



IN THIS ISSUE:

**PAGE 2:  
2020 BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS**

**PAGE 3:  
NAAA MEETING UPDATES**

**PAGE 7:  
NATA CONVENTION  
REGISTRATION**

# THE *Voice*

www.gonata.net NOVEMBER 2020 VOLUME No. 20 ISSUE No. 6

## CAPTAINS' STORIES

By Dan Petersen

When I was a young flight engineer on a Boeing 727, I used to listen intently to all the stories that the “old” captains I was flying with told during our flights while at cruise altitude. Most were about what it was like back in the 1960s when they were first officers (FO) on the Constellation or the B-707 and how they navigated across the Atlantic using a navigator or using Doppler radar to calculate drift to correct their heading. Some stories about other eccentric captains that they flew with were highly entertaining, but could not be repeated in polite company.



Even though I do not consider myself old at all, I have been catching myself telling stories about what it was like back in my day. I started my airline career 31 years ago and have seen many changes during that time, some of which my FOs can hardly believe.

One night we were flying from New York to Miami on an offshore airway called an Atlantic Route. I commented to the young FO that this airway used to be a non-directional [radio] beacon (NDB) airway that was almost 200 nautical miles (NM) long. The FO wondered how we could do that. I explained that it was highly inaccurate as the needle was waving about. Some enterprising pilot made a chart that we could crosscheck to determine how well we were doing on the airway by plotting the distances from Distance Measuring Equipment (DME) stations along the coast to the airway. This was, of course, not approved and was unofficial, but it was a big confidence booster.

Most of the FOs I fly with grew up with glass cockpits that provide wonderful pictures of the whole flight and they easily can see where all the airports are by looking at the navigation display. In the “steam gauge” days we used to dial in a VHF Omnidirectional Radio Range (VOR) frequency and looked at the Radio Magnetic Indicator to see where the needle was pointing. They cannot imagine flying like that, following needles and moving Course Deviation Indicators (CDIs) to follow airways instead of following the “magenta line” using GPS and auto-sequencing of waypoints, in today’s aircraft.

I definitely have not seen the changes that my predecessors have experienced. Some started on the DC-2 and finished their careers on the B-747 like Captain Bob Buck, who wrote *Weather Flying*, but I have seen many changes. Many safety improvements have been made. It is much easier to maintain situational awareness with all the avionics that we now have, and it is comforting to have Ground Proximity Warning Systems and Traffic Collision and Advisory Systems these days.

It is still fun to reminisce at times, and, yes, I do have some entertaining stories of eccentric captains that I have flown with that I cannot share here.

## THE NATA VOICE

Published by the Nebraska Aviation Trades Association

521 First Street, Milford, NE 68405 —Phone: 531-289-8323, Email: [taylor@youraam.com](mailto:taylor@youraam.com)

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# **NAAA/NAAREF BOARD MEETS IN KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE, BOLDLY TACKLING KEY ISSUES FACING AG AVIATION INDUSTRY**

The industry should be most proud of its NAAA/NAAREF Board for traveling to Knoxville, Tennessee, the second week of October and working on key industry issues ranging from strategizing the use of association resources based on election outcomes; promoting next year's 100th anniversary of ag aviation; and planning and preparing for December's live, in-person 2020 Ag Aviation Expo in Savannah December 7-10. The meetings were conducted safely and were most productive. Here are the details.

**Train the Trainer:** As is customary this time of year, the National Agricultural Aviation Research & Education Foundation's PAASS (Professional Aerial Applicators' Support System) presenters learned and practiced the upcoming 2020-2021 PAASS Season Program which will focus on better understanding our psyche and that of others and identifying when and why we take unnecessary risks related to aviation safety, environmental professionalism and site security. Much of the input was provided by Dr. Basil Spyropoulos, a psychiatrist specializing in aerospace psychiatry. Virtual and live PAASS presentations will be offered in 2020-2021 at state and regional conventions.

**General Session/Industry Overview:** President Darrin Pluhar of Montana opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and introduced NAAA CEO Andrew Moore for his industry overview report. Moore remembered pilots, operators and past board members that had passed this year. He then provided an economic analysis of ag and ag aviation reporting that USDA projects \$102.7 billion in net farm income for 2020, up \$19 billion or 22.7% from 2019. This is due to: (1) federal farmer payments (not including loans and insurance payments) forecast at \$37.2 billion, up 65.7% from 2019 or 36% of net farm income; and (2) an increase in Chinese U.S. ag imports (U.S. soybean imports were up 15% from 2019 due to the Phase 1 Trade Deal President Trump signed with China last year purchasing \$80 billion of ag commodities over two years). Moore stated that U.S. net farm income is still 25.4% under its 2013 peak of \$137.6 billion. He then discussed the NAAA 2020 Industry Economic Survey sent to U.S. operators to gauge how the season went for the aerial application industry. Twenty-one percent of the operators participated. The number of aircraft used per operation increased slightly from 2.23 in 2019 to 2.26 in 2020. The number of hours flown per ag aircraft decreased 16.6% from 329.1 hours in 2019 to 274.5 hours in 2020 with 64% of operators treating either significantly more, somewhat more or about the same number of acres in 2020 compared with 70% in 2019. Nearly 52% were optimistic about the 2021 season's prospects, compared to 53% in 2019 that were optimistic about the 2020 season.

Moore then switched gears to public policy and the efforts and success NAAA made in 2020 at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic last March contacting the FAA, USDA, EPA, DHS and White House and Vice President Pence's Coronavirus Task Force about the essential nature of crop input services. Shortly thereafter the Department of Homeland Security identified 16 "Essential Critical Infrastructures" which included ag aviation services and their "special responsibility to maintain ... normal work schedule(s)." NAAA also worked with government agencies to extend expiration dates for flight medical, CDLs and commercial pesticide applicator and other needed licenses to conduct aerial application services so the industry could keep running when government agency offices approving these credentials were shuttered.

Moore also discussed urging the EPA to use the AgDRIFT Tier III drift model when conducting analyses on aerial drift due to this version of the model taking into account drift reduction technology devices for reregistrations and not unrealistic overestimates of risk when compared to Tier I. In 2020 NAAA commented on 52 FIFRA required reregistrations on pesticide active ingredients, urging aerial use on the labels. This totals 153 since 2017. NAAA has also been working to facilitate UAS application efficacy and drift modeling via the EPA and UAS/Spray Drift Workshop Planning Committee. The association also successfully urged the FAA, in its proposed rule for tracking and identification of drones, to set the minimum weight requirement for such technology at 0.5 lbs. That final rule is likely by year's end. NAAA is still urging the FAA to act on promulgating and then enforcing the marking and logging requirements for towers 50 to 200 feet tall with a base of 10 feet or less in rural areas that was enacted in 2018.

Moore brought up the 2020 election and potential policies that a Democratic majority will likely attempt to enact including a \$3 trillion tax hike with increases in payroll taxes and corporate income from 21% to 28%; a push for more electric vehicles which could push down demand for corn and ethanol; carbon taxes; and pesticide policies similar to the Sen. Udall (D-NM)/U.S. Rep. Neguse (D-CO) bill that would ban organophosphates and neonics, and allow local pesticide laws to trump state preemption. This comes at a crucial time for farmers with the farm bill up for reauthorization in 2023.

The many public relations activities for next year's 100th anniversary of the agricultural aviation industry were discussed. The first draft of the 100-year history book of the industry has been completed. A video documentary is being produced for the mass media to use in its reporting and a trailer of it should be ready for the Ag Aviation Expo Dec. 7-10, as well as the unveiling of the 100th anniversary website which will include b-roll video footage, historic photos, etc. for media access. Also being produced is a museum grade timeline exhibit display for states to purchase and use for their own promo-celebrations. Disney approved use of an Air Tractor aircraft painted as the 2013 Planes movie character Dusty Crophopper to be permanently donated to the Smithsonian Institution's National Air & Space Museum by Texas operator Rusty Lindeman. The Smithsonian's approval of the aircraft is expected shortly and that will be the site of the Aug. 3, 2021, official centennial celebration in addition to celebrations at EAA's Air Venture and Ag Day on the Mall in Washington, D.C., in 2020.

Moore also discussed the upcoming 2020-2021 PAASS season (see Train the Trainer above) and did bring up accidents, of which 44 have been reported by the NTSB, nine of which were fatal, sadly.

The convention—the 2020 Ag Aviation Expo—was the next topic of discussion. It will be held live, in person, in Savannah, Georgia, Dec. 7-10. Much excitement is building for the event as exhibitor numbers, pre-registrations and hotel nights build, albeit fewer than in previous years, but still with a significant number of serious exhibitors and serious customers chomping at the bit to attend. Substantive

health-safety protocols are in place and an incredible educational lineup of experts in advocating agriculture, legal preparations to avoid drift violations, young consumer purchasing attitudes, maximizing precision ag technology at your operation, etc. will be presented as will well over 100 exhibitors. Eighteen states are offering CEUs toward recertification of aerial commercial pesticide licenses and eight aircraft will be on the show floor. The auction will again include a PT6A-34AG engine donated by Pratt & Whitney Canada, a \$15,000 Covington gift certificate, a Turbine Conversions Single Point Fueling System and more great items.

Moore discussed membership next. New amendments were added to NAAA's bylaws overwhelmingly (by over an average of 92% approval among voting members in the recent bylaws election) including adding a Code of Conduct to use to maximize professional services from membership; removing barriers impeding operators and pilots from joining NAAA; and increasing the size of the electorate to more robustly vet allied board members. He then stated that as of the end of September 2020 there were 1,608 total members of NAAA compared to 1,739 as of the end of 2019. Moore noted there are a total of 1,560 operators and 2,028 non-operator pilots in the agricultural aviation industry in the U.S. and urged board members to successfully advocate membership and all of its benefits. Moore then stated that the annual audit showed a surplus less than 1.5% above total revenues, due mainly to staff decreasing by one-third in the past year.

Moore then summed up stating optimism about the future of ag with the global populous increasing from the present 7.6 billion to upwards of 9.1 billion by 2050 and an increase in middle class and East Asians that will depend on higher dollar food stuffs being imported resulting in great opportunity for U.S. ag exports. He concluded by showing statistics from a CropLife magazine July 2020 issue showing significant projected growth in dealers conducting crop-imaging for precision ag purposes (57% in 2015 projected to 91% by 2023) and for variable rate applications (92% for fertilizers; 78% for seeding; and 47% for pesticide applications projected by 2023).

Moore then introduced the staff from DCLRS, a Washington, D.C., legislative consulting firm NAAA works with on pesticide registration matters. The firm includes Jay Vroom, former president and CEO of CropLife America, as a partner. Vroom presented recent polling data for the upcoming elections showing that Vice President Biden appears to hold a decent lead at this point with no real movement in the polls compared to four years ago at this time, but that it was likely safe to go to bed early on election night because it could take days, if not weeks to settle out ballots and even await runoff elections held after Nov. 3 to determine the Presidency and control of the U.S. Senate.

President Pluhar then adjourned the General Session to begin the first session of committee meetings for that day. The following day, Saturday, Oct. 10, President Pluhar opened the board meeting to hear committee reports and motions. Here are some highlights:

**2020 Ag Aviation Expo and Allied Industry & Convention Committee:** Both the Allied and Convention Committees discussed the 2020 Ag Aviation Expo in Savannah, Dec. 7-10. Many health and safety protections that kept the board members safe at the Knoxville meeting will be used in Savannah and may be found at [AgAviation.org/healthyexpo](http://AgAviation.org/healthyexpo). The number of exhibitors is currently at 99 and growing on the NAAA Trade Show floor with eight aircraft (one helicopter and seven airplanes) on the floor. President Pluhar emphasized that those in attendance at the convention will be serious about being there and conducting substantive business.

**Budget and Finance Committee:** Mike Rivenbark, NAAA Treasurer from North Carolina, presented the Treasurer's Report, including the 2019-2020 NAAA annual audit showing a surplus of \$32,953 and not a deficit of \$90,544 as projected in the Budget. Staff reductions by one-third compared to last year at this time is one of the variables for the better number. The board approved the audit.

**Government Relations Committee:** Damon Reabe of Wisconsin and chairman of the Government Relations Committee reported that potential regulations, credits and taxes related to carbon emissions may be forthcoming as a result of this or future elections. As such, the industry should be proactive and pinpoint the positive environmental impact agriculture has on the environment as a result of higher crop yield generation resulting in less fuel, inputs and land needed to produce ag products and how this is beneficial and reduces carbon. Efforts will be made to work with the USDA's Office of Pest Management Programs, under the USDA's Economic Research Service, to see about their resources to conduct a study on this issue and to urge members to pursue similar studies with the land grant universities in their region.

**Insurance and Long Range Planning Committees:** Both committees discussed the possible development of a professional aerial application accreditation program with criteria a professional aerial applicator would need to meet to augment environmental professionalism and safety in the industry. Some items required that were discussed include being a member of their state/regional association, NAAA, participate in PAASS and Operation S.A.F.E., follow the knowledge and skills criteria that the current Knowledge & Skills Ad Hoc Committee is pursuing and have an audit of their operation. This is ambitious but could tie into NAAA membership, insurance benefits and pesticide label uses. It was agreed to await completion from the Knowledge and Skills Ad Hoc Committee before continuing with implementing such a program.

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**Do you have an Aviation event to promote? Let us know!  
Article and pictures are always welcomed. Contact us via the  
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# AVIATION ART CONTEST 2021 NOW OPEN FOR AGES 6 THROUGH 17

By David Morris

Since 1986, the Department of Transportation/Division of Aeronautics has sponsored an annual Aviation Art Contest for the benefit of our youth. The program goal is to motivate and encourage young people to become more familiar with and participate in aeronautics, engineering, math and science. There are three age categories of contestants: 6-9, 10-13 and 14-17 for boys and girls. This year's theme is "A Friendlier World with Air Sports."



When we think of aviation, our first thoughts go to the sky. We imagine what it would be like soaring through the air in a glider, floating across the sky in a hot air balloon, or maybe even twisting and looping through clouds in an aerobatic plane. Working together, a group of aviation enthusiasts can accomplish what one person alone never could. The friendships created in this process are one of the things that keeps people coming back to air sports again and again.

Air shows, of course, offer it all. Everyone is invited to share in the joy that sport aviation produces. Pilots love talking about their planes, ground crews share the work required to keep everything safe and in top shape. A single parachutist in the sky can hold the attention of hundreds of people below. Air sports bring people together and creates friendships that connect people from all over the world and of all ages.

For youngsters ages 6 through 17, it is time to get out your favorite artist supplies and give free rein to your imagination by creating a poster that represents your thoughts when you think about the theme of "A Friendlier World with Air Sports" for the Aviation Art Contest 2021.

Due date for all entries is January 19, 2021. For further details and/or an entry brochure contact David Morris at the NDOT – Division of Aeronautics: david.morris@nebraska.gov or call 402-471-2371.



## FUTURE NATA CONVENTIONS

**February 14-17, 2021**  
Embassy Suites, LaVista

**February 27-March 2, 2022**  
Younes Center, Kearney

**February 20-February 22, 2023**  
Younes Center, Kearney

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# 2021 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

*The following information will be used in the membership directory:*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

ITEM	PRICE	QUANTITY	TOTAL
Lifetime Membership	\$1,500.00	_____	\$ _____
2021 Voting Membership (Pt. 137/Owner/Operator/Pilot)	\$150.00	_____	\$ _____
2021 Non-Voting Associate Membership (Non-Pilot/Employee)	\$75.00	_____	\$ _____
2021 Allied Membership (Supplier/non-voting)	\$60/per person	_____	\$ _____
		<b>Total Enclosed:</b>	\$ _____

*40% of your dues is not tax deductible due to lobbyist expenses*

**Make Check Payable to:  
NATA - 521 First Street, Milford, NE 68405  
Phone: 531-289-8323 Fax: 402.761.2224**

**Deadline to be included in the  
2021 Membership Directory is March 15, 2021!**

# 2021 NATA ANNUAL CONVENTION ATTENDEE REGISTRATION FORM

February 15-17, 2021 - Embassy Suites, LaVista, Nebraska

## CONTACT INFORMATION

*(The following information will be used as your membership listing in the 2021 NATA Directory)*

MEMBER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

COMPANY: \_\_\_\_\_ SPOUSE NAME(if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of other(s) who will attend and name for badge:

\_\_\_\_\_

NATA MEMBERSHIP DUES <small>(40% of your dues not tax deductible due to lobbyist expenses)</small>	COST	QUANTITY	TOTAL
Lifetime Membership	\$1,500	_____	\$ _____
2021 Voting Membership - (Pt. 137/Owner/Operator/Pilot)	\$150	_____	\$ _____
2021 Non-Voting Associate Membership (Non-Pilot/Employee)	\$75	_____	\$ _____
2021 Allied Membership (Supplier/Non-Voting)	\$60/per person	_____	\$ _____

CONVENTION REGISTRATION	Cost	QUANTITY	TOTAL
NATA Member <small>(includes PAASS)</small>	\$215/person	_____	\$ _____
NATA MEMBER <small>(Convention Only - No PAASS)</small>	\$110/person	_____	\$ _____
Non-Member <small>(includes PAASS)</small>	\$390/person	_____	\$ _____
Tuesday Only Member <small>(PAASS &amp; Exhibit Hall)</small>	\$190/person	_____	\$ _____
Tuesday Only Non-Member <small>(PAASS &amp; Exhibit Hall)</small>	\$365/person	_____	\$ _____
Convention Meal Package <small>(Two Luncheons)</small>	\$75/person	_____	\$ _____
NATA Spouse	\$70/person	_____	\$ _____
<small>*Convention Registration does not include meals.</small>			<b>TOTAL</b> \$ _____

**\*\*\*\*\*YOU MUST ATTEND THE PAASS PROGRAM ON TUESDAY AND RECERTIFICATION ON WEDNESDAY TO BE CERTIFIED\*\*\*\*\***

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Payment Method     Visa\*     Mastercard\*     Check (Payable to NATA)     Invoice  
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Name as it appears on credit card \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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When you provide a check as payment, you authorize us either to use information from your check to make a one-time electronic fund transfer from your account or to process the payment as a check transaction. When we use information from your check to make an electronic fund transfer, funds may be withdrawn from your account as soon as the same day we receive your payment, and you will not receive your check back from your financial institution.

**Complete, sign, and date this form and return to:**

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# 2021 NATA ANNUAL CONVENTION EXHIBITOR REGISTRATION FORM

February 15-17, 2021 - Embassy Suites, LaVista, Nebraska

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 ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name(s) of other(s) who will attend and name for badge: \_\_\_\_\_

EXHIBIT BOOTHS	COST	QUANTITY	TOTAL
_____ Exhibit Booth <i>(Includes one allied membership dues)</i>	\$400	_____	\$ _____
_____ Exhibit Booth Electricity	\$45/per day	_____	\$ _____
<b>ADDITIONAL EXHIBITOR ITEMS</b>			
_____ Additional Allied Memberships	\$70/per person	_____	\$ _____
_____ Meal Package <i>(Includes two luncheons)</i>	\$75/per person	_____	\$ _____
<b>SPONSORSHIPS</b>			
_____ Diamond Sponsorship	\$5,000	_____	\$ _____
_____ Platinum Sponsorship	\$2,500	_____	\$ _____
_____ Gold Sponsorship	\$1,000	_____	\$ _____
_____ Silver Sponsorship	\$500	_____	\$ _____
_____ Bronze Sponsorship	\$400	_____	\$ _____
			<b>TOTAL \$ _____</b>

## EXHIBIT BOOTH INFORMATION

Please refer to the Exhibitor Registration Information & layout to complete the following.

Exhibit location preferred: 1st Choice: \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd Choice: \_\_\_\_\_ 3rd Choice: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Please indicate, by number, the location of your choice.)*

Please check the items you need for your display:  Extra Chairs *(Two are included with the booth)*

Please list any exhibitor(s) you do not wish to be located by: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I will donate an auction item - **Item Description:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Payment Method**     Visa\*     Mastercard\*     Check *(Payable to NATA)*     Invoice  
\*4% processing fee when paying with credit card

Name as it appears on credit card \_\_\_\_\_

Account # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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When you provide a check as payment, you authorize us either to use information from your check to make a one-time electronic fund transfer from your account or to process the payment as a check transaction. When we use information from your check to make an electronic fund transfer, funds may be withdrawn from your account as soon as the same day we receive your payment, and you will not receive your check back from your financial institution.

I understand that NATA has no obligation to refund all or part of the exhibit fee. I have read the enclosed Exhibitor Agreement and comply with its terms. Sign: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Complete, sign, and date this form and return to:  
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