

AIR NEWS

Chicago Area Chapter Ninety-Nines®, Inc., International Organization of Women Pilots.

APRIL 2026



chicagoarea99s.org

WHAT'S THE SCOOP!

Waypoint April 1, 2026 issue has been released. See all the wonderful things our Section 99s have been doing and what's coming up next on the 99s Calendar. See info at NCS99s.org.

Next meeting—brunch at Larisa's Our Vice Chair is the hostess extraordinaire! Plan to bring a dish to share (for 4-6) and help put the Aviation Day packets together. Yes—you have to drive to Barrington, but it WILL be worth it.

Larisa K

Last name starts with A-L bring savory

starts with M-Z bring sweet

APRIL 11, 11:00 AM

Have you heard about Queen Bess Film Festival at Bult Field, May 2. Read all about it on page 5. FLY IN

Did you know? That our Chapter hosts two big events each year that educate the aviation (and non-aviation) public and spread the knowledge we have with as many people as possible..... Aviation Expo and Aviation for Girls Day. Girls Day at Lewis University is set for May 23rd. Still chances to join in and show girls what women can do in aviation. Contact Megan or Corie to volunteer. Or just come and look like a pilot! 😊

FLY IN MAY 23, 8am to 3pm

Our annual meeting of the Chicago Area Chapter will take place at Sky Soaring Gliderport. If you have never flown a glider, here's your chance. The pros at Sky Soaring will show you the ropes (tow ropes) and teach your first lesson!

FLY IN JUNE 13

Did you sign up for the International Conference in San Diego? See registration information at ninety-nines.org Tours, Meals, Great speakers, Awards banquet, Scholarship presentations, Fly Market Sales tables, Panel discussions, FUN!!! And the Business Meeting (which you can attend via zoom, but that's not as much fun!)

FLY IN JULY 8-12, 2026

Editor's note If you haven't attended any meetings or events yet, we would love to meet you.

The bond we share as women pilots is the most wonderful thing about being a 99.

Please plan on something that sounds interesting, and join us, for an hour or two!

WHO'S WHO
in the
Chicago Area Chapter

CHAIR

Victoria S

VICE CHAIR

Larisa K

SECRETARY

Lisa M

TREASURER

Susan R-M

Deadline for submission the
20th of the month :

Madeleine M,

Editor

Air News is published monthly by the Chicago Area Chapter of the 99s Inc and is available to non-members for \$20 per year. Members must pay chapter dues to receive Air News. Suggested donation for a business card size ad is \$5/month or \$50/year. Members may place 6 free personal ads per year. Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and shall not be construed to express the policies or opinions of the Ninety-Nines, Inc.



Skywriting
Chicago Area Chair, Vickie S

“Help! I need somebody
Help! Not just anybody”
The song Help by the Beatles

We need you! We are looking for volunteers to help with Aviation Day for Girls. I hope that you can join us on Saturday, May 23 rd at Lewis University. The volunteer hours are from 8-2 depending on what you are doing. No experience is needed. On the job training! Really this is easy and fun! Many of the jobs are escorting the groups to each station, helping the groups check-in, or handing out lunch. If you want to level up, be a presenter! I'm talking about the plane's mechanics. It is really cool teaching middle school girls about internal combustion engines! (So, look me up in the hangar.) There is something special about sharing your love of flight.

If you cannot make it to Aviation Day for Girls, don't worry, I have 2 other opportunities! I have been asked to talk at the Lansing Youth Aviation Career Day at Lansing Airport on Thursday, April 30 th to middle school students in the morning and high school students in the afternoon. I would like another 99 to sit at a table with me and answer any questions about aviation. It looks like it will be a cool event with the support of the airport, a helicopter parts firm, the state police, etc.

Another opportunity is to help man a table at the Queen Bess Centennial Aviation Film Festival at Bult Field on Saturday, May 2 nd . The film festival is being run by our own Susan Roe Musacchio! The festival will not only have aviation films but also Gigi Coleman, Bessie's great-niece will be there along with fly-over, drone demonstrations and STEM activities. It should be an awesome day!

One more thought, I have found that when I am working at these types of events, I really get to know my fellow 99s. I find out the coolest things about them as we work together. Also, it truly is fun.

Hope to see all of you soon!

Vickie

P.S. In case you didn't notice, you can fly to all of these events!

P.P.S. Please remember to vote in the International election. Yes, your vote does matter!



Questions posed to the students this month include:

- 1). How do you plan to use your pilot license (e.g. hobby, career change, airline travel)?
- 2). How do you manage the "invisible load" of training (studying, scheduling, flying) with the rest of your life?
- 3). If you could go back to the day before your first lesson, what advice would you give yourself?

Susan M- I will use my pilot license to have fun flying around with friends. I manage flying, studying and practicing by scheduling it into my week. I would tell myself to set aside time just for flying and get proficient in a block of time.

Corie W: Hi Joy...here is my update. I like the questions, but think I will stray a bit because of the strange circumstances. I started my training in 2021 at the tail end of my marriage (even though I didn't know it at the time). While I've had a few setbacks like setting up a new house, job, money...you know all of it, I still enjoy learning about everything aviation at every opportunity. This last year has brought so many challenges that I actually had to go on hiatus - financially, emotionally and for the time involved to do it well. In January 2024, I moved in to care for my 80 year old father, coincidentally, also my biggest critic. He did NOT want me flying. "It was a waste of money, time, I'm a girl and I'm old so what will I do with it, anyway?" On the sly, I also found out there may be feelings of jealousy and admiration since he was unable to complete his PPL in 1967 due to color blindness, a trait shared with him by my son, Jack. Dad passed on February 18, 2026 right on the heels a me having a major, unexpected and VERY invasive surgery for which recovery has been consistent but slow. The local hospital realized they were in over their head and sent me down to Univeristy of Chicago Hospitals where I had 8 hours of surgery to correct 2 hernias. I emerged with a 14 inch incision, 2 drains, an open wound where my ileostomy used to be and a new ileostomy on the other side of my gut. When I got home, Dad was visibly relieved, enough so, he died a week and a half later. With all the celebration and memorial things wrapping up, I am the head thank you note writer and was so happy to see Vicki had made a donation to the Endowment fund for the 99's on behalf of herself and our chapter. It made me laugh. Belly laugh, in fact. How fitting and apropos to have that in his name all to inadvertantly push his daughter forward. Since he passed, I have had an amazing amount of people asking my plans, when I'm going to get started again, telling me not to give up (as if that was an option). I've never been more encouraged to fly the skies as I have in the last few weeks. There was a reason for the hiatus...it was not yet my time to soar, but it's coming, I can promise all of you that...it's coming. Thank you for all the kind words and actions.

Side Note: Vickie shared that the donation to the Endowment Funds was from several of Corie's friends in the Chapter, not just her. According to Vickie, the message was clear: "You just keep going! The best is yet to come!"

AND UPDATES FROM OTHER MEMBERS!

by Kadajah H



Daniela G: I am a newer member of the 99s currently finishing up my undergraduate degree at Lewis University in Aviation Flight Technology and am set to graduate this May. I work as a student aircraft dispatcher in the Lewis Aviation Department and serve as the Treasurer for the Lewis WAI Club and the Vice President for the Lewis AAAE Club. I recently obtained my CFI and CFII certificates in February and am actively applying to flight schools in the Chicagoland area for a Certified Flight Instructor position, and am in active pursuit of my Multi-engine rating. I was recently awarded a scholarship from Women in Aviation International allowing me to attend the 2026 WAI Conference in Grapevine, Texas later this month which I am beyond excited and grateful for!

I am volunteering at the 99s Aviation Day for Girls event on May 23rd in which I am responsible for coordinating Swag Bags for the girls in addition to leading an educational workshop about the forces of flight. I am interested in one day becoming a mentor within the 99s to guide other female aviators along their journey in this industry. For fun, I enjoy baking, playing tennis, reading, and spending quality time with friends and family. I don't have any suggestions for the local chapter yet.

Linda U: This summer, I will be celebrating my 50th anniversary as a Chicago Area 99. If I recall correctly, I joined in my junior year at NIU and was sponsored by Donna Bennett, wife of NIU Biology Professor Dr. Jack Bennett. At the time, I was actively involved with the flying club at NIU known as the Flying Huskies and I also worked at the DeKalb Airport office as a bookkeeper and also answered the unicom to provide active runway status. Unfortunately, about the only thing I am flying these days is my broom stick! I'm working really hard to retire from my job as a Controller of a local home healthcare company. Maybe I can get back into flying once retired but I feel like I will need to go thru ground school all over again as technology has changed so much since I learned to fly with an E6B.

I last helped out the chapter by managing the badge program - we were able to raise a nice sum of money for the chapter with this program but we lost our key contact at our badge manufacturer to retirement and the folks that took over don't seem interested in our inconsistent, small order business. It's a shame since I think many chapters liked our state shaped badges.

My only "fun" these days are wrapping things up with my employer after working as a Controller/CFO for nearly 50 years, getting them thru their 2025 financial audit and then hopefully riding (or flying) off into the sunset of retirement. When I'm not working, I'm just keeping my head above water with things around the house, catching up on sleep, spending time with family, etc. I enjoy my little craft projects when I have slivers of free time and spending time with my Autistic adult niece.

I try to make it to meetings when I can but just have not had much opportunity lately. I sometimes feel that because I am not actively flying anymore, that I don't really fit in as a pilot much anymore. I do enjoy helping out with the Girl Scout programs and seeing all the bright, excited, eager, little faces at those events. When these events are held at Chicago Executive, it's a little easier for me to get to them. Anyway, this is where I'm at with things.

CONGRATULATIONS TO LINDA ON 50 YEARS!!!!

Joined: 7/30/1976

Happy 50th Anniversary

99S FLY GLIDERS TOO

and balloons and helicopters.....

We recently started following Soaring Society of America and now receive their enewsletters

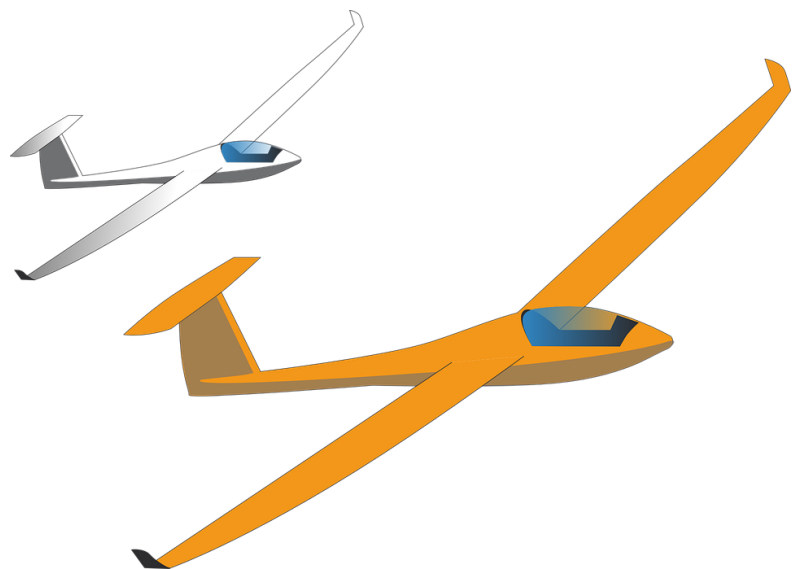
They offered the following info—so we are sharing it!

“ We will add your new email address to our list.

Great to hear that you like our newsletter and that you share it with the 99s!

Please consider joining the SSA, or if you can, take a ride in a glider. For locations near you, please look at <https://www.ssa.org/where-to-fly-map/>

We have many women pilots and an entire organization devoted to their activities - <https://womenssoaring.org/>”



Join us at our June meeting at Sky Soaring and give soaring a try.

Queen Bess Aviation Film Festival

Invites The Ninety-Nines to Inspire the Next Generation of Flight

The **Queen Bess Centennial Aviation Film Festival** invites members of The Ninety-Nines to take part in a powerful, first-of-its-kind event honoring the legacy of Bessie Coleman while inspiring the future of aviation.

Taking place **May 2, 2026 at Bult Field (C56)**, the festival brings together aviation, film, STEM education, and innovation—creating a shared space where history meets the next generation of pilots.



At the heart of this year's festival is a featured film by filmmaker Beth Powell, whose work captures the enduring spirit of flight, perseverance, and the power of storytelling within aviation history and culture. Powell's film anchors a program designed to inspire audiences, connect communities, and elevate underrepresented voices in aviation. Hosted in the Chicago region—where Bessie Coleman's journey began—the festival brings together filmmakers, pilots, historians, and future aviators to mark the centennial era of Coleman's impact on aviation and equality. "Bessie Coleman didn't just break barriers—she redefined who belongs in the sky," said Susan Roe Musacchio, founder of the festival. "This festival carries that legacy forward through film—connecting past, present, and future in one powerful experience."

In addition to The Discovering Bessie Coleman film, there will be several other aviation films in the Bult Theater. An award ceremony will be held at 4 pm on Saturday, May 2, 2026, awarding the best feature film, the best short film, the best drone film and the Audience Choice film. In addition to the film screenings, the festival will feature: A panel discussion with filmmakers and aviation leaders, a Welcome film by Gigi Coleman, Grand-Niece of Bessie Coleman, Drone demonstrations by RBS Drone and Ken Rapier, Tuskegee Airmen, flight simulators, Aviation vendor fair with education tables, including a 99 table, Beth Powell book signing and Awards presentation recognizing excellence in aviation storytelling. About the Festival: The Queen Bess Centennial Aviation Film Festival will be held at Bult Field in Monee, Illinois. The festival starts at 9 am with the Honor Flight by Ken Rapier, Tuskegee Airman. Throughout the day, attendees can enjoy films, drone demonstrations, aircraft displays and the educational forum in the grand foyer. For the complete schedule and more information, visit www.BessFF.com. **FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

The Queen Bess Film Festival is the first aviation film festival in the world. Ninety-nines interested in volunteering for the event, reach out to Susan Roe Musacchio at queenbessff@gmail.com. Pilots are also welcome to bring planes and share educational opportunities with the public.

Queen Bess Centennial Aviation Film Festival



Bult Field (C56), Monee, Illinois



FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC



Saturday, May 2, 2026, 9 AM - 4 PM



bessff.com

AIR NEWS

Madeleine M



Chicago Area Chapter Ninety-Nines, Inc. International Organization of Women Pilots

CHICAGO AREA 99S 2026 CALENDAR

APR 11	CHAPTER MEETING POT LUCK BRUNCH NEW DATE/TIME 11AM	LARISA'S HOME BARRINGTON
MAY 2	QUEEN BESS FESTIVAL BULT FIELD ALL DAY	SUSAN
MAY 23	AVIATION FOR GIRLS DAY LEWIS UNIVERSITY	MEGAN and CORIE
JUNE 13	ANNUAL CHAPTER MEETING SKY SOARING	ELIZABETH
JULY 8-12	INTERNATIONAL—SAN DIEGO	INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
JULY 20-26	EAA AIRVENTURE VOLUNTEER AT ONE OF TWO 99 BOOTHS FOR A DAY	GREAT CONTACTS
AUG 15	CHAPTER MEETING HAINESVILLE	ANA
SEPT 11-12	INTL FOREST OF FRIENDSHIP 50TH ANN REUNION	HONORING ONE OF OUR MEMBERS
SEPT 24	CHAPTER MEETING PILOT PETES DINNER	MADELEINE
OCT 2-4	NCS MEETING—INDIANA	INDIANA CHAPTER
OCT 17	CHAPTER AIR MEET (RAIN DATE 18) LANSING	VICKIE & CYNTHIA
NOV 12	FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN	LISA
DEC 13	HOLIDAY PARTY	SUSAN