

VOLUNTEERS

The Fuel for ALPA's Engines

By Susan Burke, Publications Specialist

*"I'll do it."
"I don't think so, can't you get
anyone else?"
"I'll do it, but just this once."
"But I don't know anything about
[writing a newsletter, safety issues,
representing a local council, talk-
ing to the press, mediating a con-
flict, grievance procedures, contract
compliance, accident investigation,
pension issues, choosing hotels . . .]."
"I'll do it."*

Words like these, willing or reluctant, have been the stepping-off point for an enormous cadre of men and women who have kept the Air Line Pilots Association running strong for 75 years. Pilot volunteers doing ALPA work on every level are not just the union's backbone but also its blood supply. In fact, ALPA work can be a matter of blood, plus sweat, plus tears, which means it is also often heroic, gratifying, and even fun.

Robert Savelson, who has worked with ALPA for 42 years as an attorney with the union's outside general counsel, Cohen, Weiss, and Simon, says ALPA's greatest asset is that it "has continually been member-driven—its member pilots are really in charge of the organization. They control and run it from top to bottom. The staff and professionals work at the direction of the members, not the other way around.

"When important decisions are being made, the pilots, their elected representatives, are making those decisions. That's what gives the organization its vitality," Savelson says. "This doctrine does not exist across the board in the labor movement, so ensuring that it continues is especially important.

"ALPA has succeeded in many ways over the years," he observes. "It has persevered—not just survived, but persevered—despite some very hard times. The new ideas and strength to implement them, which underlie this history, can fairly be said to be the result of the basic credo that the Association be pilot-driven. The Major Contingency Fund, which didn't exist before 1985 and is accepted as the norm today, is a great example."

The nature of the airline piloting profession demands that its union do more than simply try to lift the wage scale every few years. ALPA was founded first and foremost to increase the safety of the profession, its crowning achievement. And its members, by their nature, want quality of life, both negotiated and staff-supported, to cover a wide range of areas, from scheduling to layover hotels, from airport security to conduct in the cockpit, from ethical behavior to the outcome of congressional legislation.

Which means a volunteer opportunity probably exists for almost everyone. Pilot volunteers have all sorts of motives for being part of the ALPA structure beyond paying dues, voting in union elections, and reading union communications. Some are naturally helpful, others are looking for a way to fill out layover hours, still others have a passion that fits like a glove with an ALPA committee or elected position. For all of them, ALPA's professional staff offers training and support.

MEC polls show that, on average, about 20 percent of ALPA pilots volunteer in some capacity. These are the people who essentially take on a second, unpaid, job so that their first job, and that of their coworkers, is the best it can be. Volunteers often don't know what they're getting into. The work is sometimes intense, time-consuming, even thankless. Burnout is a risk. On the other hand, ALPA work can be like playing in a fervent competition, surprisingly invigorating, and rewarding beyond expectation.

Here's a sample of those 20 percent—why, how, and what they contribute:

Capt. Michael Hynes 49, Continental Council 171, Houston



Capt. Hynes, according to Don Skiados, director of ALPA's Communications Department, "is the utility infielder for the Continental MEC. When you need a proxy for the Executive Council, he's the guy. When you need someone to make a presentation, he's the guy. When you need something written in pilot talk so pilots can understand it, he's the guy. When you need some-

body to man the phone and make people feel better by listening to their complaints, he's the guy. And he does his volunteer work on his own time; he never takes flight pay loss."

There are a few exceptions to that, Capt. Hynes said in an

Capt. Madeline "Mimi" Tompkins



As the first female captain of Aloha Airlines (and first female pilot of the airline), Capt. Mimi Tompkins is something more than a pioneer for women in the airline industry. She's a household name to those who remember Aloha Airlines Flight 243. But, beyond her then-celebrity status of first officer during a disastrous

flight in which a Boeing 737 lost an 18-foot section of its fuselage at 24,000 feet, Capt. Tompkins has more than done her share of giving back to the airline industry. Camera-shy, humble, and well spoken, she shows by doing her devotion to an industry she loves.

She is the perfect example of a pilot who—despite living through a tragedy—stepped up and did something to help her fellow pilots. She spearheaded the formation of ALPA's Critical Incident Response Program, which is an indispensable tool for pilots. She is the chair of her MEC's Human Performance Committee, which includes Aeromedical, CIRP, Pilot Assistance, and Professional Standards, just to name a few committees she is involved with. Capt. Tompkins is indeed invaluable not only to ALPA but also to the airline industry as a whole.

- *My fascination with flight began* "when I was a very young child. My earliest memory of Dad is going to the airport and looking through the chain link fence at the airplanes in Beaumont/Port Arthur, Tex."

- *The biggest change I've seen in my job since I first began flying for the airlines* "is the treatment of women. My first and only airline job has been at Aloha Airlines. In the late 1970s—1978/1979—affirmative action forced the airlines to begin hiring women. I was hired in 1979 as the first woman pilot at Aloha Airlines into the right seat as a first officer of a B-737/200. Those first few years were tough, but the effort was worth the wonderful career I have had so far. Without the support and expertise of ALPA, I would not be flying today."

For more on Capt. Tompkins, please visit www.alpa.org/mimitompkins.

interview, but generally, "I don't take flight pay loss because I really enjoy flying.

"Let's face it," he said, "we pilots get 15 to 16 days off a month; I live 20 minutes up the street from the MEC office; by 8 in the morning, the rest of the family is gone, and I'm left with the dogs. What am I going to do with my time? I want to do something that's airline-connected."

But for Capt. Hynes, it has never really been a matter of filling in time. He joined ALPA in 1979, when he started with Braniff, and eventually came to Continental by way of People Express. He worked to get ALPA on the Continental property in the 1993 election, but it lost to an independent union. "My

"There's a whole list of things an ALPA member can do; everyone can seek out his or her own specialty. I've done work in safety, negotiating, grievances, and now the Preferential Bidding System. I've sat on arbitration boards. I even served all of three hours as temporary MEC chairman while we elected new MEC officers."

—Capt. Michael Hynes (Continental)

ALPA friends told me at the time, 'You don't want inexperienced people to decide your future for you; you have to get involved.' So I did, and when we merged with ALPA in 2001, I didn't miss a beat."

But he had been active even before ALPA. "Volunteering is based on a willingness to help out and having an interest in your profession," he said. "I've always been interested in things—What are the mechanics? How does this business work? What are the dynamics? You can learn only so much from a book; you have to get involved to really understand something."

Capt. Hynes has little fear of the unknown. "I volunteer for things I don't know anything about because I figure I can learn on the job. And because I don't know anything, I don't mind asking seemingly basic questions, because I'm able to bring a new perspective that maybe people who are more familiar with the project don't have.

"There's a whole list of things an ALPA member can do; everyone can seek out his or her own specialty. I've done work in safety, negotiating, grievances, and now the Preferential Bidding System. I've sat on arbitration boards. I even served all of three hours as temporary MEC chairman while we elected new MEC officers."

And he's also not afraid to set some boundaries, so he can maintain both the variety and his flying. "I don't want to get involved in something that requires regular hours or full-time work," he said. "I tell people I'm just the worker bee—somebody tell me what you want me to do. Right now, we're working on the PBS scheduling system, so I helped on a draft of a manual telling how it works, then let somebody else handle it from there."

Finally, he believes it is important work. "It surprises me when I talk with fellow pilots who are not very aware of what's going on in their profession. If you become more

Capt. Herb Hunter



"I deal with the stress of being an airline pilot the way we all do—by being professional," says Capt. Herb Hunter (United). "The job can really wear you down. Doing the job right—being professional and taking care of my passengers and crew—keeps my mind on the right track. Being an airline pilot carries with it a great deal of responsibility and pressure. But there is only one way to do this job—the best you can, every time."

"The biggest change I've seen in my job since I first began flying for the airlines is the loss of work rules. ALPA fought long and hard for those rules and regulations. That so many of those rules have been lost in the name of protecting 'the bottom line' and 'keeping us in business' is tragic beyond words."

Capt. Hunter began his career as an airline pilot with United Airlines in 1978. In 1981, he began a furlough that lasted nearly 4 years. During his furlough, he became involved with the Chicago Lakefront Air and Water Show. He has served as the air show's announcer for the past 19 years. Today, he is captain on the B-747-400. Capt. Hunter has served as spokesman for the United Airlines pilot group since the summer of 1994 (except for a break in 2003), and currently serves as vice-chairman of his MEC's Communications Committee and chairman of the MEC's International Code-Share Committee.

For more on Capt. Hunter, visit www.alpa.org/herbhunter.

involved, then you can communicate what you know to others, to effect change."

So next time, just call Mike, he'll think of something. Ask Mike, he'll do it.

Capt. Annmarie Savitski 36, Mesaba Council 106, Detroit



Back in 2003, when Mesaba was in contract negotiations and was getting ready for the possibility of a strike, First Officer Chris Collins, another Mesaba pilot and volunteer, asked Capt. Savitski if she would give a hand in the Detroit strike center. Being, as she describes herself, "a typical volunteer, somebody who likes to help," she agreed. And then, "The guys who were running the

strike center quickly said, 'Here're your keys, do whatever you want.' Next thing I know, we're staying long nights, and we're getting our work done, and things are going really well. I thought, 'The time we're investing here is paying off, we're ready for a strike, and I'm enjoying this.'"

About 9 months later, Capt. Tom Wychor, Mesaba's MEC chairman, called Capt. Savitski and asked if she would consider the captain rep position in Detroit. "At first, I said no, then eventually, I said, 'OK, I'll try it out,'" she said in a telephone interview. She was named interim captain rep in Sep-

F/O Richard Obermeyer



First Officer Richard Obermeyer (US Airways) could certainly be called well-rounded. Not physically, of course, as the man is not only devoted to his profession and his family, but also to his health. And because despite flying a full schedule every month, he still finds time to be an ALPA volunteer—for the past 13 years—to spend time with his sons, to umpire college baseball, and to

serve as the editor of *US Airways*. F/O Obermeyer has held a variety of union positions, including Negotiating Committee note taker during the 1997 US Airways negotiations, Communications Committee vice-chairman, media spokesman, and member of a Strike Oversight Board—a recent appointment.

- *My fascination with flight began with* "lying in my back yard when I was about 12 years old, watching large formations of Air Force transports flying over on their way to Lockbourne Air Force base near Columbus, Ohio."
- *The thing I remember most about my first solo flight is* "the feeling of freedom and being in charge of my own life. I was 17 years old."
- *On my very first line flight, I remember thinking* "if all of the captains were as bad as this guy, I would never make it off of probation. He even spent time screaming at the check engineer who was giving me my IOE."
- *I deal with the stress of being an airline pilot by* "staying in close contact with my boys when I am on the road and making sure that we share a laugh every day. I also work pretty hard at staying in shape."
- *To me, being an ALPA member means* "service to my fellow pilots. We all owe a debt to those who came before us, and we need to give something back not just sit around asking, 'What has ALPA done for me?' Being an ALPA member should mean putting the group ahead of the individual."

For more on F/O Obermeyer, visit www.alpa.org/richardobermeyer.

tember 2004 and elected permanent rep two months later.

"Not expecting to be in the position we're in now, I thought I'd be on easy street," she said. "Having just finished the contract, everything would be nice and quiet, I'd be representing a couple of pilots—and now, a year later, we're in bankruptcy."

"But being Detroit captain rep, I get to support the Mesaba pilots. Regardless of whether you always agree with what they've done, your main goal is to support them, to make sure their needs are fulfilled and their contract is upheld. The amount of time we've had to volunteer has been a lot more than expected, but it's been a very good experience."

The cache of ALPA work had still more in store for Capt. Savitski, this time on the MEC level. When an MEC Communi-

Capt. Don McClure



"My very first line flight was a three-day trip with a crusty old captain who decided to find out just what kind of pilot I was," says Capt. Don McClure (Eastern, Ret.). "After the captain flew the first leg VFR from Washington, D.C., to Huntington, W.Va., we taxied out again for departure to Lexington, Ky. As we taxied, the captain turned off both VORs and ADFs.

"Okay, she's all yours," said the captain. "Do you think you can find Lexington?" "Yes, sir," I responded, perhaps a bit too confidently. What the captain didn't know was that I was already very familiar with the route. I'd flown it many times before in light airplanes. "What heading are you going to fly?" asked the captain. "I'll probably try 255 degrees and see how it works out," I said offhand. Off we blast, and enroute the captain quizzes me relentlessly about reference points along the way. As I responded correctly each time, the captain would look at me with disdain. But I guess I impressed him sufficiently. I still had a job when we got back. Those were the little nonrequired tests you would get to make sure you knew what you were doing."

Capt. McClure began his airline career with Eastern Airlines in 1964 at the age of 23. He retired from Eastern in 1990 as captain on the B-727. From 1968 until 1990, he held various ALPA safety volunteer positions, including Local Air Safety Chairman, Central Air Safety Chairman (Eastern), Chief Accident Investigator (Eastern), and chairman of ALPA's Accident Investigation Board. During his career he has participated in 21 NTSB airline accident investigations. Since 1992, he has been an air safety coordinator with ALPA's Engineering and Air Safety Department.

For more on Capt. McClure, visit www.alpa.org/donmcclure.

cations Committee chairman was needed, she somehow became the natural prospect. "I said, 'I don't know how well I can write, and I don't know if I can do it, but I'll try.' It's been working well, with the help I'm getting from Anya [Piazza, ALPA communications specialist]; Jane Schraft, our contract administrator; and the rest of the MEC."

Speaking by phone during a break in bankruptcy hearings at the end of June, Capt. Savitski seemed unfazed by the long, busy days that she had taken on.

"I'm the type of person who's always got to have three things going at one time. I've always got my hands in something. I recently got married, and thankfully, my husband has been extremely supportive of this whole thing. For a couple of months, while we were in the first hearings, I was rarely home. Without his support, I know I couldn't have done it.

"It's very hard for me to say no," she admitted, "but I'm

F/O Mark Abbott



"My fascination with flight began when I spent my first \$10 on a glider ride at Brown Field near San Ysidro, Calif.," says First Officer Mark Abbott (FedEx). "My father, who had been an air traffic controller in the U.S. Navy, used to take me there to watch aircraft take off and land.

"The hardest flying job I ever had was flying food into the famine areas of New Guinea in a DHC-6 for Air Serv International in 1999. We flew into 1,000-foot-long, one-way airstrips at 10,000 feet elevation with a 30 percent slope.

"To me, being an ALPA member means being unified to maintain safety and the standard of living within our profession. ALPA has been the biggest contributor in the world to aviation safety policies. I am very proud of that fact. I also feel that being an ALPA member requires commitment. Two of my ALPA heroes are Capt. John Gustafson of the FedEx Negotiating Committee and First Officer Ken Rogers, a member of the Delta Air Lines Board of Directors and chairman of ALPA's National R&I Committee. To me, they epitomize what commitment beyond self means as ALPA members."

F/O Abbott began his airline career with FedEx in 1995. Initially, he served as a second officer on the DC-10, and later became a first officer on the Airbus A310. Today, he flies the MD-11 and is based out of Los Angeles. He has served as an ALPA volunteer in a number of capacities, including as a Pilot-to-Pilot representative, as coordinator for the Family Awareness Committee, and on the Hotel Committee for the LAX domicile. He has also been a volunteer humanitarian relief pilot with Air Serv International since 1998 and has served as chairman of the organization's Board of Directors.

For more on F/O Abbott, visit www.alpa.org/markabbott.

getting better at it, let me tell you. It's very important to have a balance."

Capt. Jack Stockton

58, Alaska Council 67, Seattle

Capt. Stockton "has done just about everything under the sun here at ALPA," says Alaska MEC chairman, Capt. Tom Crank.

"He certainly poured his heart and soul into this Association."

"I got involved because I thought everybody should volunteer sometime," Capt. Stockton said in a telephone interview. "And I always thought you should volunteer in an area in which you had an interest. Whenever I talk to a fellow pilot about volunteering, I always say you need to do something you're interested in. Is it safety or scheduling or hotels or contract compliance or training—whatever, if you don't do something you're interested in, it won't be any fun. ALPA's pretty varied on all the possible volunteer jobs. If you find something you like, you'll do a good job.

"For me, it ended up being negotiating."

Capt. Stockton evolved into his taste for negotiating. In 1986, when the first officer representative resigned in mid-

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—Capt. Jack Stockton (Alaska)

term, then-F/O Stockton volunteered to replace him, was elected, and went on to become captain rep and eventually MEC chairman. Between 1985 and 1997, Capt. Stockton was involved on four negotiating committees, and even coordinated the organizing campaign at Continental for a while.

“I’ve always thought it was a challenge to compete with management across the table,” he said. “That’s their job, while our job is to be pilots, and I enjoyed that challenge.”

“What’s the hardest thing in negotiations, saying yes or saying no?” he asked rhetorically. “Saying yes is the hardest thing.”

“We tried our best every time, and I thought we negotiated good contracts.”

A low-key, hard-working man, Capt. Stockton is not particularly fond of the politics that sometimes go along with being in, and working for, a union of strong-minded pilots. But that didn’t keep him from being effective.

“The highest praise anyone can give a volunteer is to say that he always kept the pilots’ best interests in mind, and I can say that about Jack,” says Capt. Crank, who served as MEC secretary-treasurer from 1991 to 1993, when Capt. Stockton was MEC chairman. “No matter what, Jack always tried to do what was best for the pilots.”

These days, Capt. Stockton tries to be quiet publicly, though not always privately. But he still has the will to help out in some way if the call comes. Because in the end, he said, “I was proud of everything we did.”

First Officer Cameron Cloar

26, Mesa Air Group Council 84, Phoenix

F/O Cloar’s plunge into ALPA work began on the day he “got mad.” Then his involvement grew because he has the energy of a rocket ship.

He started with Mesa in 2001 as a flight instructor for the company’s pilot development program at Arizona State and got on Mesa’s seniority list in 2003. “I called in sick,” he said in a recent interview, “and even though I had been with them

Capt. Nick Di Cintio



Capt. Nick Di Cintio (Air Canada Jazz) didn’t take long to realize the importance of being involved in union work. Six months after getting a job with Air Canada’s Regional Carrier Air Alliance, he became immersed in volunteer work and has continued that passion for the past 16 years. From council chairman to negotiator for Air Alliance, through two strikes and the breakup of CALPA, to the formation of Air Canada Regional/Jazz Air, Capt. Di Cintio can be described as one who stands alone in his leadership.

- *My fascination with flight began with “July 21, 1969, when man set foot on the moon.”*
- *During my initial flight training, I remember “a five-hour round trip bus ride for one hour of training, and thinking, this will all be worth it one day!”*
- *On my very first line flight, I remember thinking, “Thank you, Lord, for making this possible!”*
- *The biggest change I’ve seen in my job since I first began flying for the airlines is “the loss of many carriers and jobs. Pilots are realizing once again that speaking with one voice will allow us to move through turbulent times.”*
- *To me, being an ALPA member “has helped me realize that we are still fragile; however, working together will make us stronger than ever.”*
- *The next generation of airline pilots will “have to work together and speak with one voice to survive. Every pilot should do at least six months of ALPA work.”*

For more on Capt. Di Cintio, visit www.alpa.org/nickdicintio.



almost a year, they accused me of lying because they were short-staffed. So I got mad, and I was single, and when you’re done flying ... I guess I got bored. I wanted to do something.”

F/O Cloar originally thought he wanted to do grievance work, but the volunteer trail led elsewhere. “I kept pestering a couple of the guys in the [MEC] office until they finally said, ‘O.K., come in,’ and the first thing they had

me do was ... scan photos. They had me scan four photos, which were never used. It’s funny now because the guy who finally called me was Capt. James Ackerman, who is now our MEC chairman. He says I’m the reason he’s MEC chairman, because I said he had to do it, and now I’m a rep too [F/O rep and chairman for Council 84]. We joke that he had me come in to do this BS job, and it turned into something great!”

Try to follow this trail: After F/O Cloar scanned his four photos, he asked for more work, and Capt. Ackerman, who was Communications Committee vice-chair at the time, suggested

F/O Mark Ingram



"On my very first line flight," says First Officer Mark Ingram (Continental), "I remember thinking, 'I can't believe I'm really flying a jet!' Immediately thereafter I remember repeating the old pilot's mantra, as Tom Wolfe recounted in his aviation classic *The Right Stuff*, 'Don't

**** up, don't **** up, don't **** up!'

"The biggest change I've seen in my job since I first began flying for the airlines is the deregulation of the U.S. airline industry and the sad demise of the flagship airlines like Eastern, Braniff, TWA, Pan Am, and the rest. The job of airline pilot has become commoditized, with the mom-and-pop FBOs and flight schools having largely been replaced by the big university and commercial pilot factories."

Since F/O Ingram began his career as an airline pilot, he has flown for various airlines, including Frontier and Braniff. Today, he flies the Boeing 777. He has served on the ALPA Charting and Instrument Procedures Committee and his MEC's Security Committee, and he recently participated in a series of focus and working group meetings with the Federal Air Marshal Service. A past president of the Ozark Festival Orchestra, he has served as a regional resource person for the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum and is a current local volunteer for the National Weather Service's Community Weather Involvement Program.

For more on F/O Ingram, visit www.alpa.org/mark Ingram.

he manage the ALPA web board for Mesa. "So I did; and then I said, 'Well, this is nothing, I could do much more.' So Capt. Ackerman said, 'You could be communications specialist for your Council,' and I did, but there wasn't much to that. So he said, 'We want to revamp our Pilot-to-Pilot,' so they made me vice-chair, but the chair was busy upgrading, so I became Pilot-to-Pilot chairman. Then the MEC Communications Committee chair [Capt. Aaron Konen] was leaving to go to another airline, so Capt. Ackerman became the chairman and made me vice-chairman. Then he started upgrading to another airplane and was out of the picture, so I had the whole Committee on me for a while. Then in the past six months, he became MEC chairman, and I became the Communications chairman."

Did he have any background in communications work?

"Well, James and Aaron were really welcoming, and pretty much gave me free rein, and it turned out I really enjoy communications," he said. "Now I'm *too* busy, though we have more volunteers, and that helps. We had stopped producing the *Coast to Coast* newsletter, so I said, 'I'll do it,' and it went

"I was a journalism major in college, and it all started with Cameron [Cload] asking me to proof an article. That was the most I thought I would do. And he'd say, 'When you're Communications chair . . .,' and I'd say, 'Yeah, I'm not that stupid.' But now I'm pretty excited, I have help, and I'm getting to know the job."

—F/O Samantha Negley (Mesa Air Group)

from a 2-page newsletter to 30, 35 pages. Plus we have *The Enforcer*, basically grievance and arbitration updates, and Pilot Light conference calls, a weekly hotline . . .

"*Coast to Coast* turned out to be me writing everyone's articles for them because they didn't have time. I said just give me some bullet points, and I'll write it. That's a full-time job in itself. I'll learn more about writing in law school—that's all I'll do."

Law school? Yes, F/O Cload is giving up his flying job to begin law school at the University of San Francisco this month.

"All I wanted to do since I was five years old was be an airline pilot," he said, "and now that I've done it, I don't get the same thrill. But I've sat in on arbitrations with our contract administrator, John Dean, and helped the Grievance Committee a lot, and being an attorney will feel like I'm right in there when management wrongs people. It's awesome to be part of that. I like the negotiations."

"Some people out there on the MEC hate the politics, but I live for the politics. If you're in negotiations, if you're an officer, a status rep, as disappointing as it may be, politics is how things get done. Also, Mesa has a reputation as not having the most friendly management, and I feel I've gotten a lot of experience that I can use."

Who knows, one day he might even wind up back at ALPA as a staff attorney. Meanwhile, he's not quite ready to release the reins he's holding now.

"I'll be insanely busy, but I told the MEC if there's a way I could still help, I want to," he said. "I've been spooling up my replacement for Communications chair, and she's going to be really good, but I'm going to miss the union stuff."

And that replacement is . . .

First Officer Samantha Negley

29, Mesa Air Group Council 84, Phoenix

In late June, F/O Negley was at ALPA's Herndon office for media training to prepare for taking over as Mesa's MEC Communications chair.

"I was adamant before I took the position that I still want to fly," she said in an interview. "Cameron Cload and James Ackerman were trying to rope me in, telling me I'd be really good at it, and I told them they didn't have to butter me up, but I definitely would need help. I talked to three friends and

Capt. Paul McCarthy



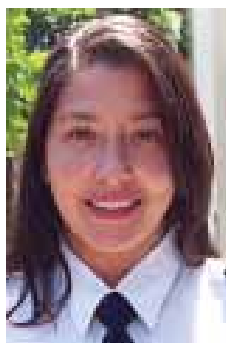
After serving 31 years in the airline industry, Capt. Paul McCarthy (Delta) retired—but not before subtly leaving his mark through his volunteerism at ALPA. Beginning with Council 6 Retirement and Insurance,

Capt. McCarthy was instrumental in ALPA's efforts on—just to name a few—accident investigation, noise abatement, and LAHSO and as EASC and IFALPA principal vice-president—technical, from which he has just now retired.

He recently described to *ALP* his life as an airline pilot as a "fairly busy career," but we know he was just being modest. Capt. McCarthy embodies the passion, willingness, and balance that make being a pilot an honorable profession.

- *My fascination with flight began with "my first memories. My Dad was a pilot in World War II and died when I was 3. I suppose my fascination was at least in part a reaction to that."*
- *I decided to become an airline pilot because "it was a way to earn a living doing something I loved."*
- *The biggest sacrifice I had to make to become an airline pilot was "having been a Navy pilot, the sacrifice was my family's, not mine."*
- *The biggest change I've seen in my job since I first began flying for the airlines is "loss of pride in the profession."*
- *With regard to the airline industry, I think the federal government "has no coherent policy for preservation of a national asset or the people who make it work."*

For more on Capt. McCarthy, visit www.alpa.org/paulmccarthy.



got them on board: First Officers Nick Lyman as the vice-chair, Jason Rice as the *Coast to Coast* editor, and Matt Hawk as the web page coordinator.

"I was a journalism major in college, and it all started with Cameron asking me to proof an article. That was the most I thought I would do. And he'd say, 'When you're Communications chair . . .,' and I'd say, 'Yeah, I'm not that stupid.' But now I'm pretty excited, I have help, and

I'm getting to know the job."

A principle also lies behind her agreeing to take the position. "It's good to be in union work," F/O Negley said. "We do have complaints, but doing something about them is important, and now I'm actually doing something rather than just complaining."

Capt. John Lux

59, FedEx Council 26, Memphis



Capt. Lux joined ALPA in 1978, when he went to work for Continental, then soon found himself spinning through the furlough/People Express/Continental revolving doors. He did some volunteer work on the Continental ESOP project, but not until he joined FedEx in 1988 did he begin moving toward the ALPA work that would engage him for years to come: Human Performance areas, especially Professional Standards.

In about 1990, he said in a telephone interview, "I got involved in the HIMS [Human Intervention and Motivation Study] program because a friend of mine had come to a tragic end, and alcoholism was the root cause." Capt. Lux was trained in the HIMS program, which helps pilots with substance abuse problems, but was mainly a name on the list, "just trying to be an active ALPA member." Then, around 2000, a friend of his was creating a Professional Standards Committee at FedEx, and Capt. Lux offered, "If you'd be interested in my help . . ."

At the time, FedEx pilots had an independent union, but the petition was circulating to merge with ALPA, and volunteers were moving into other jobs. "Before long, I was chairman of the Professional Standards Committee," Capt. Lux said. "That's the way it works a lot of times—you raise your hand for something, and you turn around, and now you're the boss of the place, running everything."

At first, Capt. Lux had an issue with the name of his Committee. "I thought the Pro Stans moniker was a little bit haughty," he said. "Who were these Pro Stans guys and how come they were more professional or more standard than anyone else? But it wasn't that at all, it was people stepping up to do conflict resolution, to provide another level of security for the pilot force."

"I didn't see myself as a committee-chair type of person, but I had been around for a while and was a fairly senior guy, and it was pretty much of a commonsense kind of job. And if not me, who? And if not now, when? We're just trying to put the rational-man theory out there for people who are having problems. And I think we had some success."

"I stayed with it for about four years, and then thought it was time to let somebody else move up. My program was to help my vice-chairman in the transition and then disappear into the woodwork."

Capt. Jeff Kilmer, who was National Aeromedical chair at the time, had a different idea. He wanted the FedEx program to mirror the ALPA model of a Human Performance Committee, working with several related committees, "a wing-and-

Capt. Ed Miller



As with all things, Capt. Ed Miller (United, Ret.) wanted to be thorough. When he received ALPA's questions regarding outstanding volunteers, the soft-spoken, humble, and vastly experienced retired pilot and now ALPA project manager for volcanic ash and aviation safety looked at the project as he would a college term paper. His responses were well-written, heartfelt, and most of all, God's honest truth.

Capt. Miller became a member of ALPA in October 1957. His ALPA volunteer safety work includes serving on a number of committees, speaking at international conferences, and receiving a handful of awards, including the 1990 ALPA President's Award.

- *My fascination with flight began with "World War II. I lived in Bayside, Queens, N.Y., during WWII, and there was a lot of aviation activity in the area. One of my father's friends and my cousin were pilots in the Air Force. We often passed La Guardia Airport and Flushing Meadows Airport to visit family. A P-47 fighter didn't pull out of a power dive and bored a large hole in the ramp at La Guardia Airport, and a B-25 hit the Empire State Building with the same results as the P-47. I learned early on that aircraft do not fare well with immovable objects."*
- *To me, being an ALPA member means "you are a member of a unique group of pilots—individualists all, but joined together by the love of flying. The group's members realize they must do more than create a flight plan from A to B. They have fought for better conditions at points A and B, including improving approach procedures, runway lighting, proper spacing of aircraft on the same approach, just to name a few items of concern. As a member of ALPA, I have had to call on all of the resources ALPA had to offer. My years as a volunteer have been a form of payback to ALPA for its many years of support."*

For more on Capt. Miller, visit www.alpa.org/edmiller.

squadron type of deal," Capt. Lux said. Capt. Kilmer had the idea of Capt. Lux as chairman and talked him into it. "We joke about it, and I'm sure they do at other properties," Capt. Lux said, "that it's like being in the IRA: once you get in, you can't get out."

Human Performance incorporates Aeromedical, Bereavement—"when a crewmember or close family member dies, this group makes sure benefits are taken care of and lines up counseling"—Critical Incident Response, the HIMS program, and Pro Stans.

"How does it work? ALPA provides me with a computer and a phone and, with the exception of the training seminar, I can do a lot of it on the road," Capt. Lux said. "I live in Virginia Beach and have a crash pad in Memphis, not far from the union office.

We often fly at night and are off during the day, and you can do only so much exercise and TV watching. Volunteering gives you a chance to feel productive in your down time."

Capt. Lux said he'll probably continue with the work until he retires, a year from now. "It's been a good ride, and I've worked with some good people. Nobody is getting paid for this work, and that makes it a lot easier to do it, to say, I'm just a line guy like you, and here are a couple of things we have to think about."

The rewards lie in the work itself. When Second Officer John Bewley was stricken with cancer, fellow crewmembers came forward to contribute to him and his family. "Guys were donating right and left," Capt. Lux said, "mostly a day's pay, but one guy gave a couple of thousand bucks, with one requirement: that it be used for fun. That's the kind of thing I'll miss."

"Now we need to find the younger pilots who will follow in our footsteps," he said. "We need that fresh blood in there to keep going down the road. One thing is that people hold you to a pretty high standard. You've got to be above reproach, all the volunteers do. It's like having a trust to keep because you're representing the union."

"It's not just being a union guy or a squadron guy, it's being part of a group, something bigger than yourself. My son just turned 25 and started at Pinnacle, flying an RJ. The other day, two ALPA publications came to the house, one for me and one for him. I said to him, 'You're in the industry now. I hope you don't hold it against me.'

"He had a good job before this, a job in a cubicle, but this is what he wanted to do, and his boss told him, 'Don't ever walk away from a dream, son.'

"When we both got that *Air Line Pilot*," Capt. Lux said, "it made me feel good."

First Officer Hal Myers

48, Northwest Council 20, Detroit



"The way I got involved in doing ALPA work," F/O Myers said in a telephone interview, "is that, like many pilots do, I was complaining that I didn't think the union was doing something well enough."

The year was 1989, and F/O Myers had started flying with Pennsylvania Airlines the year before. He was telling the MEC chairman, Capt. Bob Travitz, that the union wasn't giving the pilots

enough information. Capt. Travitz replied that the MEC had been looking for someone to serve as Communications Committee chairman.

"And," says F/O Myers, "it was either put up or shut up. I felt

F/O John Keller



"My fascination with flight began while watching my Dad take off in a DC-7 out of LGA," says First Officer John Keller (Kitty Hawk). "I remember riding in the cockpit as a child. I still have Dad's old ALPA pin and ring. They have been my inspiration throughout my quest to become an ALPA member."

"The hardest flying job I ever had," he says, "was with a small airline that flew automotive parts and UPS and FedEx packages. We had to live within 15 minutes of the airport and report within 20 minutes. 'Wheels up' time was expected to be within 30 minutes of getting called. You had to keep your bag packed for two weeks and with you at all times. You didn't know where you were going until you got to the airport. It was tolerable for a single man, but no job for anyone with a family."

"I thought I was sacrificing my standard of living by staying in aviation when I could make more money doing other things. I drove the same car for 17 years (11 of them without air conditioning, and the final 4 without heat). Now I realize that there is no greater sacrifice than being away from my wife and children."

F/O John Keller is the son of a captain and a flight attendant for American Airlines. His parents met on a flight during a bomb threat. His father was the captain and his mother was the senior flight attendant.

While pursuing a career in aviation, F/O Keller became a labor activist, and has been involved with organizing at several carriers, including Kitty Hawk Air Cargo. He has served as an ALPA Merger Committee chairman, first officer representative, secretary/treasurer, and Jumpseat Committee chairman. Today, he flies the B-727.

To read more on F/O Keller, visit www.alpa.org/johnkeller.

that, if I was going to complain, I needed to be willing to back that up with some action. So I went on from there, wearing a number of different hats at Pennsylvania Airlines—communications, working on grievances, MEC vice-chairman."

F/O Myers found that he liked the work, though there was an awful lot of it. They were flying a full-time regional airline schedule, with little or no flight pay loss, and doing ALPA work on the side. "So it took a tremendous amount of time and energy," he said. "But if someone doesn't do it, the job doesn't get done. And the thought of not having the job done is unthinkable."

His focus was on one-way communications, ALPA to pilots, acknowledging that upstream communication largely occurs through the representation structure. "We concentrated on educating our pilots on issues, making them aware of the work ALPA was doing for them," F/O Myers said. "Pilots certainly have a right to complain about their union, and they do; but that's largely because they aren't aware of what their union is doing for them."

F/O Myers has also found that when it comes to dealing with disagreements between labor and management, the devil is often in the details. "At first glance, the solution to a

problem may appear obvious and simple. But when you take into account all of the 'tentacles,' it may require lots of work and time to resolve."

After Allegheny's merger with Pennsylvania, as Strike Committee chairman for Allegheny pilots, he worked with Capt. Steve Arnold (Northwest), who helped the Allegheny pilots set up the strike organization.

"Steve and I got along great," F/O Myers said. "He was a great resource for our pilot group, and I learned a tremendous amount from him."

F/O Myers moved to Northwest in 1995, and a year and a half later, Capt. Arnold asked him to do communications for the strike organization he was putting together. "I said, 'I'm new here, and I want to bite off a little piece,'" F/O Myers recalled. "Well, the ALPA volunteer vortex sucked me in, and I ended up serving as the Strike Committee communications coordinator. I did a lot of media work, writing, coordinating picketing, got a lot of experience."

"After that, Steve Arnold's term as Communications chairman was up, and even though, frankly, I wanted to escape, I allowed myself to be appointed Communications chairman. I did that until I stepped down at the end of last year."

During those years, F/O Myers learned that volunteering for one pilot group can often benefit the wider union. "After the Northwest strike in 1998, I served as chairman of ALPA's Strike Assistance Task Force, helping other pilot groups set up their strike organizations—Midwest Express in 2000, Trans States, Comair, and Delta. The experience gained through events at one airline is shared throughout the system. During our strike, pilot volunteers from Delta and FedEx helped us in our MEC Strike Center, which let them see firsthand what worked and what didn't."

Reflecting on his tenure, F/O Myers said, "I believe Communications people have a particularly difficult job and a particularly heavy load because communications touches everything the union does."

"Communications people are always on the front lines. At MEC meetings, at the end of each day's meeting, the gavel would sound, everyone else would get up to go have dinner, and we were there for another hour and a half crafting the hotline message that had to go out that night."

But the payoff is real, no less so for being intangible.

"You learn about issues that you have to communicate about," F/O Myers said. "You're involved in every little piece of the airline or union activity, and so you learn a huge amount about a wide range of subjects, sometimes in great depth."

"Volunteering for ALPA can involve a lot of personal sacrifice," he concluded, "but it is a tremendously broadening experience. You learn things; you experience growth. I'm a different person than I would have been if I hadn't done ALPA work." 🗣️