



Volume 63

August 2026

No. 1

President's letter: Fr. Allen Corrigan

NAPP tour confirmed for Goodyear Blimps' home base

Dear Members:

CONVENTION UPDATE: I am thrilled to announce that we have received a confirmation from Captain Michael Dougherty, chief pilot of Goodyear Airships,



Photo courtesy of the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.

that we will have a tour of the Goodyear Blimp facility at Wingfoot Lake, which is a mere 15 miles from our convention headquarters at the Comfort Inn & Suites in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio. There will be a blimp there for maintenance, and

we will be up close and personal with an amazing airship.

Not only that, we will have a private tour of the Akron History Center, guided by **Dave Lieberth** (right), president of the Akron History Center, a local historian and former deputy mayor dubbed by the nickname "Mr. Akron" for his extensive work preserving the city's past. He has an encyclopedic knowledge of the many contributions of Akron-area manufacturers to aviation over the past century.



Our annual meeting, liturgy and banquet will be at Saint Victor Parish in Richfield, where I am pastor. I'm still



Convention hotel deadline approaches

The 2026 NAPP Convention will be September 14-17 in Akron, Ohio, with Fr. Allen Corrigan as our host.

General aviation arrivals will be at [Akron Fulton International Airport](#) (KAKR) and commercial flights are available at [Cleveland Hopkins International Airport](#) (KCLE) and [Akron-Canton Regional Airport](#) (KCAK). Our event headquarters will be the [Comfort Inn and Suites](#) in Cuyahoga Falls, which is eight miles from the host airport.

Reserve your room by August 17: Call the hotel directly at: 330-926-1233. To receive the special group rates, identify yourself as being with the "National Association of Priest Pilots – NAPP" group block.

In addition to making your own room reservation, please complete the NAPP RSVP form on Page 3.

working on a few other details that will come together soon. The most difficult aspect of the planning is arranging for surface transportation, and hopefully some solutions will come together in the next few weeks. But I'm extremely excited about the convention and

look forward to seeing the members who are able to attend. Remember, if you plan to concelebrate the litur-

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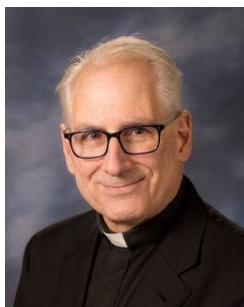
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gy, I must receive a “Letter of Suitability for Ministry,” which your bishop or superior will send to me via the Diocese of Cleveland.

I’m seriously indebted to **Sean McCallister** of the Akron/Summit Convention & Visitors Bureau who has truly gone the extra mile in assisting with our convention. Thank you, Sean, for everything you have been doing behind the scenes to make our 2026 convention a success. I appreciate all your help! The bureau also provided a generous grant to help with our convention. Thanks to the bureau for their support as well!



SOME SAD NEWS: Those who attended the NAPP Convention held July 11-14, 2011, in Clear Lake, Iowa, may recall that I brought along a priest passenger for the long cross-country flight from Medina, Ohio. **Fr. Robert J. Kropac** and I were both ordained in 1982, and our friendship spanned not only the years since then, but many previous years. Bob had taken some flying lessons and loved to fly. We frequently flew together, although he was never able to obtain a pilot’s license.



I have many memories of that very long trip with Bob. Our course was interrupted twice by thunderstorms, which forced us to take shelter in Toledo and South Bend. Flying over Scott Air Force Base at 6,000 feet, I looked down and saw a KC-135 right beneath us at around 3,000 feet inbound for landing at Scott.

I also remember looking down at the highway below noticing that due to our headwind, we were sometimes falling behind vehicle traffic moving the same direction. I recall Mel Hemann’s great advice on the way home to stop for fuel at Kankakee, which was an excellent stopping point between two even legs from Clear Lake back to Medina.

I’m sorry to report that Bob, who was an excellent preacher, president, priest, friend, and human being,

sadly left this world on Sunday, July 5. Two other priest friends and I, Mike Feldtz and J.T. Lane, accompanied Bob during his very unexpected illness and death.

As a gifted liturgist and active member of the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions, Bob was always my first call whenever there was a question about liturgy. He will surely be missed.

CONTINUING EDUCATION: Priests are generally encouraged to continue their education and training, and, if they are nearing retirement age, should make some careful preparations for that long-awaited day so that it does not arrive like a thief in the night. In order to prepare for new opportunities for ministry which will be theoretically in October of 2031, give or take, I’ve wanted to learn how to preside at the Eucharist in Spanish.

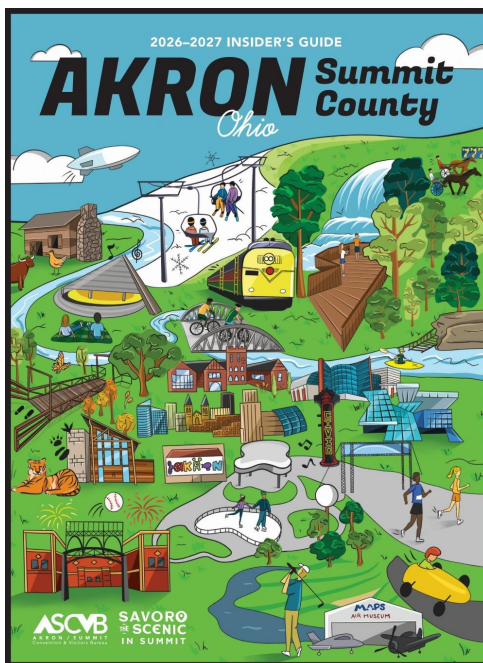


Fr. Allen Corrigan, celebrating his second “solo” liturgy in Spanish at Sacred Heart Chapel, Lorain, Ohio.

After shadowing my friend **Fr. Alex Spenik**, who pastors a Hispanic parish in Lorain and sometimes serves in El Salvador, about once a month all year, I recently had the opportunity to twice serve as solo presider for daily Mass in Spanish. I’m thankful to one of my parishioners, Maria, for tutoring and Fr. Spenik for mentoring. The process seems to be going fairly well, but there is still a lot of work to be done, and I’m not yet ready for “prime time” (weekend liturgies).

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION: This is the current fly in the ointment with regard to the convention. I’ve located some 16-passenger vans for rent, but they are very expensive, particularly when the insurance is included. I found out that one’s personal insurance may apply to rental cars, but not large vans. So, this is still a work in progress.

Allen Corrigan
President



You can learn more about Akron and Summit County by reading this [online guide](#).

2026 NAPP Convention | Akron, Ohio

Arrive: Monday, September 14

Depart: Thursday, September 17

Our host: Fr. Allen Corrigan, NAPP President

Special note: Priests wishing to concelebrate the annual NAPP Mass on September 16 at St. Victor Church must request of their bishop or superior a Letter of Suitability for Ministry and direct it to Bishop Edward Malesic of the Diocese of Cleveland at 1404 E. 9th St., Cleveland, OH 44114 with a copy to Fr. Allen Corrigan of St. Victor Parish, 3435 Everett Rd., Richfield, OH 44286 by September 1.



Comfort Inn & Suites Cuyahoga Falls - Akron

1420 Main St., Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio

The hotel features NAPP hospitality room, complimentary hot breakfast, premium free Wi-Fi, indoor heated pool and fitness center. This is a smoke-free hotel. Check-in: 3 PM. Check-out: 12 PM.



Reserve your room by August 17: Call the hotel directly at: **330-926-1233**. To receive the special group rates, identify yourself as being with the "National Association of Priest Pilots – NAPP" group block.

NAPP room rates:

- \$125 per night (plus 15.25% tax) for double queen room (10 in the block)
- \$135 per night (plus 15.25% tax) for king suite (5 in the block)

NOTE: A deposit for incidentals is required at check-in; there are two options. #1: \$100 authorization on a credit or debit card which will be released within 5-7 business days after checking out or #2: \$250 in cash that will be returned at check-out after housekeeping has checked the room.

In addition to making your hotel reservation, please send this RSVP to:

Tom Enwright, 419 Chestnut St., Sauk City, WI 53583. You can email your information to: napp.editor@gmail.com

NAPP RSVP deadline is August 17

NAME _____ CELLPHONE _____

EMAIL _____

How are you arriving?

☐ **Private plane at Akron Fulton International Airport (KAKR)**

N _____ Arrival time: _____

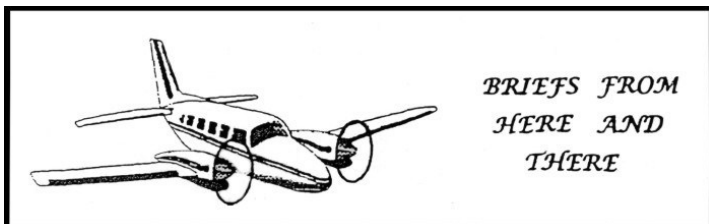
FBO information: [Summit Airport Services](#); phone: 330-733-4760; radio: 122.775

☐ **Airline at Akron-Canton Regional Airport (CAK)** ☐ **Airline at Cleveland International Airport (CLE)**

Airline & flight number _____ Arrival time: _____

☐ **Arriving by car** Arrival time: _____

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



A special wedding for a father and deacon

Deacon Dennis Kudlak had a special experience walking his daughter, Danielle, down the aisle and then officiating at her marriage to Jon Kimble. “I had a very unique, amazing and moving experience as a deacon when my daughter allowed me to officiate at her wedding and guide her into her new chapter, which blended my deep respect, love, and spiritual leadership.”

The wedding took place at St. Patrick’s Church in Erie, Pennsylvania. As Dennis describes St. Patrick’s, “it is an architectural masterpiece established in 1837 and is the oldest parish in the Diocese of Erie.” St. Patrick is the patron saint of the diocese.

Thank you, Vincent: Special thanks to associate member **Vincent Kearns** for his generous \$1,000 donation to NAPP in addition to paying his dues for fiscal years 2027 and 2028. He passes along greetings to all NAPP members.

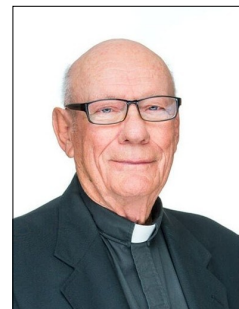
Reminder to pay your fiscal 2027 dues: Thanks to those members who already have paid their dues for fiscal 2027 or beyond. If you haven’t paid, please send



your \$30 to remain a member in good standing. Additional donations are appreciated. Fiscal 2027 began July 1, 2026. See the form on Page 6.

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.

Happy 93rd birthday: Fr. Al Werth writes that he and Fr. John Wolesky were at a gathering of priests at St. Fidelis Friary (Capuchin Franciscans) in Victoria, Kansas, on July 23. It is just nine miles east of Hays. “They have this every Thursday — an hour social before noon and a meal following with an open invitation to priests. Last Thursday (July 23) happened to be my 93rd birthday and so that was noted. I consider it being a blessing reaching that age.”



Here are some recent official appointments

Fr. Joseph McCaffrey has an expanded role as episcopal vicar in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Effective July 13, he is regional vicar of the South Vicariate in addition to retaining his role as regional vicar of the North Vicariate.

Fr. Alex Nevitt has been assigned to theological studies at the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome, effective July 1. He is a priest of the Diocese of Paterson in New Jersey.

Fr. John Wolesky concluded his appointment as priest supervisor of Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, Solomon, and St. Patrick Parish, Gypsum, and is granted full retirement, effective July 1. He is a priest of the Diocese of Salina, Kansas.

Three NAPP members have new assignments in the Archdiocese of Dubuque, Iowa, effective July 14:

Fr. Phil Gibbs is pastor in the Peosta Area Pastorate and pastoral coordinator of LaSalle Catholic Schools, Holy Cross, and Seton Catholic Schools, Farley.

Fr. Nick Radloff is parochial vicar in the Clear Lake Area Pastorate.

Fr. Joshua Link is parochial vicar in the Cedar Falls Area Pastorate; chaplain of St. Stephen the Witness Catholic Student Center, Cedar Falls; and associate director of vocations for the archdiocese.

Back in 1967, learning to fly was the ticket to get home

Kansas priest looks back on his travels and the fellowship offered by NAPP

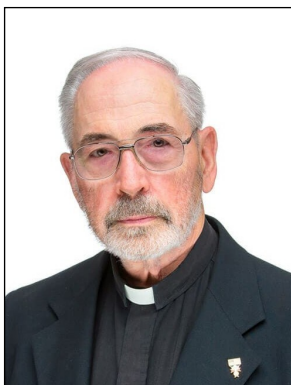
By Fr. John Wolesky

I thought I would try writing somewhat of a bio of myself as a priest who flew for 50 years and got the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award. It started in my hometown of Owatonna Minnesota, when I went to the airport and found out that it would cost me about \$500 to get my private license when I was in high school.

It may as well have been \$200,000, so I went off after high school to St. Mary's University in Winona as a seminary student. In my senior year, we had a large class and two of us were asked to study for the Salina Diocese in Kansas. After graduating from St. Mary's, I began theology studies in St. Louis, but I was a long way from home in St. Louis and passenger trains were being phased out.

I was ordained in 1967. When I found myself once again better than 500 miles from my family, the first thing I did as a priest was to find a flight instructor in the parish, and I got a good one. He was like a dad to me. His kids were gone, so he and his wife were empty nesters. His wife invited me over for supper, and then we would roll out the charts while I learned what I needed to know when I got in the airplane.

I started this in April and got my license on the Feast of the Assumption in 1967. My parents and brother happened to be in Kansas at Junction City and were



Fr. John Wolesky receives a pin from Dr. Paul Uhlig for receiving the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award from the Federal Aviation Administration. [See story in the February 2018 newsletter.](#)

my first passengers, one at a time, in the Piper Colt that I learned in.

I rented a four-place Piper 180 for a time, but rental planes were expensive. I realized I needed to buy some kind of plane that I could fly more to be safe, and I found a 1946 Funk. It taught me a lot about flying because it was a taildragger. I had that plane for

about three-quarters of a year, but it was a slow way for flying to Minnesota and back. Sometimes the cars were beating me, especially against the strong south wind, which is common in Kansas. So, I found a Mooney Mark 20 with wood wings. I had that airplane for about 18 years.

In 1980, Fr. Alvin Werth and I were invited by Fr. Irv Weber to fly to Oshkosh, Wisconsin, for the NAPP convention, which was held at St. Norbert's College in De Pere. That's how we became acquainted with the priest pilots' group.

In 1981, the NAPP convention was in Anchorage, Alaska, so Fr. Al and I decided to fly there in my Mooney, but it was a challenging trip — 24 hours of flying going there and 22 hours coming back.

Soon after that, Fr. Al got himself a Piper 200-horsepower and I only had 150, so we flew his, too, and we saw an awful lot in 30 or 35 years with the NAPP. He was the president from 1997 to 2001, and I was treasurer for a time. We went to as many Midwest meetings (spring and fall) that we could and always tried to get to the summer convention.

When I got into hospital chaplaincy work, I got my instrument and commercial ratings. I was working on my plane one day and in came a bunch of fellows who were too old to be active-duty Air Force, but they had Air Force uniforms on. It turns out they were with the Civil Air Patrol, and they were having a practice mission in Salina. Their unit needed a chaplain, so I became a chaplain and pilot with them for about 15 years. It kept me sharp and taught me to fly a few other airplanes too.

Looking back, I realize NAPP has been a great blessing to me. It has been a big part of my life. I have enjoyed flying to so many interesting places and becoming friends with other priest pilots and associate members. I'll never forget the special camaraderie we shared over the years, and I thank God for the opportunity to be part of NAPP.



Fr. John talks with Fr. Nick Radloff (center) and Mike Makelbust on a boat ride during the 2025 convention in Clear Lake, Iowa.

New associate member joins NAPP

Editor's note: Rowan Prown of Sebastopol, California, is the newest associate member of the National Association of Priest Pilots.

I am a recent convert to the Catholic Church, having been confirmed Easter Vigil 2025. I am the third child of six children, though none of my family are practicing Catholics. I have one brother who is considering converting to the Church in the next year. I currently work as a small animal and exotics veterinarian in Santa Rosa, California.



My path through aviation began with aspirations to be a military pilot. That did not work out, so I put down aviation for a minute and surrendered it to God. If he wants me to fly again, I will.

I was approached by a group in Texas who aims to fly priests to deliver the sacraments in places where natural disasters or other factors have made it impossible. My main goal with NAPP is to find others who may be interested in this mission as we intend to open a chapter here on the West Coast. Hoping to serve God through aviation.

Rowan Prown



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 October edition is September 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



"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.

2027 NAPP Dues – U.S. \$30.00

Fiscal year began July 1, 2026

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.



Photos from EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2026



AirVenture 2026 by the numbers

Attendance: Approximately 734,000 (Previous record: 704,000 in 2025)

Total aircraft: More than 10,000 aircraft arrived at Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh and other airports in east-central Wisconsin. At Wittman alone, there were 15,527 aircraft operations in the period from noon July 16 to noon July 27.

Total showplanes: 2,851

Camping: More than 13,600 sites in aircraft and drive-in camping

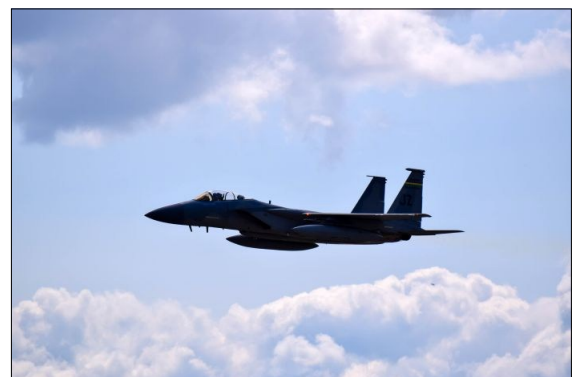
Volunteers: Approximately 6,000 contributing nearly 300,000 hours

Commercial exhibitors represented: 1,021 (record)

Forums, workshops, presentations: More than 1,600 sessions at 65 venues

AirVenture 2027: July 26-August 1

Source: EAA



Photos by
Tom Enwright