

Aviation Quarterly

Issue #55

www.ndac.org

NDAC

Spring, 2002

Chairman's Corner

By Darrel Pittman

Do you ever wonder how the "North Dakota Aviation Council" (NDAC) keeps coming up with these outstanding programs each year? The answer is diligence and hard work (lots of hard work) by a group of dedicated volunteers. This year the "Upper Midwest Aviation Symposium" (UMAS) was just that: outstanding. The council led by past Chairman Kirby Hahn deserves a great deal of appreciation and thanks.

The training sessions were successful and our speakers were notable. Gary Ness gave me the extreme pleasure of introducing our FAA Great Lakes Regional Director, Cecelia Hunziker. She has a general aviation background and has done a great job defending GA since coming to her Chicago office. Thanks Cecelia for attending our symposium.

The Council elected me as your Chairman for the upcoming year. In doing so, they have entrusted me with the responsibility of keeping that outstanding tradition

Continued on page 2



The United States Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron, the "Blue Angels" will highlight the Fargo Air Show, June 8-9, 2002 at Fargo Hector International Airport.

Fixed Base Operation Changes, Consolidation Begin to Make Impact Felt Across State

Changes in Fixed Base Operator (FBO) ownership and operations, common in other parts of the United States, have begun to have their impact felt in North Dakota. At the end of the last year, Fargo Hector International Airport FBO Fargo Jet Center began a consolidation of operators with the purchase of neighbor and business competitor Valley Aviation in Fargo. Concurrent with that purchase was the acquisition of

long-time Bismarck avionics repair facility, Way Point Avionics, who had served the region as a major source of avionics work for many years. Way Point had opened a small Fargo facility in the late 1990's and had long been a major regional player in the avionics field. The same private owner had owned both Way Point and Valley Aviation for some time.

In an interview with the Quarterly, Fargo Jet's Jim

Sweeney indicated that changes in local economics drove the sale of Valley's assets and Way Point. Sweeney pointed out that the economies of scale had allowed for costly duplications of assets to be alleviated by the consolidation.

Where there had previously been 11 fuel trucks at Fargo Hector, there are now five. Fargo Jet is now offer-

Continued on page 4

From The Editor:

Andrew Niemyer, Editor-in-Chief

Goodbye, farewell and amen: It has been a real privilege to serve the last few years as the editor of the *North Dakota Aviation Quarterly*. Because of the chance afforded me by the North Dakota Aviation Council, I have had the unique opportunity to meet an amazing variety of hard working, dedicated people from all corners of the state and across the nation who have taken the time to discover the amazing diversity that is the face of aviation in North Dakota.

Few people outside our industry realize how vital aviation is to our state's economic and transportation infrastructure. It is very important that each of us, be we applicators, air taxi pilots, flight instructors, FBO owners, maintenance technicians or airport managers, get the word out about the role aviation plays in the day-to-day life of our communities and the state as a whole. What we do here is reflected across the nation and the world. North Dakota aviation and its products, be it human, mechanical and even biological, spread everywhere around our planet. We should look with pride upon what

North Dakota aviation has done, is doing and will do in the future.

After 12 years here on the high plains, my family and I have made a tough decision and will be moving east to the shores of the "big water," Lake Superior, this summer. The Minnesota and Wisconsin aviation communities, while bigger, will not be the "family" that exists here. While I will enjoy the chance to meet new people, make new friends and discover new places to get \$100 hamburgers, the close-knit aviation community of North Dakota will always have a very special place in my "personal log-book."

Dan Vigesaa will take the helm of the *Quarterly*, starting as soon as you receive this issue. I know everyone who reads this will enjoy Dan's insights and ideas. The *Quarterly* will continue to grow and thrive under his guidance. I wish him, the Council, and everyone in North Dakota aviation the very best of luck, and as anyone who has called me knows, "May all your landings equal your takeoffs." Best wishes,
Andrew S. Niemyer,
Editor-in-Chief

Chairman from page 1

going. You've heard me make this statement before.

As an air traffic controller I am honored to be a viable part of the North Dakota aviation arena. The new council and I will do our best to keep that outstanding symposium tradition alive.

That being said, the symposium for 2003 needs to be a very special event. Your

council has voted unanimously in favor of Grand Forks for 2003. To properly celebrate the 100-year anniversary of aviation we needed to have more hangar and ramp space for aircraft displays. We had a meeting at UND with Bruce Smith, Dean of the "Center For Aerospace Science" (CAS).

They are excited and planning to work with the council to make it a memorable event.

The tentative schedule is for a four-day affair, starting on Saturday the 1st of March, and running through Tuesday the 4th of March. Saturday and Sunday would be fun days, celebrating aviation and touring the facilities at UND's CAS.

We've elected Dan Kasowski as your Vice Chairman; he is in charge of the UND aircraft maintenance department. Dan will also head up our coordinating committee for GFK.

Those who were at the Symposium know we honored Andy Niemyer for his dedication as the editor of the "*Aviation Quarterly*". Well, Andy and his bride are moving away. He will be giving OJT to our new *Quarterly* editor on this issue. Our new editor's name is familiar to us all. Yes, he is none other than that famous pilot for the North Dakota Governor, Dan Vigesaa. Welcome back to the council, Dan. Does the Governor grade you better than Gary, Fred and me?

The NDAC is made up of the various aviation groups in North Dakota. It is the desire of every council member to serve your interests. Get in touch with your representative and convey your thoughts to the council.

Remember, file your flight plan for GFK in March of 2003. We are planning a great celebration for your enjoyment.

"CLEARED FOR TAKE-OFF."

Darrel

Letters to the North Dakota Aviation Council:

Thank you, NDAC, for your fantastic spouses program at the recent aviation symposium. It was interesting, educational, fun and positively uplifting.

We had the "Hat Lady," "Candle Makers," "Dr. Scott McFall, hypnotist," and a tour of the Harris House and Five Nations Art Studios.

We're looking forward to next year's program. Thank you.

Sally Pfeiffer
Spouse Program Attendee

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FROM THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

By Gary Ness, Director,
ND Aeronautical Commission

The 2002 "Gathering of Eagles" has come and gone. The aviation community has met again, taking the time to share the good and the rest with counterparts from all corners of the state. When I walked around the exhibit hall on Sunday night, I couldn't help but be amazed at the amount of material available that represented so many facets of the industry. I was impressed with the time and hard work involved assembling it all. The realm of information was staggering in its simplicity and complexity. What would the two people who lead the way to "powered flight" think of these accomplishments and our little get-together? Orville and Wilbur would be stunned at the changes and the advancements in the industry they helped to jump-start ninety-nine years ago.

This year we had the opportunity to hear from "Orville." Jim Spence presented the best imaginable first-hand look at the birth of aviation, as well as informative descriptions of events preceding and following "FIRST FLIGHT." In addition to our presentation, Jim took the time to tell the story to approximately six hundred 4th, 5th, and 6th graders from four Bismarck elementary schools on Monday morning and afternoon. Even a history buff like me found new information in his account. This was the second historical presentation on the Council's march to 2003 and the "Centennial of Flight" celebration.

The approaching year will have special significance to the aviation community as the Council has already started to plan for the culmination of the effort and com-



memoration events. If this involves a request for assistance from the aviation community, please step forward to help make 2003 "The Best."

Congratulations to all of you who received recognition and awards from your peers. That marks a special time in a person's life because the recognition comes from those who know and care.

Of the 166 aerial application operators in the State, 154 were represented, totaling 176 people in attendance at the Safety/Security briefing held on Saturday afternoon. A video of the presentation was sent to Minnesota for use at their aerial applicator meeting scheduled for the week following ours. Operators from Minnesota who also work in North Dakota had a chance to view the briefing. The State Homeland Security staff was impressed with our turnout. The aeri-als are to be complemented for their cooperation and efforts in improving and providing national, state and local awareness to security.

The North Dakota Private Airfield Owners Association (NDPAOA), an offshoot of the ND Aviation Security Plan, held an organizational meeting during the Symposium. An article related to that meeting can be found in this issue.

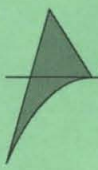
Editor Andy has informed us that he not only will be leaving the *Quarterly* he will be moving his family to Duluth, MN. Good-byes are always hard, but to say so long to a AVIATOR is the hardest. Best of luck, good buddy, keep the power up in the turns.

Have a good spring and keep the greasy side down and the nuts tight.

NDAAA News

The numbers are in — 95 aerial applicators (286 people overall) paid attendance to the 2002 Upper Midwest Aviation Symposium in Bismarck March 2-5. Although it wasn't a record-breaker, you have to go back to 1994 (there were 98) to find a higher attendance by aerial applicators. I'm sure the mandatory Security Briefing on Saturday morning helped get us there. Still, many didn't stay and register for the Symposium — which brings to mind the old adage 'You can lead a horse to water, but...' Well anyway, thanks to all of my fellow applicators who stuck around to experience and enjoy the Symposium. A great deal of time, effort, and money goes into putting one on. The NDAAA, on behalf of all aerial applicators in our great state, has decided to pursue a public relations campaign. The objective is to inform a somewhat weary public about our work and its importance to agriculture. This will be accomplished by using various media, including television and radio. The cost of making this a successful effort will be quite high. The NDAAA, in addition to using general funds, has asked members to help sponsor the

ads. Additional funding is being sought from companies involved with agricultural aviation. NDAAA President Tim McPherson, along with a committee set up for that purpose, is doing the leg-work on the project. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor; would like more information; or maybe you have some ideas — we would like to hear from you. This time of year the excitement begins to grow for 'crop dusters' as we look forward to another season. The thrill of making those first turns or flying those first fields is hard to describe to people who have never done it. It isn't until later that it becomes work and then after awhile — just another job. During the coming weeks, take time to get ready mentally and physically for another demanding season and remember to always FLY SAFE.



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Fixed Base Operation Changes Continued from page 1

ing the remaining six, and other assets no longer needed with the consolidation, for sale. He did allow that concurrent with that consolidation was a reduction in staffing, as duplicative efforts across the board were eliminated.

Sweeney told the *Quarterly* that the measure does help make Fargo itself more attractive for transient traffic that crosses the country. The avionics operation itself has already grown in number to five full-time staff, equaling the size of the Bismarck operation, and that number is expected to increase. The increase in the avionics niche will be driven in part, he feels, by the larger numbers of aircraft situated in the eastern half of the state.

Sweeney did allow that while North Dakota's many small airports and small FBO's makes it a unique market, the mergers and acquisitions of larger operations "[I]s a trend that is reflected across the nation." An experienced state FBO owner pointed out that the small market nature of the state's fixed base operations precluded massive buy-outs and more consolidations of the size of the Fargo business deal.

Much of the changes seen, as many FBO's sell out to others and leave the aviation business, seem to be a reflection of the tough time Part 135 operators and FBO's have in obtaining reasonable insurance coverage at reasonable rates. An area FBO observed that one factor driving many operators out of supporting piston powered aircraft which can fly paying passengers into smaller airports is the soaring costs of insuring piston engine planes and their pi-

lots. With insurers looking closely at aircraft size, pilots, line and ramp operations and even insurance limits on liability for parked transient aircraft, the rates have soared to the point that many operators, already pressed by stiff competition, simply sell out and leave the aviation industry all together. Coupled with recent high dollar liability awards in aviation cases and many aviation underwriting firms simply leaving the market, there has been a substantial decrease in the number of firms even willing to offer insurance to FBO's.

Sweeney added that Fargo Jet is actively looking at establishing a fractional ownership program that would allow groups of businesses or individuals to purchase ownership in a small twin turboprop or small jet aircraft much like the increasingly popular concept pioneered by Netjets of Cleveland, Ohio.

As Fargo Jet Center expanded its operations, another major FBO, Executive Air Taxi of Bismarck was also beginning to institute major changes in its Bismarck activities. In a decision that may have consequences that go far beyond the local area, Executive Air's owner, Dennis Rohlfs is in the process of retiring his entire piston engine air taxi fleet in favor of a Cessna Citation II and a turboprop aircraft. Rolf's told the *Quarterly* that Executive Air had been seeing a steady downturn in piston powered aircraft utilization and that prompted the turn to, as he put it, "the next generation of air travel." In order to enhance the utilization of his new fleet, Rolf's has been promoting the presale of flight time to Executive Air's client base. When asked about the impact on his former clients of the loss of transportation

to airfields whose length is too short to support turbine powered aircraft, Rolf's did add that Executive Air would be keeping two piston powered training aircraft, and that this might encourage some of those clients to pursue training for their own pilot licenses. Another option, one that is becoming more popular around the nation, would be for clients to group together, purchase an aircraft, and obtain a pilot to fly the aircraft as a FAR Part 91 operation. This last option has been tried in other locations as more and more Part 135 operators leave the "small aircraft-small field" business model in favor of larger, farther ranging aircraft that appeal to larger corporations and groups.

The move will also help Executive Air's extensive network of helicopter operations as well. The two aircraft have the potential to move personnel and potential clients around the country to the sites where Executive Air maintains its helicopters.

The impact of Executive Air's decision on business practices and travel in western North Dakota remains to be seen, but it will no doubt force changes in how many area businesses arrange travel to outlying business sites.

NDPA Hits the Web

The North Dakota Pilots Association has begun a new web presence. For those who have internet capability, details and information on NDPA events and happenings can now be found at <http://www.geocities.com/ndpilots/index>.

NATA News: Association Praises Administration's New Ergonomics Plan

National Air Transportation Association (NATA) president James K. Coyne today praised the Bush Administration for a new ergonomics plan recently released by the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA).

The plan, a culmination of several public forums throughout the country designed to collect testimony and comments on the best solutions to prevent ergonomic injuries, provides a comprehensive set of guidelines on how to stem musculoskeletal disorders while recognizing the financial affects on America's small businesses.

"The Association applauds the Bush Administration for its well-rounded and objective ergonomics plan," Coyne stated. "NATA will strongly encourage its members to follow the guidelines released by OSHA in order to limit ergonomic injuries."

"This debate has been an extremely arduous process for the Administration and Capitol Hill," Coyne commented on the resolution of a politically sensitive discussion that has encompassed a very diverse set of constituencies. "I hope that all parties will accept this plan and incorporate its recommendations."

National Air Transportation Foundation Awards 2002 Scholarships

The National Air Transportation Foundation (NATF), the research and educational arm of the National Air Transportation Association (NATA), announced the winners of the Foundation's scholarship programs following NATA's Annual Convention and AS³ tradeshow last month.

Three Pioneers of Flight Scholarships were awarded totaling \$4,500. The 2002 winners of the Pioneers of Flight Scholarships include Grant Desmarais, a sophomore at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University; Rebecca Kizior, a sophomore at Southern Illinois University; and Daniel Mosley, a junior at the University of North Dakota. Mosley was awarded the Lawrence L. Burian Scholarship of the Pioneers of Flight, established in honor of NATA's 18-years past president.

Two flight-training scholarships for continuing flight training were awarded totaling \$5,000. The John E. Godwin, Jr. Memorial Scholarship Fund recipient for 2002 went to M. Penny Levin, Ph.D. who will use the funds to complete her instrument rating on the way to becoming a flight instructor. The Godwin scholarship was established in memory of John E. Godwin, Jr., past chairman of Atlantic Aero.

The second flight-training scholarship, the Dan L. Meisinger Sr. Memorial Learn to Fly Scholarship, went to Theresa Harrison, a junior at Jacksonville Univer-

sity. Harrison will use the scholarship to earn her private pilot certificate on the way to becoming a professional pilot. The Meisinger scholarship was established in memory of Dan L. Meisinger, Sr., whose 63-year career in aviation included the founding of Executive Beechcraft.

On selecting the winners of this year's scholarships, NATA president James Coyne said, "The recipients for the NATF scholarships were some of the strongest candidates we have seen coming into the general aviation industry. General aviation has ample opportunities for these enthusiastic and ambitious young students. The entire Foundation Board of Directors and the NATA staff join me in congratulating these fine students for their academic/flight excellence and look forward to working with them very soon."

The NATF scholarships were established in 1989 to offer financial assistance and encouragement to young people in the pursuit of academic excellence and to promote careers in the general aviation industry. The Foundation awards academic and flight-training scholarships in order to assist outstanding candidates pursue careers in aviation service businesses.

For more information on the Foundation's scholarship program, contact Amy Koranda, NATA's manager of education and training.

NATA, the Voice of Aviation Business, is the public policy group representing the interests of aviation businesses before Congress and the federal agencies.

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NDPAOA NEWS:

The organizational meeting of the North Dakota Private Airfield Owners Association (NDPAOA) was held on March 2, 2002 during the Upper Great Plains Aviation Association Symposium. Mark Holzer, aviation planner for ND Aeronautics Commission presided. Rick Ennen, a private airfield owner and airport planner for Kadrmas, Lee & Jackson facilitated. Malinda Weninger, executive secretary for ND Aeronautics Commission, assisted. Eight private airfield owners attended.

At the meeting we learned that there are approximately 200 active private airfields in North Dakota. The majority of these facilities are base to at least one aircraft, and many of our aerial applicators operate off private airfields. Cecilia Hunziker, regional administrator for FM's Great Lakes region addressed the group on issues of security, safety, and the need for educating the public on the importance of all airfields to our nation. Cecilia added that no other state is doing as well as North Dakota in terms of organizing and guiding its airports and aviation users.

Discussion ensued on the issues facing private airfields, and whether there is a need for an organization of private airfield owners. It became obvious in the discussion that private airfield owners face many of the same issues as do their publicly owned counterparts: protection from towers, invasion by residential development, and need to educate their communities on the importance of aviation. By the end of the meeting everyone agreed that there is a need for an organization to help private airfields.

The course of action chosen by the group was to approach the Airport Association of North Dakota (AAND) on allowing private airfield owners to join their organization. This idea was presented to AAND at its business meeting on March 4, 2002. AAND membership thought the idea had merit and agreed to review their bylaws before making a final decision on our proposal. Contact Rick Ennen, 701-3558431, if you have questions or comments concerning NDPAOA.

SYMPOSIUM

HIGHLIGHTS



◀ General Session speaker and Symposium guest Mr. Jim Spence, autographed the new 2002 state aeronautical charts at the Saturday night ice breaker function.



▲ Members of the ND Sport Aviation Association, state EAA chapters and the ND Association of Air Museums posed in front of the replica Wright Flyer currently being built in chapters statewide.



◀ Terry Fleck, the "Attitude Doctor" had Monday night's annual banquet and ND Aviation Hall of Fame attendees' full attention with his humorous and insightful presentation.

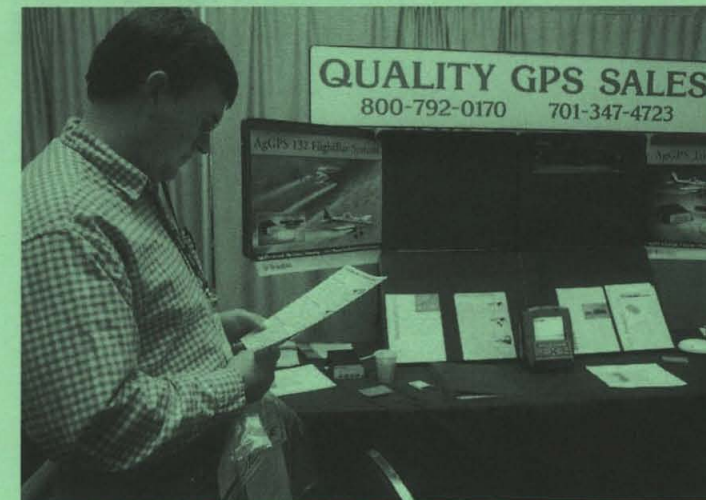
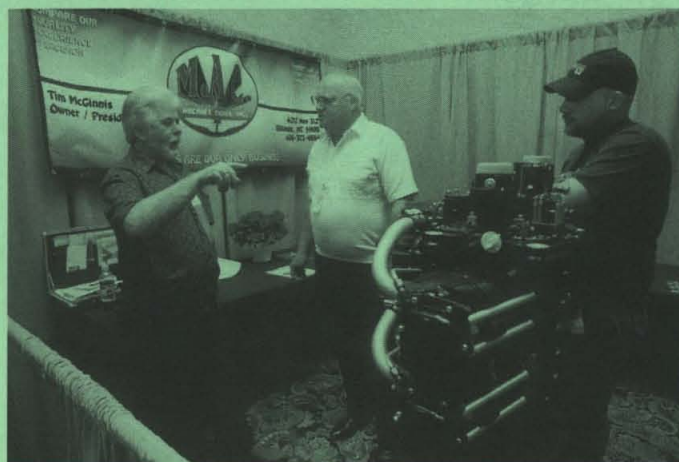


▲ Members of the FAA's state offices were present to help educate all Symposium participants in the new runway safety program's goals.



▲ NDAAA members received an in-depth briefing and training covering anti-terrorism procedures from federal and state officials.

Tim McGinnis, President and owner of Air Mac, discussed the finer points of engine maintenance with two attendees.



▲ Quality GPS Sales' booth, featuring precision equipment for multiple aviation uses, drew this attendee's attention.

And Finally, Aeronautics Commission Director Gary Ness is caught trying to decide if he should give Governor Hoeven or Jim Spence a "Wedgie."



NATA Applauds Release Of Fractional NPRM

The National Air Transportation Association (NATA) is enthusiastic over the publication of the long-awaited Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) that will establish new regulations for fractional ownership providers and revise several on-demand air charter regulations.

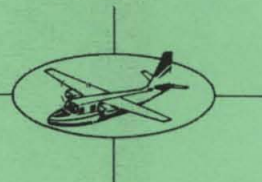
The proposed rule is based on recommendations by the Fractional Ownership Aviation Rulemaking Committee (FOARC), an FAA-appointed group that comprised various industry and government representatives. The FAA proposes to create a new Subpart K of Part 91 that sets forth regulatory requirements for fractional programs. Changes to certain Part 135 regulations include weather reporting require-

ments and landing distance limitations and are based on evidence showing that an alternate means of compliance will not compromise safety standards.

Both NATA's Air Charter Committee and the recently formed Fractional Aircraft Business Council (FABC), which met for the first time July 18, will review the proposed rule to aid in the development of the Association's comments. The NPRM was published the same day as the initial meeting of the FABC. FABC members were briefed by FAA staff and committed to assist the Agency in developing compliance and guidance documents necessary for transition to the new regulations once a final rule is in effect.

"Because both fractional and charter business interests are now well represented within NATA, we are able to provide the FAA with essential feedback and advice, not only during the NPRM process, but when the implementation of the regulations begins after a final rule is issued," said NATA president James Coyne.

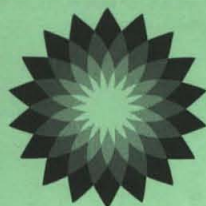
"We are pleased that the FAA respected the hard work of the FOARC by issuing an NPRM consistent with the consensus recommendations of the Committee," added Coyne.



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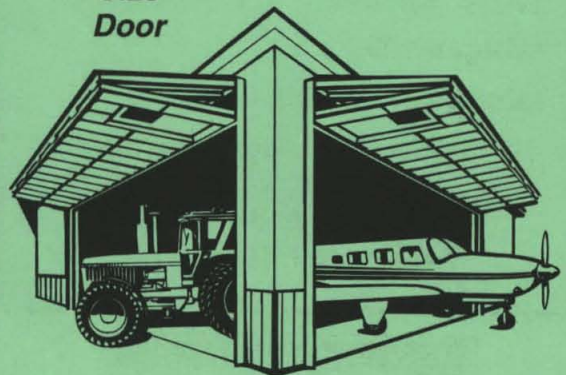
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June 8-9, 2002

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June 16, 2002

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June 21-23, 2002

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Contact: Bill Isaacson
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July 14, 2002

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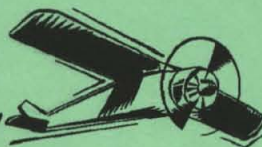
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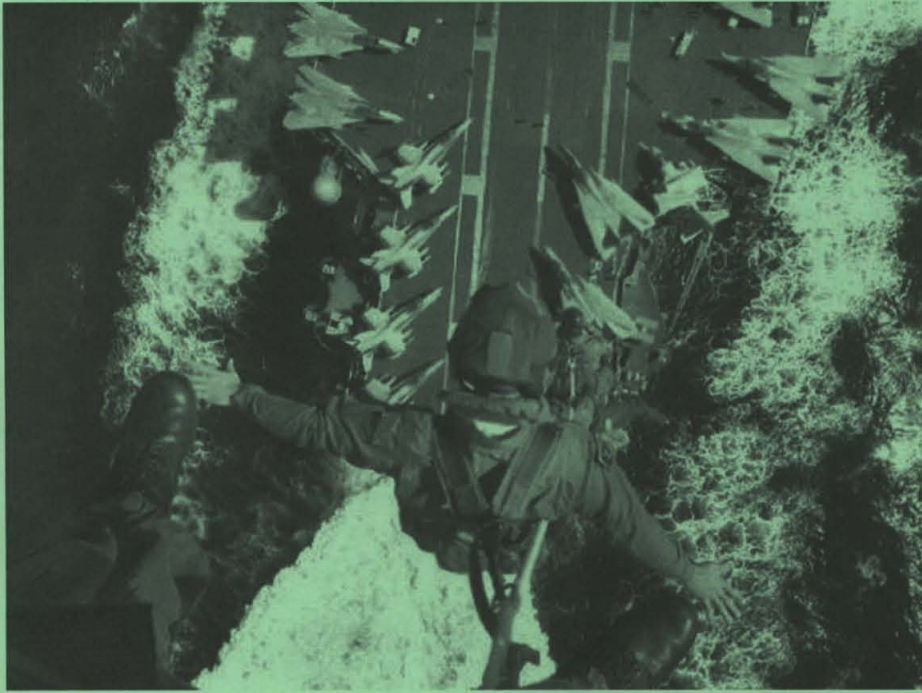


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