

Ponca City Aviation Booster Club Newsletter

April 2009



Last Fly-In Breakfast

Flight Breakfast, Saturday April 4, 2009

Once again the weather was the main ingredient in our breakfast that kept many of the aircraft in their hangars on this breezy Saturday morning of the PCABC's monthly flight breakfast. The winds did not deter our local guests which came out in huge numbers as usual. I did receive many compliments on our breakfast; ranging from the food and service are good as well as the comradery.

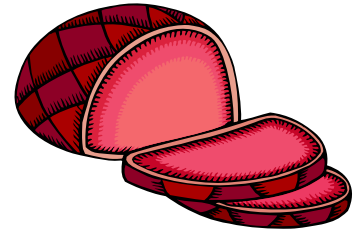
The serving line opened promptly at 6:50 AM and we had served **395 guests** by the 10:00 AM closing time. The first hour of serving was rather slow but soon after, airplanes starting arriving and a short line formed on the serving line, which was never greater than about twenty guests. Tom reported that we had **28 aircraft** arrivals on this pretty spring day in Oklahoma.

The following volunteers made this weekends flight breakfast another huge success. They include: Steve McGuire, Jordan Mrad, Ed Jones, Bill Thomason, Chris Hiatt and Kirsten, Don Nuzum, Harold Taylor, Burnard and Betty Simpson, Robert and Ardetha Christensen, Scott Rower, Bert and Sandra Blanton, Merle Helt, Mike Caldwell, Jim Yates, Don Crawford, Nancy Jane Mayfield, Ron Hartman, Heather Cannon, Tom Auerbach and any I may have missed.

I encourage other members to volunteer, which would allow some of the above members to enjoy a breakfast from the other side of the serving line. One area where additional volunteers are needed is in the cleanup after the breakfast. It would be great if the volunteers who worked during the breakfast did not have to spend another hour cleaning up the kitchen and clubhouse. Let me know if you would like to volunteer, call me at 761-5884.

Bruce Eberle, Breakfast Coordinator

Next Club Meeting



The next regular meeting will be held **Tuesday, April 21st** (the usual third Tuesday of the month) at 6:30 p.m. in the clubhouse on the grounds of the Ponca City Regional Airport. The entire menu this month will be provided by **Homer Nicholson** and his friend **Barbara Rozell**.

Club members will need to bring only an appetite as **everything will be furnished** to include Ham, meat balls, potato casserole, brown beans, green bean casserole, coleslaw, relish tray (carrots, celery, pickles etc.), dessert of brownies and pumpkin bars, beverages of water, tea, and lemonade. Homer and Barbara will be the only Host/Hostess, cook, chef, dishwasher, janitor, decorator, etc.

Meeting Program

The speaker will be **David Myers, Executive Director of Ponca City Development Authority**, speaking on current and local economic conditions. David is a very dynamic and informed speaker and everyone should make a special effort to attend this meeting. Bring your friends.

POP BOTTLES – see page 3

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Next Fly-In Breakfast

May 2009

The next fly-in breakfast is scheduled for Saturday morning, **May 2nd** (the first Saturday of the month; rain or shine) at the Ponca City Regional Airport. Breakfast is served from 7:00 to 10:00 a.m. The requested donation is \$6. The menu includes pancakes, scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage, potatoes, biscuits & gravy, orange juice, coffee, and fruit. Cold soda pop and bottled water are available at 50¢.

Minutes of Last Meeting Ponca City Aviation Boosters Club Regular Meeting – Mar 17, 2009

President Merle Helt called the meeting to order.

Bernard Simpson gave the invocation before the meal of Lasagna, garlic bread, salads and desserts. Steve and Judy McGuire prepared the meat and Garlic Bread and Merle & Cerita Helt were the hosts. There were 41 in attendance.

We had some new guests (members of the Truman and Margot Smith family) and a visitor from Germany, Daniella Iiter-Klein (a former exchange student of the Smith's) and Chuck and Betty Weir and their daughter Anne Wyckoff from Blackwell. Chuck and Betty Weir recently moved from Kodiak, Alaska and they have now joined the club.

Bob Christensen gave the Treasurer's report. The Booster Club checking account shows a favorable balance. The NOFA account also has a good balance.

*Bert Blanton had slides and a presentation about our recently approved 501(c)(3) status. The **Ponca City Aviation Foundation** will now be the name for our bank account. We can receive goods and money now and be able to give the donors a tax break, if wanted.*

Merle has received an invitation for the club to be involved with the Pioneer Vo-Tech Career Day, May 6, 2009. It was approved that we participate. 8-10 people are needed to help that day, so volunteers are needed.

Margot Smith presented a very enlightening program. She gave a synopsis of her life in Germany before and during the World War II. She also brought an album of pictures of her younger life and passed around for all to view. Very interesting!

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Verona Mair, PCABC Secretary



EAA CHAPTER 1046

MINUTES – March 16, 2009

OFFICERS:

President: Joe Harris

Vice-President: Wayne Whittington

Secretary: Steve McGuire

Treasurer: Jim Yates

Young Eagles Coordinator: Tom Auerbach

President Joe Harris called the regular meeting of EAA Chapter 1046 to order at 7:00 pm, March 16, 2009. The meeting was held in the shop behind Steve McGuire's house at 10 Hillcrest in Ponca City. The minutes of the January 6, 2009 meeting were approved as written.

Jim Yates gave a brief treasurer's report. Joe Harris recognized those who worked on construction and completion of the chapter workshop. We still have insulation of the ceiling to complete before the job is done. A motion was made by Steve McGuire and seconded by Ed Jones to buy the 3 rolls of insulation to complete the shop. The motion carried.

Jim Yates reported on IRS tax reporting requirements for the chapter. Jim will file the necessary Form 990 with the IRS.

Joe Harris reported that the Oklahoma City chapter of the Antique Airplane Association has been reactivated. They will be meeting on the 1st Saturday of each month in their old facility on the Pauls Valley Airport.

The next chapter meeting will be held at 6:00 pm, May 12 at Merle Helt's house. Merle and Cerita will provide a cookout meal. The program will be a report on Sun 'N Fun 2009 by John Jacobs and Roy Harris.

The business meeting was adjourned. Members spent the rest of the evening enjoying refreshment and cookies made by Judy McGuire while they viewed the Cabin Junior Ace project being worked on in the shop by Steve McGuire and Jim Yates.

Respectively submitted,

Steve McGuire, Secretary



PCABC Officers/Directors Meeting - April 2, 2009

Attendance:

Merle Helt (President), Mike Caldwell (Vice-President), Bob Christensen (Treasurer), Bert Blanton (Director), Dan Hector (Director), Ron Hartman, Bruce Eberle, Tom Auerbach, Dean Henson, Don Nuzum, Don Crawford, Jim Yates, Steve McGuire

President Merle Helt chaired the meeting. He requested the Treasurer's report.

Bob Christensen reported the PCABC account had a balance of \$5,068.38 on March 31. The NOFA account was closed and the funds transferred to a new account for the Ponca City Aviation Foundation (PCAF) – this account had a balance of \$3,227.86 on March 31. A debit card in the name of Sandra Blanton was ordered for the PCAF account to be used for NOFA purchases.

Since the Foundation is the 501(c)(3) [charitable] institution, the PCAF account will be used for all NOFA transactions, donations, and Flight Breakfast receipts/expenses. The PCABC account will be restricted to members' dues and small fund raising activities such as T-shirt sales due to its status as a 501(c)(7) [social club] institution. This account needs to be changed to a free checking account. Bob saw our CPA Ron Freeland at the last flight breakfast and he commented favorably on the club facilities.

A bill was submitted for shelves to store NOFA supplies. This will be paid out of the PCAF account.

Bruce Eberle suggested that the club insurance needs to be reviewed in light of the fact that most of the activities leading to possible liability will now reside with the PCAF activities rather than PCABC.

Merle noted that member Margot Smith has been in the hospital for the past two weeks and asked if anyone had an update on her condition. No one did.

Flight Breakfast:

Bruce Eberle said that he had sufficient food for 500, although the weather forecast calling for windy conditions was likely to hold down the turnout. As usual, volunteers are needed in the kitchen and for cleanup after breakfast. Aircraft parking may be a problem with the airport construction limiting space. Also without the taxiway, aircraft departing on runway 17 will have to back-taxi on the runway.

April 21 Regular Meeting:

The food will be prepared and supplied by Homer Nichols and his friend Barbara. They will also be Host/Hostess for the meeting. The program has not been defined at this time. Some further details will be needed for the newsletter so that members can decide what to bring. Bob and Karen Haworth are already signed up as Host/Hostess for the April meeting and their status needs to be defined.

Old Business:

Bruce asked about the status of Jordan Mrad's request for financial assistance to attend Spartan School of Aeronautics. He suggested that we fund Jordan to the tune of \$500 for 6 months and another \$500 if he is still in good standing at that time. Mike Caldwell made the motion, it was seconded and passed by the officers & directors present. Merle Helt said that he would inform the club membership of the decision at the April 21 meeting.

New Business:

Mike Caldwell said that PCABC will be participating in the Career Extravaganza for 8th Graders to be held at Pioneer Tech on May 6. The schedule is for set-up 7:30-8:15 am, students from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm and tear down at 2:30 pm. PCABC will have 2 tables. Volunteers will be needed to man the tables. Merle said that he would take his Cub over the parking lot as he did last year – the airplane got a lot of attention from the students. He would like to have another airplane, such as a Baby Ace.

Ron Hartman said that with the IRS approval of 501(c)(3) status for the Ponca City Aviation Foundation as of August 22, 2008, we need to send letters to all who have donated goods and services to the club. Bert Blanton said that he would prepare the letters and Merle Helt will sign for the Foundation. Some of the donors may be able to deduct their charitable donations from their 2008 Federal income tax.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Auerbach, Acting PCABC Secretary

POP BOTTLES

Save your 2 liter pop bottles for our Flight Academy stomp rockets. We would appreciate it if they are clean. We don't need the lids; only the bottles. Thanks!

Sandra Blanton



Meet Captain Arlie J Nixon

By Nancy Jane Mayfield

Captain Arlie J. Nixon has been a frequent visitor at the Ponca City Aviation Booster Club fly-in breakfast for the past four years. While some of you may have spoken with him, many are unaware of his remarkable history, both in and beyond aviation.



Arlie grew up on a farm near Merrimac, Oklahoma. He was the first naval aviator from the state of Oklahoma and he was one of three members in the naval aerobatic team from 1937–1939.

He was a pilot for TWA for 36 years, 33 of which he was Captain. His professional flying career includes piloting the following prop planes:

- Co-pilot on a Ford Tri-Motor, which carried 10 passengers
- Captain and co-pilot on the Douglas DC-2
- Captain on the Douglas DC-3 and Boeing 307
- Captain for the following Lockheed Constellations – L-049, L-649, L-749 and Super G (L-1049G)

Arlie also piloted the following commercial jet aircraft:

- Captain on the Boeing 707
- Captain on the Boeing 747

Arlie owned and flew a Johnson Rocket (and other private planes too numerous to mention). He said that 16 Rockets were built and 15 of them killed their owners. Arlie's Rocket killed the man who owned it after Arlie.

During his career he narrowly averted major airline catastrophes on three separate occasions. During one incident, engine failure nearly resulted in the incineration of the city of Paris. The incident is dramatized in the following article, "Incident Over Orly", appeared in Readers Digest. The article may also be accessed online at:

<http://www.geocities.com/mledgerwood/incidentoverorly.html>

You will learn details of the other two occurrences in future newsletters. On your next visit to the breakfast, feel free to stop by Arlie's table and say 'Hi'.



INCIDENT OVER ORLY

Flying an airliner across the Atlantic is mostly a routine of mathematics and organization, but in spite of infinite forethought there are still times when the captain lives hours in the space of seconds, when each minute seems a day. The critical part of the drama that follows took only seven minutes, yet during every one of those 420 seconds; death was never more than a hairbreadth away.

It was a sweltering summer evening at Orly Field, Paris. In the cabin of the airliner 85 passengers fretted, eager to be off. Some were vacationers going home to the United States; some were emigrants, with suitcases and parcels; one was the captain's 18-year-old son, returning from a graduation trip to Europe.

The plane was scheduled nonstop to Idlewild, with 27 tons of fuel aboard; that brought the total weight, plane included, up to 80 tons, only a shade under the legal maximum. But that was no concern of the passengers, relaxed now and chatting gaily as the plane taxied out.

Up front it was a little different. The cockpit of an airliner is always full of strain before take-off. Tonight all seemed well; weather over the Atlantic was fine. Everything on the airplane had been checked and double-checked, but still the captain was concerned about two points on the take-off roll, called V1 and V2.

V1 is that speed, once passed, that commits the plane to take off. A few seconds before that, if there is any malfunction in the engines, the captain can cut the throttles, reverse the propellers, stand on the brakes and come to a stop before the end of the runway. After that, the plane will be going too fast to stop and, in case of trouble, the only safety lies in height. The hot, thin air of this August evening, the heavy load, meant using up a lot of runway before they would reach V2, the speed at which the airplane would rise.

At the edge of the runway they stopped and ran up each engine with minute care, studying the dials for the slightest sign of malfunction. Everything seemed perfect. Nevertheless, for five minutes they worked through the printed check list: "Compasses in sync ... prop feathering checked . . . hydraulic pressure up . . . mixtures full rich ... fire warnings tested." Each member of the crew answered in turn: "Ready, Captain!" To a layman, they would have seemed almost bored; to a professional, the tension could have been sliced. This crew knew, as all crews do, that despite every precaution there is always the element of chance – the statistical chance, for instance, that in one out of every 20,000 take-offs an engine will fail.

The captain faced forward. "Give me take-off power!" The plane shuddered and strained, held firmly on the brakes until the roaring engines built up to full power,

– continued, see ORLY on page 5

ORLY – continued from page 4

long flames pouring from exhaust pipes glowing red-hot in the dusk. Then the captain lifted his feet. The runway lights began to roll past, slowly at first, then in rapid flicks. The captain bent forward, left hand on the nose wheel steering column, right hand resting lightly on the throttles. Listening intently to the engines, he was ready to chop them at any instant. The first officer sang out the increasing speed.

"Ninety ... one hundred ... one five ... coming up on V1 ... coming ... V1!"

Quickly, the captain shifted his hands to the main controls, ready for flight.

"One thirty ... one forty ... one forty-five ... V2!"

The captain hauled back on the control yoke, the heavy plane lifted clear. "Up gear, up flaps! *Meto* (maximum-except-take-off) power!" The landing gear locked into place.

The overheated engines relaxed a shade.

And then, without warning, disaster struck. On the instrument panel a red light flared. A bell clanged, so loudly that it drowned the engines. From the engineer came a message that filled all with dread. It was that one chance in 20,000.

"Captain, No. 4 is on fire!"

This was the critical moment at which a power failure could kill them all. Minutes later they would have been high enough to maintain height on three engines. But now the heavy plane was speeding at 150 mph, only feet above the ground. To the captain, the nightmares of a lifetime had come true. But in those nightmares, like all good captains, he had rehearsed the decisions he would make in every possible emergency. Now he summoned the repeated experience of simulated emergencies into action during the seconds available to him in crisis.

"Feather it!"

"It's feathered!"

"Fire first bottle!" Buried in the wings were steel bottles filled with fire extinguisher under high pressure. The engineer pressed a switch.

"Fired, Captain!" A cloud of chemical streamed into the burning engine.

Almost instantly the red light shut off, the bell stopped. The fire seemed to be out.

But a hideous obstacle now confronted them. Straight ahead lay a row of apartment houses. Though only half a dozen floors high, the roofs were above the airplane's nose. Normally, planes made a procedural turn before they reached them. Now, with one engine out, the captain dared not bank steeply, for such a turn

would decrease the lift of the wings and send the airplane spinning ground-ward. There was only one salvation: *climb*.

The captain eased back on the controls. The air speed fell five knots, and a faint shudder ran along the plane. To the captain it signaled certain death from an impending stall. Instantly he put the nose down again. The plane would not climb.

One more weapon remained – resumption of take-off power on the remaining three engines. But take-off power imposes tremendous heat and strain, and the maximum use is two minutes. The captain had used that up. If he made a second call too soon, an engine might falter, and they would hit the apartment houses dead center. His mind, racing against the seconds, figured the smallest increase that might lift them over.

"Give me four inches more pressure. Quick!"

The relief pilot was crouching at his side. Together, they watched the onrushing roof. It seemed to sink a fraction. The crew scarcely breathed. Then the relief pilot did a courageous and dangerous thing. Although the captain's face was calm, he was streaming with sweat and his hands were rigid. The relief pilot knew that all depended on the sensitive fingers of the man at the controls. At the risk of fatally distracting him, he reached forward and touched his captain's arm.

"Take it easy. . . . I believe you have it made!"

The captain's hands relaxed a fraction and the airplane swept over the roofs, a bare few feet above them.

But now all Paris lay before them, a dense mass of houses, packed among narrow, twisting streets, their thousands of ancient chimneys smoking from the fires over which Parisians were cooking their suppers. In the cabin, the passengers gazed into open attic windows, praising the captain for giving them such a low-level view of the city; but to him the low altitude meant that at any moment he might encounter a building higher than the rest. Somehow he had to climb.

Again the captain eased back on the controls. Again, there was the deadly shaking. Only one sure means of survival was left: to dump fuel. His speeding mind weighed a terrible decision. Aboard the plane were 95 persons, including his son. To dump meant probable escape for them all; but 6,000 gallons of high-octane gasoline, hosed down from zero altitude on the crowded old city, hitting the cooking fires and gas flames, could start a fire which would kill thousands.

His decision was automatic. He began inching the airplane's nose in a long, slow turn to the right, his fingers feeling each faint tremor from the laboring wings. The first officer, reading his mind, snatched up his mike.

"Le Bourget Tower, Le Bourget Tower! We have a fire

– continued, see ORLY on page 6

ORLY – continued from page 5

emergency. We are attempting to overfly the field and dump on the far side."

If they could make Le Bourget, the other big Paris airport, there was open country beyond. Only the crops would be ruined by dumped gasoline. The nose crept around; Le Bourget came into view, swung under the wings. It was agonizing to watch salvation so close at hand, the smooth runways waiting to receive them, and not be able to land; but they were nearly 20 tons overweight with fuel (the safe weight for landing being considerably lower than that allowed for take-off). If they tried it, the landing gear might buckle and the whole of Paris would be lighted by their funeral pyre.

As the field moved astern, the black countryside loomed ahead. "Stand by to dump!" Back in the cabin the passengers had been told of the emergency and the stewardesses were moving rapidly up the aisle, cautioning against any violation of the "No Smoking" sign, checking each seat belt. There was no panic.

Up forward the engineer closed his fingers on the dumping switch, and slowly the laboring plane began to rise. To the captain, no experience in life compared with the exquisite sensation of feeling the plane lighten under his hands. No image in his memory compared with the sight of the altimeter needle as it began to creep around its dial. The situation was still critical, for the fuel tanks were still heavy and the engines overstrained. But the awful, hopeless seconds were over.

"Advise Orly Tower have completed partial dumping, am returning to field."

The French controller, fighting to keep his accented English clear and concise, answered them. Everything was cleared. Fire trucks were already tearing out to the runway, followed by ambulances and medical teams. In the cabin, the purser broke the seal on the escape chute that could bridge the 12-foot gap between the door and the ground if it became necessary to evacuate before steps could be brought.

Now remained the tricky business of landing on three engines. Carefully, listening to the engine pulses, the captain swung the big plane into the path that led to the runway.

"Turning on final. Flaps 20 degrees. Gear down!"

The captain breathed a silent prayer that the gear would not buckle on impact. Exhausted as he was, he needed to put the airplane down as softly as a master pilot could do it. He eased it over the fence, the first officer calling each five-mile reduction in speed. Out of the corners of their eyes, they sensed the fire trucks tearing along, striving to catch up. Softly, softly ... then came the thunder of the wheels, the smooth contact with the blessed runway, the solid feel of the concrete,

the lovely concrete.

They rolled up the runway, turned off, stopped. For a moment the captain leaned heavily on his forearms, his head bowed over the control yoke. Then he turned to his crew. They stood staring at him, rigid, pale as death in the dim light. Then, spontaneously, they all smiled. In their exacting profession, this was a moment of perfection and pride. The years of experience had paid off.

Before midnight the engine had been replaced, the plane refueled, a routine take-off accomplished. Fifteen hours later they landed uneventfully in New York.

Arlie Nixon was the pilot of this Lockheed Super G Constellation, model L-1049G in 1959 when it nearly crashed over Paris. This article appeared in the June, 1960 Readers Digest.



Klyde Morris (03.20.09)

Fri, 20 Mar '09

NASA Deals With Fallout From Animal Rights Groups...



FMI: www.klydemorris.com

Homeland Security Initiatives Could "Lock Out" General Aviation

March 19, 2009 — General aviation is under attack on several fronts in the name of national security. While the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and its divisions adopt a "whatever it takes" posture, the people who fly aircraft for fun, education, philanthropy, and business are asking whether severe restrictions on freedoms are worth marginal enhancements to security.

When the cost of lost liberties is combined with the significant dollars required of aviators and airports to comply with these initiatives, an unfavorable cost-to-benefit ratio becomes strikingly evident.

DHS is throwing several security initiatives at general aviation at once, challenging aircraft operators not only to differentiate them but also to understand how they interrelate. Accordingly, [EAA has posted an analysis](#) that sorts out the issues and identifies common themes.

The combined effect of these initiatives would be stifling to general aviation. Imagine security requirements that would:

- Force aviators to acquire government approval *before each flight* in certain general aviation aircraft;
- Require private citizens to develop and implement costly security-compliance programs;
- Hamstring historic aircraft operations such as EAA's B-17 tour;
- Limit our military-veteran aviators' freedom to fly historic airplanes like the ones that, ironically, they flew in service to *defend* American freedoms;
- Restrict access to the airport for pilots, owners, and their guests;
- Make it difficult or impossible to conduct certain Young Eagles events;
- Force pilots and passengers to stay in the aircraft when arriving as a transient flight at an airport until an authorized person becomes available to escort them from the aircraft;
- Limit the public's access to engage in and support general aviation activities; and
- Limit the interactive and social elements of participation in flight that are so important to a thriving general aviation community.

Members of EAA's Regulatory Affairs staff remind EAAers that these and more consequences could result if the general aviation community fails to rally to protect its interests. They encourage you to [stay informed](#), spread the word, and be prepared to act.

Man Pleads Guilty in Burglary Case

By SHARON ROWEN, Ponca City News Staff Writer

KANSAS CITY, Kan. — A Hutchinson, Kan. man has pleaded guilty to burglarizing six airports in four states, including the **Ponca City Airport** and Strother Field in Winfield, Kan.

Michael S. Wagner, 27, pleaded guilty to four counts of interstate transportation of stolen property, two counts of wire fraud and two counts of mail fraud. Sentencing is set for May 29 in federal court. Wagner is accused of stealing from small airports in Kansas, Colorado, Texas and Oklahoma over a nine-month period.

Authorities started investigating two years ago when Wagner was found in a vehicle close to a damaged fence at the Emporia Municipal Airport. The Federal Bureau of Investigation searched a location in Wichita where agents turned up stolen items, including laptop computers and weapons, according to the U.S. Attorney's office. Investigators determined some of the stolen merchandise was sold on eBay, and buyers paid by mailing money through the U.S. Postal Service.

According to the indictment, Wagner was involved in burglaries in 2005 and 2006 at Strother Field Airport, **Ponca City Municipal Airport**, R.L. Jones Riverside Airport in Tulsa, Front Range Airport in Denver and Collin County Airport in McKinney, Texas.

Ponca City police spokeswoman Sherry Bowers said the Ponca City burglaries were reported in July 3, 2005, and occurred after 9 p.m. in July 2, 2005, and before 6:30 a.m. Sunday morning. "Several hangers were entered and up to 19 locks, hasp and chains securing the hangers were cut," she said. Bowers said that four pair of David Clark Aviation headsets valued at \$350 each were reported missing. Other stolen items cited in the indictment include laptop computers, hard drives, aviation headsets, cameras, GPS receivers, rifles, pistols, tools, radios and televisions.

Wagner's string of burglaries came to an end on Jan. 22, 2006, when he was arrested at Emporia Municipal Airport after burglarizing several aircraft hangars. During a search of the man's vehicle, investigators found a laptop computer that had been stolen Jan. 13, 2006, from an airport in Adams County, Colo. Wagner eventually told investigators he had begun burglarizing airports in mid-2005.

He faces a maximum penalty of 10 years in federal prison and a fine up to \$250,000 on each count of interstate transportation of stolen property; a maximum penalty of 20 years and a fine up to \$250,000 on each count of wire fraud; and a maximum penalty of 20 years and a fine up to \$250,000 on each count of mail fraud. Also charged in the case is Chauncey L. Gaynor, 27, Wichita, who is awaiting trial.

Published Tue, Mar 10, 2009, On Page 1 A

PETA Sues On Behalf Of Geese Lost In 'Flight 1549 Tragedy'

Wed, 01 Apr '09

Asks For \$250K, Apologies To Flock -- "But We Can Do Without Apologies"



ANN APRIL 1st "SPECIAL" EDITION: Saying the recent downing of a US Airways Airbus A320 following an in-flight encounter with geese was "an avian tragedy unprecedented in the course of modern human events," on Wednesday the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals filed suit in US District Court of New York against the airline for the "unwarranted slaughter, fricasseeing, slicing, dicing, julienning and barbequing of at least four Canadian Geese."

As ANN reported, the A320 with 155 persons onboard had just taken off from New York's LaGuardia Airport on January 15 when its flight path conflicted with the track of a large flock of geese. Investigators have not yet determined how many birds were struck by the airliner... but PETA officials believe between 4-6 birds met their demise, most by passing through the rotating turbine disks of the airliner's twin CFM56-5B/P turbofans.

"There is no other way to say it -- the so-called "Miracle on the Hudson" was in truth a slaughter," said PETA spokeswoman Moonbeam Horowitz. "Those birds took flight that day with not a care in the world, their sole goal to fly around for a little bit in the manner Mother Nature intended.

"It's unconscionable such a tragedy has been lauded by the media, our elected officials -- even President Obama! -- as an inspiring event," Horowitz added. "What's more, we fear such popular support will only spur other pilots to attempt copycat acts."

The animal rights organization is seeking \$250,000 in damages, as well as a formal apology from US Airways CEO Doug Parker, Captain Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger, and first officer Jeffrey Skiles.

Horowitz added, "if a deal must be made, we can do without the apologies."

In related news, a major cereal company announced special honorary packaging of one of its popular breakfast cereals, in honor of the Flight 1549 crew. Instead of the legendary "Wheaties" box, however, the crew will grace the fronts of economy-size boxes of "Shredded Tweet."

FMI : www.peta.org, www.usairways.com

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