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BUSINESS JET TRAVELER[®]

Erin Andrews

on sportscasting,
Dancing with the Stars,
and how bizav enables
her fast-paced lifestyle

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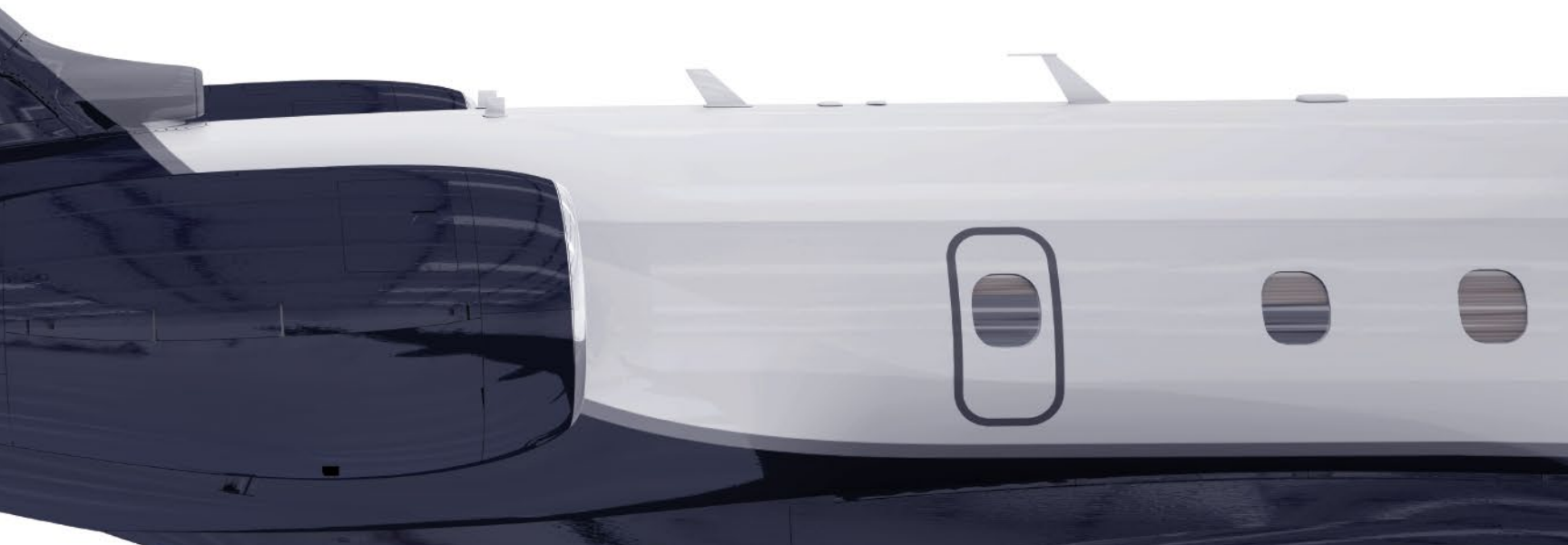
Rethink Convention.



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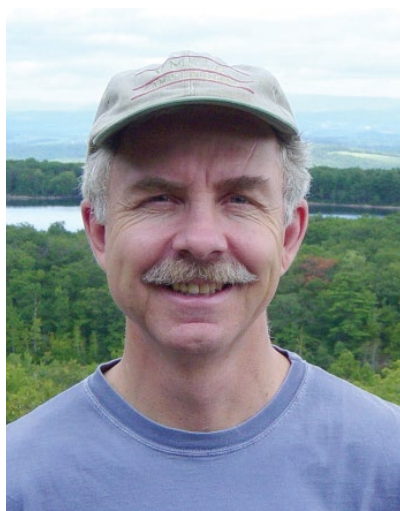
Asia's big bizav event, where **BJT** will publish its fifth annual **China Buyers' Guide**.

FEATURED CONTRIBUTOR

JOHN GROSSMANN

A freelance writer for more than three decades, Grossmann won an Aerospace Journalist of the Year award in 2001 for an *Air & Space/Smithsonian* story on the buying and selling of private jets. He is the coauthor, with Emmy-winning acoustic ecologist Gordon Hempton, of *One Square Inch of Silence*, a book about the importance of preserving America's last remaining naturally quiet places.

Grossmann—whose article about restaurants with private dining options begins on page 41 of this issue—was a two-time finalist in the food-journalist category of the Le Cordon Bleu World Food Media Awards. He has written on food, restaurants, and chefs for such publications as *Departures*, *Gourmet*, and *Savuer*. He recently moved to South Portland, Maine, where he made sure that his first assignment was a quest to find the state's best lobster roll.



► On the Cover:

Erin Andrews, photographed for **Business Jet Traveler** at Santa Monica [California] Airport by Manuello Paganelli. Makeup by Patrick De Frontbrune. Hair styling by Richard Collins.



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Up Front



Two holiday gifts from the bizav community

“Request for Christmas flight home for fallen airman’s wife, child, and sister.”

That was the subject line on a December 23 email to members of the National Business Aviation Association. The message, which began with “please, please read the following request,” came from NBAA northeast regional representative Dean Saucier. It asked for donated use of a private aircraft to transport the grieving family of TSgt. Joseph Lemm, a New York City police detective who had been on his third tour of duty in the Middle East when he was killed in a suicide bombing in Afghanistan on December 21. An NBAA member who asked to remain anonymous quickly stepped forward to provide the flight.

Meanwhile, on Christmas Eve in Kansas City, Kansas, there was a knock on the door at the home of six-year-old Caroline Lopez, who had been battling a brain tumor for more than a year. She had recently mailed Santa some of the snowflakes she’d made, and now the Snowflake Princess had come to say that those snowflakes were the most beautiful of all. Would she like to come visit the North Pole?

The Snowflake Princess accompanied Caroline and her mother aboard an Executive AirShare Phenom 300 to Santa’s workshop. (Of course, the window shades were pulled down tight for secrecy for the duration of the 15-minute flight.)

At the North Pole—also known as Hangar #2 at Kansas’s Johnson County Executive Airport—more than 500 elves greeted Caroline with their rendition of “We Wish You a Merry Christmas.” Caroline then toured Santa’s workshop, candy land, a reindeer stable, a naughty-and-nice station, and a toy factory. Presents were piled high under more than 50 brightly lit trees.

Hundreds of volunteers had produced this magic. They had worked under the direction of the Elves of Christmas Present, an organization whose mission is to provide surprise gifts and experiences for children who suffer from life-threatening illness and families that have experienced tragedy.

What’s perhaps most extraordinary about the donated flight for TSgt. Lemm’s family and the North Pole visit for Caroline is that they’re anything but extraordinary in the world of business aviation. All year round, the people in this industry seem eager to lend a hand, whether it be to victims of natural disasters anywhere in the world or to cancer patients here at home. That’s one reason I’m so proud to be a part of this community.

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"EIGHT MILES HIGH"

In 1968–69, I was 13–14 years old, and I remember when KNUS here in Dallas played the song "Eight Miles High" [*"How High Did the Byrds Fly?" Exit, October/November 2015*]. I was very familiar with the corporate jets of the time, and I knew the song was not related to doing drugs. I knew it related to flying at 42,240 feet but I did not know what they were flying in. I figured they flew in the Lear 24 since it was the most desirable jet to fly and to be seen deplaning at the airport terminal.



I often wondered about that and yet there was no way to find out till I read your article. I now know the premise for the song, and I have you to thank for finally answering the question I have pondered all these years.

Kurtis K. Samples
posted on bjtonline.com

FLYING PRIVATELY

A well-made point by Mark Phelps [*in "Flying 'Under the Radar,'" Exit, December 2015/January 2016*]. I was sitting in business class of a major airline recently, and the aircraft was so quiet I could hear two attorneys discussing a matter which involved a world-renowned brand. They were not talking loudly, but one was making his case and the arguments made and the subject matter were

easily heard by those in the seats behind them. My point here is that you never know who is listening in a commercial cabin.

Steve Anderson
posted on bjtonline.com

FIXING THE AIRLINES

Regarding "Even Magicians Can't Fix the Airlines" [*On the Road, October/November 2015*]: Years ago the taxi industry in New York City was on the top of the heap. Fares were rising every year and scam drivers were hoodwinking passengers for every cent they could obtain (especially from foreigners). Then came Uber! The taxi industry is now bankrupt. Sooner or later the airlines will be brought to their knees because someone will come along and offer something better to passengers. Then there will be lawsuits, infringement rights, and all of the other legal entanglements that American businesses try to use to push the newcomer out of business. Patience! It will come to pass.

David Howell, Ph.D.
posted on bjtonline.com

CUSTOMER DISSERVICE

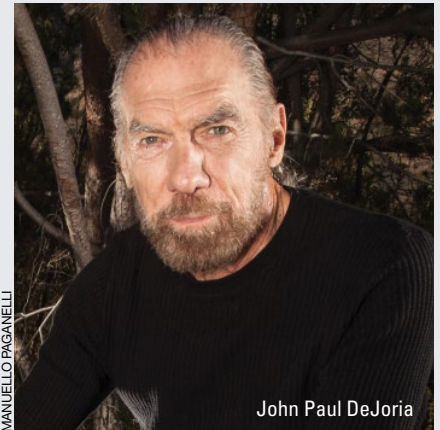
Regarding "Customer Disservice" [*Editor's Notes, December 2015/January 2016*]: Amen! Love your straightforward observations.

Richard Neely
posted on bjtonline.com

PREOWNED VALUES

The annual report on the preowned market [*"Down, Down, Down," December 2015/January 2016*] is a great article. A correction in large-cabin was inevitable based on tepid global demand, oversupply, strength of the U.S. dollar, and volatile geopolitics. Better not have a static business strategy when working in a highly cyclical industry.

Joe DiLallo
posted on bjtonline.com



JOHN PAUL DEJORIA

I thought I'd send you a note to let you know how much I enjoyed your interview with John Paul DeJoria [*December 2015/January 2016*]. It's very inspiring and I learned interesting facts that I didn't know about him.

Cristina Scarlata
Sterling, Massachusetts

I hope John Paul DeJoria is what I read, as I know how media and PR can sugarcoat everything and anyone. If he is the gentleman he [seems to be], he has my full respect. Wishing him a long life because he is giving unconditionally to the needy. (I don't mean money.)

Virginia Chan
posted on bjtonline.com

Your comments are welcome. Please e-mail letters to editor@bjtonline.com. Include your name, address, and a daytime telephone number. Letters are subject to editing and are presumed to be for publication unless the writer specifies otherwise.

CORRECTION: Our article on John Paul DeJoria (December 2015/January 2016) incorrectly indicated that the Horatio Alger Award is given by the U.S. Supreme Court. It is given by the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans.



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Stellar wines from Italy's Piedmont region

The Langhe wine region in Piedmont, in northwest Italy, is famous for Barolo and Barbaresco—complex, brick-hued reds made from the late-ripening Nebbiolo vines planted in the area's clay-rich soil. The fabulous 2011 harvest, promising refined tannins and a powerful perfume, has now been released to the market, so it's time to stock up on the "wine of kings, king of wines." Here are three options:

Barolo Arione 2011. Hailing from the organically minded Gigi Rosso's vineyards in Serralunga D'Alba, the heart of the Langhe, this wine is full-bodied and intense. Aged in Slavonian oak, the bouquet supplies liquorice, cherry, and violets, while the rounded tannins are accompanied by mineral notes on the long finish. Lay down for a minimum of 10 years.

Bruno Giacosa Barbaresco Albesani Santo Stefano 2011. The Barbaresco is typically less heavy than Barolo, which possibly explains why many Italians assert a preference (often lowering their voices as they

do so) for the lighter Nebbiolo expression. This—the last vintage from Santa Stefano to be produced by the lauded Bruno Giacosa—is a classic Barbaresco, offering sour cherry, wild strawberry, and red rose notes underscored by spice. Ready to drink this year.

Barolo Cannubi Boschis 1990. Also ready to drink now, this is the wine that established vintner Luciano Sandrone's reputation. *The Wine Advocate's* Robert Parker awarded it 99 points and described it as "amazingly rich, superbly balanced, profound Barolo that is crammed with flavor." —Chris Allsop

QUOTE UNQUOTE

"People sometimes ask me what the biggest perk of being president is. No. 1 is the plane."

— President Barack Obama

SOURCE: NEW YORK TIMES, OCT. 19, 2015



THE EUCALYPTUS

Felt Alley (between Hativat Yerushalayim 14 and D+rur Eliel Street), Jerusalem, Israel
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Closed Fridays and on Saturdays until 7:30 p.m. in observance of Shabbat.

The Eucalyptus, a contemporary Jerusalem restaurant owned by internationally renowned chef Moshe Basson, specializes in weaving Biblical ingredients into modern takes on traditional kosher Israeli and Middle Eastern cuisine. Ancient herbs such as hyssop, sumac, Jerusalem sage, and tamarind season the culinary creations, which include ingredients referenced in the Old Testament or grown in Israel.

Among the standouts: a delightfully flavorful warm mallow (wild herb) salad, chicken-stuffed figs in a tangy sweet and sour sauce, succulent lamb baked overnight in a clay pot, and an aromatic oriental ceviche of fresh fish, herbs, and cracked wheat. For dessert, try the Basbusa—a Jerusalem-style semolina cake with sesame cream and date



Chicken-stuffed figs

honey—or my favorite, pears poached in red wine served over sweet almond cream.

Located in the Artists' Colony within walking distance of the Old City's Jaffa Gate, the Eucalyptus offers a list of white and red wines—mostly Israeli labels from the Judean Mountains. Several options are available for vegetarians and vegans, including Basson's mother's Ingeria recipe: a beef and eggplant stew in a sweet and sour sauce that is also available in a vegan version. —Kim Rosenlof



BJT's Randy Padfield and Mark Phelps win journalism awards

Randy Padfield, **BJT**'s first editor, has been named the 2016 winner of Helicopter Association International's prestigious Lightspeed Aviation Excellence in Communications Award, which is part of the organization's Salute to Excellence awards program. He will accept the award during HAI's Heli-Expo, which will take place in Louisville, Kentucky from

February 29 to March 3.

Padfield, who continues to contribute to **BJT**, served as editor in chief and COO of our parent company, AIN Publications, until his retirement at the end of 2014. Before joining *AIN*, where he spent 22 years, he worked as a pilot. Padfield has written four books on aviation, including *Learning to Fly Helicopters*, which McGraw-Hill

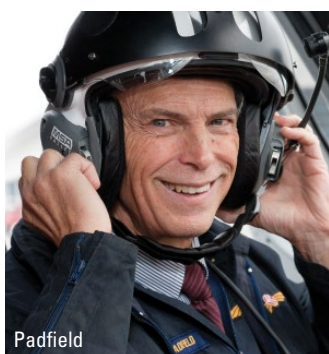
Education reissued in an updated second edition in 2013.

Last year, Padfield was a finalist for a Lifetime Achievement Award in the Aerospace Media Awards in Paris. In 1998, also, he won a Gold Wing Award for Journalism Excellence from the National Business Aviation Association.

Speaking of the Gold Wing Award, the 2015 winner was **BJT** columnist Mark Phelps. The award—which he accepted at the NBAA's annual convention in Las Vegas last November—recognizes three of his Exit columns in **Business Jet Traveler**: “The Brightest Side of Flying” (October/November 2014), “The Scan Before the Storm” (December 2014/January 2015), and “Crew Cuts” (April/May 2015).

This was the second Gold Wing for Phelps, an AIN Publications managing editor who also won the prize in 2005. It was also the fourth Gold Wing for **BJT**.

Our congratulations to Padfield and Phelps for these well-deserved awards. —Ed.



Padfield



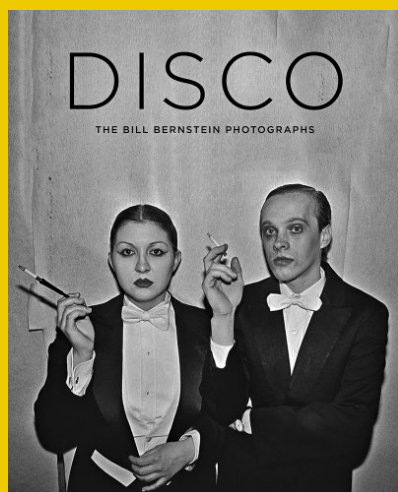
Phelps

ERIC RAZ

ERIC RAZ

MARIANO ROSALES

NEW BOOK DOCUMENTS NEW YORK'S DISCO YEARS



Photographer and frequent **BJT** contributor Bill Bernstein has been garnering accolades for his new coffee-table book, which documents a unique period in New York City nightlife. Called *Disco: The Bill Bernstein Photographs*, the book contains striking and memorable images from 1978–80, a time when the city's disco clubs were impacting music, fashion, and popular culture.

Bernstein, whose photos have accompanied numerous **BJT** stories and appeared on many of our covers, was personal photographer to Sir Paul McCartney for 15 years. He collaborated with the ex-Beatle on the 2004 book *Each One Believing: Paul McCartney Off Stage, On Stage and Back Stage*. ■



BJT readers—who represent one of the highest-net-worth magazine audiences anywhere—clearly have the means to contribute to a better world. To help you do that, we're spotlighting deserving organizations in every issue. All of them have received a four-star overall rating from Charity Navigator (charitynavigator.org), which evaluates philanthropic institutions based on their finances, accountability, and transparency.



COURTESY OF SAVE THE CHILDREN

Save the Children

(savethechildren.org)

Two sisters in London started this organization in 1919 to help starving children in the aftermath of World War I. The charity has since grown into a massive international network, and it remains one of the most well-respected groups of its kind. Its philosophy is based on the U.N. Declaration of the Rights of the Child (created in 1959 by Save the Children), which outlines basic rights such as protection from abuse and the right to full development. Today, Save the Children operates in 120 countries and provides emergency, health, nutrition, and education services. The group believes that “by transforming children's lives now, we change the course of their future and ours.” —Jennifer Leach English

Six ways to build a workplace that works

They all amount to common sense, but they're not exactly common practice.

by Jeff Burger

My late father, Chester Burger, published the first of his books about management, *Survival in the Executive Jungle*, in 1964. At the time, I was more interested in surviving high school, so I paid attention to the book mostly just because my dad had written it. I also liked that he'd slipped in my first and middle names as a pseudonym for one of the incompetent executives he described in its pages.

When I grew a little older and read the book more carefully, I was amazed at just how

many such executives he discussed. Could there really be that many of them in positions of authority? Then I grew older still and experience gave me the answer: yup.

What does it take to be a good manager? My father and his books provided some ideas, but I began to develop a few of my own after I started editing magazines and managing people myself. Here are half a dozen principles that have served me well. You've undoubtedly already heard variations of most of them but judging by what I've seen over the years, they all bear repeating:

Hire carefully.

Firing can be so tough that many companies keep employees around long after it becomes obvious they're not working out. That's why it's crucial to avoid problems up front by hiring prudently. Consider using multiple interviewers as well as giving trial assignments. In my view, there's nothing you can do to ensure the success of an enterprise that's more important than assembling the right team.

Invite everyone's ideas.

Maybe a junior sales executive has a suggestion for the manufacturing department, or someone on the design team has a plan to boost sales. Make it easy for people to be heard regardless of their level or area of responsibility.

They'll be grateful for the opportunity to contribute. And you need all the good ideas you can get. So make it clear that all suggestions are welcome—even the ones that might initially seem a little wild. Some of the best ideas are the “crazy” ones, and the riskiest route is to focus on playing it safe.

Deemphasize the time clock.

Unless your business requires a physical presence during certain hours, pay less attention to when your salaried employees come and go than to what they accomplish. In many companies, “office hours” should mean when your building is open, not necessarily when your staff should be on the premises.

If they're delivering first-rate work and meet-

Jeff Burger (jburger@bjtonline.com) is the editor of BJT.



JOHN T. LEWIS

The riskiest route is to focus on playing it safe.

ing deadlines, give them the flexibility to arrive late or leave early when necessary, or to do the job from home. They'll appreciate the freedom and your trust and will likely work harder as a result. If not, they probably shouldn't be in your employ in the first place.

Let people do their jobs.

I'd hesitate to restate the old advice about not micromanaging if there weren't so many executives who still aren't heeding it. By not micromanaging, you'll not only save yourself time; you'll save yourself from an unhappy workforce. People who feel they have no authority and no stake in the enterprise won't care much about its success or enjoy contributing to it.

You're paying people to do a job; get your money's worth by letting them do it. And don't overrule someone just because you like your own approach slightly better. Having it your way is

often not worth the impact on morale; besides, the staffer's plan may turn out to be better than yours.

Seek solutions, not culprits.

If one employee screws up repeatedly, you know what you have to do. But we all make mistakes from time to time, and if errors typically result in pointed fingers you'll do little but destroy morale. When a mistake happens, don't ask, "Who messed up?" Instead say, "What can we all do to prevent this from happening again?"

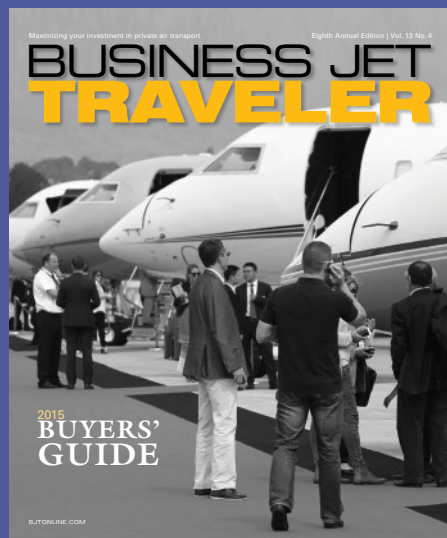
Focus on helping others.

People appreciate praise and rarely receive enough of it. Spend your time thanking staffers for their good work rather than promoting yourself and you'll win friends while boosting employee morale. It may seem counterintuitive, but if you concentrate on valuing the people

you manage and seeking ways to advance their careers rather than your own, your future will take care of itself. As a bonus, you'll likely find work less stressful and more satisfying.

I've heard all sorts of schemes for managing employees and increasing their productivity: put everyone in cubicles, try a new-fangled review process, schedule staff retreats for "bonding"—the list goes on. Forget the fads and quick fixes, most of which do more to sell books and consulting services than to foster a successful work environment.

Instead, simply hire the smartest, most motivated and creative people you can find; give them the power to make a difference; and let them know you appreciate their work. It's amazing how much you can accomplish in a workplace like that. It's also amazing how many workplaces aren't like that. **BJT**



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Erin Andrews

The Fox Sports reporter and *Dancing with the Stars* cohost needs to be in three cities in a typical week. Business aviation makes that possible.

by Matt Thurber

“This is chaos,” Erin Andrews said when she took a brief pause in her whirlwind pace to sit down for our interview at the Atlantic Aviation FBO in Santa Monica, California. A sideline reporter for Fox Sports and cohost of ABC-TV’s *Dancing with the Stars*, Andrews thrives on her busy schedule, which she said is made possible by business aviation and her relationship with Wheels Up, the membership-based private aviation company for which she is a spokesperson. “This is how I kind of roll, anyway,” she said. “I’m in three cities in one week.”

Andrews grew up in Tampa, Florida, where her father, Emmy award-winning investigative reporter Steve Andrews, worked for the local NBC-TV station. She was a cheerleader in high school, and in college she joined the dance team, though she admits that dancing was not her forte.

“I didn’t work very hard in high school and college,” Andrews told me. “I feel like if I worked as hard as I do now, I probably would have made a lot better grades. I think I learned in my jobs now that I need to work hard.”

You seem like an independent person. Did your parents encourage that?

To be independent? No. I think the biggest thing my parents encouraged was just passion, a drive, being competitive, hard working. It wasn’t hard for me to learn that because my mom and dad are both very hard working.

Where did you get your love of sports?

From my dad. Since I was a little kid, that was our bonding. My dad is from Springfield, Massachusetts, and he would say, “These are the Boston Celtics, and these are the Boston Red Sox, and this is why

PHOTO: MANUELLO PAGANELLI



Erin Andrews

I love these teams.” I would watch games with him, and he would tell me all about the organizations and the players and the coaches, and the competition, and who on the other team we liked and who we shouldn’t like. That’s where my passion developed.

So...New England Patriots fan?

Nope. My dad said when he was growing up that the Patriots weren’t very good and that they were never on television, so it was hard to see their games. So he grew up a Packers fan and big fan of [former Green Bay Packers quarterback] Bart Starr. I had a chance to meet Bart, and was with him in Lambeau [Field] and got to do a little back and forth with him. I was so excited to text my dad that photo.

How do you respond to criticism that women broadcasters are hired just for their appearance?

I would say those people don’t know what they’re talking about. I don’t hear credible people say things like that anymore. I think if you take that seriously that’s really sad.

Is sports a huge part of your life?

If you’re only going to be home two, three days out of the week because you are doing your job and living out of a suitcase and living and breathing football you have to be a sports geek.

In 2014, when you interviewed Seattle Seahawks cornerback Richard Sherman, there was a viral reaction online to his emotional attack on San Francisco 49ers’ Michael Crabtree.

I think it’s because an athlete has never done that on air before.

So it surprised people?

Yeah, yeah.

It seemed like you appreciated his candor.

Well, why wouldn’t you want an athlete to give you an answer like that when he’s so excited? Of course, you want an athlete to show he’s completely overwhelmed when he made a career-changing game-saving play that is putting [his team] in the Super Bowl.

That’s raw emotion. Why do people freak out [when they see that]? They freak out ’cause you don’t get it [often].

In 2010, before you became a *Dancing with the Stars* host, you competed on the show along with Maksim Chmerkovskiy. How does it feel to be the host instead of performing?

As much as I loved dancing with Maks and competing, I was horrible. I’m a lot more comfortable with a sequined microphone in my hand



With *Dancing with the Stars*’ Tom Bergeron.

ABC/JACK TAYLOR

than with ballroom shoes on, trying to learn the routines and worry about my posture and my toes being pointed, then being judged. But I was very grateful for my experience in 2010. It was a wonderful time.

You did pretty well—third place.

Yeah...I stunk. I’m my harshest critic. I was not good at all. I went up against the [pop group] Pussycat Dolls [lead singer Nicole Scherzinger] and an Olympic gold medal figure skater [Evan Lysacek]. I beat the football player [Chad Ochocinco], and that’s all I cared about.

Now you’re the cohost.

I love it. The cast and crew are phenomenal and [host] Tom Bergeron is one of the best out there, and his humor and the way he’s nurtured me and brought me along...it’s been wonderful. He’s fantastic.

You have a busy schedule.

As crazy as it sounds, we’re always looking for ways to make me more busy. Which is delusional and nuts, but that’s the kind of person I am. I’m driven. I don’t like to have a free minute. I’m almost happier when I’m chaotic. It’s pretty crazy, I know.

What does your schedule typically look like?

I’m at a game on Sunday, and then I fly home that night [to Los Angeles], wake up early Monday morning. I’m at the studio all day until 7:30 at night. I come back home. I’m either flying to New York to be at my other apartment or I’m on a random [assignment] here in L.A. And then I’m home Tuesday and Wednesday, and then Thursday I leave to go to my next game. It depends if I’m in New York or L.A. and where I’m flying to. Friday I do a sit-down feature with a player and coach, and then I go to coaches’ meetings, and then Saturday we’re in meetings all day with the opposing team, and then Sunday I’m at the game, and I start it all over.



Interviewing Pittsburgh Pirates center fielder Andrew McCutchen

RICK NORTON FOR FOX SPORTS

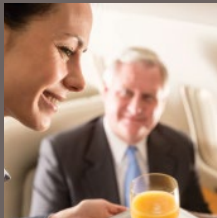
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Seven Benefits of Superior Aircraft Management



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February 2016





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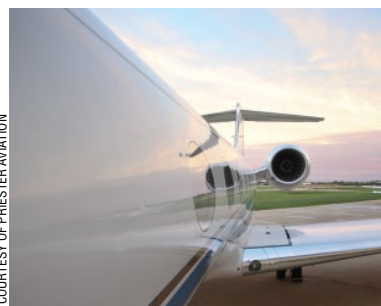
Seven Benefits of Superior Aircraft Management

Performance is the benchmark for measuring an aircraft's capabilities and advances, and improving it typically requires considerable time and expense. But not always: you can dramatically enhance the performance of your aircraft at almost no cost, virtually overnight, simply by entrusting it to a well-qualified management company. Such a company's operational efficiencies, economies of scale, 24/7 global services and range of expertise can enable your aircraft to deliver peak performance.

"These are complex machines, and the operations, regulatory structures and maintenance are equally complex," said National Air Transportation Association senior v-p Bill Deere. "The value of these companies is that they have expertise in all these areas."

Good management is becoming

more critical by the day. Owners fly to more remote destinations, regulations are ever changing, and shifting aircraft valuations have raised the financial stakes. Management services can make sense for "any business where aviation is a non-core function and managing airplanes is not what they do day to day," said Jeff Agur, CEO of aviation consultancy Van Allen. In fact, today a growing number of corporate flight departments also use select skills and resources of management companies to supplement their in-house capabilities. So whether you're flying your aircraft Part 91 or seeking charter revenue, and whether you're a first-time owner or experienced operator, you'd be wise to consider the many ways management companies can boost the performance of your aircraft and enhance your ownership experience. Here are seven of the most important.



COURTESY OF PRIESTER AVIATION



COURTESY OF JET AVIATION



COURTESY OF SOLARIUS AVIATION

1

Managing Operations

A Chicago-based Learjet 60 was recently set to fly to New York and back in 48 hours, but the flight-planning team at Priester Aviation's Global Operations Center predicted snow squalls and nasty winds at the hour of the scheduled return. "Our logistics people recommended moving the time up to beat the

are operating internationally, and we have the bandwidth and fortitude to manage that in real time in a robust way," said Pentastar v-p, sales and marketing, Brad Bruce. "While the dispatcher might be communicating with the crew, we're managing the maintenance portion in parallel." Based at Oakland County International Airport (PTK) in Waterford, Michigan, Pentastar manages 22 aircraft, from light jets up to an executive-configured MD-83.

But a company doesn't need a large fleet to manage aircraft globally. The Central Dispatch Department at Volo Aviation, which manages a Citation CJ1+, GIV and Falcon 900, "handles all details related to flight operations: permitting, navigation clearances, local handling and briefing the flight crews so they're aware and comfortable with everything being planned," said Kyle Slover, COO of the Stratford, Connecticut-based company.

Good operational management also ensures aircraft are strategically and economically maintained, and ready when needed. "We use a range of service providers that complement our in-house maintenance capabilities," said Slover.

Volo Aviation's "vector for visionaries" motto exemplifies its high-tech, high-touch spirit of innovation. The company, founded in 1997, has deep experience operating aircraft ranging from turboprops to large-cabin jets. In addition to managing aircraft, Volo manages FBOs and operates a growing network of its own FBOs (currently seven) in the eastern U.S., stretching from Connecticut to Florida.

Every owner's needs are unique, and management companies can typically tailor their services accordingly. Jet Aviation offers Silver ("a simple hourly charge"), Gold ("more traditional management") and Platinum ("all services are included") programs, said Don Haloburdo, the company's v-p and general manager of flight services. Headquartered in Teterboro, New Jersey, Jet Aviation manages more than 100 aircraft. "If you're having trouble getting a permit in Hong Kong, we've got boots on the ground there to find a solution. That's the value a Jet Aviation customer can get out of our global network," said Haloburdo.

Management and corporate flight departments

Corporate flight departments with as few as one aircraft are turning to management companies for operational assistance, including flight planning, permitting and supplemental lift, as well as other services. Solairus Aviation chairman and CEO Dan Drohan cited a recently inducted corporate GV his company is helping to manage. Solairus administrators found prior "billing errors and attempts to do maintenance that wasn't needed" on the aircraft. That discovery "rationalized the management fee three times over for the owner," Drohan said.

weather, and the owner was able to adjust the meeting time in New York two days in advance," recalled Andrew Priester, president and CEO of Chicago-based Priester Aviation, which manages 55 aircraft, primarily midsize and large-cabin jets.

That's just one small example of the advantage a quality management company can offer. Such a company can provide oversight of every aspect of trip planning and execution. At Pentastar Aviation's Operations Control Center, licensed dispatchers—who make up the majority of the staff—provide flight-following and operational-management services. "Our aircraft



COURTESY OF PENTASTAR AVIATION

COURTESY OF VOLO AVIATION



IT'S ALL IN THE DETAILS

EJM has devoted more than 35 years to perfecting every aspect of private aircraft management for today's sophisticated aircraft owners and flight departments. Our customized approach, tailored to your unique needs and serviced by your 24/7/365 team of aviation experts, takes the hassle out of the day-to-day details and lets you truly enjoy the full benefits of private aviation.

As part of the largest private aviation company in the world, our infrastructure and experience allow you to take advantage of unmatched industry savings and state-of-the-art technology you won't find anywhere else. But it's our people's focus on the little things that makes your experience with EJM exceptional. And as we know, **it's all in the details.**

2

Providing Crews & Support Teams

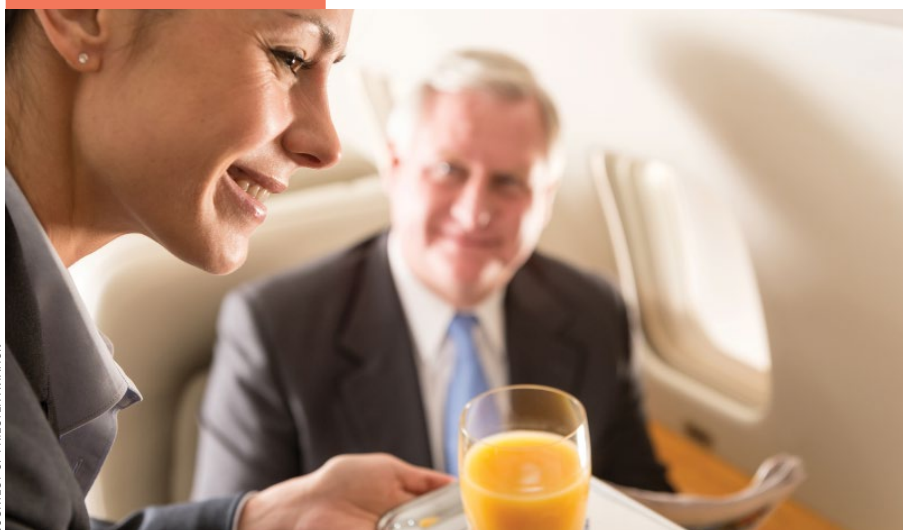
A management company's operational capabilities are only as good as the crews that fly the aircraft and the teams that support them. Quality providers attract top-notch talent and develop winning teams able to respond to owners' needs anytime, anywhere.

Owners who already have pilots find that good management companies view their flight crews as assets and provide all the support needed for the crews to perform at their best. When an owner joins Priester Aviation, "Our operations team sits down with the guys and gals flying the airplane so we understand their [operational] experiences and can accommodate how they like to fly their Gulfstream when doing the North Atlantic track systems," Priester said by way of example.

Meanwhile, fielding qualified flight crews is becoming more challenging. "It's an extremely difficult space and time in business aviation to find people to fly large-cabin airplanes around the world," noted Jet Aviation's Haloburdo. Jet Aviation leverages its relationship with sister company Jet Professionals, which provides crews for business aircraft. "It's an invaluable resource, whether for a permanent or temp solution," Haloburdo said. On the ground, Jet Aviation's client-services team focuses on "making sure the customers are getting the value of Jet Aviation to the maximum extent possible," Haloburdo added, citing the company's FBO, maintenance, completions and refurbishment capabilities.

Solairus Aviation creates for each owner's aircraft a dedicated team headed by a client aviation manager (CAM), often the chief pilot. This decentralized approach allows owners to base their aircraft virtually anywhere they desire. "We find a CAM who not only meets our leadership and flight-operations-experience requirements, but who also will be a good fit in personality and style with the client," said Solairus's Drohan. All CAMs and other team members gather at the annual Solairus Operators Conference for information sharing, professional-development training and corporate bonding.

Though Solairus was founded in 2009, its management team has decades of experience and includes Jake Cartwright, former president and CEO of Tag Aviation, USA. Headquartered in Petaluma in the San Francisco Bay area, the company now manages almost 100 aircraft. With 10 offices around the U.S., Solairus outsources all ancillary services, keeping its focus on serving as an advocate for its aircraft owners.



COURTESY OF PRIESTER AVIATION

Management and human resources

"The best assets a management company has and that clients can leverage are its people," said Clay Lacy Aviation president and CEO Brian Kirkdoffer. At Clay Lacy, that starts at the top. "We have a very experienced senior leadership team in all aspects of our management operation," he said, pointing to its maintenance, logistics, accounting, flight operations, avionics, interiors and FBO services. "Their experience, working together, really maximizes synergies for our clients. That's the people side—the most important side."

At Executive Jet Management (EJM), "Our average pilot has close to 10,000 hours of flight time, and our retention rates are very high," said Michael Tamkus, senior v-p, client services and management sales. "I'm proud to say EJM is a career destination." Pilots want to work for management companies like EJM because they provide superior support and training, in the interest of meeting owners' needs for safe, efficient carriage. Owned by NetJets and headquartered in Teterboro, New Jersey, EJM has more than 200 aircraft under management.



COURTESY OF CLAY LACY AVIATION



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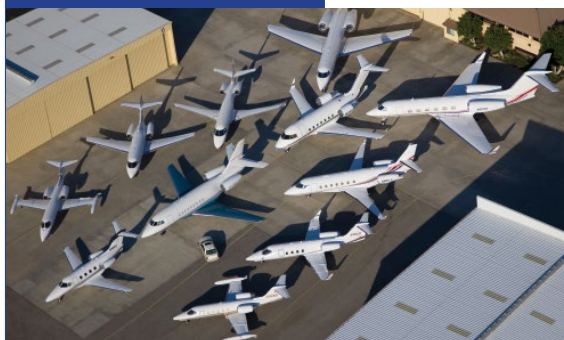
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3

Bringing charter benefits down to earth

Satisfying charter customers on the ground as well as in the air keeps them returning. Volo Aviation has been expanding its FBO network, and several of its seven locations (Bridgeport, Connecticut; Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; Hinesville, Georgia; Jacksonville, Sebring and Tampa, Florida; and Plattsburgh, New York) are popular destinations for its charter customers. "Now we're able to go to a Volo FBO, where we can deliver the level of service our customers are accustomed to," said Slover. "We want them to feel like they're home whenever they come to a Volo location."



COURTESY OF CLAY LACY AVIATION

Designing Charter Solutions

Charter revenue can "make ownership much more palatable" by offsetting costs, said James Butler, CEO of aircraft consultancy Shaircraft Solutions, but not every management company can offer solutions to match an owner's schedule and revenue targets.

"You have to know the market very well; it's a competitive marketplace," said Pentastar's Bruce. His company's Part 135 program, Pentastar Aviation Charter, Inc., employs seasoned sales professionals and "invests heavily in traditional and digital marketing," Bruce said. "We're spending the right marketing dollars in places where charter customers live, work and play." Pentastar also has its own catering facility, ensuring the quality of the dining on its charter flights.

Good management companies also make it easy for owners to approve charter requests and review revenue data. Priester Aviation recently introduced "a technology solution for the owner-approval process," said Priester. The app notifies the owner by text and/or email when a trip request is received and provides data including the number of hours being billed, fuel surcharge, average stage length and anticipated revenue, Priester said. "All the owner has to do is hit 'accept,' and our charter-services team knows it can confirm with the charter client."

Owners who occasionally need supplemental lift can also benefit from a management company's charter services, noted Clay Lacy Aviation's Kirkdoffer. "If the owner of a midsize or light jet needs access to a large-cabin aircraft, or vice versa—there may be a \$350,000 charter on their aircraft that they don't want to pass up—they have access to a fleet of aircraft to fit whatever mission they want, at rates far below general access [prices]."

Founded in 1968 by its namesake, Clay Lacy Aviation was the first Learjet operator in the western U.S. Today the company manages

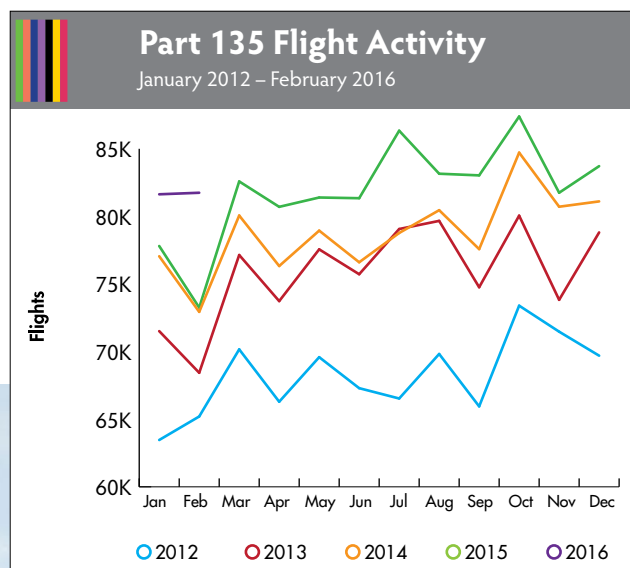
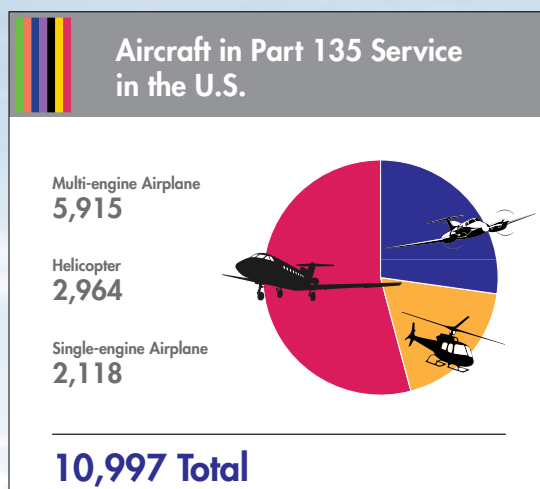
some 80 aircraft—primarily large-cabin jets—and is in the midst of a \$15 million upgrade to its headquarters in Van Nuys, California. A full-service provider, Clay Lacy offers maintenance, interior completions, avionics installations, sales, acquisitions and FBO services. The company recently opened a Part 145 repair station at its Seattle FBO.

A management company's charter fleet can also indicate the level of trust and confidence placed in the business. Jet Aviation recently added an



COURTESY OF PRIESTER AVIATION

executive-configured ACJ318 to its charter rolls, the first such U.S.-based model available for hire. The owners placed it with Jet Aviation, said Haloburdo, “because the aircraft will be operated around the world, and they see the value of our worldwide FBO network, and the value of Jet Aviation as a world-class operator.” Another recent addition, a Sikorsky S-76, speeds owners to aircraft that are based at outlying airports as a result of hangar shortages in the New York metro area. “With a copter in the fleet, it’s an easy solution,” said Haloburdo. ■



SOURCE: ARGUS INTERNATIONAL



4

Getting a JetStart in ownership

Jet Aviation offers JetStart, a management program for first-time owners who are unsure whether they need a management company. "It provides some basic guidance on infrastructure to support the scope of their operation and gets them up and running," said Jet Aviation's Haloburdo. Aircraft brokers and consultants regularly recommend the program to new customers, who often opt for management. "When you start having that discussion with a first-time buyer," said Haloburdo, "it frequently turns into, 'Can you handle this for me?'"

Supporting New Owners

A stabilizing U.S. economy and great values in preowned aircraft are helping to draw more first-time owners into the market, and quality providers can manage their aircraft properly from day one. A first-time owner contacted Clay Lacy Aviation this past year, two months before delivery of his Dassault Falcon 7X. "We had 60 days to find crew and a director of maintenance, as well as establish a base of operations in a location without existing office space, hangar space or fuel arrangements, and secure the appropriate RVSM [reduced vertical separation minimum] letters of authorization [LOA]," said Kirkdoffer. "Typically it can take one to five months for the LOA, but we do it often and know what the FAA wants. We had the authorization in hand at the end of the first flight."

Executive Jet Management's Tamkus recounted the recent experience of a first-time owner who bought a suddenly available Bombardier Global 5000. "The aircraft came to us within three weeks with the new technology Vision Flight Deck, and crew services was able to get the airplane flying internationally for the owner while we were still interviewing full-time pilots," said Tamkus. "So in very short order



COURTESY OF SOLARIUS AVIATION

we were able to obtain airspace approvals, get crewmembers qualified, and fly the airplane safely and efficiently."

Determining the aircraft that best suits a prospective owner's needs is another complex undertaking at which good management companies excel. "The first thing is to match the airplane with the mission," said Slover at Volo Aviation, which provides acquisition consultation services. Volo augments in-house technical expertise and usage analysis with third-party specialists, including aircraft brokers, financiers and tax planners who can detail operating costs, staffing needs, maintenance projections and residual values.

Pentastar plans to launch PentaShares, a shared-ownership program selling quarter shares in new Beechcraft King Air 250 twin turboprops. "We want to provide solutions to local or regional customers who might not be able to afford whole aircraft," said Bruce. Meanwhile, Pentastar helped one global public company rebuild its fleet this past year, establishing operating bases for three intercontinental and three midsize jets. "They wanted an organization that could partner on issues from emissions assessment to financial, maintenance and operational modeling, as well as aircraft outfitting and staffing," Bruce said.

Created as a division of Chrysler more than 50 years ago, Pentastar became an independent company after Daimler-Benz bought Chrysler early in this century, and is owned today by Edsel Ford II, whose family has a rich legacy in business aviation. The five hangars at its headquarters at PTK can each accommodate multiple BBJs and ACJs, and its Stargate Terminal is the only private aviation facility with a jet bridge.

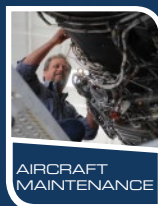
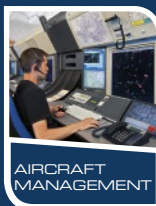


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claylacy.com

Founded in 1968 by world-renowned pilot Clay Lacy, Clay Lacy Aviation was the first aircraft management company west of the Mississippi River and today operates one of the largest fleets of charter and managed aircraft in the world. Clay Lacy Aviation offers a comprehensive suite of aviation services including aircraft management, charter, sales, maintenance, avionics and interior completions designed to provide the highest levels of safety, service and value for our clients.



COURTESY OF PENTASTAR AVIATION



executivejetmanagement.com

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jetaviation.com

Jet Aviation, a wholly owned subsidiary of General Dynamics, was founded in Switzerland in 1967 and is one of the leading business aviation services companies in the world. With more than 20 facilities worldwide, the company provides maintenance, completions and refurbishment, engineering, FBO and fuel services, along with aircraft management, charter services and personnel services.



pentastaraviation.com

Pentastar Aviation, wholly owned by Edsel B. Ford II, is a leader in the world of business aviation, providing aircraft management, advisory services, aircraft maintenance, avionics services, interior services, private jet charter, shared ownership, and award-winning FBO services. With over a half-century of experience servicing regional and global travelers, we are committed to delivering the highest standards of safety and service excellence to our customers.



COURTESY OF VOLO AVIATION



COURTESY OF EJM



COURTESY OF PRIESTER AVIATION

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FlightWorks

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solairus.aero

We understand that owning an aircraft is a major investment that comes with considerable responsibilities. When you select Solairus Aviation to support the operation of your aircraft, you gain a full range of services focused on safety, service and savings. Our focus on the management of your aviation asset allows you to simply enjoy the benefits of your investment—flexibility, convenience and reliability.



Volo Aviation

voloaviation.com

At Volo Aviation, the vector for visionaries, our mission is to provide clients comprehensive and innovative management services with an individual focus. Our tailored aircraft management programs deliver professional oversight of your asset, with the knowledge gained from over 20 years in operation as a certificated air carrier. From turboprops to long-range jets, let our experience help guide you through the complex area of aircraft ownership and operations.



COURTESY OF JET AVIATION



COURTESY OF CLAY LACY



COURTESY OF SOLAIRUS AVIATION

5

Ensuring Safety & Security

Safety is the first priority of every quality management company, and industry leaders continually raise their standards. “The SMS [Safety Management System] culture developed over the last 10 years has completely

Priester Aviation subjects every planned flight to a risk assessment, and every international operation is reviewed for security threats en route and at the destination with specialists at Universal Weather, AirMed International and a private consultancy. If threats exist, standard policy includes providing secure transportation and accommodations for passengers and crew. Occasionally the risks are too great, Priester said, recalling an owner’s proposed flight to Myanmar that the company vetoed.

Founded in 1945, Priester Aviation manages about 55 aircraft and operates VistaJet’s Challenger 350 fleet in the U.S. Andrew Priester represents the third generation of the family to head the company. In addition to whole management, services offered include maintenance control, accounting, trip planning, crewing and insurance. Still an innovator, the company completely reviewed and overhauled all its processes three years ago, with “a sole focus on how we deliver quality to the customer,” Priester said.

Missions don’t have to head to foreign trouble spots to engender risk. Volo Aviation’s standard assessment includes a review of insurance documents, leveraging its relationship with Marsh & McLennan and its Global Risk Center. “So many times we find the owner isn’t properly protected,” Slover said. When owners fly internationally, Volo—which is Argus Platinum, Wyvern Wingman and IS-BAO Stage 3 certified—ensures local insurance requirements and special endorsements are in place.



COURTESY OF JET AVIATION

Putting safety to the test

Emergency Response Plans (ERP) are vital for preparedness, and Executive Jet Management (EJM) “live tests” its ERP to ensure readiness. A recent three-day test “simulated an international crash on a charter flight with an owner’s airplane, while at the same time, our headquarters building had a bomb threat,” said EJM’s Tamkus. “We had to execute the ERP while evacuating our operation.” EJM has involved the FBI, NTSB and Red Cross in the tests. “Tests like these really expose any weak points in the plan,” said Tamkus.

changed the operating environment for business aviation,” said Drohan at Solairus Aviation. “It’s divided operators into those that are truly seeking to be better, and those doing as little as possible to get by.” Clearly in the former camp, Solairus has a dedicated safety department (“That’s literally the bare-bones requirement in our book,” Drohan said), along with Argus Platinum, Wyvern Wingman and IS-BAO (International Standard—Business Aviation Operations) Stage 3 certification.

The security component of safety is a growing focus as owners travel to more distant and remote locations in an unstable world.

Clay Lacy recently brought aboard retired USAF Col. Preston Williamson, former vice commander of the 89th Air Lift Wing, which operates Air Force One and other aircraft used by high-ranking government and military leaders. “He’s been making sure the President of the United States has been safe for the last eight years, so he brings an additional layer of experience in the security area,” said Kirkdoffer.



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6

Offering Compliance & Upgrade Expertise

Regulatory mandates and cabin and cockpit upgrade options present many owners with challenging choices. Management companies have the knowledge and

used as the STC (supplemental type certificate) launch platforms for several cockpit upgrades.

Yet simply staying abreast of mandates and upgrade solutions, a forte of management companies, can be beyond the means of many owners. Executive Jet Management has a government-affairs specialist on staff to monitor regulatory issues.

EJM has more than 200 aircraft from private owners and flight departments under management, based at some 85 locations across the U.S. Its annual pilot and maintenance technician roundtables help forge its dedicated, unified staff. EJMC recently expanded its client-services team, adding a chef and concierge personnel, and the company embraces the professional development of all its employees. EJMC's management capabilities are complemented by aircraft acquisition and sales, and consulting services.

Additionally, EJMC representatives sit on customer advisory boards at OEMs and hold positions in industry working groups. "We understand what's required today, what's coming down the pike, and the investment needed," said Tamkus.

Nonetheless, "Meeting the mandate requirements remains a difficult investment decision in older aircraft," said Bruce at Pentastar, which recently developed an ADS-B Out compliance solution with avionics manufacturer



COURTESY OF VOLO AVIATION

The charter upgrade decision

Cabin amenities affect demand for an aircraft in the charter market, and management companies can advise owners on the impact of upgrades on charter revenue. "You can trace that all the way to [Rockwell Collins's] Airshow, a passenger enhancement a lot of charter clients wanted," said Priester. Today Wi-Fi and talk-and-text connectivity are hot cabin features. "It's our obligation to educate owners on expectations in the charter market," he said. Priester can provide owners with cost-benefit analyses that include effects on residual aircraft values and on their own onboard experience.

means to clarify the path forward—sometimes blazing the trail themselves.

"For us, and most management companies, [the upgrade question] involves a comparison: this is what it costs to get compliant, and if you can no longer perform a mission because you're not, how much impact does that have on your operations?" said Slover at Volo Aviation. "The answer can determine the wisdom of the investment." In search of alternative solutions, Volo has managed aircraft



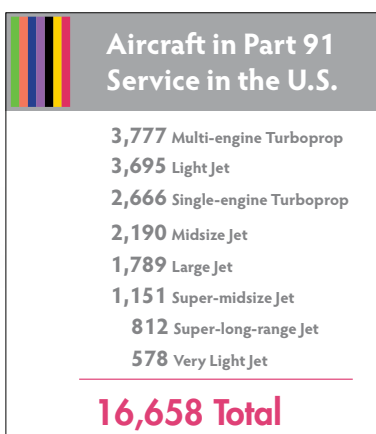
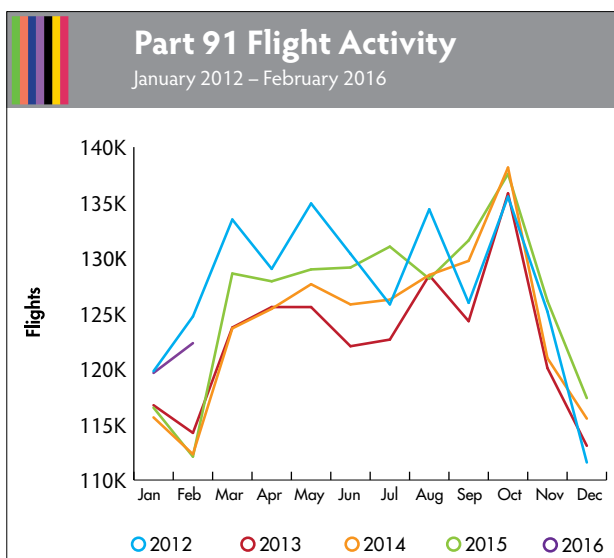
COURTESY OF EJMC



COURTESY OF PRIESTER AVIATION

Rockwell Collins for the GIVs in its fleet. ("It costs around \$100,000 as opposed to the \$300,000 it would otherwise cost," said Bruce.) Meanwhile, cabin refurbishments can give an older aircraft a like-new interior relatively inexpensively. For owners seeking to refresh their aircraft this way, the recently established Pentastar Interior Design Center contains "thousands of samples of wood grains, carpets, suede, leather and metallic trim," Bruce said, so customers can see and feel the materials on site. The samples made a big difference in planning a recent GV refurbishment, he added. "The owners had thought they would have to verbalize their ideas and concepts."

But management companies don't need in-house capabilities to offer refurbishment or other services. "In 2015 we assisted clients in five to seven major refurbishment projects," said Drohan at Solairus Aviation. "We acquire two to four open bids from approved vendors, present those bids to the client, and work through the proposals with them." In fact, Solairus outsources all services, including maintenance, to approved providers, avoiding any potential perceived conflict of interest, earning money only on its management fee and share of charter revenue. "We stick to our knitting," Drohan said. ■



SOURCE: ARGUS INTERNATIONAL



7

Delivering Cost Savings

The fees that management companies charge can be recouped many times over in operational efficiencies and cost avoidance. But management services become even more compelling when you factor in savings on fuel purchases, training, hangaring and other expenses. “If you go with a well-established, efficient management company and they’re not creating more savings than costs, then there’s a problem,” said Clay Lacy Aviation’s Kirkdoffer. Clay Lacy provides owners with an annual report on savings realized through fuel-purchase discounts, crew training and travel, avionics purchases, and MRO and

FBO services. Kirkdoffer cited the example of a GIV-SP that came to Clay Lacy this past year from owners who had operated aircraft independently for 50 years. “We were able to substantially reduce their fixed costs as well as their direct [operating] costs, because of our infrastructure and buying power.”

For good management companies, delivering reduced costs “is not just about buying power with the number of aircraft but also about how you operate and insure those aircraft,” said Jet Aviation’s Haloburdo. His company’s ongoing safety and risk-management programs allow for preferred insurance rates that group purchases alone can’t provide.

Founded in 1967, Jet Aviation, a General Dynamics company, has more than two dozen locations in the U.S., Europe, Asia, the Middle East and the Caribbean. In addition to offering management services, it is one of the world’s premier maintenance, refurbishment and completions providers.

Clearly owners benefit from management companies’ economies of scale and volume discounts. “We’re buying \$40 million to \$45 million per year in aircraft maintenance, so we’re able to drive that value into our relationship with providers” and receive discounts, said Drohan at Solairus Aviation. Solairus provides discounts for onboard Wi-Fi subscriptions, and on hotels and rental cars through its International Association of Travel Agents’ membership, in addition to savings on fuel, training and insurance.

Owners who need supplemental lift for planned or unplanned maintenance on their aircraft, for example, can also realize substantial savings. Executive Jet Management’s Owners Club provides discounted access to the company’s charter fleet, a common benefit among good management providers. “[A customer’s] aircraft may be down, but we’ve got options, and at the same time our fleet-maintenance group is working to get the airplane back in service,” said Tamkus. “That’s a benefit of staying with us.”

The value of asset management

Perhaps the biggest opportunities to realize savings and reduce costs come when buying or selling an aircraft. Management companies offer expertise that can save owners or prospective buyers from making mistakes that could easily run into seven figures. “We provide consulting services specific to those acquisition needs,” said Bruce at Pentastar Aviation, which has a certified aircraft appraiser on staff. “We get very involved with everything from needs analysis to appraisals to lifecycle costs on five-year aircraft-ownership programs.” With its diverse fleet, Pentastar can also provide customers with access to just about any model of aircraft they’re considering for purchase. “Our consultation team can give them a total immersion,” said Bruce.

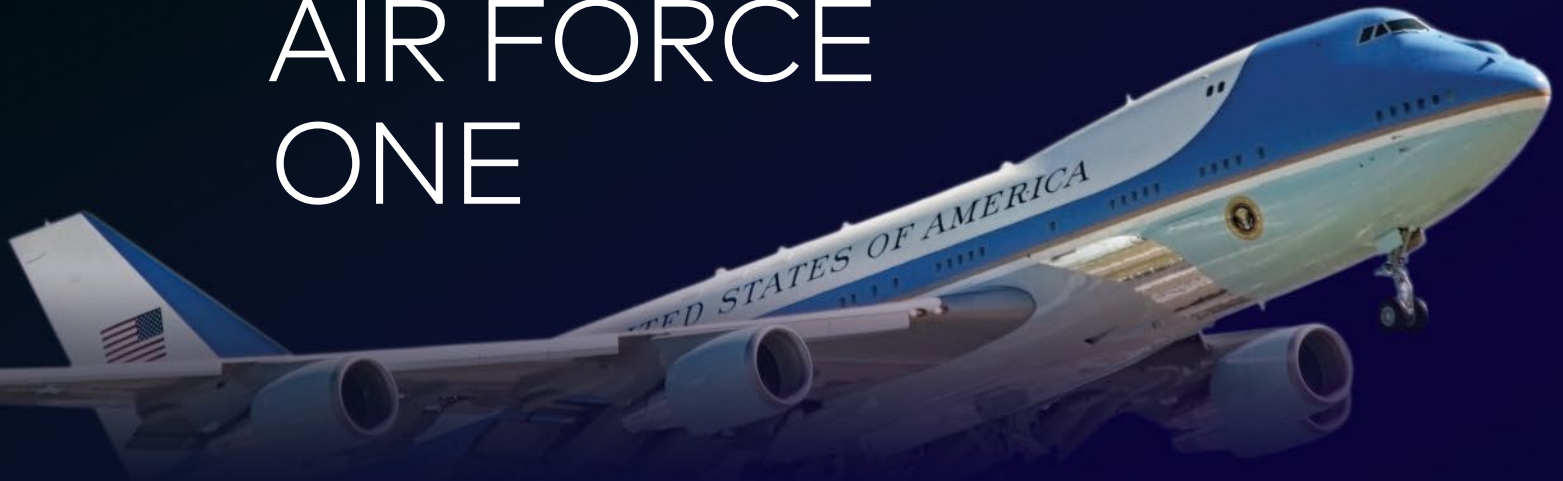


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Do you encourage young kids to get involved in broadcasting? Is it a good career?

Well, I do it for a living, so I hope it is. I definitely encourage young girls. I have dads and moms come up to me all the time and say, “My daughter looks up to you. She really wants to do what you do. What advice would you give her?” And I say, “read.” When I got out of college, my dad said to me, “You’re not going to work just college football your entire life. You need to become well rounded. You need to learn other sports. If you want to do this, you’re going to have to know about everything.” So my biggest advice to kids is you’ve just got to read. And you’ve got to study.

And that has helped you?

It’s the biggest reason why I’m here.

What else would you like to do career-wise?

I like where we are in reaching two demographics. I’ve got the sports world, and I’m working in the entertainment industry with *Dancing with the Stars*. I’d like to keep it that way.

Where would I like to see my career go? Michael Strahan [cohost of the *Live! With*

Kelly and Michael TV show] has me come in every season when Kelly [Ripa] goes on vacation, to fill in for her. I love that kind of venue. I think that would be fun to do. But I can’t imagine not being involved with football on Sundays. I just love the sport way too much to not be involved with it.

What do you like about business aviation?

There’s no TSA, no waiting for your bags—you drive up and you go. It’s efficient, and you don’t have to worry about delays.

Is this how you travel mostly, using Wheels Up?

Yeah, I use that to get me from football to *Dancing with the Stars* every Monday. [Without business aviation] it wouldn’t be possible for me to do a game in Green Bay, Wisconsin, at four o’clock Eastern and then be back in Los Angeles to do *Dancing with the Stars* the next morning.

Do you like the King Air 350?

It’s fabulous. You can do the lie-down bed, which is wonderful. There’s wireless, which is huge for me because on Sundays I’m on the plane before *Sunday Night Football*, so I’m able

FASTFACTS

NAME: Erin Jill Andrews

BORN: May 4, 1978 (age 37) in Lewiston, Maine

OCCUPATION: Fox Sports sideline reporter and cohost of ABC-TV’s *Dancing with the Stars*

TRANSPORTATION: Wheels Up King Air 350

EDUCATION: B.A. in telecommunications, University of Florida

PERSONAL: Lives in Los Angeles area. Enjoys working out and attending hockey games. In a relationship with Minnesota Wild pro hockey player Jarret Stoll.

to keep up with the game, with the scores, and with Twitter, what everybody is saying so I don’t feel like I’m wasting time. I’m able to read my articles to get prepped for next week’s game and also I can check my emails, check the scripts that *Dancing with the Stars* is sending me.

The layout is wonderful, the Wi-Fi is huge. It’s just a wonderful experience. It makes it efficient for me because when I get on the plane it’s not about relaxing. It’s just getting ready for my next show that morning, and it’s also getting me ready for the game on the next Sunday. So it allows me to have an office, lie down, have a drink, get something to eat.

Any desire to get your hands on the controls?

No. I don’t need that in my life. I’m very big on not trying to do what other people do better.

Would you like to fly privately more often?

Oh gosh, I don’t know anyone who would ever turn their nose up at it. It is the best way to travel. When my boyfriend [Minnesota Wild professional ice hockey player Jarret Stoll] and I are on private jets, we’re always just saying, “We need a jet!” Whenever we book deals or anything like that, we’re always like, “plane money, plane money!” It’s the way you want to travel, absolutely. **BJT**

Matt Thurber (mthurber@bjtonline.com), a longtime contributor to **BJT**, is a senior editor at our sister publication, *Aviation International News*.




MANUELO PAGANELLI

The Star-Spangled BASH

For private jet travelers, a trip to events like the Super Bowl or Sundance can mean up-close encounters with celebrities.


by Joe Sharkey

 ear after year, business jet travelers flock to major sporting and arts-world events such as the Sundance Film Festival, the Super Bowl, the Academy Awards, the Indianapolis 500, and the U.S. Open Tennis Tournament.

Well-heeled arrivals at events like these are often eager to attend exclusive parties where the draw is the appearance of major sports figures or other celebrities. But there's a new twist to this undertaking, as organizers increasingly strive to use such stars to offer ever-more-special enticements.

Take singer Katy Perry's performance for an invitation-only crowd of 3,200 corporate executives last November at the Dubai Airshow. After the concert, a production of Dubai-based Done Events, the pop princess also was the centerpiece at an even more exclusive dinner with a few hundred bleary-eyed guests.

Then there are offerings like the David Sanborn Townhouse Experience, in which corporate guests pay for a two-night stay at the deluxe Mandarin Oriental Hotel in New York. The package includes Saturday night dinner, drinks, and a tête-à-tête with and performance by Sanborn—all at his Manhattan townhouse.

 t's a hardball, competitive field, and big players are moving in. For example, to expand its reach in

corporate hospitality management, Hollywood's giant Creative Artists Agency, known as CAA, recently bought the New York-based event-management company Goviva and another firm, Beyond Sports & Entertainment. Along with a third company, Inside Sports & Entertainment, which CAA acquired in 2014, these outfits are part of a new division, CAA Premium Experience.


The venture “puts us in a position to reshape the corporate hospitality and VIP events business globally,” says Michael Levine, the co-head of CAA Premium Experience. “The sweet spot is large corporations that

are using passion points within popular culture to create unique experiences for employees or existing or potential customers.”

Some events that draw heavy private jet travel from college alumni and corporate sponsorship activities—such as football weekends at schools like Notre Dame and the University of Alabama—stay below the radar, so to speak. Exclusive parties and celebrity appearances through corporate sponsorship deals are popular on such weekends.

But the major action is at internationally famous events, where celebrity wrangling is increasingly

part of the process. “The Super Bowl is certainly the big one for [private-jet] travel, but so is Sundance,” says Robert Tuchman, a Goviva founder who is now an executive with CAA Premium Experience. The Masters golf tournament, he adds, “is real close to the Super Bowl in terms of the number of private aircraft that fly in.” Indeed, according to NetJets, it alone accounted for 350 flights arriving for the 2015 Masters—compared with about 200 in 2014.

 s a big new player at the table, CAA can draw on its huge rosters of movie, television, and music-world stars for its Premium Experience programs, which arrange private-jet travel and luxury hotel packages and snare hard-to-get tickets in addition to offering what Tuchman calls “once-in-a-lifetime” encounters with celebrities.

The Super Bowl is an especially elaborate hospitality event this year, with the added allure of the San Francisco location coupled with the celebrations surrounding the 50th anniversary of the pro-football classic. Another anniversary is this spring's 100th running of the Indianapolis 500, where a bigger-than-ever, “Super Bowl-like” corporate splash is being planned, says Mark Miles, chief executive of the company that owns the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

For the Super Bowl, Tuchman and his colleagues spent months



MONA BROWN

arranging something called the CAA House. It's "a private town-home venue," he says, "where we'll bring in our talent for personal interactions, including some of our big musical acts and celebrity chefs, to do dinners and interact with the clients."

Participating celebrities are expected to become more involved in hospitality activities, "doing stuff that the clients can be a part

corporate appearances if the money and other matters are right. The Rolling Stones, for example, played for a private party thrown by the investor Ralph Whitworth at a club near San Diego while on their U.S. tour last May. The band pocketed \$3 million for that gig.

"I think a lot of talents, even the biggest ones, look for new ways to engage with and grow



"It used to be a big deal at these kinds of events just to get former athletes to do a Q&A for you," says Tuchman of CAA Premium Experience. "Now people's expectations have evolved."



of," Tuchman says. "I think a lot of that has to do with clients' growing expectations, and even the effect of reality TV, where people want to be immersed in the experience.

"It used to be a big deal at these kinds of events just to get former athletes to do a Q&A for you," Tuchman continues. "Now people's expectations have evolved. We might bring in the host from *The Bachelor* and create a *Bachelor*- or a *Shark Tank*-type of event. Or we'll have a TV personality like Giuliana Rancic do a celebrity *Fashion Police* show, or we'll design wellness events working with nutritionists like Joy Bauer from the *Today Show*. It's a matter of customizing and creating these kinds of celebrity events that were never even on the radar five or six years ago."

These days, even the world's top celebrities are willing to do

their audience and also to just make money," Tuchman says. "In terms of bands, look at what's happened—artists getting paid for albums is a thing of the past, and their [income] now is much more from touring and private events.

"So you get creative," he continues. "Say, for a hospitality event, you take a big Southern band, combine them with a famous barbecue chef, and create a one-off experience for a company where they bring in their top 500 clients. It used to be you'd just arrange for the client to go to the concert or wherever; now you're bringing that talent to the client."

Of course, big celebrities don't fly the airlines to these events any more than these clients do. So almost always, a business jet is in the picture—and in the star's contract.

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Joe Sharkey (jsharkey@bjtonline.com), the author of six books and a longtime **BJT** contributor, wrote a weekly business travel column for the *New York Times* for 16 years.

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FALCON 8X

It's a little longer—and in many ways, much better—than its wildly popular predecessor.

by Mark Huber

NEW AIRCRAFT PREVIEW



It's said that the margin of victory in life can sometimes be measured in inches. Dassault seems to think so, as it is betting that another 43 inches of fuselage length will help make a big difference when it comes to the Falcon 8X. The long-range, large-cabin trijet, which the company will begin delivering to customers later this year, boasts a slightly longer passenger cabin than its 7X predecessor. That translates into 7 percent more volume—enough to allow for a somewhat longer galley, a little more legroom between seats, or an optional steam shower in the aft lav.

The added inches—and a long list of other enhancements—push the price of the 8X to nearly \$60 million, making it about 10 percent more expensive than the wildly successful 7X. But Dassault apparently thinks price won't be a stumbling block and that a ready audience exists for the airplane: some of the more than 200 owners of the 7X and perhaps those waiting—and waiting—for the under-development Bombardier Globals as well as for the Gulfstream G650ER, which is in production but has a long backorder list. The

Globals are even more expensive than the 8X, at \$71 million and \$75 million, respectively, as is the Gulfstream, which runs upwards of \$66 million.

Dassault might be right about the market for the 8X, which offers a quick way for owners of earlier models to take a step up. The aircraft has a range of 6,450 nautical miles (with eight passengers and three crew, at Mach 0.8), 500 more than the 7X. The extra range—courtesy of an additional center-fuselage fuel tank and a lighter, redesigned wing—enables the 8X to fly nonstop from Hong Kong to London, Paris to Singapore, and Beijing to Los Angeles. The



At a Glance

Price	\$58 million	
Range*	6,450 nm	
Maximum cruise speed	Mach 0.9	
Long-range cruise speed	Mach 0.80	
Takeoff distance at max weight	6,000 ft	
Landing distance (typical landing weight)	2,150 ft	
Passengers (typical)	11-14	
Crew	3-5	
Cabin	Length	42.67 ft
	Height	6 ft 2 in
	Width	7 ft 8 in
	Volume	1,695 cu ft
Baggage volume		140 cu ft

*Eight passengers, three crew, NBAA reserves, Mach 0.8)
Source: Dassault

Thanks to nearly 1,700 cubic feet of space, you can choose from more than 30 layouts in three zone configurations.





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NEW AIRCRAFT PREVIEW



reworked wing also keeps the 8X competitive on short runways; it needs 6,000 feet to take off fully loaded but can stop in 2,150 feet.

The Pratt & Whitney Canada PW307D engines have been optimized to offer 6,725 pounds of thrust each, with a 5 percent thrust increase and lower emissions. Dassault claims the 8X is more fuel-efficient than other offerings in this class.

And you get all manner of other goodies that weren't available or that engineers didn't think of when the 7X hit the market back in 2007. Things like:

- A cabin altitude of just 3,900 feet at a cruising altitude of 41,000 feet, ensuring that you arrive at your destination not only freshly showered but alert and refreshed. (The 8X has a service ceiling of 51,000 feet.)
- More cabin layouts. Thanks to nearly 1,700 cubic feet of space, you can choose from more than 30 layouts in three zone configurations. Possibilities include turning the aft cabin into a media lounge with oversized divans and a



Dassault might be right about the market for the 8X, which offers a quick way for owners of earlier models to take a step up.

- pop-up monitor or making it a separate state-room with a sliding pocket door. Mid cabin there's also space to install a six-seat conference grouping.
- More cabin windows. You get four more than on the 7X for a total of 33. That means natural light in more places.
- A choice of three galley layouts, and galleys that are 25 percent larger overall. The added space means you can accommodate the larger chillers and refrigerators envisioned to service passengers on what can be 14-hour flights.

- New cabin seats that are electrically assisted and eliminate the traditional mechanical cabling system for greater reliability. Full electric function seats also will be available.
- A new high-definition entertainment system.
- New, color-adjustable LED lighting.
- A new system that increases cabin humidity by at least 20 percent.
- A redesigned convertible crew rest area opposite the galley that converts into a closet when not in use.
- An optional vacuum lavatory in the forward cabin. (You really want this. Think odor abatement next to the galley. Enough said.) The vacuum lav in the aft cabin remains standard.
- A better cockpit. It incorporates super-comfy seats and takes styling cues from Dassault's new 5X twinjet. And it features the new EASy 3 glass-panel digital avionics, which are built around the Honeywell Primus Epic System and the Elbit head-up display, which combines enhanced and synthetic vision.

The 8X builds on the features and flight characteristics that have made the 7X popular, adding increased utility and luxury. Dassault is so convinced that this is a winning formula that it already is expanding its completion facility in Little Rock, Arkansas. That seems like a prudent move, because while the new airplane may be only inches longer than its predecessor, it really is miles apart.

BJT

Industry veteran **Mark Huber** (mhuber@bjtonline.com) has reviewed aircraft for **BJT** since 2005.



Fractional fallout

When a jet-share provider sells off a model, could a glutted market reduce the value of your wholly owned aircraft?

by James Wynbrandt

What happens to your airplane's value when a major fractional program starts liquidating its fleet of the same model?

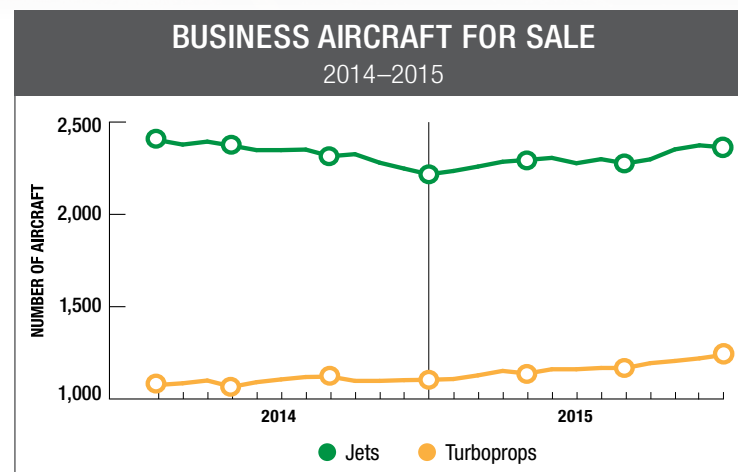
Last year, this column addressed the expected impact on values as a host of new business jets enter service in coming quarters, ending production of some current models and rendering family lines one generation older. [See "In with the New...", August/September 2015—Ed.] Now, as I report in my Inside Fractionals column (see page 44), fractional providers are upgrading their fleets with new models, a development that likely signals the impending retirement of many older aircraft in the same category.

Flexjet, for example, has said it plans to replace its Bombardier Global Express jets with Gulfstream

G500s. And while NetJets hasn't announced its full intentions, its midsize Challenger 350 and Citation Latitude buys could send its Citation Sovereigns and Hawker 800/900XPs out to pasture, while recent upping of its Phenom 300 orders could signal a phase-out of its Citation Encore and Excel series light jets.

As I explain in Inside Fractionals, these changes could have important consequences for shareholders. But the fractional-fleet upgrades could also have an impact on anyone who owns a model that's being purged from a fractional program, because a glut of similar aircraft coming to market could erode already depressed prices.

That said, owners of the models being retired from fractional



fleets have reason to remain calm, says Brad Bruce, vice president, sales and marketing, at Pentastar Aviation. "The industry has become cognizant of that [potential problem], and while that impact can never be negated, the fractionals will try to meter out the re-fleeting, so you won't have double-digit numbers [of aircraft] hitting the market at one time."

Meanwhile, of course, whatever erosion in values does occur could be good news if you're seeking to

buy rather than sell. The aircraft being retired from fractional programs are "a good value for someone looking to enter the industry as an aircraft owner," comments Bruce. "They say, 'Maybe it's higher time [meaning it has accumulated more flight hours], but it's priced right and I know it's been well cared for.'"

BJT

James Wynbrandt (jwynbrandt@bjtonline.com) is a private pilot and longtime BJT contributor.

SOME POPULAR PREOWNED MODELS 2013–2015

	FALCON 2000	CHALLENGER 300	HAWKER 400XP	GLOBAL 6000	HAWKER 900XP	GULFSTREAM G150	GULFSTREAM G550	EMBRAER LEGACY 600	CITATION MUSTANG	CITATION SOVEREIGN
No. in Operation	230	454	233	159	184	112	506	174	460	348
No. for Sale	10	30	23	8	18	5	32	24	33	25
Avg. Price 2013 (millions)	\$8.01	\$12.41	\$2.19	N/A	\$8.27	\$7.20	\$36.46	\$10.04	\$2.15	\$8.66
Avg. Price 2014 (millions)	\$6.96	\$12.20	\$2.51	\$21.82	\$7.26	\$6.44	\$32.39	\$3.65	\$2.11	\$8.15
Avg. Price 2015 (millions)	\$6.55	\$11.61	\$2.06	\$47.50	\$5.93	\$8.00	\$29.94	\$8.37	\$2.03	\$7.12

Source: JetNet LLC (JetNet.com)

The Rules of the Game

The Federal Aviation Regulations, better known as the FARs, govern every aspect of business aircraft flights. Here's what you need to know about them.

by Jeff Wicand

With the possible exception of nuclear-power plants, aviation is the most highly regulated industry I can think of. Laws and rules apply to every aspect of business flights, from where and when you can land to whether and how much you can pay for a flight. As a result, most everyone who works in business aviation exhibits an impressive awareness of legal requirements.

Unfortunately, non-aviation professionals don't necessarily share that awareness. To explain the rules to audiences ranging from tax accountants to flight dispatchers, a cottage industry of seminars and conferences has mushroomed over the years.

Topping the list of legal topics at such events are the Federal Aviation Regulations, the so-called "FARs." The FARs are issued by the Federal Aviation Administration, a branch of the U.S. Department of Transportation. The DOT has many jobs, but the FAA has only one: to ensure that civil aviation in America is as safe as possible.

With the exception of military aircraft, FARs regulate almost everything flying in U.S. airspace, from Boeing Dreamliners to balloons. You'll find the basic operating rules in Part 91, which applies to civil aircraft of all sizes.

Other parts of the FARs impose additional requirements on various operations.

Airlines, which operate scheduled flights, must also comply with Part 121, which runs to over 250 pages of small, eye-stressing print and contains rules that vary from the essential to the mundane. Section 577, for instance, covers stowing of tray tables and Section 571 requires that passengers must be briefed that "Federal law prohibits tampering with, disabling, or destroying any smoke detector in an airplane lavatory."



In addition to Part 91, two other sections of the FARs basically govern the operation of business jets: Part 135 for charter and air-taxi commercial operations, and Part 125 for larger airplanes. (A special subsection of Part 91 allows fractional programs like NetJets to avoid Part 135.) Which of these Parts governs your operations depends on the size of your airplane and whether any of your flights are "commercial."

Two factors basically render a flight commercial: carriage of passengers (or cargo) and compensation. The first requirement is fairly straightforward. Airplanes provide transportation, so if you don't fly someone or something someplace, it's hard to argue that a flight is commercial. It's also hard to argue that it's commercial if you don't get paid for it. If you do receive payment, on the

other hand, that instantly makes a flight commercial unless an FAA-approved exception applies, and in the FAA's view, any kind of compensation counts, including the conferral of a benefit or the reimbursement of flight expenses.

Unless you're flying on a Part 125-size business jet, if your operations are non-commercial, they are simply governed by Part 91 of the FARs. On the other hand—and assuming again that your jet isn't too big or that no exception applies—if you are receiving compensation for a flight, you must conduct it under Part 135.

At first glance, it may seem odd that the FAA has different rules for operating identical flights on the same aircraft, depending on whether paying passengers are aboard. Suppose, for example, you fly your mother on your Citation Excel from

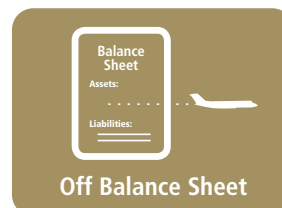
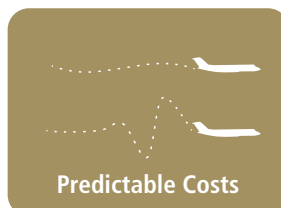
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The Rules of the Game

Teterboro, New Jersey, to West Palm Beach, Florida. Assuming you don't charge Mom for the flight, you can operate it under Part 91. But if Mom insists on paying for jet fuel, you would now be receiving "compensation." That would make the flight commercial, so the FAA would expect it to be operated under Part 135, even though, apart from the exchange of funds, the two flights may be identical.

This raises a question: What's the safety rationale for imposing different operating rules? Essentially, while it's reasonable to assume you'll be careful flying *yourself* around, the FAA considers Part 135 rules necessary to ensure that people in the business of providing air transportation will exercise special care to ensure passenger safety. These rules hold pilots, aircraft, and operations to a higher standard than would apply to someone providing transportation only to himself and his guests.

Why not then just operate all flights under Part 135? First, though you can (and some people do) follow Part 135 rules even when officially operating under Part 91, actual Part 135 operations require that you have a commercial certificate (often called a "charter certificate," though the technical name is "air carrier certificate") issued by the FAA as well as an approval from the DOT. Obtaining a charter certificate is complicated, expensive, and time-consuming, so don't count on flying Mom to Florida under Part 135 for at least a year after you apply. Consequently, most aircraft owners who want to fly under Part 135 sign up with an existing charter company.

But even if they have easy access to a charter certificate, most aircraft owners are happy to fly Part 91. The reason is that the FAA's way of making sure that Part 135 flights are arguably safer is to impose operating restrictions that most jet owners would just as soon have at least the option to avoid.

First, under Part 135, you can't use just any airport that would be available under Part 91.

Aircraft flying under commercial rules can't land at airports without on-site weather reporting, and the runway length must have a 40 percent cushion over what the aircraft's performance limitations require. Second, Part 135 imposes greater restrictions on when you can take off. (If visibility is zero, forget it.) Third, Part 135 requires your aircraft to be equipped with gizmos and upgrades that are optional under Part 91, and the aircraft must be maintained to the higher standards of Part 135 even though you operate many or even most of your flights under Part 91.

For pilots, Part 135 has specific duty-time and rest requirements, so when the stipulated workday ends, it doesn't start again until the FAA's rest requirement is satisfied. Pilot

If your mom pays for jet fuel, the FAA would expect the flight to be operated under Part 135.

qualifications and test requirements are also more stringent under Part 135. In short, to fly under Part 135, you sacrifice a great deal of operational flexibility.

On the other hand, Part 135 lets you charge Mom or anyone else whatever you want for a flight. Once the aircraft is on a charter certificate, you can also make it available for revenue charter to help offset the fixed costs of ownership. You can even charter your own airplane yourself, which can be advantageous in minimizing federal and state taxes. Finally, the FAA imposes operational responsibility for flights operated under Part 135 on the holder of the charter certificate, not the aircraft owner or Part 91 operator, which greatly reduces their liability exposure for accidents or incidents. Some well-heeled owners choose to operate their own flights under Part 135 for that reason alone.

As noted earlier, the other section of the FARs that business jet owners operate under

The FARs at a Glance	
Part	Purpose
91 ▶	Establishes basic rules that apply to all civil aircraft.
121 ▶	Establishes additional rules for airlines.
125 ▶	Establishes additional rules for large business jets.
135 ▶	Establishes additional rules for most charter/air taxi operations.

is Part 125. Part 125 applies to aircraft with at least 20 seats or a maximum payload of at least 6,000 pounds—Boeing Business Jets, Airbus Corporate Jets, and the like. As with Part 135, you can receive compensation for flights and (unless the FAA lets you out of this requirement) you need a commercial operating certificate. But unlike Part 135, Part 125 doesn't allow you to hold yourself out to the public as willing to provide air transportation for hire (so-called common carriage). Instead, you have to make private arrangements with potential customers, which is why many owners of Part 125-size aircraft seek ways to operate under Part 135.

Why comply with FARs? Depending on the violation, civil and criminal penalties start at more than \$1,000 and go up from there. That's per violation—and every day and/or every flight in which a breach of the rules continues can often be treated as a separate violation with a separate fine, which means that, even at the lowest levels, fines can add up quickly. Jail time is also a possibility. And of course, as a result of violations, your aircraft could be grounded and your pilots could have their licenses suspended or revoked. Accordingly, it's essential to ensure that members of your aviation team understand and comply with the FARs.

BJT

Jeff Wieand (jwieand@bjtonline.com) is a senior vice president at Boston JetSearch and a member of the National Business Aviation Association's Tax Committee.



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Beacon's Wade Eyerly

The cofounder of California's all-you-can-fly Surf Air has launched a similar operation in the Northeast and plans to test the concept in other markets, both domestic and international.

by James Wynbrandt

Wade Eyerly helped develop the all-you-can-fly subscription model with California-based Surf Air, which he cofounded with his brother David and others in 2012. Offering customers unlimited flights aboard its fleet of Pilatus PC-12 single-engine turboprops, the company provides service primarily between the Los Angeles and San Francisco Bay areas.

Because it offers scheduled flights, it officially constitutes an airline, but it bills itself as a “private air travel club” because it employs private terminals and executive-configured aircraft and seeks to deliver “exceptional” service. Operating from general aviation airports and exempt from the security screening required for aircraft seating more than 19 passengers, the carrier allows customers to book flights quickly online, up to 15 minutes before departure. Rates start at \$1,750 per month, plus a one-time \$1,000 initiation fee. Since launch, the major challenge has been meeting demand.

For reasons he explains in our interview, Eyerly left Surf Air in 2014 and subsequently consulted and took board positions with several startups that his company had inspired as well as with a handful of technology companies. He continues to own a portion of Surf Air, but says he doesn't know how much, just that additional fundraising has significantly diluted his stake.

This fall Eyerly launched Beacon, which employs elements of his old company's business model. It currently flies between New York and Boston and offers seasonal service to and from the Hamptons and Nantucket.

Like Surf Air, Beacon charges a monthly fee (\$2,000) for unlimited flights; but unlike the California company, which owns and operates its airplanes, the new venture has contracted with Virginia-based Dynamic Aviation to acquire and operate a fleet of at least 27 twin turboprops (King Air 200/250s and Beech



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INDUSTRY INSIDER

Wade Eyerly

1900s) exclusively for Beacon for the next decade for \$400 million. Eyerly says that this will free him and his team to concentrate on customer service rather than operations.

His all-you-can-fly concept, which seems counterintuitive and appears to defy air-transport logic, may partly reflect his lack of previous aviation-industry experience. Born in Kansas City, Missouri, the oldest of eight children, Eyerly makes easy reference to his Mormon upbringing and his close-knit family's humble circumstances. Today a Honda Odyssey and Kia Optima provide his ground transportation, and Beacon keeps its operations lean.

We met Eyerly at Westchester [New York] County Airport shortly before Beacon's launch, where he hosted a demo flight to showcase its service style. Dynamic Aviation hadn't delivered the first of the refurbished Beacon aircraft, with their signature dark aquamarine and light-blue accents, so we flew aboard a King Air 200 from charter operator Eagle Air. Trim, energetic and dressed as conservatively as a *Mad Men*-era executive, Eyerly was friendly and expansive as we talked before, during and after the preview flight along the Connecticut shore.

What are the roots of your entrepreneurial spirit?

My dad was an entrepreneur. I knew some of the realities that made it less sexy—sometimes we were doing great, but other times we were on the school lunch program. But I always knew I wanted to do that. I sold Christmas cards door-to-door in July and I'd look in the back of magazines for things I could buy and sell. My dad would always encourage us.

What did you do before starting Surf Air?

I was in the first graduating class at Central Missouri State [University; now University of Central Missouri] after 9-11. I had had two years' overseas experience and I was a Russian speaker [because of missionary work]. I had the ability to help, so I joined the Defense Intelligence Agency. My security clearance took five and a half years. While waiting, I worked for



the Bush-Cheney campaign, attended the U.S.-Russian Summit in 2004 for the International Economic Alliance and went to graduate school. I started at the Defense Intelligence Agency in 2007. I went to Iraq and when I came back I became an economist, writing reports to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. But I knew government wasn't going to be my career.

When did you first fly privately?

That would have been on our airline. The first flight when you inaugurate a new airplane or salute a retiring captain, the fire department will come out and shoot water cannons, so our very first flight at Burbank [California] Airport... it sounded like driving a car through a carwash. It was a great feeling, the culmination of a lot of work. My brother [a pilot] was in the right seat in the cockpit. Once before I'd been up in a Cessna 172 with him.

What was the genesis of the all-you-can-fly concept?

My brother had just graduated Embry Riddle [Aeronautical University]. He called and said, "The FAA just raised the retirement

"My brother said, 'Buy an airplane, start an airline.' I said, 'OK.'"

RÉSUMÉ:

NAME: Wade Eyerly

BORN: June 12, 1979 (age 36), Kansas City, Missouri

POSITION: Cofounder and CEO, Beacon

PREVIOUS POSITION: Cofounder and CEO, Surf Air

EDUCATION: B.A., International Economic Policy and Cross Cultural Relations, University of Central Missouri. M.P.P. Public Policy, International Economic Development, Brigham Young University. Certificate, Global Management, Brigham Young University.

PERSONAL: Lives in New Canaan, Connecticut, with wife Kelli and three sons. Hobbies include collecting and designing strategy board games.

age to 65 [for airline pilots]. I'll have a quarter-million dollars in debt and no job." I said, "What will it take to keep you in the air?" He said, "Buy an airplane, start an airline." I said, "OK."

I started looking at business models, digging into data to find a way to make a living in aviation. We researched for five-and-a-half years, and ultimately we hit on a model we thought would work. We are addressing people for whom flying is a chore. You buy tickets for things that are a privilege; you don't buy tickets for things that are a chore—for example, to go to the gym. The subscription model makes it less painful. We make a bet on ourselves every month that we will make you happy. The month you have a bad experience, you leave.

How did you launch Surf Air?

We put up a website to see if anyone cared, saying, "Do you want to know more?" and in six weeks we had 12,000 people signed up. So we pulled together a summit over Veterans Day weekend in 2011 and invited dentists, doctors, attorneys, scientists—anyone we thought could give us good advice. We laid out our research, waiting for them to say, "This is a terrible idea." Instead, five said, "We'll leave our jobs to do it with you." We got into the MuckerLab business incubator program, and we raised money in three rounds of financing in six months—two equity and one debt offering.

Why did you leave Surf Air?

We spent money fast, and ultimately the former CEO of Frontier [Airlines, Jeff Potter], raised his hand and said, "I'd be willing to run the company." The way we phrased it, if you can get [famed NFL quarterback] Brett Favre to run your flag football team, you do. The plan was to work together, but to a certain degree there's a cult of personality, and I knew my presence would undermine him. I still owned a huge part of the business but I needed to leave for him to succeed. So I resigned. They asked me not to, but I did.

What did you learn from your Surf Air experience?

Build strong relationships with investors. I hadn't done that as well as I wish I had. We have a really great relationship with our investors Romulus Capital here.

Why did you start another subscription airline?

I thought I wouldn't do aircraft again. I started giving advice to lots of clones [of the subscription model] around the world, and the advice we gave was different [from the way Surf Air operated]. We realized we could do this on the East Coast. There was no non-compete clause with Surf Air.

How does Beacon differ from Surf Air?

It's similar from a customer perspective. We're a sales-and-service company, not an airline. Surf Air is an airline; it buys and maintains airplanes. We take care of customers for a living.

Surf Air operates single-engine turboprops, whereas Beacon will primarily use twin-engine models. Why?

It comes down to the number of seats we can fit comfortably in the plane. It costs more to run a twin, but if that's 30 percent more and I can fit 50 percent more seats [it makes economic sense]. And King Airs are very common aircraft, so they're not hard for us to get ahold of.

How does Beacon's service model differ from a traditional airline's?

At a traditional carrier, the person at the ticket counter—that's the bottom of the totem pole. For us, that person at the ticket counter is the concierge—the most important person. We're focused on training them to deliver service, hiring the right people with the right personality and mindset. We want to be the Westin Hotel chain; not the W, not trendy, not the Four Seasons, not white glove. It's executive, consistent: "You will be comfortable." We want to make the pain points go away.

"We are addressing people for whom flying is a chore. The subscription model makes it less painful."





INDUSTRY INSIDER

Wade Eyerly

How do you find the right type of employee?

First we do a competency interview: Can they do the job? Then I do a culture-fit interview: Do they get the vision of what we are? Are they going to fit with the team? They meet the team over lunch. I let the team decide if this is going to be a good fit. You have to enjoy working with coworkers. We can't pay people enough money to work the hours we do, so they have to love it. We have 30 employees now. Twelve are handling sales, about 12 are concierges, and the rest are administrative, supporting them.

Who are Beacon's customers?

We refer to them as frequent commuters. They're most often working in professional services—accountants, attorneys, data, finance folks—with an average income of \$400,000 to \$500,000. They're not early-career guys; the average age is in the early 50s. Not more than 15 percent are women. When you look at the Acela [high-speed train service between Boston and New York], it's more than 15 percent female, so we're missing something, but I don't know what.

What's the background of the other Beacon principals with whom you started Surf Air?

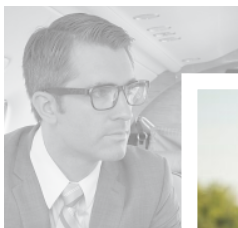
Reed [Farnsworth, cofounder and CFO] was at the Federal Reserve. Cory [Cozzens,

cofounder and COO] is an attorney. [Chief business development officer] Ryan Morley was the finance director for Mitt Romney's presidential campaign and raised \$1 billion. Scott Porter was a nursing-home administrator—the perfect lead for our customer-experience team: if grandma's coffee isn't right... He's overseeing every taste, smell and sound as we build the experience.

You didn't recruit from within the aviation field.

Aviation is an industry that has been slow to innovate. You can name only four or five innovators since Howard Hughes, and none of them

"Pilots are good at running companies the way they've always been run. People need to come from outside the industry to innovate."



Beacon is using a fleet of twin turboprops, including King Air 200/250s and Beech 1900s.

were pilots: [JetBlue founder] David Neeleman, [Southwest Airlines cofounder] Herb Kelleher, [NetJets founder] Richard Santulli and [Virgin Airlines founder] Richard Branson. Pilots ultimately run airlines, and they're very good at running companies the way they've always been run. So people need to come from outside the industry to innovate.

Do you plan to launch additional regional subscription services?

Yes. Anywhere high-speed rail would work, we'd work. Any direction out of Chicago, any direction out of Atlanta. We'll do it as fast as we can sell it and not degrade or dilute our service. There's about a \$2 billion to \$4 billion domestic opportunity, and a \$2 billion to \$4 billion international opportunity. We're negotiating with folks in about a dozen countries to take the model. Usually we take a percentage ownership in the company and provide them with technology and support—in essence, subscription service in a box. We can grow faster that way.

What's your advice for starting a successful business in the aviation industry?

Be very lucky, and work your tail off. The idea is worth almost nothing—the execution is where all the value resides. I think entrepreneurs do a disservice by claiming too much credit for our success. We get lucky.

At Surf Air, we were in the front end of an investment cycle. I couldn't have known that. A lot of people throw up barriers about why they can't start a business. Not doing it is a much greater risk. To leave a job you don't like to do something you do like—that's not risky.

People overestimate the risk involved, and also overestimate the correlation of money to their happiness. It's weakly correlated at best. **BJT**

James Wynbrandt (jwynbrandt@bjtonline.com), a private pilot and longtime **BJT** contributor, has also written for *The New York Times*, *Forbes* and *Barron's*.



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its introduction,
it remains rugged,
capable...and
cool.

TWIN COMMANDER 1000

by Mark Huber



N695MM

When I was 10 my dad bought a Cessna 182. When you're that age, any airplane is cool, but the Cessna was pretty much a Buick with wings. While I enjoyed the flights we took in it and hanging out at the airport, the aircraft picture that ended up on my bedroom wall was of an AeroStar. This futuristic-looking mid-wing piston twin oozed cool factor. It had been designed by aerospace engineering legend Ted Smith, who made a name for himself beginning in the late 1940s by creating the Commander line of high-wing twins. You can see the beginning of the AeroStar's lines in these airplanes.

And you can do things with Commanders you wouldn't dare try with comparable models. Legendary test pilot Bob Hoover—who, among other things, flew the chase airplane when Chuck Yeager broke the sound barrier—performed aerobatics in a twin Commander for decades. He did things with it the good Lord simply did not intend a business aircraft to do, demonstrating at air shows its inherent strengths as well as its aerodynamic slipperiness. He always ended his act by shutting down both engines long before landing and then taxiing precisely to show center. And the man never missed. In the 1980s, Commanders—known for their excellent short-field, rough-field, payload, and range capabilities—

Specifications & Performance

Passengers (executive)	5
Pilots	1–2
Range*	1,210 nm
Max Cruise Speed	300 kt
Cabin Dimensions	Height: 4.8 ft
	Width: 4.2 ft
	Length: 12.6 ft

*IFR NBAA 200 nm reserves.

Economics

Total variable flight cost/hour	\$1,296.46
Total fixed cost/year	\$289,270

Source: Conklin & DeDecker, Orleans, Mass.

Please see the online version of this article for detailed specifications and performance data as well as a report on all hourly and annual fixed and variable expenses.



Aerospace engineering legend Ted Smith's genius is written all over the Twin Commander.

were the airplane of choice for Colombian cocaine smuggling cartels as well as the DEA agents chasing them down.

There are several flavors of turbine Commanders, which first came on the scene in the 1960s when Rockwell owned the company. All feature various models of the direct-drive Honeywell TPE331 engines, which deliver excellent fuel economy and have long overhaul intervals—5,400 hours on Commanders.

Approximately 700 turbo Commanders remain in service, and most of those are the 690 models, which are powered by a pair of 717 horsepower TPE331-5 engines (known for their signature high-pitched whine). However, it wasn't until Gulfstream bought the Commander line in 1981 that the brand really hit its stride with two models—the 900 and the 1000, also known as the 690D and 695A/B—according to most of the aficionados I spoke with for this article.

About 40 of the 900s and approximately 110 of the 1000s were made. You can easily differentiate the two: the 900s have large mid-cabin picture windows, which offer great views but make for a noisy ride. The 1000s deliver 15 knots better maximum cruise speed—up to 290 knots—and have up to 500 pounds, more takeoff weight than the 900s.

You can configure the big Commanders to carry as many as 10 passengers but most are outfitted for five (plus the two pilot positions). All Commanders can be flown single pilot. The aft cabin can be fitted with a belted electric flushing lavatory (making it a legal passenger seat) and a semi-rigid privacy door. The “squared oval” cabin provides generous shoulder and headroom for an airplane in this class. The baggage section can hold 600 pounds. With pilot, three passengers, full bags, and full fuel, Commander 1000s can fly 2,000 nautical miles—that's eight hours of cruising.

Gulfstream's Commander stewardship lasted only from 1981 to 1985, but Commanders produced during this period are highly valued. Today, Twin Commander Aircraft of Creedmoor, North Carolina, holds the type certificate and supports the airplane with spare parts it makes from more than 58,000 pieces of original production tooling.

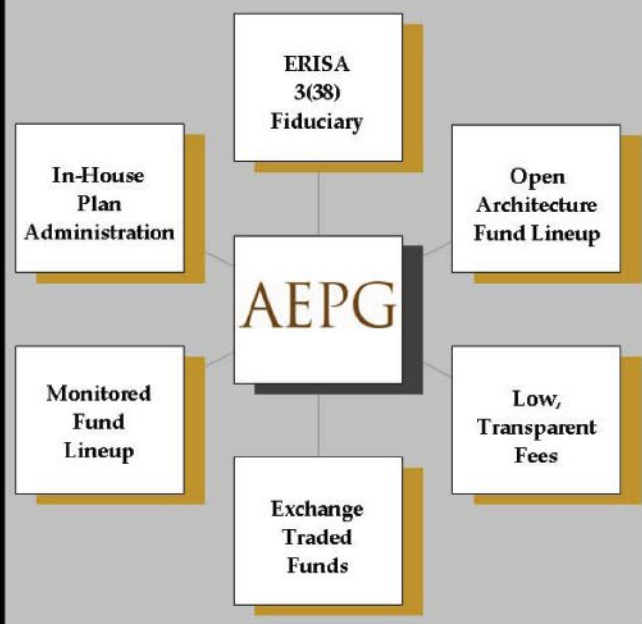
Matt Isley, the company's president, notes that “95 percent of our parts requests are out the door the same day. We stock a lot of inventory. When you compare the support we provide with the support of an in-production aircraft, we're on par with some of the best OEMs to make sure our owners have mission-capable aircraft. Guys are comfortable flying this airplane in revenue-producing roles because the product support is there.”

Twin Commander keeps the parts flow active with its Grand Renaissance program, a virtual rebuild of the aircraft structure that effectively zero-times the airframe. But even without such

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Twin Commander 1000 compared with other aircraft

Model	First year produced	Variable cost/hour	Seats exec/max	Range (nm)	Normal cruise (kt)	Max takeoff weight (lb)
Twin Commander 1000	1982	\$1,296	5/10	1,321	290	11,200
Mitsubishi MU-2 Marquise	1979	\$1,160	6/9	1,012	290	11,575
Beechcraft King Air B200	1974	\$1,373	6/15	1,164	283	12,500

Assumptions: Jet fuel \$6.20/gal; variable cost: fuel plus maintenance reserves; four passengers; NBAA IFR 200-nm reserve fuel; passenger weight 200 lb includes baggage; two pilots.

Sources: Conklin & de Decker's Life Cycle Cost and Aircraft Performance Comparator.

investment, Commanders tend to be robust. Still, “when you’re dealing with an aircraft that has been flying for 30-plus years, you’re going to have some corrosion things and structural issues,” Isley notes.

“When a new airplane rolls out of the factory today, they start working on a service-life extension program,” he adds. “We are very proactive through our 17 service centers that report back to us any difficulties they see, and we address

those with service letters and bulletins.

“Gulfstream really learned from the earlier models and eliminated a lot of problems with the changes they made on the 900 and 1000,” Isley continues. “There have been two large service bulletins on the [Commander] line in the last six years, but those have not applied to the 900 and 1000 models, so they are fairly clean from an SB [service bulletin] or AD [airworthiness directive] standpoint.”

Ted Smith’s aerodynamic genius is written all over this airplane. You won’t see little aerodynamic “cheats” or afterthoughts on it like vortex generators, those little things on the wings that resemble razor blades and that are put there after the fact to induce more lift. About the only real performance option available for this airplane is installation of Hartzell Q-tip three-blade propellers. They reduce noise a bit and add maybe five knots to cruising speed at a price of about \$80,000 for the pair.

That’s not to say that you can’t spend serious money modernizing your Commander. A good paint job and interior rerag can together cost up to \$150,000, and then there is the not-so-small matter

Understanding the Commander Lexicon

It pays to work with a broker who knows the ins and outs of the type because Commander 1000s were not all created equal. Within the breed, you’ll find the models 695A and 695B, certified for maximum takeoff weights of 11,250 and 11,750 pounds, respectively. Commander 1000s have Dash 10 engines, but some Commander 900s, known as model 690Ds, have had their less-powerful Dash 5s replaced with Dash 10s, rendering their performance virtually identical to that of Commander 1000s. Further muddying the waters, some 900s have been converted to 1000s, some 695A 1000s have been converted to high-gross 695B 1000s, and some 840s have been converted to 980s, so production and database numbers vary.

Also note the following: under Gulfstream the Commander 840 and 980 “picture window” airplanes have the same 52-foot wing as the 900/1000, but have 10,375 pounds ramp weight and optional 474 gallons of useable fuel; 121 of the 690C Model 840s were produced with Dash 5 engines, but most were converted to Dash 10, making them effectively identical to the 980s; and 85 of the 695 Model 980s were built with Dash 10 power. The remainder of 1973–1979 production are 690/690A/690B variants which have the picture window and cabin configuration of the 840/980 models, but accommodate 384 gallons of useable fuel. —M.H.

of avionics. For the princely sum of \$450,000 to \$550,000, you can give your Commander glass-screen-jet capabilities with the Garmin G950, which is comparable to a Garmin G1000 system on a factory-fresh aircraft. The installation takes 10 to 12 weeks but at the end of the process you get a fully integrated flight deck with all the latest safety features. That can make this turboprop worth more than a light jet on the resale market, according to Twin Commander broker Bruce Byerly.

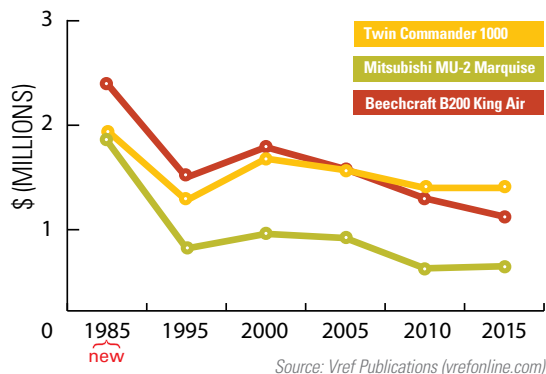
There are a few other trinkets to consider: a new environmental-control system to replace the anemic factory model; acoustic-sound-damping blankets to quiet the cabin; and LED lighting, both inside and out.

By the time your refurb ride is over, the damages could easily approach \$700,000, with your total investment nearing \$2 million. That’s a lot to put into a 30-year-old airplane but, then, few models do what a Commander can do. As Byerly notes, “a no-compromise airplane is rare.” This is one of them. **BJT**

Industry veteran **Mark Huber** (mhuber@bjtonline.com) has reviewed aircraft for **BJT** since 2005.

FAIR MARKET VALUE

price comparison of competitive aircraft



GOURMET

Getaways

Secluded tables at high-end restaurants offer privacy for ultra-special occasions.

by John Grossmann

Usually, eating out is all about being part of a restaurant's bustle and ambiance. Maybe, too, about being seen. But sometimes, the goal is different. For special occasions, the best seats in the house aren't necessarily at booth No. 1 or the table with the sweeping view of the dining room. At a growing number of restaurants and resorts, the perfect seats aren't even in the dining room. They're tucked away somewhere special, in a downstairs wine cellar, or perhaps at a secluded table on a private deck or patio, often with a stunning, privileged view. Here's a sampling.

One Flight Up in Chicago

OK, so the marriage didn't last, but Richard Gere proposed to Cindy Crawford in the cozy, six-by-12-foot confines of **Vivo's** Elevator Shaft

Room, a purple-velvet-curtained hideaway one flight up from the Chicago restaurant's mezzanine level. More recent patrons at the 35-foot-high private dining nook have included actor Tyler Perry and rapper Eminem. The transformed space—a freight-elevator shaft in a meatpacking plant back in Chicago's stockyard days—now hosts five-course prix-fixe meals for up to six guests. *Info: vivo-chicago.com*

A Sanctum in New York

No one looks down on the kitchen at New York's **Daniel**, which critics perennially call one of the finest in America. No one, that is, except for those fortunate enough to be dining in chef Daniel Boulud's exclusive Skybox, a photo-, book- and memorabilia-filled tiny room where

two to four guests can slide onto comfortable banquettes and gaze through a big window. On the other side of the glass: a culinary ballet in a state-of-the-art, 1,800-square-foot kitchen, where more than two-dozen cooks prepare and plate the de rigueur eight-course tasting menu. *Info: danielnyc.com*

South Carolina's Secret Door

As if winking to those lucky enough to know its secret, a painting by famous wine artist Thomas Arvid hangs on a narrow stretch of a faux-bricked wall at **Soby's**, the seminal restaurant on the recently revived Main Street in charming Greenville, South Carolina. The painting helps mask the hidden door that leads down to the new private table in Soby's award-winning, 5,000-plus-bottle wine cellar. The table, which comes with special menus, is best booked for groups of six to 12. *Info: sobys.com*

Seattle's Coveted Caché

Dating to 1950, **Canlis** is a Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired gem of a restaurant perched on Seattle's Queen Anne Hill, overlooking Lake Union and the Cascade Mountains. But the most privileged views are from Caché, the establishment's private dining room, which seats two to four and has hosted guests such as Bill Gates and Seattle Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson. The hideaway has helped seal many a marriage proposal, none more creative than the one from a guest who preset the room's telescope to a city park location where he'd arranged for a banner to be unfurled. Taking her turn at the telescope, his girlfriend shrieked happily at the words: "Will you marry me?" *Info: canlis.com*



Vivaldi Oval Room

A London Hideaway

As if London's Roof Gardens, a Limited Edition Richard Branson property, were not exclusive enough, a private table for two to 12 awaits at **Babylon Restaurant**, seven floors above the Kensington neighborhood. It comes with a dedicated waiter, a terrace and a bird's-eye view of the 1.5-acre, sixth-floor gardens, not to mention the four resident flamingoes traversing the tranquil green refuge one floor below. Info: virginlimitededition.com

A Royal Experience in Berlin

Though you might well consider it, you don't need to be staying at the Schlosshotel in the fashionable Grunewald section of Berlin to reserve the intimate, gilded Oval Room at **Vivaldi**, the hotel's fine restaurant. Here, you'll dine like royalty at a round table that can host up to eight beneath a crystal chandelier and beside a fireplace. Info: schlosshotelberlin.com

Montana's Room with Two Views

The secluded chef's table at the luxe **Triple Creek Ranch** resort in Darby, Montana, provides an insider's window on the gourmet kitchen preparing your seven-course tasting menu, which typically features such local game as venison, elk and pheasant. But a mere turn of the head delivers postcard-perfect, end-of-day views of Montana's scenic West Fork Valley and the Bitterroot Mountains fading into darkness. Info: triplecreekranch.com

A New Jersey Kitchen You Won't Forget

Not many restaurant kitchens have an ornate stone fireplace near the pass between chefs and waitstaff. But then few such kitchens occupy the former dining room of an early 20th century mansion. That's the case with Morristown, New Jersey's **Jockey Hollow Bar & Kitchen**, which was built in Italian Renaissance palazzo style for the first president of AT&T. The best two seats here are in this kitchen at an equally old, glass-topped butcher table from Wisconsin. Like the paintings and photographs scattered throughout the museum-like restaurant, the unique table, its



Vivo Chicago



Babylon Hotel Roof Gardens



Daniel New York



La Cave Fromage

stunning floral display and dining duo are framed, captured in an interior, second-floor arched window that faces the mansion's majestic atrium-like entryway. *Info: jockeyhollowbarandkitchen.com*

A Tasting Table in Thailand

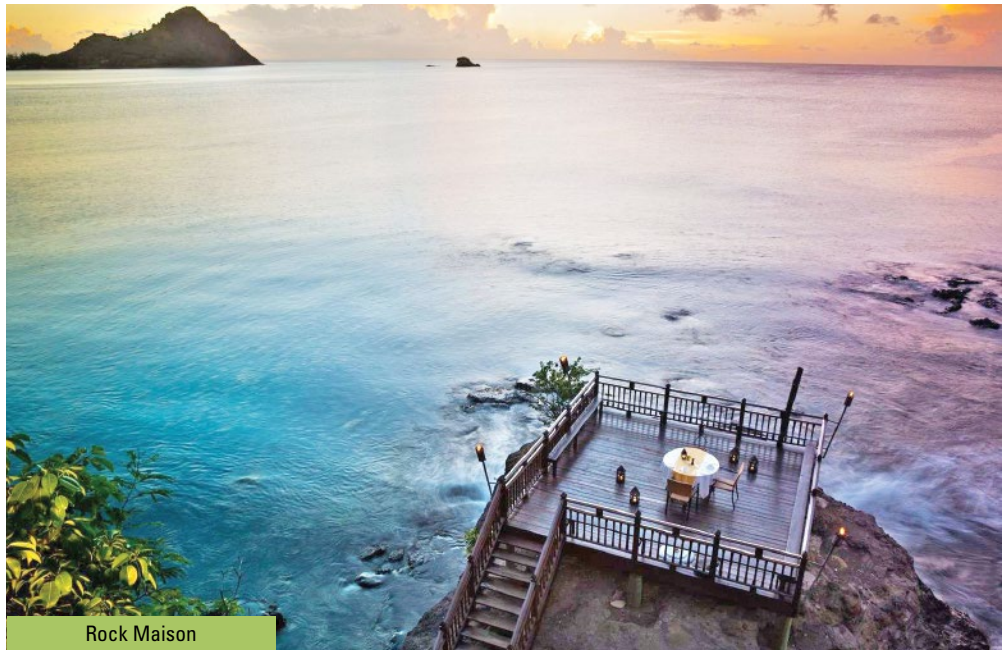
A walk through the organic garden at **Six Senses** resort on Yao Noi Island in Thailand's Phang Nga Bay brings you to its open-air chef's table/kitchen and dedicated chef, who prepares a customized six-course tasting menu on the working side of a U-shaped counter limited to eight diners. The treehouse-like setting even has a waterfall for background music. Returning guests know to reserve their seats upon arrival or, better yet, when they book their trip. *Info: sixsenses.com*

On the Rocks in St. Lucia

A wooden stairway takes you down to a sunset-kissed wooden deck called Rock Maison, which sits atop St. Lucia's craggy shoreline in the West Indies. A single table practically surfs the crashing waves. Dinner for two or small, intimate groups will be hand-delivered from the **Cap Maison** resort's cliffside restaurant high above. But a bottle of champagne and such occasion-appropriate items as roses or an engagement ring arrive with unforgettable flair: in a covered basket lowered by zip-line. *Info: capmaison.com*

New York's Cave for Cheese Lovers

La Cave Fromage, in one of Manhattan's temples to fine cheese, is not underground, but rather in a temperature- and climate-controlled room in the back of **Artisanal Fromagerie**



Rock Maison



Huka Lodge Jetty Pavilion

Bistro. Lucky patrons (reservations are taken for two to four guests) dine on a chef's tasting menu surrounded by aging wheels of Paglierino, Brillat-Savarin, Robiola Due Latti, Bonne Bouche, Bûcherondin and scores more of the world's most celebrated cow's, sheep's, and goat's milk varieties aging on the surrounding shelves. No need to request a cheese course. *Info: artisanalbistro.com*

20 New Zealand Hideaways

After a day of fly fishing, kayaking, horseback riding or bungee jumping, guests at the luxurious **Huka Lodge** in Taupo, New Zealand, can choose from 20 private dining spots. Among

the most stunning: the underground Wine Cellar, an evocatively lit, vault-like chamber across from the Main Lodge; the so-called Green Room, an outdoor haven with river views walled by meticulously trimmed, towering evergreen hedges; and the Jetty Pavilion, a table for two to six guests close enough to the rippling turquoise waters of the Waikata River to drop a line. *Info: hukalodge.co.nz* **BJT**

John Grossmann (jgrossmann@bjtonline.com) has contributed to such publications as *Audubon*, *Cigar Aficionado*, *Departures*, *Esquire*, *Gourmet*, *Inc.*, *National Geographic Traveler*, *The New York Times* and *Smithsonian*.

Move up—or out

When fractional providers upgrade their fleets, shareowners may face a difficult choice.

by James Wynbrandt

Fractional providers are refreshing their fleets, taking delivery of new models in the industry's first major upgrade wave since the 2008 economic downturn. If you're a shareowner in one of these programs, this may present you with a stark choice: "It's upgrade to a new airplane or get pushed out," says FractionalLaw attorney Daniel Herr, who notes the wide contractual latitude fractional providers have been exercising as they start transitioning fleets.

If you're not given an ultimatum in the midst of your contract term, you may be pushed toward a new airplane at its end. "The programs seem to be more restrictive in terms of allowing renewals and extensions," notes attorney Eileen Gleimer, a fractional-transaction specialist at Crowell & Moring. "That forces the owner's hand."

If you're like most shareowners, your program membership predates the downturn, and you've since simply renewed your share or bought into a different aircraft already in the fleet. But if you're shopping for an upgrade now, you'd be wise to put value retention high on your list of priorities. "The elephant in the room is the spread between what you paid for a share and what you get back,"

says *AviationIQ* publisher and fractional-share adviser Michael Riegel.

While all these incoming aircraft are awesome performers, some will retain value better than others. Among the airplanes entering fleets, Embraer's Phenom 300 and Bombardier's Global 6000 represent newer designs and have been received enthusiastically in the marketplace, and the Gulfstream 500 and the forthcoming Citation Latitude are clean-sheet designs. However, Bombardier's Challenger 650 and Gulfstream's 450 are based on older designs and "are going to get slammed on residual values," Herr believes.

But new marketplace realities and the buyback policies of your provider will also affect the residual value of any aircraft you select. In earlier years, providers would typically buy back shares at 70 percent of their original value at the end of a five-year contract. In today's market, aircraft can lose half their value or more during that time.

Moreover, new shares carry premium prices. Riegel notes that fractional programs typically order aircraft loaded with bespoke optional equipment that "does not help retain values" yet jacks up the buy-in price, increasing the provider's margin at the



"First you buy at retail, then you sell at wholesale, and that's not going to change. That's the way they make their money."

shareowner's expense. "This is insidious," Riegel says, noting that contracts state "clearly and consistently" that when it's time to exit the share, the provider will buy it back at fair market value.

"But," he notes, "I've seen offers of *Bluebook* minus 80 percent multiple times."

Before 2008, says Gleimer, contracts stated, "Here are the guidelines for establishing fair market value," and you had the ability to challenge [the valuation] and get an appraisal closer to retail." Newer contracts leave less room to challenge, she says. "The realistic way of looking at it is, first you buy at retail, then you sell at wholesale, and that's not going to change. That's the way they make their money."

Fortunately for shareowners, concerns that the relatively high

A Look at Buyback Policies

We asked Executive AirShare, Flexjet/Flight Options, NetJets, and PlaneSense about their practices for setting aircraft values at the end of ownership periods. Flexjet/Flight Options and NetJets declined to respond.

At PlaneSense, which operates PC-12/NG single-engine turboprops, David Verani, director of sales and marketing, said the company "works with owners cooperatively to develop aircraft share values, taking into consideration third-party resources as well as our own experience as a seller in the used-aircraft market. This is the case whether the shareowner is establishing a price for a share sale to a third party midterm, or the share is being divested at the end of the ownership."

Executive AirShare, meanwhile, establishes values "through contacts with aircraft brokers and dealers and comparisons to online aircraft value resources," according to president and CEO Keith Plumb. —J.W.

times of airframes being retired would leave them almost worthless haven't been borne out. "From the first day of fractionals," Herr says, "the boogeyman was, 'What's going to happen in 10 or 15 years when some Gulfstream [model] gets loose from a fractional program with 10,000 or 15,000 hours, and all comparable Gulfstreams have 5,000 or 6,000 hours? Fractional owners will get burned.'

"From the numbers I've crunched and what we've now seen from experience, that hasn't happened," Herr continues. "I would urge people to set that boogeyman aside."

No one is accusing the fractional companies of profiteering. It's been a tough slog for providers, so the new aircraft offer an opportunity for them to bump revenue and induct more efficient aircraft with lower operating costs into service, giving them a double incentive to see you step into that new jet share.

As an alternative to upgrading, ask your provider about the availability of shares in aircraft already

in the fleet. Other owners may have been waiting to upgrade, leading to situations where your airplane is slated for retirement, but an identical or similar model has one or more shares available. Be aware, though, that fractional providers typically resell shares at above-market prices.

You can also consider selling back your share and buying a share in a new or legacy aircraft in a different program. If you're shopping for an old share, seek assurance you won't soon be forced into the same upgrade decision. "If they offer five years with a five-year [term] extension, that's one thing," says Herr. "If it's a two-year term with no extension, that's telling you a very different story. That's the best way to get intelligence on what they're doing" with the fleet.

Aircraft shares in some programs are also bought and sold on the open market, and that's another avenue worth investigating. **BJT**

James Wynbrandt (jwynbrandt@bjtonline.com), a private pilot, is a longtime **BJT** contributor who has written for the *New York Times*, *Forbes*, and *Barron's*.






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Lending a hand in a **FARAWAY** land

So-called volunteer vacations allow you to interact with and help people in the places you visit.

Story and photography by Debi Lander

Affluent travelers have already explored London, Paris, and Rome; played golf on Scottish links; learned how to make pasta in Italy; and watched penguins waddle in Antarctica. Now many have moved beyond sun tanning and sightseeing. They want to continue to enjoy travel but also to use their skills and resources to benefit the places they visit.

That's why international vacations with some component of volunteer work—often called voluntourism—rank among the fastest-growing trends in travel. Nancy Gard McGehee, an expert on sustainable tourism at Virginia Tech University, says that each year, as many as 1.6 million volunteers spend up to \$2 billion on such trips.

The opportunities are diverse. You can assist with trail work at Machu Picchu in Peru, save leatherback sea turtles in Costa Rica, feed baby

pandas in China, or help install solar panels on schools in Nicaragua. Or you can teach English or deliver medical supplies almost anywhere.

In the face of disasters, such as last year's earthquake in Nepal, organizations call for funds, supplies, and volunteers. Sambhav Nepal and Ace the Himalaya, two charitable groups previously working in the area, used volunteers to distribute rice and lentils, tarps, and roofing sheets. Doctors Without Borders offered medical aid. Hastily assembled volunteer programs helped to rebuild houses destroyed by the quake.

The main purpose of a volunteer vacation is to put yourself at the service of the host community and to contribute to community-driven projects. Sponsoring organizations arrange itineraries that bring people together to perform practical work while fostering



Renovating a classroom

cultural understanding. Most of these organizations are international nonprofits with no political or religious affiliations; others are for-profit tour operators.

Some groups specialize in trips for teens and college students, families, and the 50-plus crowd. Projects Abroad's Projects for Professionals offers programs designed specifically for graduates, professionals on a career break, and retirees who wish to do volunteer work in a developing country. The group matches each volunteer to a project where his or her knowledge will have the greatest impact.

Schoolhouse



Tips for the Volunteer Vacationer

- ▶ Always ask what people need or want; don't assume you know.
- ▶ Research and patronize nonprofit businesses that support others.
- ▶ Make sure the organization you volunteer with has a lasting positive impact on the communities it serves.
- ▶ Instead of giving cash, which can easily be misdirected, buy local handicrafts and give goods. Toothbrushes, notebooks, pens, and books can all be meaningful contributions. —D.L.

The cost varies considerably, depending on where you're housed—whether you're living with a host family, sleeping under the stars, or staying in tent camps, dormitory rooms, or more luxurious lodges.

While these tours benefit residents, wildlife, or cultural sites, volunteer vacations are also a way for participants to give back to themselves.

Such was the case with my 14-day trip to Tanzania last summer. The adventure grew from a yearning to visit Africa and a desire for a meaningful way to celebrate a momentous birthday. I wanted an authentic experience, a non-touristy, hands-on cultural exchange where I could give and interact with locals on a daily basis.

Discover Corps Experience Tanzania allowed me to do just that. I stayed, along with 11 other participants, at its lodge in Moshi. It's not a fancy hotel but rather a comfortable facility with eight bedrooms, en-suite bathrooms, and a staffed kitchen.

The first morning, the group gathered for an orientation and a quick Swahili lesson. Later that day, neighbors from the surrounding village were invited for a meal. Before we ate, Mama Simba, our director, asked everyone to explain how they made their livings. These introductions were not just for the sake of the volunteers' knowledge, but a way of socially connecting those within the community.

Discover Corps assigned each volunteer to a family: mine included Justin, a bilingual safari tour guide, his sister, and his aging mother. I followed as they led the way down a rutty dirt path to their house for a visit.



The author in Tanzania



PHOTOS COURTESY OF DEBI LANDER

The family maintains a compound with some 20 multigenerational members living in connecting houses that would be deemed shacks in the U.S. The kitchen is the fire pit; a goat acts as a garbage disposal.

The family members were gracious hosts who treated me as an honored guest and engaged me in friendly conversation, using Justin as the interpreter. On a later visit, they checked up on my activities, and I inquired about their needs.

The bulk of my volunteer work took place at a public elementary school. The understaffed campus has no electrical power except in the office. The food-service staff consists of a lone woman who cooks cornmeal and beans over an open fire for all 425 children. The students eat sitting on the ground. One water source—a pipe coming from the garden area—supplies the

A school I visited in Tanzania has no electrical power except in the office. A lone woman cooks cornmeal and beans over an open fire for all 425 children.



Classroom, before and after



Hiking with the Maasai



Discover Corps' home base



entire school. The children bring empty containers from home and fill them to water the plants or use in the classroom. Some tiny tots haul the heavy water containers home to their families. The toilet facilities broke my heart.

Discover Corps—which, incidentally, works in partnership with the National Peace Corps Association—paired up the volunteers and assigned us to a teacher and her students. Following the lesson plans, we helped teach English, assisted with pronunciation and comprehension, introduced silly songs, and corrected homework assignments one-on-one. We noticed that the school lacked textbooks (often two or three students had to share), so my group decided to purchase additional primers with our own funds.

Following the English lesson, we changed into work clothes and began renovating a substandard classroom. We tore down the dilapidated ceiling, scrubbed furniture, and prepped the walls before giving them fresh paint. The

men in my group installed the new ceiling with the aid of a local handyman. When we finished, the renewed room, although not up to OSHA standards, looked bright and cheery.

Another volunteer project on my Tanzania trip involved visiting children in an orphanage. (HIV/AIDS is to blame for a rise in the numbers of homeless African children.) We brought them supplies and our love; they returned smiles and hugs. We were also treated to a full-day cross-cultural exchange with the Maasai as well as to dance performances, a batik painting lesson, and two photo safaris in the national parks.

Aaron Smith, founder of GoVoluntouring, says, “When travelers return, they have a deeper cultural sensitivity to the challenges and the systemic issues that the developing world tends to have. Many travelers get attached to the animals, local community, and other volunteers they work with, and return to the same program each year.”

Where to Learn More

Interested in a volunteer vacation? You'll find comprehensive databases of international opportunities with reviews by past volunteers at VolunteerAlliance.org and Idealist.org.

Voluntourism is not without critics. Some say the programs mainly benefit the global travel industry by enticing the socially conscious but untrained to pay thousands of dollars to work in poor communities across South America, Asia, and Africa. An article posted on a website called Sociological Images, meanwhile, called voluntourism a form of narcissism and stated that it “is ultimately about the fulfillment of the volunteers themselves, not necessarily what they bring to the communities they visit.”

That may sometimes be the case but, counters Alex DuBois, operations manager of Discover Corps, “It comes down to a few key variables, including the philosophy behind how the trips are run, the staff who are running them, and the organizations they are partnered with. I think the key word here is ‘reciprocity.’”

Perhaps the question to ask is whether small, personal acts of kindness, and the spreading of understanding between people and cultures, can help effect lasting change. While my own experience in Tanzania benefited me by opening my eyes and heart and giving me new insights, it also, in some small way, helped the community I visited. I would travel as a volunteer again, and I encourage others to explore the possibility as well. **BJT**

Debi Lander (dlander@bjtonline.com), a regular contributor to these pages, is a Florida-based freelance writer specializing in travel subjects. Her flight to Tanzania and Discover Corps experience were self-funded.

Celebrating the volunteers' work





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FOTOLIA

Kayaking the Keys

Here's the best way to experience
Florida's marine wonderland.

by Thomas R. Pero

I dipped my paddle into the crystal-clear salt-water shallows and set off a series of minor explosions. Instantly, a dozen elegant, squawking great egrets leaped into the air from a grove of leathery-leafed mangroves. Then a school of silvery baby tarpon erupted, splashing beneath the prehistoric-looking, reddish-orange dangling roots.

When the ruckus quieted, I sat in my red-top ABS-plastic kayak and paused. That's when a dive-bombing osprey plummeted from the sky, made a quick hole in the water, and emerged with a striped mullet writhing in its talons.

I was happily exploring a tiny corner of 800-square-mile Florida Bay, a vast backwater region of sand flats and mangrove islands, all connected by channels of turquoise green and blue that beckon swimmers and snorkelers, anglers and boaters. A long string of subtropical ancient coral reefs called the Florida Keys—from the Spanish “cayo” or small island—protects the bay from strong ocean winds off the Atlantic.

Sea kayaking is the perfect way to explore this marine wonderland. Today's modern kayaks are rugged, lightweight and easy to transport. You can launch them practically anywhere—and

the Florida Keys offer an array of public and private boat ramps, state parks, beaches and fishing piers. Best of all, once you're in the water, you slip around quietly, experiencing nature on its terms and at your pace.

Bring binoculars. Fishing and bird watching are, of course, two compelling reasons for kayaking the Keys, but there are other attractions I recommend you visit. One is the National Deer Key Refuge—some 8,500 acres of critical pine and hardwood hummock upland and freshwater-marsh wetland habitat in the lower Keys, mostly on Big Pine Key and No Name Key. This is where you'll find the miniature Virginia white-tailed deer, which are relatively easy to see from one of several hiking trails, especially at daybreak and at dusk. There are only 600 to 800 of them in existence.

Although all of my explorations of the Florida Keys over the years have been day trips, camping overnight offers interesting possibilities for the adventurous. You can also paddle your kayak from town to town and stay at one of hundreds of inns and hotels. The Florida

TRAVELER INFORMATION

Airports: Florida Keys Marathon Airport (MTH) offers access to the middle Keys and has a 5,008-foot runway. Key West International Airport (EYW) provides access to the lower Keys and has a 4,801-foot runway.

Kayak rentals and guides: Andrea Paulson, Reelax Charters at Sugarloaf Marina, (305) 304-1392, keys kayaking.com; Bill Keogh, Big Pine Kayak Adventures, (305) 872-7474, keys kayaktours.com; Bob Rankin, Keys Kayaks, (305) 743-8880, keys kayaksllc.com.

Campsites: (800) 326-3521, reserveamerica.com

Inns and hotels: fla-keys.com



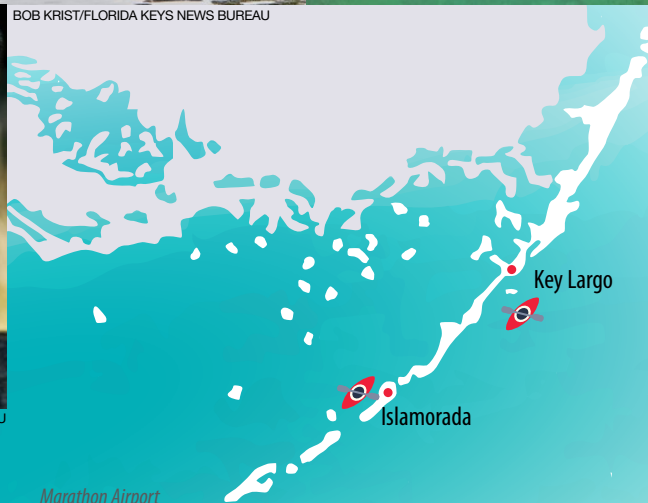
BOB KRIST/FLORIDA KEYS NEWS BUREAU



ANDY NEWMAN/FLORIDA KEYS NEWS BUREAU



FRAZIER NIVENS/FLORIDA KEYS NEWS BUREAU



Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Greenways and Trails has produced an excellent guide to 10 kayak trips, complete with detailed downloadable maps of the Florida Keys Overseas Paddling Trail.

One important tip: always carry a rain jacket. Even if you set out to kayak for only a few hours, assume it will rain. Florida experiences more thunderstorms than any other state. Days often start sunny and bright. By afternoon, dark clouds build on the horizon. Sheets of pounding rain are brief. And by early evening the sun is back, the fragrant, still air smelling of bougainvillea.

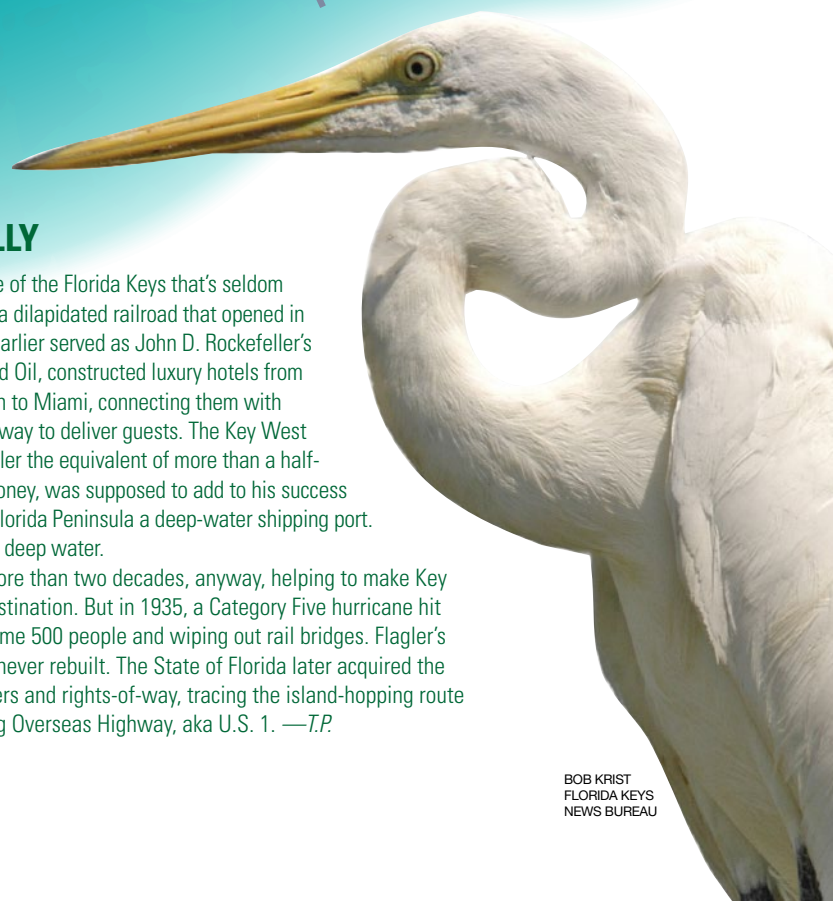
BJT

Thomas R. Pero (tpero@bjtonline.com) is publisher of Wild River Press and the author of two books about fly fishing.

FLAGLER'S FOLLY

One interesting feature of the Florida Keys that's seldom out of sight of kayakers is a dilapidated railroad that opened in 1912. Henry Flagler, who earlier served as John D. Rockefeller's right-hand man at Standard Oil, constructed luxury hotels from Jacksonville to Palm Beach to Miami, connecting them with the Florida East Coast Railway to deliver guests. The Key West Extension, which cost Flagler the equivalent of more than a half-billion dollars in today's money, was supposed to add to his success by making the end of the Florida Peninsula a deep-water shipping port. Trouble was, there was no deep water.

The railroad ran for more than two decades, anyway, helping to make Key West a popular tourist destination. But in 1935, a Category Five hurricane hit the archipelago, killing some 500 people and wiping out rail bridges. Flagler's Key West Extension was never rebuilt. The State of Florida later acquired the remaining trestles and piers and rights-of-way, tracing the island-hopping route with today's 113-mile-long Overseas Highway, aka U.S. 1. —T.P.



BOB KRIST
FLORIDA KEYS
NEWS BUREAU

Making *money* while doing *good*

Can you earn attractive profits while investing in companies that are aligned with your beliefs?

by Chana R. Schoenberger

Thinking about investing in companies that further causes you believe in—or at least making sure your stocks, bonds, and mutual funds don't help causes to which you object? If so, you may be wondering whether a so-called socially responsible portfolio can yield attractive returns. The short answer is that it can, but finding the right investments can be tricky.

While funds focusing on specific social ideas and causes have been around for two decades, investors have been selecting companies that align with their beliefs for much longer. Socially responsible investing, also known as impact investing, can involve the use of negative screens, which separate out companies with products or approaches that investors don't want, such as alcohol or gun manufacturers or businesses with poor environmental records.

Alternatively, investors can screen for characteristics they do want, including strong corporate governance, adequate representation of women or minorities on boards of directors, or family-friendly employee policies. Fund managers and large investors also try to enhance their impact by voting in proxy campaigns and meeting with company management.

A big question facing investors is whether returns on socially responsible funds typically equal or exceed returns for broad market indexes. No clear answer exists, but many academic articles do suggest that firms with high scores on corporate social responsibility measures tend to perform better than firms with low scores, both in terms of profits and stock valuations, says Caroline Flammer, a professor at Canada's University of Western Ontario. Some examples:

- A study by Alex Edmans at London Business School concluded that companies that treat their employees well outperformed the overall market, as a group.

- In a 2015 paper in the journal *Management Science*, Flammer showed a correlation between corporate social responsibility and improved operating performance.

- A 2015 Harvard Business School working paper by Mozaffar Khan, George Serafeim, and Aaron Yoon found that companies that invest more money in sustainability initiatives have higher stock returns.

- In 2012, Deutsche Bank concluded that 89 percent of academic papers looking at this issue found that higher environmental, social, and governance standards at companies led to stock price outperformance.

Chances are, you can find portfolios that address causes that matter to you. For investors who care about placing more women on corporate boards, for example, Eve Ellis and Nikolay Djibankov, who run the Matterhorn Group at Morgan Stanley, created the Parity Portfolio. Starting with a list of the 300 large-cap public companies with three or more women on their boards, Ellis and Djibankov then chose the 40 or so top performers. The group's clients have about 10 percent of their assets invested in the Parity Portfolio, Ellis says.

Ascent, a wealth-management division of U.S. Bank where clients have a minimum net worth of \$75 million, maintains a database of some 400 impact-investing mutual and exchange-traded funds. Some of these funds select companies that meet certain criteria while others exclude stocks with particular characteristics. But Jonathan Firestein, managing director of private capital and impact investing at Ascent, says that about a quarter of the funds in the database charge excessive fees, and of the rest, "only 15 percent are really worth it," a proportion that is about the same as for regular funds. He adds



John Lewis

that it's important to think of impact funds as you would any investment—not just as a way to do good but as a way to make money.

Investors over age 55 tend to be relatively skeptical about impact investing, Firestein says. But sticking to a philanthropy-only model—just donating money—can lead to missed opportunities both to help and to make money, he says: “There are things you can invest in that you cannot give to, and there are things you can give to that you cannot invest in.”

One Ascent client family that's heavily involved in social investing, Firestein says, is passionate about affordable housing, education, and healthcare in the U.S. and has also made impact investments in Africa and Latin America. In addition, it is moving all of its investments in several long-term generation-skipping trusts into impact areas, including stocks and bonds, private equity and venture capital, and direct loans.

For the public-market investments, the family expects “to beat the market by a little bit,” Firestein says, and it anticipates that the private equity and venture-capital funds will yield an annual internal rate of return of 20 percent or more.

Some advisors say philanthropy is a better way to aid a cause than impact investing. One reason is that it can be difficult to measure how much social good or bad a company is doing, says Scott Clemons, chief investment strategist at Brown Brothers Harriman. “If a company derives 10 percent of its revenues from tobacco, is that too much?” asks Clemons. “Five percent? Or should we measure as a percentage of profits instead of revenue? It gets tricky pretty quickly.”

There's also the question of what socially responsible funds should do about companies that some investors think are good and others consider bad. For instance, one investor might avoid Monsanto, which makes genetically modified seeds, while another might seek out the company's shares, reasoning that the seeds are fighting world hunger. Similarly, an investor who has chosen to eliminate alcohol companies would have to consider whether to invest in Costco, which sells alcohol. This can make it difficult to select a fund that bills itself as socially responsible, leading

Socially responsible funds have to decide whether to buy into companies that some investors think are good and others consider bad.

many investors to craft their own portfolios.

“If you want to be an impact investor, you have to define your terms really carefully and revisit [your portfolio periodically] because business models change,” Clemons says.

Evaluating a manager's performance is also difficult when the impact portfolio and the regular portfolio don't match exactly, making it challenging to know when the manager is doing poorly and when the investor's own constraints are causing lower returns.

“Rather than overlay social goals onto an investment program, we recommend that clients express their social responsibility through philanthropy,” says Clemons.

EJT

Chana Schoenberger (cschoenberger@bjtonline.com) has been an editor at *Forbes*, a reporter for Dow Jones and the *Wall Street Journal*, and a news editor at Bloomberg News.

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The flag of Georgia, featuring a large red cross on a white background with four smaller red crosses in each quadrant, is shown waving on a flagpole against a blue sky with white clouds.

Georgia

on my mind

This former Soviet republic, which most Americans have yet to discover, is rich in history and natural beauty.

by Margie Goldsmith

PHOTO: FOTOLIA





“Watch out—there’s a lot of money here,” says my guide, Merab, with a smile. “You will get very rich.” In the former Soviet republic of Georgia, when you walk through cow dung, you supposedly become wealthy. I sidestep the muck and continue behind Merab up a steep, rocky trail, past the small village of Gergeti. The odor is foul. “Village perfume,” says Merab with a laugh.

We are headed for the sacred Georgian Orthodox Holy Trinity Church, about 7,000 feet above sea level. While a handful of people go by horseback, most tourists take the 30-minute Jeep ride up a rutted mountain road to the famous 14th century icon. I’m hiking, which should take about three hours. I’m not on a pilgrimage, but I’ve spent the last three days driving with Merab from one highlight to the next, and I need some exercise.

Georgia is where Jason and the Argonauts came in search of the Golden Fleece. The real story, Merab says, is that the early miners stretched a lambskin across the river to capture the gold flakes, and eventually the entire fleece turned gold.

I’d barely heard of this country when my tour operator, Houston-based Ker & Downey, told

me Georgia would be the next “in” destination with its rich history and art, UNESCO World Heritage sites, and snow-capped Caucasus Mountains, the highest range in Europe. I like to be among the first to discover a place and, in fact, I’ve yet to see a single other American here.

There are plenty of tourists, though—mainly Asians, Australians, Israelis, and a few Brits.

There are also Russians, Turks, Armenians, and Azerbaijanis. Merab can spot everyone’s nationality just by looking at their faces. He can also tell who’s from East Georgia and who’s from West Georgia.

Our driver figures it out another way. He looks at someone and says he’s Armenian. Armenians and Azerbaijanis, he says, both wear pointed shoes, but the latter group also wear tight clothes and cut their bangs in a straight line like the early Beatles.

As he says this, two eagles fly directly overhead. I turn, looking for the snow-covered peak of 7,530-foot Mt. Kazbek, the third-highest mountain in Georgia, but fog now covers it. This morning, I stood on the balcony of my Kazbegi hotel room, mesmerized by the gigantic glacier as the clouds parted. Its massive peak was golden in the sunrise.

+++

The hill becomes progressively steeper. “We are less than 10 miles from the Russian border, and I am cursing the Russians,” Merab says. “You can go there, but we cannot. Well, we have no desire to go.”

Merab—who besides being a guide teaches linguistics at the University of Tbilisi—echoes the feelings of his countrymen. Georgia, which gained its independence in 1991 when the Soviet empire broke up, is bordered on the west by the Black Sea, on the south by Turkey and Armenia, and on the east by Azerbaijan; but the entire north neighbors the Russian Federation.



MARGIE GOLDSMITH

Spread on previous pages: the old city section of Tbilisi, the Georgian capital. Below: the Holy Trinity Church. Right: frescoes inside the church.



FOTOUA



I like to be among the first to discover a place and, in fact, I've yet to see a single other American here.



PHOTOS: MARGIE GOLDSMITH

Top: Mt. Kazbek, Georgia's third-highest mountain. Above left: handmade felt slippers for sale to tourists in Signagi. Above right: the author's driver poses with an antique animal horn.

Merab explains that the Soviet Union's war against the church started in 1917. Under Lenin, from 1921 to 1925, the Russians demolished 1,500 Georgian churches and killed 1,100 Georgian monks. From 1937 to 1939 the Bolsheviks killed thousands of people. Yesterday, when we visited Jvari Monastery, a sixth-century church a couple of hours from the Georgian capital of Tbilisi, Merab explained that the Russians destroyed fifth- and sixth-century frescoes there out of jealousy.

"It was to wipe out all the beauty of Georgia," he said. "First they vandalized the church frescoes, then they whitewashed them. They burned down everything Georgian. They were jealous because Georgia had a fifth-century B.C. church, and the oldest Russian church was 15th century." His voice was bitter.

We're about halfway up the mountain as he says this, and my quads are beginning to ache. I wish I were back in Tbilisi, where I went to the Orbeliani Baths to recover from jetlag. First, I luxuriated in a soothing hot sulfur bath. Then, my attendant led me to a tiled bench and scrubbed me raw with kisa, a dark mud. After, using her fingers, knuckles, wrists, and elbows,

she massaged every knot out of my body, poured a sack of warm soap bubbles all over me, and directed me to the shower—all for the equivalent of \$10, including tip.

It's easy to be jetlagged on arrival to Tbilisi, which once served as the connection between Europe and Asia on the Silk Road. Tbilisi still maintains some of the character it had when the first traders and camel trains stopped here, and the first day I felt as though I, too, had traveled a long distance by camel. Coming from New York City took 21 hours, including airport waiting time and airplane changes in Paris and Istanbul. But I'm not complaining.



Traveler Fast Facts

WHAT IT IS:

Georgia is in the Caucasus region of Eurasia. It is bordered by Russia, the Black Sea, Turkey, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. Ninety-five percent of the four billion residents are Georgian Orthodox. Georgia is unspoiled, with centuries-old churches and fortresses, cave towns and rock monasteries, beautiful national parks, and the snow-capped Caucasus Mountains, the highest range in Europe.

CLIMATE:

The western part of the country is subtropical while the east has both subtropical and continental climates. Bring layers of clothing, because the weather constantly changes between Tbilisi and the Caucasus Mountains. The best months to visit are June, July, and August.

GETTING THERE:

Private jets land at Georgia's Tbilisi International Airport (TBS), which has a 9,842-foot runway. No airline flies direct to Georgia from the U.S., however—it's easiest to go through Istanbul. You'll pass through Turkish customs before reboarding and must produce a Turkish visa, which is free and available online. For private-jet arrival info, contact Levani Tsertsvadze (cercvi703@yahoo.com, +995 577444970).

WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO:

Leave your suits and high heels at home, as Georgia is extremely casual. The currency is the lari (GEL) and, while you'll find ATMs in the larger cities, your guide will direct you to a reputable moneychanger for the best rate. For some churches, women need scarves to cover their heads. The official language is Georgian, and your trip will be more pleasant and easier if you have a guide/translator and driver.





I once thought Turkey offered the freshest European food I'd ever had, but its cuisine pales in comparison with Georgia's fare.

Tbilisi, a city that has inspired everyone from Pushkin to Tchaikovsky, has a quaint old town of narrow cobblestoned streets and 14th century homes with hanging balconies, thermal bath-houses, and bars. It also has a national museum filled with 4,000-year-old objects, a sixth-century walled fortress, and on top of a hill, a 92-foot-high aluminum statue of the Mother of Georgia. Erected in 1958 to commemorate Georgia's 1,500th anniversary and symbolize its character, the Georgian-dressed statue depicts the woman

with a sword in her right hand to protect against enemies and a bowl of wine in her left hand to greet visitors. "One must always give guests grapes and wine," says Merab, who never stops treating me as a guest.

+++

I once thought Turkey offered the freshest European food I'd ever had, but its cuisine pales in comparison with Georgia's fare. I love the khachapuri, a cheese bread similar to pizza, which is served everywhere with various kinds of cheese



Above: Georgian specialties, including chicken with cheese, beef stew and cucumber salad with tomatoes. Right: the 92-foot statue of the Mother of Georgia. Below: 7th century Sioni Cathedral in Tbilisi.



Traveler Report Card

ACCOMMODATIONS (A-):

In Georgia, I stayed at the Rooms Hotel Tbilisi (\$233–\$813), the Rooms Hotel Kazbegi (\$171–\$242), and the Kabadoni Boutique Hotel in Signagi (\$118–\$407). Considered the country's most deluxe lodging options, they all include a large hot and cold breakfast, free Wi-Fi, robes and slippers in room, and mini bars. The Kabadoni has an indoor swimming pool and spa. All three are small, contemporary, and sleek. Make sure to request a room with a balcony at the Rooms Hotel Kazbegi (which offers views of the glacier and distant Trinity Church) and the Kabadoni Boutique Hotel in Signaghi (which overlooks the historic walled town).

FOOD (A+):

While I ate only breakfast in the hotels in Georgia, the hot and cold buffets were excellent and plentiful. Every dining establishment I visited in the country—from the plainest ones to the well-known Restaurant Kalanda, in which five folk dancers entertained—offered fresh and delicious food. Every meal featured homemade soups and cheese bread, and other options included just-picked vegetables, beef and pork kebabs, and dumplings.

ACTIVITIES (A+):

The Republic of Georgia offers hiking (easy to extreme), dance performances and visits to monasteries, fortresses, cave cities, walled cities, national parks, and Black Sea beach resorts. From December through mid-April, you can go skiing in Gudauri in the Caucasus.

QUIETUDE (A):

In the Botanical Gardens and national parks, you'll hear only the sound of birds and waterfalls. Even the cities and villages are quiet except for the sound of heels clicking on cobblestone streets and church bells chiming the hour. In the Caucasus, you'll hear sheep and cows and horses.



The children scream with joy. Soon we are all blowing in and out together, making music.

COURTESY OF MARGIE GOLDSMITH



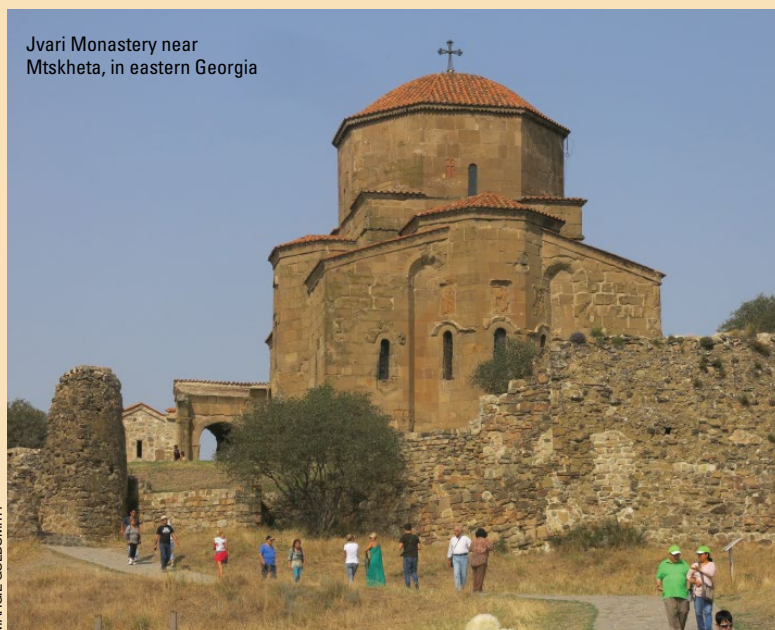
Above: the author teaches Georgian kids to play harmonica. Below: A stall selling candied walnuts dipped in sugar syrup in Ananuri, Georgia.

MARGIE GOLDSMITH



Jvari Monastery near Mtskheta, in eastern Georgia

MARGIE GOLDSMITH



(my favorite is sulgani, goat cheese). Then there's a cucumber salad with fresh tomatoes and candied walnuts; beef and pork kebabs served in thin pita bread; and grilled river trout. The restaurants are simple but the food is always delicious.

One night in a restaurant, the lights suddenly dim and five dancers take the stage: four men and a woman. They begin with a dance in which their feet move faster than in an Irish jig; in another dance, two males fight with real swords and shields, like knights. It's not touristy—it's authentic and beautiful, and you can see the dancers have had many years of training.

About three hours after we start our hike, Merab and I reach the top of the mountain. I enter the Gergeti Holy Trinity Church, considered the symbol of Georgia, after donning a long skirt and scarf. (The church loans the garb to tourists.) The church is beautiful but it is the surrounding mountains that most resonate with me.

On my last day in Georgia, I visit an elementary classroom in a village near Signagi, one of Georgia's smallest towns. Merab has arranged for me to meet a group of second graders who grin as I enter their classroom. First, two seven-year-old boys play me a beautiful song on flute. Then, I entertain the students with a slow blues song. They look spellbound.

Whenever I visit a country where I don't speak the tongue, I pack around 30 harmonicas to give away, because music is a universal language whose words are the joyful sounds an instrument makes. I take the harmonicas out of my backpack, each nestled in a red, white, and blue Hohner case, and hand one to each child. As they open their gifts, they scream with joy. Soon, we are all blowing in and out together, making music.

I walk from child to child, putting my face close to theirs and listening to them play. One shy girl has her eyes cast down, but I blow in and out, point to her, and she does the same, then takes the harmonica out of her mouth and grins. I give her a thumbs-up sign, and move on to the next student. Their teacher lines them all up and puts me in the middle for a class portrait taken with her phone.

I grab my backpack and start to leave, but they won't let me. They form a line and approach one by one with their open cardboard harmonica cases. They want my autograph. I am touched. I remember Merab telling me on our hike to Trinity church to watch out for the money, that I will get very rich. And as I look at the kids and the huge smiles on their faces, I know that I couldn't feel richer.

BJT

A Side Trip to Russia

Moscow and St. Petersburg are a short hop from Tbilisi, and well worth a visit. Private jets can land at three airports in Moscow, where runway lengths are 12,447 feet, 11,807 feet, and 11,482 feet; and at two St. Petersburg airports, whose longest runways are 12,401 feet and 11,145 feet. It's an ideal time to visit, as the Russian ruble is weak compared with the dollar.

I went on a Ker & Downey bespoke tour to Russia with guides, drivers, luxury vehicles, early entrance to Kremlin grounds, a private tour of Armoury chamber and Grand Kremlin Palace (which is normally closed to the public), a special late opening of St. Basil's Cathedral, a private choir concert in an 18th century church, and orchestra seats to the Bolshoi Ballet.

The spacious suite I stayed in at the new Four Seasons Hotel Moscow (steps from Red Square and the Bolshoi Theatre) offered views of Red Square, the Kremlin, and the colorful domes of St. Basil's Cathedral. I took the first-class fast train to St. Petersburg, where I toured the Hermitage, visited the Peterhof, and stayed in a balcony suite overlooking St. Isaac's at the Four Seasons Hotel Lion Palace, a former 19th century royal palace. —M.G.

Margie Goldsmith (mgoldsmith@bjtonline.com), a regular BJT contributor, has visited 130 countries and written about them all. Ker & Downey covered the author's airfare, drivers, and guides, as well as most lodging and meals. Four Seasons provided hotel stays in Russia.

Montana's *wilderness club*

This Big Sky outpost offers spacious fairways and dramatic long views.

by Bradley S. Klein



Out here in the deep frontier of Montana, there's a clear sense of where you are. Wide open spaces. Rugged, mountainous terrain. Deep lakes. Crystalline skies. This is a world that seems custom made for skiing, hunting, fishing and golf.

The Wilderness Club, tucked into Montana's far northwest corner in the town of Eureka, lies just seven miles south of the Canadian border and halfway between Glacier National Park and the Kootenai National Forest. Its stirring golf course design by Brian Curley and Nick Faldo

offers a compelling reason to make the trek.

The facility started as a private club in 2009 and has been developed into a 550-acre property that includes a resort and public-access play. The grounds feature comfortable lodge-style accommodations, private-home sites and a waterpark, as well as use of four lakes.

The 2,600-foot base elevation provides about a half a club distance bonus on this par-72 layout, with tees ranging from 5,431 to 7,207 yards. The course traverses 100 feet of up and down, with a few launch-pad tee shots and the

occasional need to thread an approach around or alongside towering pine trees. The combination of extensive bunkering, spacious fairways and dramatic long views of the surrounding mountains makes playing the course a rewarding adventure. And the "banana belt" climate ensures an unexpectedly long golf season for a place this far north—from late March until well into October.

BJT

Bradley S. Klein (bklein@bjtonline.com) is the architecture editor of *Golfweek*. His latest book is *Wide Open Fairways*.





COURSE:

For more information about the Wilderness Club, visit thewildernessclub.com or call (406) 889-6501.

AIRPORTS:

Eureka Airport is five miles northeast of the club and has a 4,200-foot runway. Glacier Park International Airport (FCA) is 69 miles southeast and has a 9,006-foot runway.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE WILDERNESS CLUB



TRAVELER CALENDAR

February 5–9

RIO CARNIVAL

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Get your samba on at the world's biggest carnival.

Info: rio-carnival.net

February 7

SUPER BOWL 50

Santa Clara, California. For the first time in Super Bowl history, the game will be branded with an Arabic rather than a Roman numeral.

Info: nfl.com

February 8–22

CHINESE NEW YEAR

Fifteen days of worldwide celebrations usher in the Year of the Monkey. Events in U.S. cities like New York and San Francisco will include colorful parades with dragon and lion dances and firecrackers.

Info: chinahighlights.com

February 9

MARDI GRAS

New Orleans. Why not spend Fat Tuesday in New Orleans this year? The raucous, colorful celebration takes over the city for days with parades, festivals, and musical celebrations.

Info: neworleanscvb.com

February 13–15

COCONUT GROVE ARTS FESTIVAL

Coconut Grove, Florida. A charming village within the city of Miami hosts this festival, which features nearly one mile of art, food, and fun.

Info: cgaf.com

February 15–16

WESTMINSTER KENNEL CLUB DOG SHOW

New York City. This annual show, now in its 140th year, is arguably the most renowned dog event in the U.S.

Info: westminsterkennelclub.org

February 21

DAYTONA 500

Daytona, Florida. NASCAR fans gather for the 58th running of the heart-pounding 500-mile stock-car race.

Info: daytonainternationalspeedway.com



February 28

ACADEMY AWARDS

Hollywood, California. Chris Rock will host the 88th Oscars ceremony, which honors the best of the best for their achievements in cinema.

Info: oscars.org

March 11–20

SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST MUSIC FILM INTERACTIVE

Austin, Texas. Conferences and festivals showcase the latest in music, film, and technology.

Info: sxsw.com

March 20–April 17

NATIONAL CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL

Washington, D.C. The unofficial first sign of spring in the U.S. capital also symbolizes the friendship between the American and Japanese people.

Info: nationalcherryblossomfestival.org

March 21–24

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS CONFERENCE

San Diego, California. An annual meeting for pilots who fly internationally.

Info: nbaa.org

April 3

PARIS MARATHON

Paris. An inspirational event for a city still recovering from last year's terror attacks.

Info: schneiderelectricparismarathon.com



April 7–10

THE MASTERS GOLF TOURNAMENT

Augusta, Georgia. Golf fans unite over pimento cheese sandwiches and anxiously await the presentation of the green jacket.

Info: masters.com

April 12–14

ASIAN BUSINESS AVIATION CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION

Shanghai. See box.

April 13–24

TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL

New York City. Well known for being a diverse international event that supports emerging and established directors, this festival has screened more than 1,400 films from about 80 countries since it began in 2002.

Info: tribecafilm.com/festival

April 18

BOSTON MARATHON

Boston. Prequalified athletes will compete in one of road racing's premier events.

Info: baa.org



April 22–May 1

NEW ORLEANS JAZZ & HERITAGE FESTIVAL

New Orleans. Crafts, food, culture and, of course, lots of jazz.

Info: nojazzfest.com

April 24

VIRGIN MONEY LONDON MARATHON

London. It's too late to register online, but runners wanting to participate can still secure spots through many of the teams running for charity.

Info: virginmoneylondonmarathon.com

For a long-range events calendar, please visit bjtonline.com/calendar.

Asia's Big Bizav Event

The Asian Business Aviation Conference and Exhibition returns to Shanghai as manufacturers and service providers continue to stake a claim on this exciting bizav frontier. At the show, **BJT** will distribute the China edition of our 2016 *Buyers' Guide*, and our company will publish the daily *ABACE Convention News*. Visit ainonline.com for the latest event coverage.

Info: abace.aero.

—Jennifer Leach English



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Five facts about FBOs

You know they rank among the best reasons to fly privately. Here's what you may not know.

by Mark Phelps

As a **BJT** reader, you're undoubtedly aware that folks who fly privately can usually use separate terminals—known as FBOs—to board and disembark from their aircraft. You also know that FBOs mean no long security lines, dehumanizing searches, or crowded gates—just quiet, comfortable waiting areas or even the ability to skip the building and drive right up to the airplane.

But there's a lot you may not know about the businesses that operate these terminals. Let's look at five of the questions I hear most often about FBOs from business jet travelers.

1. What does FBO stand for, anyway?

In the early post-World War I days, young, ex-military pilots who just couldn't stay on the ground would fly war-surplus biplanes from town to town, either one at a time or in "flying circuses" of two, three, or more. Operating from the most convenient pasture close to town, they would offer rides or perform aerial shows in exchange for money, food or,

sometimes, just enough gas to make it to the next destination. Occasionally, a barnstormer would weary of the grind and decide to settle in one of the towns, providing services such as flying businesspeople around, giving flying lessons, or performing other aviation-related activity such as crop dusting. These ad hoc businesses became known as "fixed-base operators" (FBOs), to distinguish them from their gypsy counterparts. The name stuck.

2. How do FBOs earn a living?

In the U.S., fuel sales are the most common profit center, but hangar rental, maintenance, aircraft sales, charter, a flying school, or some other specialty might contribute to the cash flow. Income sources depend heavily on the location, the character of traffic, and the local airport management.

3. Why is it so darned hard to find the FBO at many airports?

FBOs guard the privacy and security of their customers, so you won't see neon signs with arrows pointing the way. Make sure the friend or limo driver meeting you calls ahead for detailed directions. And if the airport is a major business aviation destination, be sure to specify which FBO you're going to. At such airports, there could be as many as half a dozen.

4. Who manages FBOs?

Though airport authorities operate a few FBOs, most of them can trace their origins to a private entrepreneur who started small, probably out of a love of aviation. Many remain individually owned, but in recent years, several large FBO chains have taken over some mom-and-pop operations, often with great success due to the chains' bargaining clout and economies of scale. But experience has shown that a key ingredient to success, whether taking over an existing FBO or starting from scratch, is a local management team that understands the needs of the micro market at the airport.

5. Why do I feel as if I've walked into a hotel?

FBOs are in the hospitality business. At small airports, they might be on the cozy B&B level while, at larger airports, they could be redolent of five-star resorts. Regardless of size, the most successful FBOs are staffed by people who understand that customer service is second in importance only to safety. So expect amenities like prompt planeside baggage pickup; refreshments in the lounge; knowledgeable concierge service at the desk; and friendly employees whose smiles may make you smile, too.

BJT

Mark Phelps (mphelps@bjtonline.com) is a private pilot and a managing editor at **BJT** sister publication *Aviation International News*.



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