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Facilities Working to Increase their Membership

Expanding membership is the key to growing an organization. Each facility NATCA represents is a mini organization, containing local leadership and members representing their facility to the larger national groups. Below are two facilities we will be recognizing that take pride in reaching 100 percent NATCA membership. They offer some advice on growing and retaining membership.

St. Louis TRACON (T75)

For more than 10 years, St. Louis TRACON (T75) has been 100% NATCA. With 32 bargaining unit employees, FacRep Matt Elliott, who has been in that role for 16 months, said that achievement doesn't come without work.

"The most important factor is getting new hires to understand the importance of the Union, when many times they haven't had any experience with a union," Elliott said. "Locals trying to achieve 100% should set up annual goals, let them be known, and then achieve them."



Involved both as NATCA members and in the community, T75 members have worked for more than 50 years with a charity that buys gifts for orphans at Christmastime.

Moses Lake/Grant County ATCT (MWH)

For more than 23 years, Moses Lake/Grant County ATCT (MWH) has been 100% NATCA. FacRep Kevin Buysman says MWH



members make building the NATCA family a collective goal, and that's what's made their organizing so successful.

"Maintaining 100% membership is a priority facility-wide, not just from local leadership. New employees are welcomed to the family immediately and taught about what NATCA means to each of us, and how our 100% membership makes our collective voice as strong as it is," Buysman said. "Each new employee is assigned a point of contact from the membership as soon as we know they're coming our way. The member chosen to reach out is someone with a similar life situation that eases their transition to an

unfamiliar city and typically, new career. After experiencing all of these things, joining NATCA is a no-brainer."

MWH members manage the five runways that cross or converge at Grant County International Airport in Moses Lake, Wash. Though the facility has no commercial traffic, daily users include an onsite flight school, C-17s from nearby McChord Air Force Base, and Boeing experimental and production aircraft, most recently the Dreamliner, and KC46 Pegasus Tanker.

"The key to successful organizing is keeping members apprised of what NATCA is doing locally and nationally on their behalf to improve and protect our rights and work lives," Buysman said. "You also have to stay in tune with the concerns and priorities of one another to ensure members don't feel alienated. Not all personalities mesh well, so having a strong executive board with a variety of personality types allows for all members to have an outlet within local leadership that they're able to relate to and communicate with."

A unique aspect of MWH, Buysman said, is that most MWH members moved to the area for their positions with the FAA. "We are a group of transplants that make the best of a fun and challenging operation in a new city that we were all foreign to initially. Though our target is 15 CPCs, we had only four CPCs three years ago and through our teamwork and strong bonds, we have climbed out of the extremity of the staffing crisis. We rely on each other and the friendships we develop at work to acclimate to our new lives here and the unique challenges our facility presents."

The NATCA Podcast: I'm Here For You



Our NATCA Family has lost 16 members in the last two years to suicide. The latest was Crystal Joy Kendzierski, the FacRep at Tulsa Riverside ATCT (RVS), which has hit our membership, and particularly the Southwest Region, very hard. Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States for all ages. Every day, approximately 123 Americans die by suicide.

This is the type of tragedy that the NATCA family has

unfortunately experienced before, but we are determined to raise awareness of this issue, and hopeful we can reach those that need help. It's vital that we are aware of the signs of vulnerability and are there to offer appropriate help to our NATCA brothers and sisters who might be struggling. We need to be there for our fellow members in times of need. "I'm here for you" will be a mantra you will see as part of our efforts.

[Our latest episode of The NATCA Podcast](#) is devoted to discussing this topic and features two members of the Southwest Region, Nick Daniels (Fort Worth Center FacRep) and Mary Ann Hall (Shreveport ATCT Treasurer). [Listen here.](#)



CFS 2019: Inspirational SR-71 Pilot Brian Shul Returning as Keynote Speaker



NATCA is excited to announce that Brian Shul, one of only 93 men in history to fly the SR-71 spy plane - the fastest jet ever built – is returning to speak at Communicating For Safety (Sept. 16-18, Bally's Las Vegas).

The Vietnam War veteran and former attack pilot in the U.S. Air Force spoke at CFS 2018 about his illustrious career and the life lessons he's learned. He flew 212 combat missions but was shot down and was burned so badly that he was given almost no chance to live. He overcame his injuries, went through multiple surgeries, and eventually returned to full flight status, flying the SR-71 Blackbird. Major Shul completed a 20-year career in the Air Force. Out of all his life experiences, he left the audience with insight that he considers very valuable:

“Life is short and not certain. Pursue your passion and live your dream.”

Once Major Shul was able to return to the Air Force, he became a safety officer and constantly reminded his employees about their attitude, perspective and making choices. He said during his CFS remarks what he told his officers could also be applied to air traffic controllers. “Don’t be afraid to do something, anything, that you feel is out of the box,” he said. “You don’t have to be the most accomplished, the best, or the smartest.”

As Major Shul ended his talk, he thanked the controllers for all that they do. “Thank you for being air traffic controllers. Whether you realize it or not, you are that still, calm voice when things get sketchy for pilots. What a treat for me to finally address you and thank you.”

CFS 2019: 15th Annual Archie League Medal of Safety Awards, Winners' Spotlight

Central Region: Andrew Crabtree - Kansas City Center (ZKC)

On Aug. 14, 2018, Andy Crabtree was working the Controller in Charge position (CIC) in the Flint Hills Area at Kansas City Center (ZKC). At approximately noon local time, the controller working Sector 62 noticed a possible problem with an aircraft under his control.

N2744Y, a Cessna 340, was traveling at flight level 230 deviating around thunderstorms trying to get to Indy South Greenwood Airport (HFY), located 13 miles southeast of downtown Indianapolis. The controller working sector 62 issued multiple control instructions to the aircraft, trying to vector him around a line of thunderstorms.

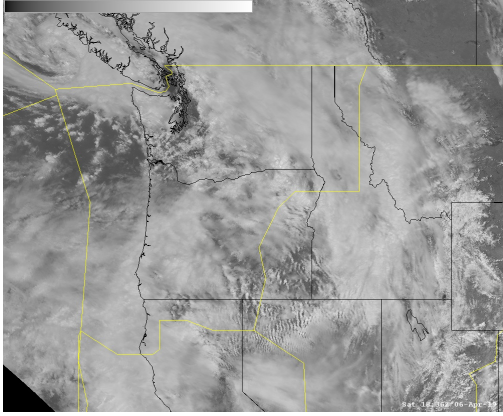
When it was clear the pilot was not following instructions and was still headed toward a line of storms, the controller asked Crabtree for help.

Crabtree quickly grabbed a headset and started listening to the aircraft in question. “When I first plugged in I couldn’t tell if the pilot of N2744Y was slightly confused or just busy navigating through the convective weather,” Crabtree said of the incident. “The controller had advised that the aircraft was not responding correctly to the recommended deviations around the weather. I didn’t want to make the pilot descend into possible worsening weather conditions without being sure.” [Read more.](#)



Northwest Mountain Region: Joseph Asmundson, Matthew Colby Rhea, Nicole Breann Coffey, and Devin Carlisto - Seattle Center (ZSE)

Midday on Saturday, April 6, 2019, near the border of Washington and Idaho, Shane Daily was piloting his two-seat, single-engine



Lancair 320 when he encountered instrument meteorological conditions (IMC) while flying visual flight rules (VFR). Daily was not instrument flight rules (IFR) certified.

“I’m on the autopilot, still trying to climb out of this, but unfortunately I am in the soup and have no visibility at all,” Daily reported on frequency.

Seattle Center (ZSE) air traffic controller Joe Asmundson was working a low altitude sector. He declared an emergency for the aircraft. He then assisted Daily in trying to re-establish visual meteorological conditions (VMC) but Daily was stuck on top of the clouds at altitudes of up to 20,000 feet. [Read more.](#)



Joe Asmundson



Matthew Colby Rhea



NATCA Well-Represented at ALPA Air Safety Forum

NATCA was well represented last week at the 65th annual Air Safety Forum hosted by the Air Line Pilots Association, Int'l (ALPA) in Washington, D.C.

Project Management Organization (PMO) Rep Jeff Woods met with a small group of ALPA members on Tuesday during a breakout session and updated them on several issues including the Northeast Corridor Initiative. "We're looking to get technology moving quicker in that area," he said. Regarding Tower Datacomm, Woods said, "We should be seeing re-routes much faster than they have in the past. Industry is working on a united front to address avionics issues associated with enroute Datacomm." Woods was also asked about putting more controllers in the jump seats in the cockpit, and one pilot asked if he thought there would be a benefit for controllers to watch pilots in a controlled environment like flight simulators. "Oh yes," he replied, "there is always benefit in being able to educate each other in what we do and why things work and don't work. I think that's something we could get behind very quickly. There is also a benefit with getting pilots in controllers' simulators. This helps with situational awareness from both sides."

Washington National ATCT (DCA) FacRep Aubrey Farrar participated on a panel discussion, "Painting the Corners...Prohibited Airspace and Modern Airline Operations."



DCA FacRep Aubrey Farrar (third from left) participates on the "Painting the Corners...Prohibited Airspace and Modern Airline Operations" panel. "Quick communication is essential when an incursion occurs," said Farrar.

"ATC's number one priority after safety of flight is to avoid a P56 incursion," said Farrar about the well-known prohibited Washington, D.C., airspace very close by to DCA. "There is not enough time to troubleshoot a navigation or FMS (Flight Management System) issue. If there is a failure or a settings issue, turn to a heading to avoid P56 and advise ATC that they are off their SID (Standard Instrument Departure) and troubleshooting." Added Farrar later in the panel: "Quick communication is essential when an incursion occurs so that the FAA and USSS (Secret Service) can de-escalate the security apparatus. Quick, honest communication regarding what happened may help avoid an interview with USSS at your destinations."



On the panel, "Maximizing Meteorological Technologies: Opportunities for Improved Operational Planning and Decision-Making" SCT Area Rep Brad Wilcko walked the audience through steps taken by controllers to gather information, adapt, and adjust.

Southern California TRACON (SCT) area representative Brad Wilcko was on a panel entitled, "Maximizing Meteorological Technologies: Opportunities for Improved Operational Planning and Decision-Making." Wilcko walked attendees through the steps taken by controllers on their shifts, including attending a weather briefing. Later, as things change, they adapt and adjust. "What we see on our screens and what you see on the flight deck are completely different things," he said. "Whatever you can give us, any amount of information that you can give us to complete the picture for other pilots, that would be very beneficial. What may seem insignificant to you is extremely important to someone else." Wilcko was also asked about having controllers in the cockpit as part of familiarization training. Pilots in the audience were highly supportive. Wilcko reported that each controller is allowed two fam rides each year and agreed that face-to-face communication with pilots is "extremely beneficial for us."

Your FINAL Opportunity to Take Advantage of Unum's Long-Term Disability



Congratulations to all who have signed up for Unum. You have taken the first steps to protect your future in case the unthinkable happens.

As a NATCA member, you have access to one of the greatest benefits our Union has to offer - long-term disability insurance from Unum. You cannot get insurance like this anywhere else; this was specifically negotiated for the benefit of NATCA members.

Open enrollment ends next week, July 31.

Visit natcadisability.com for more information.

NATCA News and Notes

NATCA Enjoying Successful Week of Aviation Safety Discussions at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2019



Every Day is a Training Day, even at EAA's AirVenture Oshkosh 2019, where NATCA volunteers were busy last weekend setting up the NATCA booth and attractions at KidVenture, among lots more exciting preparation for this week's [#OSH19](#) events. The volunteer team had their own training day walking through all of the activities NATCA members are staffing throughout the week. We will provide full coverage of NATCA at AirVenture 2019 in our next issue of the Insider. In the meantime, enjoy our photo and social media coverage:

[View photo album](#)

[Follow coverage on Facebook](#)

[Follow coverage on Twitter](#)

Newark Airport Welcomes Home U.S. Women's Soccer Team



Newark ATCT (EWR) welcomed home the world champion U.S. women's soccer team on July 8. "It was a privilege for us to guide them back home safely from France, after winning the FIFA Women's World Cup," said EWR FacRep Bill Striffler.



Aspen Pitken County ATCT Hosts Solidarity Event



Aspen Pitkin County ATCT (ASE) held a solidarity event in Glenwood Springs, Colo. During the facility visit the next morning, they discussed the unique, opposite direction operation they have at ASE (for which they have a waiver) with NATCA Executive Vice President Trish Gilbert and Northwest Mountain Regional Vice President Alex Navarro III. They also discussed the VSAS cameras that ASE uses on local control that gives them the ability to easily see the departure of aircraft and maintain a better situational awareness.

The VSAS system includes four TVs in the tower cab that display a live feed from cameras located on a pole near the departure roll end of ASE's runway. It allows them to better see aircraft due to the end of the runway being higher than the tower cab. They use the VSAS system to accomplish their opposite direction operation when they need to see the departing aircraft start departure roll prior to the arrival being five miles out.

Members Participate in Missouri Fly-In and Air Show



Members from St. Louis/Lambert ATCT (STL) and Kansas City ATCT (MCI), Central Regional Vice President Aaron Merrick, and NATCA Executive Vice President Trish Gilbert joined in the festivities of the annual fly-in and airshow hosted by the Wing Nuts Flying Circus Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Chapter in Tarkio, Mo. They attended a night show above the Gould Peterson Memorial Airport and assisted in capturing the American flag after the para-commando jumped with it.



“It was very exciting to be a part of this year’s events,” said Central Region Legislative Rep and STL member Allison Schwaegel. “We are already looking forward to participating in next year’s.”

Members Attend Collaboration Facilitators Training



Pictured from left to right around the table: Western Service Area North (WSA-N) Collaborative Facilitator (CF) Marilou Scherer, Anchorage Center (ZAN); WSA-N Manager CF Scott Burke; Management Lead CF Richard Wayne; NATCA CF Lead Russ Hannu, Cleveland Center (ZOB); Central Service Area South (CSA-S) Outgoing CF Andreas Sanchez, Dallas/Fort Worth ATCT (DFW); CSA-S New CF Corey Soignet, Houston Intercontinental ATCT (IAH); and CSA-S Manager Benny Baughman.

NATCA Lead for Collaboration and Cleveland Center (ZOB) member Russ Hannu recently hosted a collaboration facilitators training in Seattle. "This important training focuses on the delivery of collaboration skills training with an emphasis on facilitation and consulting skills for the new collaboration facilitators," said Hannu.

Colorado Springs ATCT Meets with NATCA Leadership



Colorado Springs ATCT (COS) members recently met with NATCA President

Paul Rinaldi, Executive Vice President Trish Gilbert, and Northwest Mountain Regional Vice President Alex Navarro III. "We talked with them about the conditions of our facilities and our low staffing numbers," said COS FacRep Mike Edmonds. "Despite the information we provided them, we all enjoyed and appreciated the time spent with NATCA leadership."

Store Item of the Week: Men's and Women's Ombre Polo



Features of this product: The Ombre Polo is 100% dry wicking Poly/Spandex with a high-fashion gradient design. The shirts are lightweight, comfortable, and available in sizes ranging from S-4XL. Color choices include blue, burgundy, and charcoal. Choose your logo or text for left chest embroidery. Union-made in the United States.

Starting price: \$49. Ships in 3-4 weeks.

To see the item and how to order:

[Click here](#) to view the men's style shirt.

[Click here](#) to view the women's style shirt.

Select USPS or UPS as your shipping preference on your orders. To check on stock availability or for further assistance, call 800-266-0895, or email natcastore@natcadc.org.

Member Benefits: Southern Insurance Group

Keeping people safe, it's what we do as controllers. We are there to keep things moving and more importantly, provide help if things go wrong. You could say that in some sense, we are like insurance policies for every flight across the NAS.



But at the end of the day, who has your back when it comes to insurance policies? Did you know that as a government-employed aviation safety professional, your payroll-deducted FEGLI insurance

cost increases with your age? Would you be interested in life insurance that provides more bang for your buck?

With a wide array of all types of insurance, the Southern Insurance Group (SIG) is one of NATCA's longest standing partners and have been serving the needs of our members since 2002. SIG provides members with an avenue to explore alternatives to your government life insurance. SIG will help you calculate your costs and coverages, and ensure you understand this important benefit for your life and family.

From the UNUM disability insurance that protects your income, to life insurance to replace FEGLI and all your needs in-between, Danny Brooks and George Regitko are the SIG Reps that have the backs of the folks who have the backs of the flying public. [Click here](#) for more information.