 2024, he has been associate pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes, Columbia.

Reminder to pay your dues: Thanks to those members who have paid their dues for fiscal 2025 or beyond. If you haven't paid, please send in your \$30 to remain a member in good standing. Additional donations are appreciated. Fiscal 2025 ends June 30, 2025. **See the dues form below.**

Additional ways to support NAPP: Please remember NAPP in your retirement and estate plans. Those who need to take a required minimum distribution from their Individual Retirement Account can designate NAPP for a qualified charitable distribution. Also, please remember NAPP in your will. For more information, email: napp.editor@gmail.com.

Obituary planning: Members who are making advance funeral arrangements are encouraged to include NAPP in the list to be notified by the family or funeral director. Email: napp.editor@gmail.com.

2025 NAPP Dues – U.S. \$30.00

Fiscal year began July 1, 2024

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

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

Member category: ☐ Charter ☐ Regular ☐ Associate

Make check payable to NAPP and mail to: Tom Enwright, Treasurer, 419 Chestnut St., Sauk City, WI 53583

In addition to the \$30 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.

Donate



The National Association of Priest Pilots newsletter is published online six times per year (August, October, December, February, April, June). Fiscal year begins July 1. Website: priestpilots.org

Articles, news notes and photos can be sent to Tom Enwright, napp.editor@gmail.com. Deadline for the August edition is July 30.

NAPP Leadership Team

President: Fr. Allen Corrigan

1st VP: Fr. Edward Moran 2nd VP: Fr. Bill Menzel

Secretary: Fr. Alex Nevitt

Treasurer & Newsletter Editor: Tom Enwright

Regional Directors

East: Fr. Alex Nevitt Midwest: Fr. Gene Murray

Reflecting on 60 years of priesthood and flying adventures

By Fr. Gene Murray

June 5, 2025, will be the 60th anniversary of my ordination.

It will be the 58th year that I have had a pilot's license and 49th year that I have been a member of NAPP. I recently passed my biennial flight review and am still an active pilot.

I recall these milestones not so much to brag but with a spirit of gratitude, reflecting on what a wonderful gift aviation has been in my life. NAPP has played a large part in expanding my life experience attending conventions in all four corners of the continental United States including Alaska. Flying to those conventions has provided some wonderful opportunities and experiences.

At the 1980 convention in Anchorage, our flight was forced to stay over an extra day because of bad weather. So, Phil Schmitt, Ed Murray, Dick Remmes and I had to bide our time after the other conventioners left for home IFR. Archbishop Frank Hurley, our convention host, invited the four of us to his home for a cook-out. We all had a delightful time helping with dinner prep: making the salad, scrubbing the potatoes, setting the table, etc. It was a memorable celebration of our priestly aviation fraternity.

While flying to these conventions was always challenging, the conventions themselves always provided many once-in-a-lifetime experiences from walking on Bunker Hill, to landing on Nantucket Island, to the flight to Tangier Island, to landing at First Flight Airport, to a crawfish boil in Lafayette, Louisiana, to

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deep-sea fishing in Alaska and on and on. They were all wonderful experiences.

Sometimes the flights themselves were memorable for the wrong reasons. I remember Dave Hogan's remark after a particularly harrowing flight from Coeur d'Alene through Stevens Pass in the Cascades to Everett, Washington. "It was a few moments of terror sandwiched between hours of boredom." It is an understatement to say that it was a teachable flight.

There have been a few times in my flying life that I have been confronted with situations requiring an Act of Contrition, but I must confess the only words that came out of my mouth were "Oh, s—."

So, I have much to be grateful for and thank God that I am still around to enjoy flying and being with other priests who love to fly. After all, that is one of the main reasons that Henry Haacke founded the organization.



Fr. Gene Murray prepares to fly home to Iowa in his RV-8 in July 2023. He used a friend's hangar at the Baraboo/Wisconsin Dells Airport during a trip to EAA AirVenture in Oshkosh.

Exploring life with John Casey

By Patrick J. McDonald

In late October of 2024, John Casey surrendered to his final resting place in the Iowa soil near the family farm in Cascade. I was unable to attend his funeral liturgy, but I agreed to MC a celebration of life for him several months later. Thus, on a warm March afternoon in 2025, 40 of John's family, friends, fellow pilots, teachers, neighbors and admirers gathered to remember him at the [Iowa Aviation Heritage Museum](#) in Ankeny, Iowa.

The Setting:

You might ask why we chose this museum venue. If curious, I invite you to take a look at the museum website photos and you'll begin to understand why. In the shadow of the RC B-29 and B-17, you'll see a cluster of aviation memorabilia, with John's model airplane collection on display — surrounded by items that only an aviator could love. The Heritage Museum smells of aviation history: oil and grease, soiled war birds and sweaty flight suits. For John, this pungent mix of fantasy and history manifested sacred space.

The Gathering:

I opened our event with a sketch of my burgeoning friendship with John, beginning during our freshman year in Rohlman Hall at Loras College in Dubuque. It was 1957. We were seminarians, surrounded by other true believers, struggling to master the Latin substructure to all sacred realities,

while testing out the authenticity of our emerging pious personas.

John showed the usual signs of a true believer, but he also spoke the mysterious language of aviation. I found him to be authentic. He confessed that his innocent dreams included someday owning a Midget Mustang or a Mooney Mite. I confessed

that I had no idea how airplanes stay in the air, so John explained it all. That encounter welded together a bond that grew stronger over 65 years.

My opening sketch about John's qualities ignited similar memories for those who came to honor the man. For a solid two hours, we exchanged stories of adventure, commercial pilot headaches, radio chat, beer-

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Former NAPP associate member dies in Iowa at 85

John L. Casey, a former associate member of the National Association of Priest Pilots, died October 16, 2024, in Des Moines, Iowa, after a short illness. He was 85.

John was ordained to the priesthood in 1974 and later found a career in aviation as a flight instructor and airline pilot.



Survivors include his son, Peter, and his ex-spouse and companion, Mary Kay Casey.

His [obituary](#) says John “rejoiced for all those he met, worked with, and loved in his lifetime and asks forgiveness from those he hurt. It is with profound gratitude that he was given this great adventure accompanied with wonder and curiosity. He remained especially grateful for the fascination of flight, which — along with John Gillespie Magee Jr. — offered him the opportunity to ‘... reach out and touch the face of God.’”

As noted in the [October 2021](#) NAPP newsletter, John had the following short story published in a special [“We All Fly”](#) supplement for *Air & Space Smithsonian* magazine (August/September 2021).

“Flying a Beech 18 into Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport on a routine return morning freight run from Brownsville, Texas, for a small-business airline, I was advised to expect 35R. It was a beautiful clear day with virtually no wind. I went through all appropriate checklists, captured ILS inbound, lowered gear and flaps at the marker, when I looked to my left and was startled to see paralleling me inbound to 35C was the Concorde SST with the colors of British Airways. I could not help but marvel that I was in an airplane designed in the thirties, older than I was, still relevant, still in the game, still competing in the flying world with one designed in the seventies, the latest sophisticated technology of the time. It made my day!”

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saturated debriefings, tempered loyalties and honest friendship.

A Taste of History:

My stories about John are endless, but for the purpose of brevity, I'll rerun one historic event. Move the clock ahead to 1959. By now, we are veteran seminar-ians, our malleable personas firmly pulled into alignment with an ethic of service to the Church. However, a number of us held on to an adventuresome spirit that helped us face a routine existence. On a given Saturday, our most exciting adventure was to visit downtown Dubuque, stay clear of any suspicious beverage houses, and be back on campus by 5 o'clock for a rosary.

"I have a better idea," says John on an autumn Friday class break. "Truax Air Force Base in Madison is holding an open house tomorrow from noon to 4:00 and the Scorpions are on display; so, let's go."

"You've fallen from grace," I say with a laugh. "How are we gonna get to Truax and back in time for a 5 o'clock rosary? Madison's a hundred miles away."

"No sweat," John says. "We got John Frederick's big Buick Roadmaster. His mom'll let us use it for the day but wants it back for grocery shopping. I figure a little over an hour en route each way and we can be back for rosary time."

I remain skeptical, but by 10:00 on a Saturday morning we are crossing the Mississippi River and burning rubber for Madison. I am comfortably ensconced between two nervous classmates in the front bench seat, keeping an eye on the speedometer. We hold a steady 90 mph as the Buick Nailhead V8 effortlessly hauls its adventure-prone cargo up and down the rolling hills that point toward Truax. As Platteville slides by, John is at his best, describing Scorpion technology.

"The F-89 Scorpion is not a fighter jet," he insists. "It's an interceptor — engineered to climb to altitude and destroy any foreign enemy that messes around with the USA. The Scorpion wingtip pods carry folding fin Mighty Mouse rockets. A Scorpion squadron

can fire hundreds of Mighty Mouses and bring down anything the Russians have to offer."

We are all too busy watching the speedometer and bracing for the next 2G curve rather than getting the full gist of John's explanations. We breathe easier and slow down, coached by posted speed limits in the Truax area. "See those high tails over the flight line fence? Those are the Scorpions. The high tails make 'em look like scorpions — ready to make aggressors feel the sting of US air-power."

The Truax main gate is wide open, appearing to offer access to our promised open house, so we drive on in. With no signs, no directions, no advice, we drive around the base for a time and park 50 feet away from the flight line. Our iconic Scorpions are equipped with early 1950s dirty engines, so the six greasy

and soot-covered interceptors look at us menacingly, like they just finished a street fight. There is no sign of an official military type anywhere, so John says, "Follow me. I'll give you the tour. I've read up on these things."

Two brave souls follow John for his walkaround tour. I panic and defer. Two other cautious types stay with me in the imagined safety of the big Roadmaster. For a lengthy 45 minutes, the three adventurers crawl under the massive Scorpion wheel wells, then onto the wings for a good look at the pilot's seat, then lower themselves back onto the pavement, only to make repeated efforts to jump high enough to touch the wingtip rocket pods.

As this dark ballet ends, either an unexplainable sense of dread or a merciful divine intervention brings them back, exhausted and sweaty, to the Buick. Barn doors slam shut as someone says, "Let's get outa here."

We begin rolling at the same moment that a blue Air Police cruiser, bubble-top red lights spinning, moves laterally to block our exit. Two armed and non-smiling base officers are now facing us and open their query. "Make no moves. What is your business on this air-base?"

We all look at John as he melts into the rear seat. Our driver manages to answer: "Ah, sir, we, we're here for the Truax open house."

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Off-airport landings: *Increase odds of survival by being prepared*

By Jim Knights, ATP, CFII

I've been an associate member of NAPP for several years, having been recruited by Fr. Joe McCaffrey, Pittsburgh's Catholic FBI chaplain. I met Fr. Mac over 30 years ago

when I was an FBI Special Agent. He is now my priest, and I am his CFII. I administer his BFRs, so now he comes to me for "reconciliation" (regarding his piloting skills). I am also an ATP and flew for the FBI during part of my checkered career, including as an instructor pilot and check airman.

Off-airport landings were covered during my biennial AOPA online flight instructor refresher course (eFIRC). I thought I would share it with NAPP as it's a very pertinent topic for all pilots of all experience levels.

The Fries Technique

Dr. Ian Fries, a pilot and aviation medical examiner, has a simple technique to teach transitioning to a glide after an engine failure. The pilot maintains altitude as long as possible by trimming slowly toward full nose-up trim rather than by moving the yoke.

According to Fries, airspeed control is just as precise as pitching for best glide speed, but pilot workload is drastically reduced. He notes that most light single-engine aircraft will stabilize slightly slower than maximum glide airspeed when full nose-up trim is applied. Try it for yourself and see how well it works in your training aircraft.

Announce on 121.5: Mayday! Mayday! Mayday!
Set transponder to 7700.

Selecting a "Best Field"

It may be difficult to see over the nose once in the power-off glide attitude. Dr. Fries advises not to pick a landing spot that you can see over the nose. You



aren't likely to make it. Instead, scan to the left side if you're in the left seat. In addition to providing a better sight picture, it's also the direction you'll likely be turning to make the desired landing spot. Aim for the middle of intended landing zone if it's large enough but be flexible and adapt. You will have what you will have.

S.L.O.W. Down

The next time you're out flying, look around and consider where you might land if you had a sudden engine failure. Forced-landing field selection is an often-neglected topic. Don't let a real engine-out emergency be the first time you consider an off-airport landing. Try the mnemonic S.L.O.W. to assess a potential forced landing site. It covers:

Surface
Length
Obstructions
Wind direction



Photo by Jim Knights

Separating Fuel and Spark

It is critical to shut off fuel and electricity in the event of an off-airport landing. The key is separating the avgas or Jet A from the potential ignition source (electricity) prior to an emergency touchdown.

Even with this done, fire is possible after any forced landing. Be ready to evacuate.

Prepare Cockpit for "Rough Stuff"

The primary cause of aviation accident injuries is blunt-force trauma from impacts with the panel, glare shield, aircraft structure, or items inside the aircraft. Make sure you

get used to keeping seat belts snug for normal flights, and even tighter when practicing emergencies. Before an off-airport landing, prop the doors open to prevent them from becoming jammed by structural deformation of the airframe, unless your AFM advises otherwise.

Evacuation!

Every aircraft has more than one emergency exit path, even if it's a baggage door or window. The time to locate it is before you need it. Dr. Fries also recommends practicing emergency egress in different

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“There’s no open house here today. That’s next Saturday.” The policeman refuses to smile. We surrender easily to his dogmatic approach to our compromised bravado. “You have 5 minutes to get off this airbase,” he says, “or you will be arrested for trespassing and tampering with US government property.”

There is no sense of resistance or need for further explanation. We are off the base in 2 minutes, 15 seconds.

Homeward Bound:

The trip back to Dubuque is noticeably quiet. I watch the speedometer wind up to 100-plus, bringing with it an arrhythmic assortment 2.5G curves and euphoric lifting sensations as we top the hills and angle downward toward the Mississippi River valley.

We make it back in time to get rid of the Buick, get the grit scrubbed out of our tired bodies and get to our

place in chapel just in time for the rosary — marked by the joyful mysteries. The joyful theme is retextured to profound relief as we silently ponder what option would be a worse fate — face a federal trespassing charge or a seminary rector who is upset about his charges missing the rosary.

Closure:

Our celebration of life offered an afternoon of lively, delightful, humorous stories, spawning affection, laughter, tears and spontaneous declarations that we’re all going to miss John.

I closed the event with a prayer of gratitude for knowing John in this life and anticipating a new awakening to this same bond in eternity. However, no more Scorpions, please.

PJ McDonald, John Casey and John Frederick gravitated naturally to the NAPP at about the same time, under the early Hemann legacy.

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types of clothing, so you can see where your clothing may snag and interfere with exiting the aircraft. Prop open doors prior to touchdown.

ELTs

After landing, make sure the ELT is activated. It’s surprising how many pilots don’t know how to locate the ELT transmitter unit to manually activate it or deploy the secondary antenna. Make sure you do! The unit should be activated by impact or a sudden deceleration, but many newer aircraft have a manual activation switch within easy reach of the pilot. Use it on the way down!

After Touchdown

To organize your thoughts in a survival situation you’ll need to S.T.O.P. and consider what to do, and in what order.

Stop
Think
Observe
Plan

Remember to dress appropriately for the environment and weather. Have a first-aid kit and survival kit close at hand. Remember, you may not have time to grab them if you’re evacuating from a burning airplane.

Admitting there is a problem and thinking about it in a positive, productive, creative fashion increases the

chances of a good outcome.

Control your fears and avoid panic. Decide to live!



“It is with paternal satisfaction that the Holy Father views the efforts of the members of the National Association of Priest Pilots to encourage the use of air transportation to obtain ever more abundant spiritual fruits from their sacerdotal ministry and missionary apostolate.”

The Vatican, September 29, 1964

Purpose:

1. To promote the use of private aircraft as a practical, safe, and efficient tool of the apostolic work of a priest.
2. To cooperate with other aviation and ecclesiastical groups wherever possible in order to promote aviation in the cause of the Church.
3. To insist on the safe and proficient use of the airplane by its members.
4. To encourage the use of private aircraft as worthy of the talents and dignity of priests.
5. To further the use of aircraft in the missions.