

INTERNATIONAL  
**FOREST**  
OF FRIENDSHIP  
2024 ISSUE

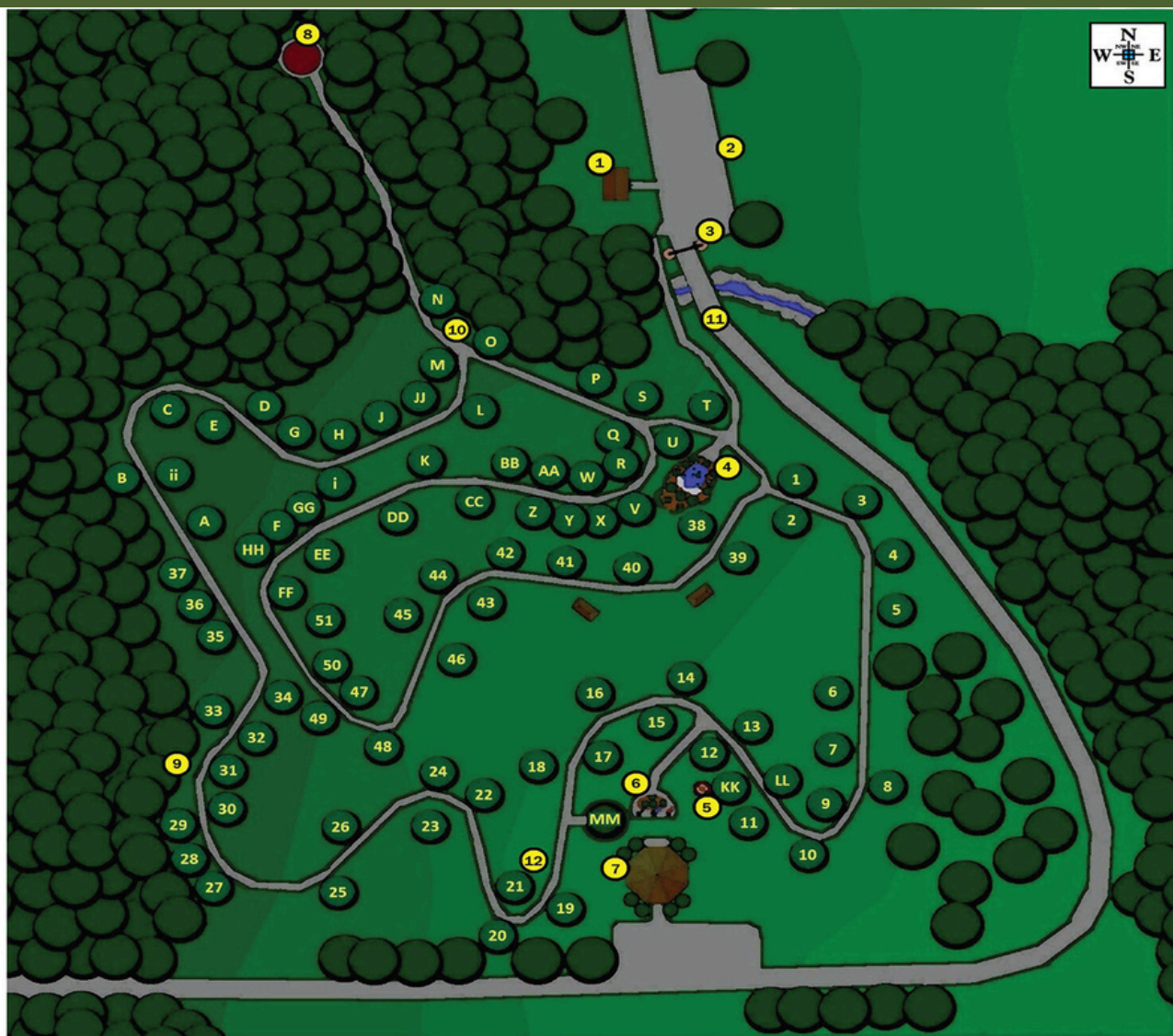
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|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| A. Flowering Peach (Israel)    | U. European Linden (Germany)      | 1. Northern Red Oak (New Jersey)       | 18. Red Pine (Minnesota)            | 35. Loblolly Pine (Alabama)      |
| B. Norway Spruce (Norway)      | V. Ginkgo (China)                 | 2. White Oak (Illinois)                | 19. Colorado Blue Spruce (Colorado) | 36. Pecan (Texas)                |
| C. Sweetgum (Bahamas)          | W. Golden Raintree (Egypt)        | 3. Pin Oak (Iowa)                      | 20. Sugar Maple (Wisconsin)         | 37. Mimosa (Hawaii)              |
| D. Tree Wisteria (Morocco)     | X. Sawtooth Oak (Poland)          | 4. Black Hill Spruce (South Dakota)    | 21. Southern Magnolia (Mississippi) | 38. Spruce (Alaska)              |
| E. Apple (France)              | Y. Klinki Pine (Papua New Guinea) | 5. Douglas Fir (Oregon)                | 22. Sugar Maple (West Virginia)     | 39. Cottonwood (Nebraska)        |
| F. Cottonwood (Mexico)         | Z. Sourwood (Siberia)             | 6. Eastern Hemlock (Pennsylvania)      | 23. Coffeetree (Kentucky)           | 40. Cottonwood (Kansas)          |
| G. Amur Cork Tree (Korea)      | AA. Red Maple (Jordan)            | 7. Shortleaf Pine (Arkansas)           | 24. Paper Birch (New Hampshire)     | 41. Redbud (Oklahoma)            |
| H. Black Gum (Portugal)        | BB. White Ash (Pakistan)          | 8. Sugar Maple (New York)              | 25. Tuliptree (Indiana)             | 42. Blue Spruce (Utah)           |
| I. Sugar Maple (Canada)        | CC. Star Magnolia (Surinam)       | 9. White Oak (Maryland)                | 26. Tuliptree (Tennessee)           | 43. Red Maple (Rhode Island)     |
| J. Pistachio (India)           | DD. Hawthorn (Ireland)            | 10. Ponderosa Pine (Montana)           | 27. Cottonwood (Wyoming)            | 44. Western Hemlock (Washington) |
| K. Finnish Pine (Finland)      | EE. Ginkgo (Singapore)            | 11. White Oak (Maryland)               | 28. Baldcypress (Louisiana)         | 45. American Elm (Massachusetts) |
| L. Lombardy Poplar (Italy)     | FF. Globe Locust (Australia)      | 12. American Elm (North Dakota)        | 29. Baldcypress (Florida)           | 46. American Holly (Delaware)    |
| M. Smoke Tree (Puerto Rico)    | GG. Silver Bell (Spain)           | 13. Scarlet Oak (District of Columbia) | 30. Shingle Oak (Georgia)           | 47. White Pine (Michigan)        |
| N. Mountain Ash (New Zealand)  | HH. Concolor Fir (Switzerland)    | 14. Sugar Maple (Vermont)              | 31. Flowering Dogwood (Missouri)    | 48. Ohio Buckeye (Ohio)          |
| O. Persimmon (South Africa)    | II. Sweetgum (Turkey)             | 15. Pinyon Pine (New Mexico)           | 32. Flowering Dogwood (Virginia)    | 49. Eastern White Pine (Maine)   |
| P. European Birch (Belgium)    |                                   | 16. Arizona Cypress (Arizona)          | 33. Redwood (California)            | 50. White Pine (Idaho)           |
| Q. Linden (Netherlands)        | JJ. Children's Tree of Life       | 17. Southern Magnolia (South Carolina) | 34. White Pine (North Carolina)     | 51. Pinon Pine (Nevada)          |
| R. English Oak (Great Britain) | KK. Washington's Tuliptree        |  |                                     |                                  |
| S. Katsura Cherry (Japan)      | LL. Grandpa Earhart's White Oak   |  |                                     |                                  |
| T. Catalpa (Brazil)            | MM. Moon Tree                     |  |                                     |                                  |

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|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Information Kiosk               | 10. Amelia Earhart Statue   | 20. Putnam Trail Bridge |
| 2. Parking Area                    | 11. Flag Poles              | 21. Memory Lane         |
| 3. Entrance                        | 12. Fay Gillis Wells Gazebo | 22. Allingham Drive     |
| 4. Joe Carrigan Memorial Waterfall | 13. Charter Member Circles  | 23. Astronaut Memorial  |

# Event Schedule

## Friday, September 20, 2024

- 5:00 P.M.
- Check-in at the Cocktail Party
  - Amelia Earhart Birthplace Museum  
(Two drink tickets included with registration.)



## Saturday, September 21, 2024

- 10:00 A.M.
- Induction Ceremony  
International Forest of Friendship  
1 Allingham Drive, Atchison, KS 66002
- 12:00 A.M.
- Luncheon with Keynote Speaker  
General (Ret) Glen VanHerck  
Elizabeth's  
121 North Fifth Street  
Atchison, Kansas 66002
- 6:00 P.M.
- Social Time  
Esther's at Pineview Country Club  
5882 Ottawa Road  
Atchison, Kansas 66002  
(Dinner will be on your own with menu ordering)





# Security and Solace Through Flight

This year's theme is "Security and Solace Through Flight" – emphasizing contributions by military aviators, organizations like Angel Flight and flying doctors, the aerial delivery of medicines, and other developments. As is true every year, in addition to this year's focus, all those who have contributed or are contributing to all facets of aviation and aerospace are welcome as honorees.

## Security Through Flight



We are very pleased to welcome General (Ret) Glen D. VanHerck, USAF, as our distinguished honoree and keynote speaker. He served in the U.S. Air Force for nearly 37 years with multiple assignments spanning fighter, bomber, and training operations including serving as a USAF Weapons School Instructor in the F-15C and the B-2A. He commanded two squadrons, an operations group, and two operational wings, and the United States Air Force Warfare Center at Nellis AFB, Nevada. Prior to his retirement in March of 2024, General VanHerck commanded both the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) and United States Northern Command (NORTHCOM). He is a command pilot with more than 3,200 military flying hours in the F-15C, F-35A, B-2A, and B-1B and is an FAA-licensed Airline Transport Pilot. He graduated from the University of Missouri and has graduate degrees from the University of Central Missouri and the Naval War College. Glen has been married to his wife Marilyn for more than 36 years. They have a daughter and three grandchildren.

His U.S. military aviation and aerospace includes Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force components, as well as Coast Guard aviation. It includes the finest aircrafts, space systems, unmanned aerial vehicles, and people in the world. Systems entering the force now, or planned for the next few years include these:



F-35 Lightning II  
fighter



KC-46 Pegasus  
tanker



B-21 Raider  
bomber



MQ-4C Triton  
maritime surveillance  
unmanned aerial  
system



variety of helicopter  
upgrades



variety of helicopter  
upgrades

Details of U.S. Air Force systems are provided in the Service's website. In addition, new approaches are being investigated for next-generation fighters, and collaborative combat aircraft, which may involve teaming between crewed and uncrewed systems.

The mission of U.S. Army aviation is to "find, fix and destroy any enemy through fire and maneuver and to provide combat support and combat service support in coordinated operations as an integral member of the combined arms team."

Key elements of naval aviation include aircraft carriers which carry strike aircraft and air defense assets, as well as large deck amphibious ships that increasingly will be carrying the F-35.



Among the biggest challenges facing all the US military Services today are in readiness. More than a decade of combat operations, and shortages in pilots and key maintenance personnel are having to be replaced and capabilities rebuilt. The funds provided in recent budgets are designed to address this, but it will take time.

U.S. military space systems provide unmatched capabilities in reconnaissance; surveillance; communications; weather; and position, navigation and timing (such as the Global Positioning System—GPS). These are complemented by a rapidly growing set of commercial capabilities. However, besides the increase in commercialization (such as Space X launches and the Starlink communications satellite constellation) space is becoming more congested and contested, with a diverse range of challenges the establishment of the U.S. Space Force in 2019 reflects a U.S. commitment to “securing our nation’s interests in from and to space.

Coast Guard aviation is focused on upgrading maritime surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities.

A great change in military aviation over the last five years has been the proliferation, sophistication, and operational use of drones. The war in Ukraine has shown the importance of uncrewed vehicles in air, ground, and maritime combat environments, and the use of drones in the waters off Yemen and in attacks into Israel has shown this is not a localized capability. In fact, major U.S. military procurement programs are being redesigned and future force plans reconsidered to take uncrewed systems into account. These trends will only accelerate in the future.

The Service Aviation Associations honor distinguished performances with a series of annual awards. In 2024:

- The Army Aviation Association of America awarded a series of awards at national, functional and chapter levels.
- The Association of Naval Aviation (ANA) awarded twelve awards, including the President George H. W. Bush Award to LT Charles Bill, Airborne Command & Control Squadron 113 (VAW-113)  
The Marine Corps Aviation Organization awarded 28 awards, including the Alfred A Cunningham Award (Aviator of the Year) to Maj Shane R. Gentry, VMU3, 1st MAW



- The US Air and Space Force Association selected 12 outstanding enlisted airmen based on superior leadership, job performance, and personal achievement.
- The Coast Guard Aviation Association honors active-duty aviation personnel by recognizing outstanding achievement as chosen by the U.S. Coast Guard. Awards include the Victor Roulund Rescue Swimmer Meritorious Achievement Award, the Captain Gus Shrode Flight Safety Award, the Chief Oliver Berry Aviation Maintenance I'll Award, the Commander Elmer Stone Fixed Wing Rescue Award, and the Captain Frank Erickson Rotary Wing Rescue Award.



## Solace Through Flight

“Security and Solace Through Flight” includes many facets: Angel Flight, Flying Doctors of America (FDA), the Royal Flying Doctors Service (RFDS) of Australia and counterparts around the world, Pilots N Paws for pet relocation, and the delivery of medical supplies and humanitarian assistance through the use of uncrewed aerial systems, often termed drones.

### Angel Flight



Who do you call when you need to go to a doctor that's not in your hometown, or maybe even in your state? Driving will take many hours, and you are too sick to make that trip in a car. Each year thousands of people are transported to non-emergency medical appointments by privately owned aircraft. These flights are coordinated by Angel Flight, which arranges air transportation for patients to receive urgent medical services at no expense. Several divisions of Angel Flight serve different regions of the United States but share the mission of getting patients to needed treatments who would otherwise not be able to access medical care.

Other Angel Flight missions can include flying organ transplant recipients to medical centers when an organ becomes available, often in the middle of the night. Angel Flight pilots also delivered relief supplies to affected areas following hurricanes.

As a Forest of Friendship honoree and a member of the International Women Pilots Association, the Ninety-Nines,



Tamara Willits has found joy in participating in Angel Flights regularly. Her first love of aviation started with a chance at the controls with her father as a child. Later in life, she pursued this love of aviation and has inspired many others to follow the aviation dream. She often takes nursing homes' residents from her hometown of Lawrence, Kansas, on flights in her Cessna 400 as well as Angel Flights. She has been active with Angel Flight Central, one of six regions of Angel Flight since receiving her IFR certification. The Angel Flight central region alone has flown patients over 11 million miles and have over 50 active pilots per month.

### Flying Doctors of America

Flying Doctors of America has been doing medical missions for over 33 years and started with \$700 with a wing and a prayer. They have done over 450 medical missions and treated approximately 425,000 people who otherwise may not have medical care for free. They operate under the “Mother Teresa Principle,” which means they focus on the poorest of the poor, living in conditions that are difficult for most Americans to imagine.



Flying Doctors focuses on having everybody win. The medical team misses only a few days of work and goes on the trip of a lifetime. Their support volunteers come to serve as translators, team leaders, photographers and healthcare assistants. Financial

sponsors, both individual and corporate, know their dollars are making a real difference in the world. When they know that someone cares enough to come to them a spark of hope flares up for those who live in an otherwise hopeless situation. Among the areas served are Mexico, South America, Central America, Caribbean, India, Africa, Southeast Asia (Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia), China & Mongolia.

## Royal Flying Doctors Service (Australia)

The Royal Flying Doctor Service (RDFS) is celebrating 95 years of providing medical care in Outback Australia. Australia is about the same size as the continental US, with about the same population as the state of Texas, with most residents living along the coastlines. With such a small population living in the country's interior, there is limited infrastructure to provide the needed medical care. RFDS provides essential medical services to the remote and diverse interior of the country. The charity operates a fleet of aircraft of different sizes and capabilities. These include a Hawker 800 XP, a twin-engine jet capable of carrying 3 stretchers, 2 medical personnel, and 34 King Air B200's, a twin-engine turbo-prop aircraft that has 2 stretcher beds and 3 seats for passengers. RFDS fleet also includes 32 single engine Pilatus PC-12 turboprop planes which have a good all-around combination of capacity, performance and speed. To provide maximum flexibility the King Airs and PC-12 aircraft are operated by a single pilot. RFDS provides essential primary healthcare services to the Outback, and as well as emergency transfer between hospitals, from clinics to hospitals, and from remote locations. The Flying Service logged more than 16 million miles of medical flights last year.

There are comparable flying doctor organizations all over the world.



## Pilots N Paws

Pilots N Paws® is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that connects over-crowded animal shelters with pilots willing to transport the pets to less populated shelters. Its website is intended to be a meeting place for volunteers engaged in the valuable services of rescuing, sheltering and adopting animals, and volunteer pilots and plane owners willing to assist with animal transportation. Through the Pilots N Paws discussion board, volunteers can exchange information regarding animal transports, coordinate and schedule transports, share rescue stories and recruit volunteers.



The only request for those participating is to be aware of the concerns of others. For that reason, the Pilots N Paws discussion board includes links to information that is specific to pilots and those involved in the sheltering or rescue process. Aviation is a wonderful alternative to ground transportation, but those involved will have concerns not generally faced by ground transporters.

Pilots N Paws began with a long-distance rescue effort. Debi Boies had finally found the perfect Doberman. Unfortunately, the rescue dog was in Florida, and Boies couldn't figure out an easy way to get him to her home in South Carolina. Based on her experience with a Doberman rescue group, she knew the animal would have to be transported by car, changing vehicles and drivers every hour. It wasn't an insurmountable task, but it would need a lot of coordination.

When Boies' friend and pilot Jon Wehrenberg heard of her dilemma, he offered to retrieve the Doberman in his Cessna 210. One rescue, and Wehrenberg was hooked. "Pilots are just looking for a good reason to fly, and some of them are bored going out for that \$100 hamburger that everybody talks about," he said to Boies. "Let's see if we can't combine your rescue efforts and the pilots." So, the two joined forces and set up [Pilots N Paws](#). There are many stories about Pilots N Paws contributors, for example.

## Drone Delivery of Medicine and Humanitarian Assistance

The use of drones by public health experts and providers of humanitarian aid in remote areas both in the U.S. and around the world has moved from a novelty to routine practice in just a few years. Drones now also are being used for Search and Rescue and to provide situational awareness before, during and after emergencies. However, the technology alone is not enough. All approaches will have to include people, processes, organizations and technology. Policy issues such as access to airspace by drones need to be addressed. This is now the subject of many conferences and academic courses, and a sharing of best practices.



## **Michelle Booth**



Michelle Booth is being honored by the Ambassador Chapter 99s for her longtime commitment to the chapter. Michelle began her flying career in Fairbanks, AK while attending the University of Alaska Fairbanks. After graduating from college Michelle set out full time on her aviation journey beginning as a flight instructor, and then flying single pilot IFR for Ameriflight, Inc on the PA-32R, PA-31, BE-99 and SA227. In 2007 she made the move from the left seat of the SA227 Metroliner to the right seat of the B757 when she achieved her dream job with UPS, Inc. Only one year later Michelle found herself back in school to train as a first officer on the B747 and moving back to Alaska. Since then, she has remained on the B747 fleet based in Anchorage as a First officer for UPS, but is scheduled for B747 Captain upgrade training in the late summer of 2024. In addition to flying the line Michelle works with their pilot union serving as a committee member on the CIRP committee and as chair of the HazMat committee.

Early in her career Michelle went to a Women In Aviation conference with a friend who really wanted to attend a breakfast sponsored by the Ninety Nines Ambassador Chapter. It was here that she met Janet Patton and her journey with the Ninety Nines began. Over the

years of membership with the Ambassador Chapter she has served as Membership Chair (current position) as well as Co-Editor for the Chapter Newsletter. The women in the Ambassador Chapter have provided amazing support and a place to feel welcome along this journey.

When she is not working Michelle enjoys spending her time delving into her hobby of writing fiction and hanging out with her senior dog Noble.

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## **Minnetta Gardinier**



Minnetta Gardinier achieved her dream of becoming a pilot in 2005, earned an instrument rating in 2007, and wow, has she put those ratings to use! Minnetta has landed her Cessna Cardinal in 47 of the Lower 48 states visiting family/friends and attending a wide variety of aviation-related events.

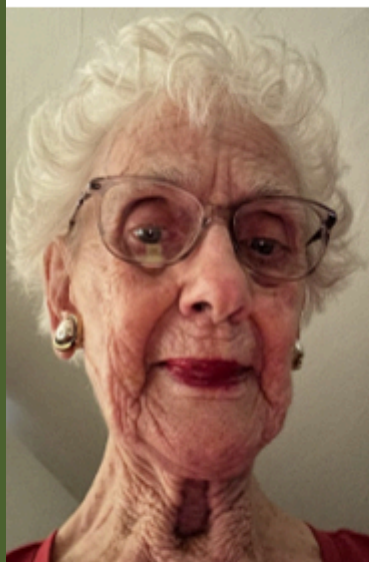
Since joining The Ninety-Nines in October 2006, Minnetta has held every board position but treasurer in our Iowa chapter. She attended section and international meetings and was soon elected to the section board, most recently serving two terms as North Central Section Governor (2014-2018). Of course, for someone as driven as Minnetta, The Ninety-Nines International board was the natural next step. She served as an International Director and was just re-elected to her second term as International Vice-President.

Minnetta has spent countless hours volunteering to promote aviation at The Ninety-Nines booth at EAA AirVenture, girls in aviation days, EAA Young Eagles events and EAA Flight Experience events at her local airport, among others. She also served on the Iowa City Airport Commission. She has worked tirelessly to grow The Ninety-Nines, and

she has demonstrated a unique ability to encourage others to step up and serve, even when it is outside their comfort zone.

Looking for another reason to fly, Minnetta decided to participate in the Air Race Classic (ARC). What started out as a challenge turned into a passion, and Minnetta just completed her 15th ARC, with a best finish of 3rd in 2017. Minnetta also served two terms as a Director on the ARC board. Eager to share her passion and the ARC experience, Minnetta is known for inviting a new co-pilot for almost every race. This is just another example of how Minnetta has expanded the aviation world for others, creating a network of volunteers sharing her mission.

## **Marie Grein**



The FL Suncoast Chapter of the 99s is presenting Marie Grein to be inducted into the Forest of Friendship.

Marie is an educator and started a Young Astronaut Program in her local school in 1986. In 1988 she attended the National Congress of Aviation and Space Education in Los Angeles. This conference inspired her to become a pilot. By 1989 she had earned her private pilot certificate and joined the 99s.

Her many accomplishments in aerospace education include:

Co-founder of the Pinellas County Young Astronaut Networking Committee, applied for and received a \$2,300 grant to implement science with an aerospace theme to grade schoolers, co-produced a brochure "Reach for the Stars" which set up the first Aerospace Day, was a member of the planning committee for the 1998 International Young Astronauts conference and the State Aerospace Summit in 1999 and 2000, co-wrote the elementary level of the Wings program, received the Ambassador Wings Award from the Lady Pilot Magazine in 2002, received the 2007 Ray Lien Award and was given an

individual "For Excellence in Aerospace Education."

As a 99 she has chaired the FL Suncoast Chapter and served on numerous committees. She conducted Air Bears (an imaginary plane trip for grade schoolers to learn about flying) for several years. She currently serves on the Jessie Woods Scholarship committee and has served on this committee for over 10 years. She was Chairman of the chapter's by-laws Committee in 2022-2023. Marie has attended almost all of the chapter meetings since 1989 and is the backbone of the FL Suncoast Chapter. She was treasurer of the Southeast Section (SES) 2003-2005 and Governor of the SES 2005-2007. In 2007 she served on the International By-laws committee.

Marie personally has awarded a \$1000 scholarship each year from 2019-2022 to a woman over the age of thirty who wanted to earn their Private Pilot Certificate.

This is only a part of what Marie has done for the 99s and for Aerospace Education. Marie is worthy of being honored as someone who has made a special contribution to aviation.

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## **Maggie Hettinger**



Born into a musical family in 1953. She lives music as a fish swims in water. Still, her interest in Earth, science, and flying influenced her as a musician, wife, mother, Girl Scout leader, Day Camp Director, schoolteacher, church and community member, and grandmother. She, and her husband, Frank, thoroughly enjoyed themselves when, at age 50, Maggie pivoted to learn to fly. Eventually they settled into the unique community around sailplanes and gliders, including the Louisville Soaring Club and Women's Soaring Pilots Association (WSPA).

Joining the Kentucky Bluegrass Chapter of The Ninety-Nines soon after becoming a licensed pilot in 2007, Maggie came to love members' camaraderie and expertise, traveling to airports around Kentucky and Indiana and to meetings around the USA. With 99s she helped with Girl Scout Days at Bowman Field, volunteered at the Challenger Center, and helped develop Girl Scout Aviation Badges. As Chapter Chair, she spearheaded the 2014 North Central Section Meeting by creating Camp Willa Brown in Lebanon Junction, KY, complementing meetings with fun retro activities, biplane and glider flights, and recorded interviews of attendees for history. Successful fundraising allowed the chapter to expand its scholarship program. Then she took a

turn as the North Central Section's Waypoint editor.

Challenges like finding invisible thermals and taking them to altitude using natural solar power as fuel or dealing with invisible wind shear on approach to landing give spice and perspective to life. Sometimes while soaring solo, the aircraft disappears into silence and pilot, sky, and Earth are all there is. These insights continue to inform Maggie's current commitment as one of many volunteers who work on policies that can stop the pollution that's overheating the planet. This invisible, hard-to-understand threat is an urgent call for people to befriend the world and choose sustainable lifestyles.



## **Gail S. LaPook**



Our honoree, Gail LaPook, has been a resident of the Chicago area her entire life. She began in aviation as a skydiver in 1965. After assessing the age of her jump pilot, Gail decided to learn how to fly herself. She earned her Private in 1971, flew all over the US and to the Bahamas, building time when it was less expensive than it is now.

Gail got her CFI in 1979 and began teaching at Midway Airport. In 1990 Gail was chosen by the FAA as a Designated Pilot Examiner. She has been giving checkrides for 34 years!

During her early years in aviation, Gail worked full time in another field, but after her retirement from that position, she dedicated all her efforts to her DPE work. She is known to be thorough and fair and has improved aviation with her contributions to safe flying.

Over the years Gail has been a valued member of the Ninety Nines, International Organization of Women Pilots. As a member of that organization's Chicago Area Chapter, she has flown many air races (winning quite a few), participated in safety seminars and other activities, and served as Vice Chair. She has presented countless safety talks; exemplified excellence in aviation by her record; and educated with humor more pilots

than could be counted.

Gail was awarded the Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship to obtain her ATP. She used that as an opportunity to get a Citation Type rating at the same time – a tribute to her reputation for excellence.

Gail has also been a member of The Chicago Flight Instructors Association, Inc. (CFAIA) since it was founded by Harold Spencer at DuPage Airport in the early 80's. Gail was recently elected by that body as a director.

We congratulate Gail on her achievements!

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## **Madeleine Monaco**



On the day she soloed, Madeleine Monaco knew she wanted to share the joy of aviation and make it possible for others to fly. For nearly five decades, she has been devoted to that goal. As a single mother with two kids, Madeleine set about earning her Private certificate, IFR, Commercial, CFI, MEI, MEII, ASES and BGI. As a natural teacher, she has donated more CFI time than her paid time. She especially enjoys discovery flights, Young Eagles and bringing new students to solo.

Madeleine's contributions to the 99s are endless. Since joining in 1978, she has served in nearly every position in the chapter; as Secretary, Waypoint editor and Aviation Education chair for the section; and for many years as AEMS Trustee. She chairs the Aviation Expo, produces the monthly AirNews and mentors many pilots. Currently serving as chapter chair, Chicago Area members can count on Madeleine to be welcoming, encouraging and supportive. In 2019, she was selected to receive the Award of Achievement for Contributions to the 99s.

Beyond the 99s, Madeleine has contributed much to aviation. She worked with the FAA on replacing the civil penalty program. She served as Airport Commissioner at

KPWK. Madeleine was a founding member of the Palwaukee Airport Pilots Association (PAPA) now renamed CEPA for Chicago Executive Pilots Association and was instrumental in redesigning the TAC in cooperation with the FAA. She was on the selection committee for the Illinois Aviation Hall of Fame. Worked with CAP at Johnson Flight Academy teaching high school age flight students. Her memberships include EAA, CFIAI, WAI and others. She has owned or co-owned several aircraft and has flown many proficiency air races.

Madeleine is an inspiring leader and the Chicago Area Chapter 99s are proud to sponsor her induction into the International Forest of Friendship.

## **Blair Parker**



Blair Parker retired in 2003, after a successful career as a Boeing 757 and 767 captain with American Airlines. Upon retirement from American Airlines, Blair continued in the career he loved, working as a chief pilot and an aviation manager for various corporate flight departments in the Phoenix area. He took his first flying lesson in 1965 slowly learned to fly by saving up for one hour of flight lessons per month. With the passage of the G.I. Bill, Blair went to school full time and trained as a pilot at the Sawyer School of Aviation in Phoenix, Arizona. He earned his private license in 1966, commercial license in 1968, and ATP in 1970. Blair also was a flight instructor for a number of years. He had the honor of being instructor for Alice Roberts, a Ninety-Nine, when she achieved her instrument rating. In addition, he was a FAA-designated PPE for the Cessna Citation 500/560 series aircraft. As a career pilot, the safety of flight and passenger comfort were always his primary considerations. In his 50-year career,

he has more than 30,000 hours of flight time with no accidents, incidents or violations. In 2018, he was the recipient of the prestigious Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award, FAA's highest award. When his head is not up in the clouds he enjoys golfing, sudoku puzzles and spoiling the people in his life.



## **Janet Patton**



Janet Patton of Denton, TX has been flying airplanes since 1986. A Michigan native, she earned her wings at small airports throughout Lower and Southeast Michigan. Since joining the Ninety-Nines in 1988 she has held many leadership positions. Her current roles are Chapter Chair and International Director. In 1999, she founded the Ambassador Chapter, the first virtual chapter of the 99s.

Janet's biggest aviation accomplishment to date was becoming Spirit Airlines first woman pilot in 1996- and first-woman Captain in 1998 in the DC-9. Later that year, Janet was hired by American Airlines. For American, she has flown these aircraft: Airbus 319/321, MD80, 8727, B737, 8757, 8767, B777, B787. Currently, she is a Boeing 777 pilot flying international flights, having previously been a 737 Captain. Janet is based at DFW (Dallas/Ft. Worth) Airport in Texas. Having been at American Airlines for nearly 25 years, she is looking forward to upgrading to Boeing 777 Captain in the near future. Janet also owns Patton Aviation, which can be found at Denton Airport ([www.pattonaviation.pro](http://www.pattonaviation.pro)) and is a combined flight school for airplanes and hot air balloon ride business. Having been a single mom for over 10 years with children now in college, both Janet's children

are 99s and pilots. Fittingly, one is an airplane pilot and one is a hot air balloon pilot. She is happy that both have independently found aviation as a hobby. For Janet, aviation is a passion, and one she is happy to share with others.



## **Diana Payne Austin**



Diana Payne Austin became a pilot and joined the 99s in 1970 after a momentous elopement honeymoon flight from Indiana to Florida. In 1976, she became a charter member of the Indiana Dunes Chapter of The Ninety-Nines, Inc.

For fifty-three years, this Life member of the 99s continues to be dedicated to fulfilling the mission of the 99s and to aviation. With a Master's Degree in Education, she has excelled at the local level, presenting Air Bear Aviation Programs in the schools over sixty times. She has presented aviation programs to Girl Scouts, Challenger Learning Center students, Flying Companion Seminars, promoted 99s and aviation at airshows for the public, flew daffodils for the American Cancer Society, and attended University of Dayton program for teachers, "Getting Comfortable Teaching with Space."

She has participated in FAIR Ladies Race (1987-2nd place), Indiana Dunes 99s Proficiency Race (1989-1st place), and helped construct a parade float-theme- "From Amelia Earhart to Sally Ride". She is a recipient of the North Central Section 99s Governor's Service Award, was an Air Race Classic Stop Chair in 2010 and has

been honored by the Indiana Dunes chapter with a tile set in Compass Rose at 99s headquarters.

Diana Payne Austin grew up in West Lafayette, Indiana; across the street from Purdue University which lately has proven to be an ironic family link to Amelia Earhart.

The Amelia Earhart connection: In 2023, Boston University provided access to a book written by David Earhart. Diana's maternal great-grandmother's first cousin is Jennie Elizabeth Earhart. Jennie's husband, Albert Mosheim Earhart, is the brother of Samuel Edwin Stanton Earhart, Amelia Earhart's father. Great Grandfather Joseph Gledhill Scott is the brother of Jennie Elizabeth Scott who married Albert Mosheim Earhart. Albert Earhart's younger brother, Samuel Edwin Stanton Earhart, is the father of Amelia Mary Earhart.

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## **Jimmy Szajkovics (sike-o-vitch)**



Jimmy Szajkovics enlisted in the military after high school, hoping to become an airline pilot. In 1963, while stationed in Panama, he joined the Albrook Air Force Base Flying Club, training in a Piper J-3 Cub. Returning to Chicago, he used GI benefits to earn ratings. Finding no airline job, he joined the FAA as an Air Traffic Controller at Chicago ARTCC, Midway Tower in 1975, and in 1978 accepted an FAA position as Accident Prevention Specialist in Milwaukee. He joined the Air National Guard in 1982, flying helicopters. In 2003, Jimmy retired after 26 years of service.

In 2005, Jimmy joined the CAP after retiring from the Milwaukee FSDO. Jimmy's background helped the Timmerman-based, Milwaukee 10th Senior Support Squadron flourish. He volunteered to train CAP squadron pilots and literally rolled up his sleeves to help modernize the squadron's dated facility. He volunteered as WIWG and Unit Stan/Eval officer and continues to be a WIWG Check Pilot Examiner, Cadet, and AFROTC orientation pilot and instructor. Jimmy was the first CAP pilot sent to Cessna when the Garmin G1000-equipped aircraft arrived. This will be his 15th consecutive year instructing at the CAP National Flight Academy in Oshkosh.

Jimmy received the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award in 2016 and was inducted into the Wisconsin Aviation Hall of Fame in 2016.

Besides the CAP, Jimmy promotes the Ninety-Nines by guiding women aviators to the organization. He has spent many hours helping 99s with airplane transitions, safety training, and providing support during all phases of flight. His love of aviation is evident in his enthusiasm for the CAP, Ninety-Nines, AOPA, and EAA. Most days of the week, Jimmy is at the airport. If you ever want to fly, ask him to go with you, he won't turn you down.

## **Evelyn Shapiro**



Evelyn Shapiro has been a loyal supporter of Aviation and the 99s International Organization of Women Pilots. Evelyn earned her Private Pilot Certificate in 1991 at the Great Barrington, Massachusetts Airport (GBR). For her flight lessons she flew Piper Cherokee's N15913 and N5733U (nicknamed 33Ugly). Her instructor was Brad Riegel who signed her off to take her check ride. The Designated Examiner Walter Koladza was a Corsair Pilot in WWII and owner of the private airport.

Evelyn Joined the Florida Spaceport 99s in March 1996, which was renamed Spaceport 99s. July 9, 2022 Evelyn became a Life Member of the 99s.

Comments from her instructor Brad were: Evelyn was persevering. Her cross-country navigation plans were immaculate – perfect planning. A pleasure to fly with, tough and proud of herself she could do it. She is a great person.

After graduation University of Rhode Island, she taught in the grammar school in Rhode Island and in 1995 moved to Spruce Creek (A residential air park), Daytona Beach, Florida. Evelyn was the Owner, Editor and Publisher of the magazine "Northeast

Weekend Flyers", Editor of the "Grasshopper" a Florida Women Pilots flying organization. President of the Spruce Creek Garden Club and holds the distinction of Master Gardener. Evelyn has taught at the Volusia County Agricultural Center, Deland, Florida and the Port Orange Public Library – gardening. For over 20 years Evelyn has donated to the Spruce Creek Flying Club Christmas Toy Parade some 1,200 chocolate chip cookies – talk about being sweet.

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## **General (ret.) Glen VanHerck, USAF**



General (Ret) Glen D. VanHerck served in the U.S. Air Force for nearly 37 years with multiple assignments spanning fighter, bomber, and training operations including serving as a USAF Weapons School Instructor in the F-15C and the B-2A. He commanded two squadrons, an operations group, and two operational wings. He also commanded the United States Air Force Warfare Center at Nellis AFB, Nevada. Prior to his retirement from active duty, General (ret) VanHerck commanded both the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) and the United States Northern Command (NORTHCOM).

Glen spent his last seven years serving in joint operations. Prior to commanding NORAD and NORTHCOM, he served as the Director of the Joint Staff where he supported the Chairman and the Joint Chiefs of Staff in their roles as advisors to the Secretary of Defense and President, he served as the Joint Staff Inspector General, and led daily operations for the Joint Staff. He also served as the Vice Director of the Joint Staff and the Vice Director of Strategy, Plans, and Policy (J5). Glen played critical roles in the development of the 2018 National Defense Strategy, the National Military Strategy, the Missile Defense Review, Nuclear Posture Review, stand up of United States Space Command, and responses to

COVID, civil unrest, and global instability. Other joint assignments include serving as the Director, Plans and Integration, JFCC-GS, United States Strategic Command. He is a command pilot with more than 3,200 military flying hours in the F-15C, F-35A, B-2A, and B-1B and a FAA licensed Airline Transport Pilot.

He is a graduate of the University of Missouri. He also received graduate degrees from the University of Central Missouri and the Naval War College.

Glen has been married to his wife Marilyn for more than 36 years. They have a daughter and three grandchildren.



## **Kira A. Vitale**



From the age of five Kira Vitale talked about wanting to fly and joining the Navy. She isn't sure if she was more influenced by the jets, she could see landing at Miramar Naval Air Station as her family drove by, the Blue Angels headlining the air shows there, or the evening she was outside playing when a jet passed so low and slow that she waved at the pilot and he waved back. It was such a thrill! Fast forward to a birthday present from her parents that changed her entire life. She was given a discovery flight to finally put to rest the notion or open the door to what she thought she wanted to do for the rest of her life. Fortunately for her that 30-minute flight solidified her desire to fly and she hasn't looked back since.

Kira started her private pilot certificate in 1998. Often skipping school to go fly (yes, with her mother's permission) she earned her "license to learn" as the examiner called it before she graduated high school. She went on to graduate from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, moving to Atlanta, Georgia for a job instructing. This is where she met Janet Patton, founder of the Ambassador Chapter of The Ninety-Nines and has been a member since 2003. She has enjoyed the leadership positions she has held but especially the

Chapter Scholarship Chair where she helped her sister aviatrixes in realizing their dreams of flight.

After instructing, Kira flew Part 135 then joined the airline world, first flying for Atlantic Southeast Airlines and now currently a Boeing 737 First Officer for American Airlines. The only things that can keep her busier than flying are the two children she shares with her husband.



## **Deborah Yarbrough**



In 1978 while working at VA hospital as a ward clerk, Deborah was able to transition into a position within Mississippi Army National Guard Aviation Depot in Gulfport. In July 1982, Deb's aviation journey began with flight training at Keesler AFB Aero Club where she exchanged work hours for flight time. Deborah soloed on September 15, 1982 and received her private pilot certificate on January 5, 1983. Then in 1984, Deborah became an air traffic controller in Gulfport, MS. In 1992, Deborah married a veteran aviator who owns a 1955 Cessna 170. They took many flights in this C170 between Memphis and their second home in Arkansas, a fly-in community. October 29, 1995 Deborah soloed in C170, achieving her tail wheel endorsement. They purchased a 1943 Taylorcraft L2M, war bird for their flying pleasure and still own both aircraft today. Deborah's flight time includes C172 and PA28. Then in June 1996, Deborah joined The Ninety-Nines, Inc. where she actively participates in the Memphis Chapter activities.

During her FAA tenure, Deborah served as an Air Traffic Controller in Gulfport and Memphis, FAA Headquarters Program Specialist in Washington DC, Evaluations Specialist in the Fort Worth Office, covering central US, and Quality Assurance Manager at Memphis Air Route Traffic Control Center before finally retiring.

Deborah's aviation service includes Memphis Chapter vice-chairwoman from 2014-2021, Air Race Classic timer, conducting speaking engagements sharing her aviation experience and knowledge, hangar space for storage, energy to support compass rose projects, and management of projects. Deborah's management skills continued as a member of the Professional Women Controllers organization, serving terms as Southern Regional Director, Vice President, and President. Deborah's passion for aviation service continued in 2017 when she served as a trustee for Amelia Earhart Birthplace Museum and later in 2019-2023 served as secretary.

## Owen Yarbrough



Owen's love of flying began as a child watching crop dusters flying overhead. While working in the fields just under the flight path of Naval Air Station, Millington, he decided he wanted to fly. Owen joined the Navy at 17 (1957) serving two years as an aircraft hydraulics mechanic. Upon returning to Memphis, he started flying at age 23, achieved his private pilot certificate on November 25, 1964, and flew for fun. Owen joined the Memphis Police Department until enlisting in the Army. He obtained his Military Chief Warrant Officer pilot certificate on 2/2/67. Owen did two combat tours in Vietnam during his 12 years active duty. Owen flew numerous type Army aircraft, fixed wing, and rotary. After being discharged, Owen returned to Memphis Police Department to fly rotary wing. Owen served in the US Army and Army National Guard for 20 years as Chief Warrant Officer Four flying both rotary and fixed wing. He retired from the military and after 25 years of service with Memphis police department as helicopter pilot in the aviation department, he retired in 1996. He then went on to be an American Airlines ground school instructor from 1999 to 2007. His ratings obtained were ATP, CFII and ground instructor. Owen was awarded the Memphis Flight Standards office "Certified Flight Instructor of the Year Award" in 2012, the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award in March 2015, and Southeast Section 99s 491/2 of the year award in 2016.

Owen has been very generous with his time and aviation knowledge by helping others in aviation including the Ninety-Nines, Memphis Chapter, and the youth of Memphis area. His career in aviation has his total flight time of over 10,000 hours in fixed and rotary wing aircraft. He has spent his entire life loving and serving the aviation community.



### “Adventure is Worthwhile in Itself!”

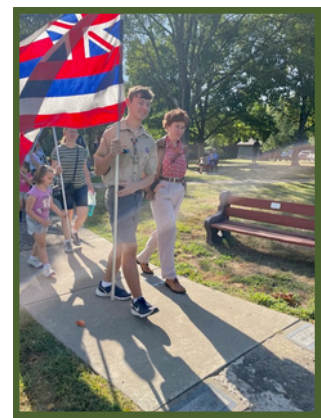
And what an adventure the last year has been at the Amelia Earhart Hangar Museum! Since opening in April 2023, the museum has welcomed visitors from across the globe, including many pilots excited to see Atchison's newest attraction devoted to her favorite daughter, Amelia Earhart! Her character, life, and legacy continues to inspire people young and old, and the mystery of her disappearance continues to intrigue the public. News of a potential discovery of her plane captured international attention in January, and in July, the Hangar Museum hosted a group of scientists and explorers to discuss the findings. Those programs are available to view by simply scanning the [QR code](#) -- OR at our [YouTube channel @ameliaearharthangarmuseum](#). Did Tony and Lloyd Romeo with Deep Sea Vision find Amelia's Electra? Many are even more convinced after watching. What do you think?

Head out to the Amelia Earhart Memorial Airport on your visit during the International Forest of Friendship festivities to the Hangar Museum to see the super-artifact on display - the world's last remaining Lockheed Electra IO-E, identical to the plane Amelia was flying when she disappeared. The Hangar Museum's compelling exhibits blend STEM concepts with historical storytelling, immersing visitors into Amelia's experiences growing up in Atchison and her tenacious attitude and dogged perseverance to change the face of aviation.



# Congratulations to the IFOF!

## A Grant for New Sidewalks



After nearly fifty years, the walkways meandering through the International Forest of Friendship are showing their age! Weather takes its toll on the trees and walkways.

Under the leadership of Leonard Buddenbohm, co-chair of the Forest, a trails grant has been awarded for \$150,000, with a match from the Forest budget of \$35,000, from the Kansas Recreational Trails Program. The lengthy process of receiving the grant included on-site visits, completing the paperwork, and securing the matching funds. Funds from the Cray-Seaberg Foundation were awarded to assist us with a large portion of the required matching funds.

Now that the grant has been approved in full, the next step will be an environmental study done by the Kansas Historical Preservation Society. After that the grant authority will send us an agreement. The Board plans to have the sidewalk project completed in time for the 50th anniversary of the International Forest of Friendship. Donations toward the matching funds may be made by clicking the “donate now” button at [www.ifof.org](http://www.ifof.org).



Ways to Honor Aviation/Space  
Accomplishments



More than 1500 names are embedded into the walkways in the Forest. Each name represents contributions to aviation and space in some small or large way! To honor someone, visit [www.ifof.org](http://www.ifof.org) and click the “Sponsor an Honoree” link. The cost is \$450. Your nominee will be honored at the annual ceremony in September and an engraved stone with their name will be added to the walkways winding through the Forest.

The Forest is currently looking for donors to replace deteriorating benches with a commercial-grade, engraved or personalized; "In Memory of", "Donated By", or create your own message. On the website, click “downloads” for the bench form.

# Family Fun at the Forest

Folks from near and far visit the International Forest of Friendship all year! Moms and Dads arrive with their strollers, their bikes and scooters, and the kids! Other folks put their dog on a leash and stroll through the Forest early in the morning or evening. The Forest provides a safe place for children to wander and explore. During the Amelia Earhart Festival this past July, all 100 flags in the Forest flew all day while guests visited. These flags provided a great opportunity for this family from Kansas City to go on a flag scavenger hunt!



## Welcome Back Smokey!

Smokey Bear is at the International Forest of Friendship for the 48th year in a row! Smokey takes every chance he can to remind all of us to take care of our country's Forests! His favorite saying is, "Only you can prevent forest fires!" When you see Smokey, take time for a picture! He loves smiling for the camera and is all about world friendship through flying!



## Meet Our New Office Manager

Carrie Miller, Office Manager, came on board this past spring and brings a wealth of skills to her position. Outside of this part-time position at the Forest's office, Carrie is a full-time business technology instructor at Highland Community College Technical Center in Atchison. In her short tenure with the Forest, Carrie has found a way to learn about the history of the Forest, create the yearly budget, and improve the website. She has met so many of this year's guests via phone calls, texts, and emails as she organized this year's annual celebration. Take time this weekend to find Carrie and smile at her! She's earned all the smiles we can give her!



# Amelia Earhart Birthplace

The Amelia Earhart Birthplace Museum Staff has made many new and exciting discoveries and updates to exhibits this past year. You will want to see these items in person. Our newest acquisition on display is a copy of Omar Khayyam's Rubaiyat, owned and signed by Amelia Earhart. Both her sister, Muriel Earhart Morrissey, and first flight instructor, Neta Snook Southern, spoke of Amelia often quoting Khayyam's poetry. This well-loved and pocket-sized edition of the book is on display in our Second Library.

Staff have also discovered that the collection holds more original pieces of furniture from the Otis family and the life of Amelia Earhart than originally thought. These pieces include Grandfather Otis' desk and Grandmother Otis' drop leaf table. All known original furniture on display are now highlighted with signs marking them as original, allowing for visitors to easily pick them out.

Additionally, a nine volume set of the works of Nathaniel Hawthorne was recently discovered to have been owned by Amelia and her mother. The first two volumes have Amy Earhart's name inscribed in the front cover, and the first volume also has Amelia Earhart's name. It appears that the ink pen used to write these names exploded, leaving splotches instead of Amelia's name in the second volume. There are also many instances of marginalia throughout the set.

Visit the AEBM to see all these pieces and many more!

If you would like to support the museum, visit  
<https://aebm.square.site/shop/donations-and-fundraisers/67>

You can also support by volunteering or becoming a member! For more information, email [asstdirector@ameliaearhartmuseum.org](mailto:asstdirector@ameliaearhartmuseum.org).



Amelia Earhart Birthplace Museum  
223 N. Terrace St., Atchison, KS 66002  
(913) 367-4217 | [www.ameliaearhartmuseum.org](http://www.ameliaearhartmuseum.org)



# Meet the Board of Directors

Linton Wells II, Co-Chair, is a retired naval officer and senior government official. He now works on community resilience at George Mason University. Lin's mother, Fay Gillis Wells, was the founding Co-Chair of the Forest (with Joe Carrigan), and a Charter member of the 99s. Lin has been Co-Chair since 2002. He and his wife Linda live in Fairfax, VA, and look forward to the Forest's 50th anniversary in 2026.

Leonard Buddenbohm, Co-Chair, has benefited from his involvement with the Forest since the 1970's. He has served on the Board in his current position since its inception. He loves seeing the people from around the country and some from around the world at our annual event.

Cynthia Putnam, Secretary, is a retired teacher living in Florida. The daughter of George P. Putnam, she happily continues his great love and support of the Forest.

Cindy Apple was born into the Forest! Her grandfather, Joe Carrigan, was co-founder in 1976 and her father, Pat Carrigan, carried on as co-chair and conservator of the Forest for many years. Her mother, Kathy Carrigan, also served on the Board and as treasurer. Cindy is a school administrator in Louisburg, KS where she lives with her husband, Nathan, and children: Nate, Erin, and Caroline.

Cindy Copeland-DeVan is a Ninety-Nine who lives in nearby Leavenworth, Kansas. She is new to the board and having fun learning more about the Forest of Friendship. She is looking forward to all the developments.

Katherine Sharp Landdeck, Ph.D., is a Ninety-Nine, a professor of history, an aviation historian and author of the book, *The Women With Silver Wings: The Inspiring True Story of the Women Airforce Service Pilots of World War II*. She is thrilled to help carry on the legacy of those who began the IFOF.

Diane Liebsch, Atchison, Kansas, is a retired educator who has served the Forest as a volunteer and now a Board member for over 30 years. Her favorite contribution to the Forest is providing STEM activities for children who visit.

Susan Myers, PhD., is a retired school administrator from Atchison. As a new board member, Susan is thrilled to be learning about the forest's exciting past, present and future.

Janet Patton is a resident of Denton, TX, a Ninety-Nines International Director and a member since 1988. Having met the co-founder Fay at a young age, Janet is happy to help carry on the legacy of the Forest as a board member.

Karen Seaberg is Chairman of the Board of MGP Ingredients Inc., a publicly traded company on NASDAQ. She is president and founder of the Atchison Amelia Earhart Foundation and Chair of the Amelia Earhart Festival. Karen lives in Atchison, Kansas and enjoys working on everything related to Amelia Earhart.

Linda Wells married Lin Wells in 1976 and so has been part of the Forest from the very start. Fay Gillis Wells got a daughter and the Forest the same year! She is looking forward to the 50th anniversary in 2026 and to introducing her grandchildren to the Forest!



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Spirit of Christmas Event & Parade  
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Go to [visitatchison.com](http://visitatchison.com) for a full list of events.

  
**AMELIA EARHART**  
= HANGAR MUSEUM =

**Congratulations to all the Honorees!**  
**Enjoy your visit to Atchison!**

[www.AmeliaEarhartHangarMuseum.org](http://www.AmeliaEarhartHangarMuseum.org)



Benedictine College is proud to be a part of the Atchison community and the Forest of Friendship Family.

Congratulations honorees!

**Benedictine.edu**



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*Congratulations to all the honorees!*



Amelia Earhart Birthplace Museum  
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(913) 367-4217 | [www.ameliaearhartmuseum.org](http://www.ameliaearhartmuseum.org)



**"It's a great day in  
our hometown!  
Congratulations,  
Honorees!"**



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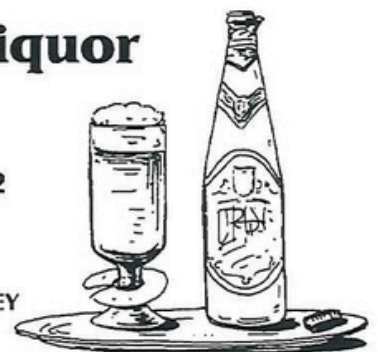
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**Welcome to Atchison, 99s!**  
**Congratulations to all the Honorees!**

Welcome, Honorees and 99's!

We join Smokey the Bear and YOU in celebrating  
World Friendship Through Flying!

Carrigan Lumber Company  
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Thanks to our many Forest friends, and volunteers  
who make the forest welcoming.



## Easy Straw Rockets

1. Choose two straws. One must fit inside the other.
2. On the larger straw, cover one end with tape.
3. On cardstock, draw a rocket about 4 ½ inches tall and cut it out. Decorate your rocket as you wish.
4. Attach the rocket to the larger straw.
5. LAUNCH! Put the smaller straw into the larger straw. Blow hard into the smaller straw. Did your rocket launch?

Now think like an engineer!

- What happens if you move your rocket further up the straw?
- What happens if you add some two or three fins to the rocket to give it lift?



*Welcome International 99s!*  
*Celebrate at the*  
*International Forest of Friendship!*

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Hope to see you at our future events.

2025-Flying and Forest

2026 - 50th Anniversary

World Friendship Through Flying



Notes



*Come Back Soon!*

