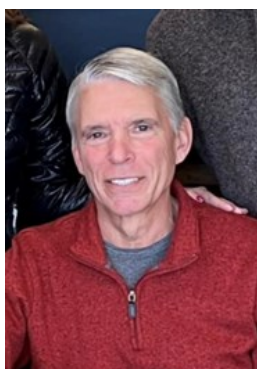




ALASKAN AVIATION SAFETY FOUNDATION

SUMMER 2024

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER, SUMMER 2024



Be an "Influencer"

I hope all of you are enjoying a safe and busy summer flying season. We had some terrific presentations at our Spring Safety Seminar. If you were unable to attend, we have links to four of the presentations on our website under [AASF Videos](#). The presentations covered Seaplane Operations in Southeast Alaska, Mountain Flying, Corrosion Control, and Risk Management ("How Many Chambers are Loaded"). The presentations are well worth your viewing time. I attended the seminar and a few weeks later watched the videos. Upon reflection, I found a common theme threaded through each of the presentations—judgment!

It's probably not a surprise to most of you that many accident sequences begin with a pilot making a poor choice. Sometimes the accident sequence begins through an act of omission, like failing to plan adequately. However, more frequently it's an act of commission that triggers the accident sequence. Maybe the pilot decides to fly under the weather in mountainous terrain or tries to land off airport on a piece of terrain he's never seen before.

So how can we, collectively, help prevent accidents? Use your influence. We hear all kinds of stuff about "influencers," usually in connection with social media. The AASF membership is, by and large, highly experienced. Most of us have many pilot friends. Some of our friends may not routinely attend safety seminars or review accident reports or take part in safety activities in general. Some of our friends may even appear to take excessive risk. As our friends, we probably have a positive and respectful relationship. This means we have an opportunity to have a positive impact on their behavior. Use that power to gently suggest they reduce their risky behaviors. You just might save a life.

Enjoy the rest of your summer and stay safe.

Rocky Capozzi
Chairman of the Board

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

PAGE 1.....CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

PAGE 2.....2024 SPRING SEAPLANE
SAFETY SEMINAR

PAGE 3.....JOHN PRATT RECEIVES
MASTER PILOT AWARD

PAGE 4.....GREAT ALASKA AVIATION
GATHERING

PAGE 5 & 6.....NON-CERTIFICATED
AIRCRAFT ACCIDENTS

PAGE 6.....X MARKS THE SPOT

PAGE 7.....AASF SCHOLARSHIPS

2024 SPRING SEAPLANE SAFETY SEMINAR SUCCESS

The Safety Foundation's annual Spring Seaplane Safety Seminar was held at UAA's Aviation Technology Building on April 20th. Approximately 75 people were in attendance and enhanced their knowledge of aviation safety. This year had an especially strong line up of speakers, starting with Chip Wisner from the Juneau Flight Standards District Office. He shared some history, tips, and advice on flying and maintaining floats in Southeast Alaska. His presentation can be found [here](#). Next John Pratt from the Seaplane Pilots Association and Pratt Aviation Services spoke about corrosion and shared some great pictures of examples where corrosion can hide. John's presentation is found [here](#). Bart Stone, formerly of the Department of the Interior's Office of Aviation Services and currently flying for a local commercial operator, educated and entertained the audience with his tips on mountain flying. Bart's decades of experience and realistic advice were well received and appreciated. His presentation can be viewed [here](#).



Kris Webber and Andrew Myers from Kenai Flight Service provided an update on Flight Service operations, weather cameras, and two-way texting options for pilots. Flight Service continues to expand their services for



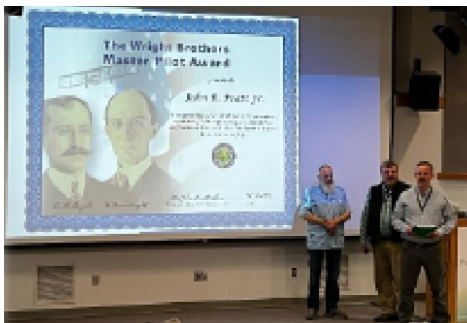
pilots, and who knew, according to one of the pilots in the audience, that a flight plan might be able to be closed by relaying through dialing 911 when their phone indicated no cell service? The Kenai Flight Service website contains information about their services and is found [here](#). The new Soldotna Common Traffic Advisory Frequency (CTAF) was reviewed by Kevin Hubbard from the FAA's Regional Administrator's Office. The creation of a single frequency of 122.5 MHz allows pilots in the Soldotna area to communicate with each other at airports and landing areas without an active control tower. For more information on this area,

including maps, please see the FAA's Soldotna CTAF website [here](#). The seminar ended on a strong but sobering note with a presentation by Dick Sutliff, in which he discussed the loss of a friend in an aircraft accident, and his observations during his decades as an insurance defense attorney. Dick is a member of the Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation, his willingness to share his story is appreciated. You can view his presentation [here](#).

Many thanks to the supportive staff at UAA's Aviation Technology Program, including Fred Dyen, the Assistant Dean of Aviation, Kimber Amundson, who made sure everything flowed smoothly, and our IT guru Mike Workman who ensured the speakers could be heard and their slides seen. The Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation would like to thank the presenters, the attendees, and the members of the Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation whose support makes these seminars possible. Thanks to Marshall Severson who recorded and



edited the presentation videos. The videos can also be found on the Safety Foundation's website, at www.aasfonline.org/videos/.



If you would like to be involved in planning our next seminar, if you have an aviation safety story or observations you'd like to share, or if you have ideas for topics or presenters, please contact us at aasfonline@gmail.com, or 907-243-7237.

We'll see you at the Fall Safety Seminar!

JOHN PRATT RECEIVES WRIGHT BROTHERS MASTER PILOT AWARD

Mr. John Pratt was presented with the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award at the Spring Seaplane Safety Seminar in April. This award is given by the FAA and recognizes pilots who have accumulated more than 50 years of safe flying. Mr. Pratt is the Alaska Field Director for the Seaplane Pilots Association, a member of their Board of Directors, owner of Pratt Aviation Services, and has extensive knowledge and experience in military and civilian aviation. He says his career in aviation has been quite a ride, and he has enjoyed meeting many wonderful people through their shared love of aviation.



Following the presentation of his Master Pilot award, Mr. Pratt was surprised by Mr. Steve McCaughey, Executive Director of the Seaplane Pilots Association, who presented him with a plaque in recognition of his dedication to promoting and protecting the seaplane community in Alaska. Mr. McCaughey had flown in from the Association's headquarters in Winter Haven, Florida the day before, unbeknownst to Mr. Pratt. The Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation recognizes John Pratt's contributions to the aviation community and salutes his accomplishments. In receiving the Master Pilot award, John Pratt has joined the ranks of fewer than 900 people who have received both the Master Pilots and Master Mechanic awards, his brother being another one of them. *Congratulations John!*

The Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award is named in honor of Orville and Wilbur Wright who were American aviation pioneers credited with inventing, building, and flying the world's first successful motor-operated airplane. The Wright Brothers made the first controlled, sustained flight of a powered, heavier-than-air aircraft with the Wright Flyer on December 17, 1903, at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.

To be eligible for the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award, nominees must hold a U.S. Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) or Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) pilot certificate; have 50 or more years of civil and military piloting experience or 50 or more years combined experience in both piloting and aircraft operations; be a U.S. citizen; and have NOT had any airman certificate revoked. For more information, see [Pilots - Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award - FAA - FAASTeam - FAASafety.gov](#)



John also received the Charles Taylor Master Mechanic award in December of 2016. This FAA award is named in honor of the Wright brothers' mechanic who is credited with designing and building the engine for their first successful aircraft. The Charles Taylor award recognizes aviation maintenance personnel who have at least 50 years of experience in the aviation maintenance industry. For more information on this award, see [FAA FS-I-8700-3 Rev. 7 \(faasafety.gov\)](#)

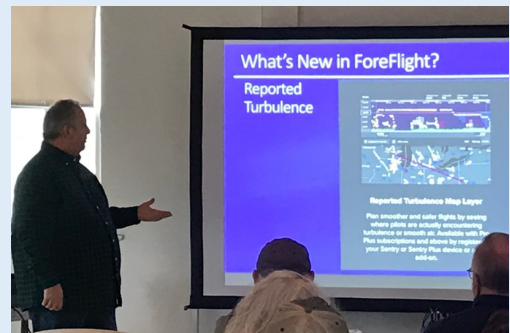
THE GREAT ALASKA AVIATION GATHERING

As it has done in the past couple of years, the Foundation organized and put on the seminar program at the Alaska Airmen Association's Great Alaska Aviation Gathering held at Alaska Fairgrounds and Palmer Municipal Airport in May. This year seminars were held in two different venues making it possible to put on fourteen different programs.

A wide range of topics were presented covering such topics as maintenance, survival and rescue, aviation insurance, and how government agencies interact with general aviation. Among the seminars presented were two provided by the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association. Returning this year was the AOPA Rusty Pilot Seminar put on by Brian Schiff, a captain with a major U.S. airline and a member of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Flight Instructors. AOPA also held a Pilot Town Hall meeting lead this year by Kollin Stagnito, AOPA Vice President of publications.

An informative presentation on uses of ForeFlight was made by Brian Schiff. John Pratt with the Seaplane Pilots Association discussed corrosion and float maintenance addressing aging floats as well as recent issues. A timely update on unleaded aviation fuel was made by Adam White with the Alaska Airmen Association. Adam and Stephen Ratcliff, President of the Alaska Airmen Association, gave an update on government and legislative matters of interest to the Alaska aviation public. The Recreational Aviation Foundation (RAF) session described their work with the U.S. Forest Service in Southeast Alaska to maintain access to public use cabins.

A topic of annual interest was the status of aviation insurance. This year it was presented by a representative of Bill White Insurance (BWI). With wild land fire season upon us Duane Morris with the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) made a timely presentation on aerial firefighting airspace considerations. Allan Schrader with Lightspeed Aviation spoke about the importance of protecting hearing to ensure good communication while flying as well as advances in technology to improve the ability to hear radio transmissions. Other presentations included entering the United States at the U.S. Canada border with general aviation aircraft, the legal aspects of FAA enforcement actions presented by Alaska aviation attorney Brent Cole, and an update on FAA Flight Service operations in Alaska.



NON-CERTIFICATED AIRMAN ACCIDENTS

By Marshall Severson, AASF Board Member

“Flown Alaska and anything goes, it’s a matter of necessity... you gotta remember this is Alaska... no roads most places... there’s no FAA out there to ask for a piece of paper out in the villages...you don’t need to register a car, or insure a car, or have a driver’s license ... or a plane for that ma[t]ter...” (extract of comments from AvWeb June 2024 article: No Certificated Pilots Aboard Taylorcraft That Crashed In Alaska.

Scope: The comments above, responding to a recent report on a regrettable fatal accident aircraft that was apparently operated by a non-certificated pilot, don’t reflect well on some perceived attitudes about Alaskan aviators. Does Alaska deserve that reputation? With all due respects to friends and family of the deceased and those injured in the reports I reviewed, let’s examine this aspect of aviation: non-certificated pilots operating in the national airspace system...yes, the one mostly populated by certificated pilots and their many trusting passengers. To be sure, there are aircraft flown legally without certificates, they are ultralights. There is an unofficial sub-category known as “heavy ultralights” which refers to ultralights that exceed the legal maximum empty weight of 254 pounds. Some of those designs are properly registered experimental and receive “N” numbers with the requirement, then, that they too be operated by certificated pilots.



Non-certificated Pilot Accident Photos from NTSB Reports. Wasilla area - minor injury (Left) Nondalton area – two fatal (Right)

Basic Analysis: Going back as far as 1982, the NTSB has 147 accidents in its database which refer to non-certificated airmen and another 98 come up referring to uncertificated, for a total of 245. That includes student pilots who are not yet licensed and some of whom were accompanied by flight instructors. One accident flight reviewed appeared to be conducted as instructional by a non-CFI. This is a preliminary non-scientific look and doesn’t include other search terms such as “unqualified” so it is only a portion of what may be in the records. Focusing on Alaska, a total of 19 accidents come up with the oldest being from 1987. So, from the information derived from this informal investigation, Alaska non-certificated airmen were involved with slightly less than 8 per cent of the National totals. Some of the accidents have a maintenance component, one was the gear collapse of an aircraft released by an uncertificated maintenance assistant and two aircraft had loss of engine power with improperly installed fuel selector indicators, one performed by nonqualified personnel, the other’s status not noted by NTSB.

Selected Factors: Of significance is that, as with rated pilots, there are many factors that result in non-certificated pilots suffering accidents besides their lack of certification. According to NTSB, uncertificated pilots were involved in accidents due to inadequate preflighting, which brought down a Super Cub with a restricted fuel supply from a frozen gascolater, and others including inadvertent stalls and weather such as IMC conditions and severe icing. Lack of experience may be cited, but was not, in the case of a Maule pilot who inadvertently pulled the mixture rather than the carb heat. Cubs bring out some of the best and worst in general aviation; a noncertificated pilot landed one off airport, struck a log and collapsed the gear, and another noncertificated pilot of

(continued on page 6)

(Non-Certificated Airman Accidents continued from page 5)

a tundra tire equipped Cub righted it and flew it to home base “...after five or six touch-and-go “ski” landings on the water, of [which witnesses] took a video, the airplane's main wheels struck a sand bar, and it nosed over in shallow water.”



Final Thought: To state the obvious, a non-certificated pilot should not be endangering passengers nor indeed, piloting (without endorsements) anything heavier than an ultralight. Is there a problem here, or are these events merely outliers, what do you think?

Note: The data in this study consists of condensing reports and is subject to process accuracy and may differ from other sources.

Non-certificated Pilot Accident Photo from NTSB report. Sleetmute area – two fatal (left)

X MARKS THE SPOT

By Marshall Severson, AASF Board Member

Summer in Alaska is when flying is at its busiest, but most other activities are just as dependent on this season of long days and favorable temperatures to accomplish their set goals. That includes airport and airway maintenance, rehabilitation, and construction. As of this writing we are heavily into the summer construction season and there are many airport projects in progress, plus the planning continues for the out years ahead. A picture may be worth a thousand words, and above is one taken in June, on a day when there were 16 NOTAMs in the system for Homer. Whew! While there may have seemed to be a thousand words in those NOTAMs, the total was less, but nonetheless it was a considerable amount and they needed to be plowed through. Planning a “night flight” (term used loosely in the land of the midnight sun)? Please take the time to get fully briefed on not only the condition reported which could indicate taxiway or runway closures or reduced widths but effective dates/hours when they may be closed. Nobody wants to see a write up like this: “The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: failure of the pilot to maintain altitude/clearance from a closed runway...” (Ninilchik, 1997). On another aspect, just because you noted an outage yesterday or unfortunately for the past few years, you might be pleasantly surprised to find the NOTAM is no longer in effect. But remember, a current NOTAM this hour may be obsolete the next or may have been published and now available in the Chart Supplement Alaska! (For example: “Whittier... clsd from first snowfall till after breakup.”)



Have a safe Summer!

Here is a link to some State project information, but please remember, various entities own/operate airports and far from all are State owned. https://dot.alaska.gov/project_info/

AASF MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

The Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation (AASF) awards three scholarships annually for students enrolled in aviation related programs in accredited colleges, universities, trade schools or approved training centers, and plan on making a career in aviation as a pilot, mechanic, aircraft dispatcher, air traffic controller, or in aviation management in Alaska. Students must have spent two of the past three years in continuous official residency in Alaska, must have completed at least two semesters or 30% of the work toward their professional goal. Applicants who are planning on a professional pilot career should have at least a private pilot certificate. These three scholarships of up to \$2,000 each are funded by families and friends of three Alaskan aviators who have contributed to improving safety in Alaskan aviation; they are the Tom Wardleigh Memorial Scholarship, the Ginny Hyatt Memorial Scholarship, and the Ellen Paneok Memorial Scholarship.



Tom Wardleigh began his aviation career as an apprentice mechanic in Seattle at Pan American Airlines and during WWII he became an aviation machinist mate in the U.S. Navy. He came to Alaska in the early 1950s and worked at the Anchorage Aviation Division of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for several years before going to work at the Alaska Civil Aviation Agency (now the FAA). Tom had over 33,000 flight hours in a wide variety of aircraft from single piston engine aircraft to small jets, he was in great demand as an advanced instructor and was recognized as one of the few multi-engine sea instructors. He played a major role in bringing the AASF to its current recognition as an outstanding aviation safety organization. Tom passed away in 2004.

Virginia Ruth "Ginny" Brown Hyatt was born in Terre Haute, Indiana, in 1924. She took her first flying lesson at age 16 and obtained her pilot's license in 1943. She came to Alaska in 1965 and became a well-known pilot and advocate for aviation flight safety. She moved with her husband and sons to Annette Island, Alaska in 1965. They moved to Bethel in 1969 where Ginny started her career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In 1974, they moved to Anchorage where she continued her career. After retirement from the Fish and Wildlife Service she worked formally and informally with the AASF as Secretary and Board Member of the AASF. In her work at AASF, Ginny co-hosted a weekly public broadcast television program devoted to aviation in Alaska with her friend Tom Wardleigh, where they brought aviation safety information and news to homes in Alaska for over a decade. Ginny passed away in 2010.



Alaska aviation pioneer and author Ellen Evak Paneok was born in 1959, in Bedford, VA, but was raised in Anchorage. When she was 16, she received a \$1,500 dividend through her Native Corporation and used the money to learn to fly. By the time she was 23, Ellen had her commercial and flight instructor certificates and was recognized as the first Native woman bush pilot. In her 17 years as a commercial pilot in Alaska, she ferried everything from dynamite to live wolverines, the U.S. mail, passengers, and medical patients. Ellen worked as an operations inspector for the FAA and as an aviation safety coordinator for the AASF. She was one of the few pilots authorized to fly vintage aircraft owned by the Alaska Aviation Heritage Museum. She was also active in several aviation organizations and spent much of her free time volunteering for Big Brothers Big Sisters and inspiring youth about how the sky offers limitless possibilities. Ellen had more than 15,000 hours by the time of her death at age 48.

Scholarship applications are available on our website at: www.aasfonline.org/scholarships/ and must be submitted online by July 31, 2024, for consideration this year. Thanks to the AASF members who have donated to the scholarship fund to help support the future of aviation in Alaska!



ALASKAN AVIATION SAFETY FOUNDATION

C/O AVIATION TECHNOLOGY DIVISION UAA

2811 MERRILL FIELD DR.

ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

EMAIL: AASFONLINE@GMAIL.COM