

“Working Together is the Answer...Compassion Consciousness is the Goal.”

Family Assistance Foundation

# Sharing the Journey

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 3

The Official Newsletter of the Family Assistance Education & Research Foundation

Summer 2009

## Our Mission:

The Family Assistance Foundation, Inc. is an independent non-profit corporation founded for the purpose of empowering people following tragedy. Our mission is to support and improve business and industry responses to emergencies and disasters.

## Inside this issue:

- 2 2009 Aviation Conference Guest Speakers
- 3 Program Agenda Cruise Raffle/Auction
- 4 Low Family Still Pursues Truth Surrounding Events of 9/11
- 5 What are Best Practices and how did they get that way?
- 6 How Large is a Disaster? In Memory of Robert McNamara
- 7 What Should I Pack When “The Call” Comes? Looking Back Twenty Years
- 8 Losing Control
- 9 Photographs of recent HSR Training
- 10 Book Review: Broken Open
- 11 Loss of the L'ACADIEN II
- 12 2009 Cruise Line Conference Survivor Speakers
- 13 Sharing the Journey Cruise Industry Recipients
- 14 Cruise Line Care Team & Leadership Panels
- 15 Cruise Line Industry Emergency Exercise Drill
- 16 2009 Aviation Planning Committee & Sponsors

## September 15-16, 2009 Family Assistance Foundation Aviation Conference - Co-Hosted by WestJet in Calgary

### Join Us As We Learn from Family Survivors of Comair 5191



Thomas Fahey (L) with his siblings, Allison and Andrew



Michael Ryan with his Sister, Terry Welch

This year marks a significant milestone in the evolution of family assistance in aviation. Several disasters will be marking their twenty year anniversaries. Survivors from some of those key disasters will present as we honor the anniversaries of those losses.

This year's conference will also feature two survivors from Comair 5191. Comair Flight 191,

operating as Delta Connection Flight 5191, departed Lexington, Kentucky for Atlanta, Georgia with 47 passengers and a crew of three on August 27, 2006. The aircraft was assigned Runway 22 but departed from Runway 26 instead. Runway 26 was too short for a safe takeoff and it overran the runway. In the resulting crash, all 47 passengers were killed as were 2 of the 3 crew members(NTSB/AAR-07/05).

*Continued Page 2*



## A Hearty WestJet Welcome

by Sean Durfy



**Sean Durfy**  
President & CEO

Here at WestJet, we take caring for one another, our guests, and our community seriously. WestJetters are proud to champion organizations like the Family Assistance Foundation and the remarkable work they do because many of their key beliefs are values we also hold near and dear to our hearts. We understand the significance and responsibility we have to establish practices and systems which support and assist those in need, in the aftermath of events that occur within our boundaries and on a global level.

On September 15 and 16, the 2009 Family Assistance Foundation Conference is being held here in Calgary. We are extremely pleased to welcome all delegates to the WestJet Campus next month; it's a privilege for every WestJetter and for me personally to host this extraordinary event. We are particularly honoured to welcome survivors and representatives from past aviation tragedies as they offer their insight and stories to help us better prepare for times of crisis and great need. We know that the information and experiences shared by our industry brothers and sisters will make this an outstanding event, and we look forward to seeing you all!

*Continued from Page 1*

Connie Fahey lost her son, Thomas, and Terry Welch lost her brother, Michael Ryan, in this aircraft disaster.

Both family survivors will share with the audience about these very special people in their lives and the impact that their loss has had on them and others in their families. They will also tell us about their own unique experiences with the many helpers and agency personnel who assisted them in the aftermath of the tragedy.

Don Bornhorst, former Comair President, will open the panel and share about how the accident impacted his own life.

Garry Priest will address the conference and talk about his life over the twenty years since the crash of United 232, in Sioux City, Iowa, July 19, 1989. Garry was one of the founders of the support group in Denver, where the flight originated. He also helped Dr. Coarsey with her research, which greatly influenced airline family assistance as we know it today. Garry invited her to the second annual memorial meeting in Denver, where she met many other survivors who chose to become part of the research for her dissertation, **Psychological Aftermath of Air Disaster: what can be learned for training** (Coarsey, C.V., 1992).

Garry wrote this poem about a little boy who died in the crash. It was printed with his permission in **Handbook for Human Services Response** (Coarsey, C.V., 2004). This accident claimed the lives of 112 people. Seeing the torso of a young boy whose face had been destroyed after being dragged down the runway on impact was one of the many pictures that haunted him in his recovery.

*Dear Lord,  
Where do I begin  
To express what words can't say  
Or share with you the thoughts  
Going through my mind today*

*I close my eyes and wonder  
If I am living proof  
To those who say you saved me  
and make it sound so true*

*But if Lord, you saved me  
There's something I have missed  
For with my eyes I've seen  
Those you didn't bless*

*It's hard for me to understand  
The logic that you'd use  
To save the gift of life, and yet  
For only those you choose*

## Other Twenty-Year Anniversaries Include United 811 and US Air 5050

Shari Peterson, also part of Dr. Coarsey's original research on the psychological impact of air disaster, will present about her survival of United Flight 811 and how the tragedy has impacted

her life. Mr. Reggie Crews will talk about his mother, Ann Crews, and how the crash of US Air 5050 affected her life as well as his own. Unfortunately, Ann died in 2003 of heart problems. Ann was a favorite on original videos of survivors of aviation disasters. We will miss her.

## American Airlines Flight 1420 Ten-Year Anniversary

Three survivors will discuss their experiences from the crash of American Airlines 1420, Jun 1, 1999. Survivor Mark Schmidt survived the accident, but sustained shoulder injuries. His wife, Betty, will join Mark and share about how Mark's involvement in the accident changed her own life and affected their marriage.

Jeff Arnold, former winner of the Foundation's 'Sharing the Journey' Award and long-term supporter of the Foundation, will update attendees on his life today and share about experiences during and following the crash.

**Day two will feature an outstanding learning opportunity that will include an all-day exercise focused on responding to an accident situation with the goal of establishing and operating a family assistance centre.**

Registrants will be able to pick up their conference packets at the Delta Hotel Check-In Desk. For complete details concerning registration, venue, etc., please visit our website at [www.fafonline.org](http://www.fafonline.org)

## Survivor's Reception

The conference will also include our traditional Survivor's Reception. This event allows participants to meet and talk with survivors, and provides a meaningful opportunity to pay tribute to all survivors who have shared their stories over the years and ultimately helped us better understand how best to support those in the future who will endure their own losses. All registrants are invited and encouraged to attend.

## Sharing the Journey Awards

Winners of the Sharing The Journey Award for the Aviation Industry will also be presented on Tuesday morning, September 15th.

Awards will be given to both a survivor and an employee in the aviation industry. The survivor award is presented to Survivors who have offered assistance that furthers the Foundation's mission of empowering people following tragedy. Examples include speaking in classes, workshops, volunteering and helping other survivors.

Recipients of the employee awards are those who have contributed to helping survivors above and beyond the expectations of their daily job responsibilities. Their assistance may or may not be related to a formal response and may also include any activity involving an employee of a member organization who has personally contributed to a survivor in need of assistance.

For additional information regarding the significance of this prestigious award please visit us at [www.fafonline.org](http://www.fafonline.org)

## 2009 Aviation Conference Program Agenda

**Tuesday, September 15, 2009** WestJet Corporate Campus/Hangar, 22 Aerial Place N.E., Calgary, Alberta, Canada

AM SESSION		PM SESSION	
7:30 AM - 8:30 AM	Registration	12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	LUNCH
8:30 AM - 9:00 AM	Conference Open - Welcome Remarks	1:00 PM - 2:30 PM	American Flight 1420
	Introductions & Sponsor Recognition	2:30 PM - 3:00 PM	Afternoon Break
	Sharing the Journey Awards	3:30 PM - 4:30 PM	Honoring 20-Year Anniversaries
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM	Comair 5191 Survivors		US Air 5050
10:00 AM - 10:30 AM	Morning Break		United 232
10:30 AM - 11:30 AM	Comair 5191 Responders Panel		United 811
11:30 AM - 12:00 PM	Disaster Memorials - Paul Houle	4:30 PM - 5:00 PM	Conclusion and Information about Day Two
		6:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Survivor Reception (Registered Attendees Only)

**Wednesday, September 16, 2009** The Delta Calgary Airport Hotel, located at Calgary Airport

EMERGENCY EXERCISE	
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM	FAC Exercise & Debriefing
	Breaks Provided for Participants

### SUPPORT FAF FUNDRAISER & WIN A CRUISE!

**RAFFLE**  
 VISIT [WWW.FAFONLINE.ORG/RAFFLE.PHP](http://WWW.FAFONLINE.ORG/RAFFLE.PHP)  
 TO PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS!

Family Assistance Foundation

NORWEGIAN CRUISE LINE  
 FREESTYLE CRUISING

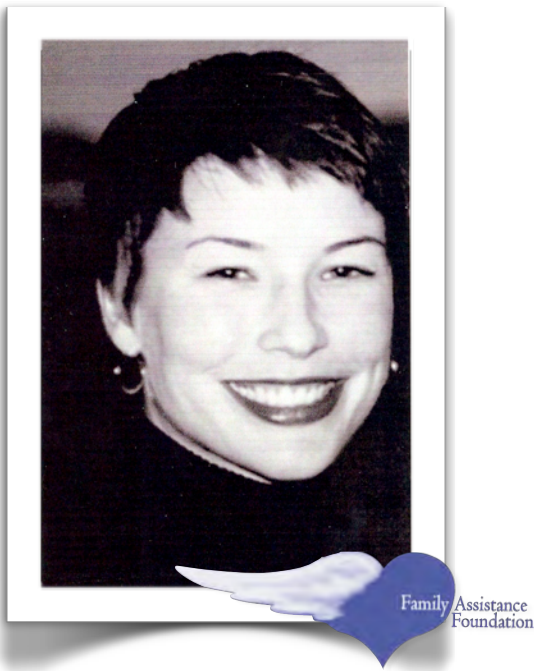
- ❖ Provided by **Norwegian Cruise Line.**
- ❖ Ship: **Any NCL Ship (based on availability)**
- ❖ Duration of Cruise: **7 days**
- ❖ Choose from **Several Destinations**
- ❖ **Ocean View Stateroom**
- ❖ **Number of Guests: Two (2)**
- ❖ **Exclusive of airfare, government taxes and fees, service charges, shore excursions, bar charges, restaurant cover charges, and other personal expenditures.**
- ❖ **Raffle ends September 8, 2009**
- ❖ **Winner will be announced September 15, 2009 at the 2009 Family Assistance Aviation Conference in Calgary, Canada**

**AUCTION** 'SOLD'

Carnival  
 The Fun Ships.

PLACE YOUR BID & WIN!

- ◆ Provided by **Carnival Cruise Lines**
- ◆ Ship: **Carnival Inspiration**
- ◆ Duration of cruise: **5 Days**
- ◆ Destinations: **Tampa, Grand Cayman, Cozumel, Tampa**
- ◆ **Owner's Suite (not available for public sale)**
- ◆ **Number of Guests: Two (2) - (Additional guests will be charged applicable rate and taxes)**
- ◆ **Does not include applicable fees/taxes, departure taxes, federal charges, fuel charges, and gratuities**
- ◆ **Auction ends September 6, 2009**
- ◆ **Winner will be announced September 15, 2009 at the FAF Aviation Family Assistance Conference in Calgary**
- ◆ **Visit us online to place your bid** ~  
<http://www.fafonline.org/auction.php>



*The Sara Low Pin, The Compassionate Heart:  
Symbol of our eternal connections with those we love*

## Low Family Still Pursues Truth Surrounding Events of 9/11

Earlier this year, Carolyn Coarsey and Jeff Morgan introduced Mike and Alyson Low (father and sister of Sara) to Wal-Mart Aviation, one of our newest members of the Family Assistance Foundation.

Bentonville, Arkansas, is the home of Wal-Mart Corporation, and since the Low family are natives of Arkansas, and Mike himself an aviator, the connection was a natural one. During the presentation, both Mike and Alyson praised the American Airlines Care Team for the support and compassion they received during the aftermath of the attacks on the United States, September 11, 2001. Mike continued to refer to the CARE Team as the "light in the darkness" during his presentation about the importance of an organization's response during such unimaginable loss.

Also during the presentation, Mike disclosed that as recent as December 2008, he and two other families again refused the offer for settlement. In his discussion Mike explained, "We continue to seek the truth, accountability and a measure of justice." While Mike's family has been offered a great deal of money, he and the other families would prefer information.

As the reader can see by the article in the **The New York Times** (Benjamin Weiser, July 28, 2009), in December the families were allowed to learn more about what happened that tragic morning in September that forever changed all of our lives. Because of the tireless efforts of the Low family, we now know that Sara and the

other two flight attendants working business class with her were attending the injured first class flight attendants, providing information to the ground as to where the hijackers were sitting (thereby identifying them), and communicating with coach flight attendants, while simultaneously maintaining a calm atmosphere throughout the entire aircraft.

At the Foundation, we are grateful to the Low family for their support of our efforts at raising awareness as to the crucial role that a compassionate response by a corporation can have on a family's ability to heal and transcend trauma. Through the Low family, we also are reminded of the importance of providing families with honest, timely, and truthful information, which research shows, allows a family to believe that all has been learned from the tragedy for prevention of future devastating losses.

The following is a testimonial we received permission to use from Judge Joe Volpe.

*Dear Mr. Low and Dr. Coarsey*

*A student with the Clinton School of Public Service and a high school civics/government teacher with the Little Rock public schools are wearing their pins proudly and telling others about Sara and the Family Assistance Foundation. These pins are very special to me. I am continually asked about the meaning of the pin when I am wearing mine. I am always so proud to explain to people the important meaning of the pin, the important work of the foundation, and how important were Sara's efforts in making us all safer.*

*It is a real honor to help spread this important message. Thank you so much for the pins!*

*Joe*

*Joe J. Volpe  
Anti-Terrorism Coordinator  
Assistant U.S. Attorney  
U.S. Attorney's Office*

The Sara Low Pin is the official lapel pin for the Family Assistance Education & Research Foundation, made in the shape of the Foundation's official logo. The Foundation is dedicated to honoring victims and empowering their families and all survivors of traumatic losses. The Angel wing symbolizes the eternal connection between families and all who share in the tragedy. The heart represents the universal symbol for compassion and empathy shown by helpers following disasters.

Sara Elizabeth Low was a flight attendant who died on American Airlines Flight 11, September 11, 2001.

In recognition of the enormous role that company volunteers played in the support of families, the Sara Low Charitable Trust Fund made a generous donation to the Foundation, which made it possible to create the lapel pin. The Foundation pin was named in Sara's honor.

## What are Best Practices and how did they get that way?

by: Jeff Morgan



**Jeff Morgan**  
*Chairman of the Board &  
Co-Founder*

We often hear the term “best practices”, but what exactly does that mean and how do certain things become “best practice”? In our world of emergency planning and support for business and industry, there are at least three methods in which processes and procedures become best practice. Let’s briefly explore a few of these methods, which may or may not produce best practices.

### Tricks of the Trade

In 15+ years of emergency planning, I’ve seen numerous occurrences where new emergency managers often start by taking any existing plans and “trading” them with colleagues to compare procedures and uncover any holes in current procedures. It’s assumed that all procedures are reasonably correct. However, in many cases, those procedures were developed without having ever been tested in a real emergency response.

As this practice continues over time and various procedures are passed around, everyone assumes these procedures are “best practice” because they’re so widespread. Be sure if you are incorporating a procedure into your plan that it is well tested and has a basis in reality rather than having been concocted ages ago and passed down through many hands.

### Lessons Learned

When accidents do occur, it’s both normal and desirable to share those lessons with industry colleagues at meetings, conferences, etc. Again, there are some pitfalls here as well. The phrase has been used by many, but it bears repeating: “When you’ve responded to one disaster, you’ve responded to one disaster.” Any response is always different from the last one because of circumstances, location, scale and other factors.

It’s important to discern if a new “lesson” you are learning about is something that may be unique to the particular response from which it was gleaned, or if it can be applied effectively to your processes and procedures. Just because somebody else did it doesn’t make it the right thing to do, nor does it necessarily mean that it would be a beneficial addition to your plan. So, consider carefully any “lessons learned” that you choose to incorporate into your plan.

### Mothers of Invention

The third way that we see processes and procedures disguised as “best practice” is where enthusiastic and sometimes new emergency managers or family assistance coordinators put much thought into creating new ways to do things. We always encourage folks to keep thinking about better ways to do things, but try running your ideas by people who have done the research or have the experience behind them to offer opinions about your ideas.

Perhaps one example I can give, because there are many variations, is how organizations pair up team members and assign them to families. We’ve seen well intentioned plans on how team members are to be assigned, based on: experience, position in company, training evaluations, cultural background, religious background, areas where you were raised (urban vs. rural), smoker vs. non-smoker, etc. Experience shows that getting well-trained, empathic volunteers to survivors and families quickly may thwart the best plans to find the best possible team member matches.

### 4 Ways to Create Best Practices

So what’s the right way to go about creating “best practices”?

1. Understand the Objective - Before creating policies and procedures, clearly define and understand your objectives. For most of you that’s going to be taking care of people-- your customers, employees, their families and the public.
2. Depend upon Research - Once your objectives are understood, find the research that clearly points you in the right direction. That is why, here at the Foundation, we are constantly examining recent events to find out what those most affected by a disaster really think and feel about their experience and how they were treated or affected by the organizations involved in the response efforts. After all, isn’t this really the ultimate customer service, to give people the support they feel they need in time of crisis?
3. Use Lessons Learned Wisely - When evaluating lessons learned, look for practices that have been tested over multiple disasters or responses. Generally, when certain practices are followed repeatedly its because they work, but be careful to check it against research to ensure the desired outcome is being achieved. It could be repeated because it became a “trick of the trade” (see above). When there is a new lesson from a recent response, certainly consider it, but also consider if it’s something that may have been unique to that event or if it is something that would work in your organization.
4. Seek Feedback for New Procedures - If you come up with an idea that you think will improve your processes and procedures, then run those ideas by people that have the research, the experience, the wisdom to help you validate whether your idea will work. Then, be sure to test it in your own organization and subject it to further evaluation..

One of the missions of the Foundation is to help you do all of the above. If you are a member, we encourage you to call us anytime you have questions about your own procedures, about new ideas or problems you are trying to correct in your own plans. If you are not yet a member, we encourage you to join. Your membership helps us to continue our mission and continually improve the ways in which business and industry responds to people following traumatic events. Most of us here are unpaid directors of the Foundation; we donate our time to make this Foundation work. As such, you can be assured that every dime of your membership goes toward our research, educational, and outreach efforts. Thank you for your support and please call us if we can help you.

### How Large is a Disaster?

by: Lamar McEwen



**Lamar McEwen**  
*Vice President,  
Operations*

The Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary defines a disaster as a sudden calamitous event bringing great damage, loss, or destruction. When we think of disasters, we most often think about natural or manmade disasters that impact hundreds, thousands or even tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of people. We've all witnessed disasters on television news reports, and some of us have personally witnessed or experienced them in our own lives.

One individual person can be impacted just as significantly as hundreds of people during a disaster. If you're reading this newsletter you're probably involved in helping others in some capacity. Many of us have had the opportunity to work with people who have experienced tragedy in their lives, and we know that each situation can be quite different, including the size of the event. The simple answer is that there is no limit, small or large, to the size of a disaster. The important thing to remember is that we should always be prepared to meet the needs of those who we may be working with in the aftermath of a disaster.

Now, putting my operations hat on, I'd like to illustrate what the potential size of an event might be when a couple of hundred people are involved. Bear in mind that each situation will be different, but this will provide you with an idea of the number of people who may be involved in responding to an incident of this magnitude.

- Victims 200-250
- Family Members 600+
- Family Assistance/Care Team 300+ members
- Operations Support/Go Team 50+ members

As you can see, this situation can easily exceed 1,000 people being involved as victims, family members, helpers or responders, and these numbers are very conservative. In order to adequately provide for the needs of all those involved, it is not enough just to have a written plan. We must have executable plans that are endorsed by corporate leadership and that are exercised regularly to ensure our response will be effective.

So, how large is a disaster? The answer to this question takes me back to a similar statement from a previous article. We should never lose sight of the fact that, no matter how small or large the tragedy, our job is ultimately to take care of people who are affected by a disaster.

### In Memory of Robert McNamara

by: Paul Houle



**Paul D. Houle**  
*Director, Disaster Memorials*

In April, 2003 officials from the City of Hendersonville, North Carolina had just approved the Flight 22 Memorial Project. This project memorialized the victims of a Piedmont Airlines mid-air collision from 1967. As fundraising efforts began, I decided to take a chance and contacted former United States Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara. Secretary McNamara had lost his friend and colleague, Secretary of the United States Navy-designate

John T. McNaughton, in the crash. Surprisingly, Secretary McNamara spent quite a while on the phone talking to me about his friend, John and the project. After I hung up, I realized I never even got to ask him for a donation.

Several days later, the memorial committee received a substantial check in the mail for the project. Ironically, it turned into the largest one-time private donation to the project. Incredibly, the check was from the McNamara Foundation. Several days later, I contacted the Secretary to thank him for his donation. I asked him what name he wanted on the donor's plaque which was to be embedded on the back of the memorial: his full name or the name of his Foundation. Very quietly, in a voice choked with emotion, he revealed that he did not want either name listed on the plaque. He said the donation was between him and John.

Secretary McNamara died several weeks ago. While his legacy as Secretary of Defense will probably be debated for many years to come; his legacy as the largest donor to the Flight 22 Memorial project will not be debated. We will forever be grateful to him for helping out his friend, John.

### **Update on Eastern Flt 212 Memorial September 11, 1974**

On July 8, 2009, I met with representatives of the City of Charlotte, NC seeking a site for the location of the Flight 212 Memorial. I met with Chief Kevin Gordon of the Fire & Police Training Academy in Charlotte. The grounds of the training academy represent land owned by the city of Charlotte that is closest to the crash site. The distance between the two points is approximately three-quarters of a mile. The academy grounds offered a terrific location for the memorial; however, the academy is closed on weekends which would limit availability to those who wish to visit it at week's end. Chief Gordon suggested a location across the street from the academy. This location proved to be ideal both to myself and Chief Gordon. It is located at a minor intersection in Charlotte. It is very well kept and parking is

## Q&A from Bill Durring: What should I pack when “the Call” comes?

**A.** Of course, we never know when that “Call” will come or the circumstances that will be surrounding the event. We will never be able to tell what the weather will be like or how long the deployment might be. But there are some basics you can prepare in advance.

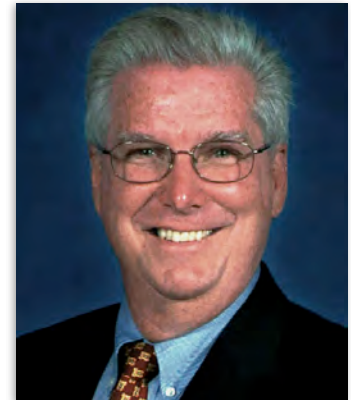
Be prepared for a short notice notification, you never know when the phone will ring. Personalize your packing list and make a copy. Tape the copy to the inside of your closet door or put it in the bag you are pre-packing. When the call comes, your adrenaline will be flowing and you will NOT be thinking straight. So, a checklist is a MUST!

♦ Generally, we recommend you prepare 4-5 days of business casual clothes and a business outfit w/ appropriate accessories (i.e., coat & tie for men, corresponding attire for women).

♦ Definitely pack comfortable shoes / socks / hose, you will be on your feet for hours on end.

- ♦ 4-5 days of undergarments (You may think reminder is unnecessary but it's the most common item forgotten!)
- ♦ Exercise clothing in case you have a normal workout routine
- ♦ Sweater / Jacket (depending on the elements)
- ♦ Toiletries - toothpaste, deodorant, comb, brush, shampoo, hairspray, makeup/Kleenex
- ♦ Hair dryer / curling iron
- ♦ Medical prescriptions
- ♦ Book(s), photos from home and family
- ♦ Care Team Manual
- ♦ Corporate ID and Care Team Badge
- ♦ Passport
- ♦ Small notebook and pens (We'll have supplies at the site but what if you do not deploy to the site?)
- ♦ Calculator (primarily for currency conversion)
- ♦ Zippered pouch for receipts
- ♦ Clock / watch
- ♦ Telephone numbers (print out your email address book occasionally)
- ♦ Your cell phone (And charger!!!)

- ♦ Aspirin/Ibuprofen/Excedrin/Tylenol PM, throat lozenges, band-aids, breath mints
- ♦ Snacks you can eat on the run (power bars, breakfast bars, biscotti, etc.)
- ♦ iPod and/or CDs of your favorite relaxation music



**Bill Durring**

*Director, ER Planning & Logistics*

## Looking Back Twenty Years A Senior Attendant's Perspective - United Flight 232, July 19, 1989



*Jan Brown Lohr & Elaine Reid (Jan's dear friend of 39 yrs and former Flight Attendant)*

**CVC** Looking back twenty years, what stands out as the most important thing for you about surviving such a well-known accident from which so much has been learned?

**Jan** Looking back it's hard to believe it has been 20 years! From one viewpoint it seems a hundred years & then it feels so close. I'm grateful to God for these 'extra' 20 years, to see my 3 grandsons, to make a positive difference wherever I can...and of course with regards to child restraint seats, though right now it is so frustrating that this has been dropped from the governments priority list (since the accident, Jan has devoted her life to

getting child restraint seats required on aircraft). As for how the accident affects my life now, it's a reminder to try to do your best every day, to leave my spot wherever it is better than I found it, and to just do my best.

**CVC** We often hear from Flight Attendants who have survived accidents about their fear of flying again. What helped you resume flying again and finish out your career?

**Jan** It is just natural to face flying again. I would tell them to give themselves space, take good care of themselves and get all the support that they can get. We as a crew supported each other & cautioned to not feel pressured about when we could fly again...they will know...and if it is 'never' that is OK too...there is no preset way to feel or act. I flew several trial trips before flying again but had to be on the job to face those first few landings that brought back the critical crash moments...but each trip lessened the anxiety/fear. Also the challenge that 40 minutes would not rule or control our lives!! That is paramount!

**CVC** Do you feel the gains from having survived the accident are greater than the losses?

**Jan** As a firm believer in the half full glass and that there is a pony in all the 'brown stuff', I feel there are gains over

losses. I always pray for those whom we lost and pray for survivors to heal...and that we should make something good out of something bad...that we decided as a crew shortly after the accident.

**CVC** Is there any wisdom that you want to share with our readers?

**Jan** I don't know about wisdom (I pray for it) but I do know that I took the advice to be good to myself and I treasure all those who were so good & thoughtful to me...and I thank God that my guilt was resolved in dreams. And in the end we must be satisfied that we did our best with what we had.



**Carolyn V. Coarsey, Ph.D.**

*President & Co-Founder*

## Losing Control: How Many Spokespersons Do You Really Have?

by: Jeff Braun



**Jeff Braun**

Vice President, Communications

*Is the idea of a company spokesperson dead?*

Like most other things having to do with media today, it's complicated.

In the rush to prove hipness to a coveted demographic, there has been a wholesale embrace by corporate America of all forms of social media. (But really – can anything used by 70 year olds still be youthfully cool? The “Twitter is for fools” eye roll has already set in among the almost old enough to drink crowd. Expect

upward motion on that trend.)

But that is a digression. The issue now is who speaks for an organization? The new hire, because she is the only one in the office who has a blog? The middle aged middle manager who learned to tweet as a career move? Or for those still working through the Cretaceous period, the corporate attorney? Who speaks? Is there a coherent message? Do the blogger and the CFO both know what needs to be told and what to withhold?

*In the same way that everyone today is a journalist, everyone is a company spokesperson.*

At this moment, most organizations are struggling to develop a good social media policy and they are feeling their way through. Some leave the whole thing to specialty firms, but most try to do this in house, by asking employees to monitor certain sites and join in discussion when needed, particularly during a media flare or crisis situation. These can function with little oversight or can be quite formalized, with people identifying themselves as employees and providing press statements and directing people to other resources.

Worth the effort? It's true that most blogs reach very small audiences but other bloggers and journalists of all stripes are constantly trolling for story ideas, tips and dirt. If it's hot on-line, it will migrate to the mainstream media quickly. To build clarity on issues, it can help to start at the lower rungs.

*Since we all know how to type, we are all prepared with the skill to become social media masters, right? Who needs a spokesperson?*

Everybody. At least one. More is better.

A generation ago, researchers determined that babies smile at anything that looks like a face, even eyes and a mouth drawn on a paper plate. They learned that the brain stores facial images in a special section that is apparently reserved for nothing but the storage of faces. We can infer that, somehow, this information is unique and vital.

The other thing for which we humans are apparently hard wired is story telling. We want to hear about heroes and villains, war and peace, love and loss. We relish intrigue and surprise and we re-tell the tales to others. It has always been thus.

That is why there remains a need for people to speak. Many of us realize that this is a given in cases where there is an event that might be labeled tragic, controversial or scandalous. But there are so many other opportunities on the lower rungs for getting great exposure and avoiding looking like a fool. This includes everything from the luncheon speech to the industry happy hour to chatting with other parents on the bleachers. This is why it makes sense to insure that every last employee knows the messages in both good times and bad. The next level needs to be a team of people whose verbal communications strengths can be called upon, dependent on the topic, the timing and the tone of the situation.

It has always been important to be credible. It is now essential to be authentic. We live in the age of snark\*. Mockery is an industry that counts on the naïve to provide their raw materials. There is no shortage. Too often, the ‘face’ of an organization looks wooden, devious, bored or just a little crazy when they appear in their well intentioned videos. The opportunities to look stupid, slick or hilariously unprepared increases exponentially when it comes to a split screen rebuttal or the off the cuff remark captured on phone.

*It is time to rethink who delivers the message and how it is delivered. It is time to understand how to build credibility in the age of corporate social responsibility.*

Those who can afford it and do not want to take it in house can still seek professionals to guide their external communication. But in the end, nobody should be sending out the hired flack to do their talking.

Audition your people, get them good training, and then let them loose to tell the story; let them communicate and connect in the most original human way.

The above sentence is tweetable.

**\*Snark:** *Biting, cruel humor or wit, commonly used to verbally attack someone or something. Other definitions can be found at: <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=snark>*

*continued from page 6*

available just across the street. We agreed that this location fits both our preferences.

Two weeks later, the Family Assistance Foundation's Disaster Memorials Division submitted a formal proposal to the City of Charlotte requesting the construction of the Flight 212 Memorial at that intersection. We are anxiously awaiting word from the city

granting us their approval. Representatives of the City of Charlotte have been tremendously accommodating of our desire to build this memorial. They, like all of us at FAF, acknowledge the tremendous effect a memorial has on those affected by tragedy. We are extremely proud to be in negotiations with staff from Charlotte and look forward in our next newsletter to announcing their acceptance of our proposal so that fundraising efforts can begin in earnest.



## A Quick Look at a Few of Our More Recent Training



FirstInfo Limited - (UK Rail Co.) Contact Centre Training - Plymouth, UK - June 2-4, 2009

***Presented by Carolyn Coarsey, Ph.D.***



Royal Air Maroc - HSR Training - Casablanca- June 15-16, 2009

***Both Classes Presented by Bill Diring & Sandra Novak***



Royal Air Maroc - HSR Training - Casablanca - June 18-19, 2009



HSR Training  
May 27-29, 2009  
Fort Worth, TX

FAF Volunteers  
& Other Attendees



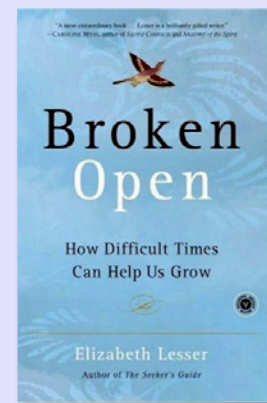
**Jolene West**  
*Director, Operations*

## Book Review: Broken Open

*How Difficult Times  
Can Help Us Grow*

**by Elizabeth Lesser**

*Reviewed by Jolene West*



In “Broken Open-How Difficult Times Can Help Us Grow” we are introduced to the life of Elizabeth Lesser, as well as some of her colleagues, Ram Dass and Thich Nhat Hanh. Elizabeth Lesser is one of the premiere spiritual teachers of our times and is the co-founder and senior advisor of Omega Institute, recognized internationally for its workshops in holistic health, psychology, cross-cultural arts, and spirituality.

Broken Open begins with this quote from Anais Nin: “And the time came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom”. Elizabeth writes: “I have made note of how fiasco and failure visit each one of us, as if they were written into the job description of being human.” She also describes the Phoenix process, demonstrating how her life was resurrected from the ashes after she was “Broken Open” and the subsequent acceleration of her soul’s growth.

One of many key phrases that resonated with me was “...instead of resisting change, just put down the paddles and go with the flow of the river.” I loved this book for all the ‘aha’ moments that came with it. Her process and her stories offer hope to all those who have been rattled by change and setbacks. It is inspiring and transformative. I feel that pretty much sets the tone, so grab a good cup of Java and get ready for a great read!

## The Loss of the L'ACADIEN II - An Investigator's Point of View

by Roger Girouard, Rear Admiral (Retired from the Canadian Coast Guard)

“What I learned in the process of this enquiry is that an investigator can be dispassionate, fair and balanced in his or her search for the truth and full analysis while at the same time being compassionate and engaged with those who have the greatest stake in the work at hand, the participants and survivors of the event and the families of the victims.”

The morning of 29 March will mark the one year anniversary date of the capsizing of the thirty-nine foot sealing vessel L'ACADIEN II while being towed by the Canadian Coast Guard icebreaker SIR WILLIAM ALEXANDER. Based in Cap-aux-Meules, on the Magdalen Islands in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, six sealers aboard the L'ACADIEN II joined the annual seal hunt on the coastal ice, eventually making their way to the east side of Cape Breton where they would suffer rudder damage and find themselves on a lee shore, unable to set a steady course and in need of extraction from the ice pack. On the night of 28/29 March, after being towed through ice for over two hours, things went horribly wrong and the sealing vessel capsized. Only two crewmembers made it to safety, one by the very thinnest of margins. Three became trapped and died trying to escape. One was never found.

In seeking to launch an internal investigation into the accident, the Coast Guard's leadership realized they were compromised in finding an impartial internal investigator. Because of the scale of the operation, essentially all of the management and operational staff were engaged in assessments and decisions about the incident at one point or another. That is why I was asked to come in from retirement from the navy and act as an independent investigator on the Coast Guard's behalf.

Investigations into tragedies such as the L'ACADIEN II are vital to ensure similar fates are avoided if at all possible. Often, they are systemic and impersonal and take a just the facts approach. The one caveat I had in accepting the task at hand was that we would include the families in the process, engage with them immediately and deliver them, and the crew of the SIR WILLIAM ALEXANDER, the findings of the report face-to-face, and not through the media. The Commissioner and the Minister agreed wholeheartedly, and committed then to making the report public.

I met with the survivors just days later, along with the members of my deliberately small investigation team. It was, understandably, an emotional time just on the heels of the memorial services for their loved ones. We offered our condolences, advised of our terms of reference, our plan, the perceived challenges and of our initial course of action. Most of all, we asked them what their questions were, what they needed answers to and what they felt needed to be addressed by our investigation. Making no guarantees and being honest with the limitations of any investigation, I did promise we would do our very best to fill in the gaps and to let them know where and why any questions remained after our efforts were complete. Like many investigations, this one became more complex than initially anticipated. The lack of “black boxes” or over-arching video or

data recordings left us dependent on memories and testimony gleaned from profoundly tumultuous circumstances. Where corroboration was lacking, we used tests and trials and science to explain what the verbal record could not.

We called on the families at the mid-way point of our investigation process to give them a sense of our work and, without being conclusive, the direction the evidence was taking us. We were able to answer almost 90% of their questions during this visit, but we also tried to prepare them for what was yet to come. In a separate session, the crew of the icebreaker was also given an update and apprised of the key issues under scrutiny.

At the end of November, with the report finalized and delivered to the Coast Guard leadership, we undertook one last trip to the Magdalen Islands and to Halifax to give the families and the Coast Guard crew full briefings on our conclusions, findings and recommendations. This was followed by a media event which delivered the report to the public. The toughest challenge during these several busy days was of course the family briefing. We spent some five and a half intense and emotional hours giving almost three dozen family members, their confidants and support, a full accounting of our work. The full gamut of the Kübler-Ross cycle of grief was evident throughout the long evening. So was patience and understanding and grace. One of the toughest things I've ever had to do, they deserved every iota of time, information and energy we could give them. Being thanked for treating them decently was a powerful and humbling sentiment.

What I learned in the process of this enquiry is that an investigator can be dispassionate, fair and balanced in his or her search for the truth and full analysis while at the same time being compassionate and engaged with those who have the greatest stake in the work at hand, the participants and survivors of the event and the families of the victims. Being successful isn't about telling them what they want to hear, but in being respectful in telling them the all the truths available about an event which has so permanently impacted their lives... and in delivering meaningful recommendations that honour their loss.

The full report on the sinking of L'ACADIEN II can be found at <http://www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca/e0003962>



## 2009 Cruise Line Conference



*Mindy Mayer at the dedication of the renovated Ronald McDonald House at Legacy Emanuel in Portland, Oregon*

**Mindy Mayer**, who addressed the Foundation's 2009 Cruise Line conference, honored her family by making a generous contribution to the Ronald McDonald House near her home in Oregon. In 2007, while on a cruise with Holland America, Mindy survived a sightseeing crash in Alaska, where 5 of her family members perished.

Via video tape, Mindy and her daughter, Randi Ray, described the response by Holland America's Care Team and ship responders to the overwhelming tragedy, which resulted in the loss of her husband, David; son, Eric; daughter-in-law, Christine; and 3-year-old twin grandchildren, Trevor and Allison.

Mindy and Randi provided the opening presentation of the conference, and were followed by other survivors who gave testimony to the effectiveness of Cruise Line Care Teams and Shipboard Guest & Crew crisis response programs.



**Judy Schwartz** shared with the audience about the loss of her mother who died while on a Royal Caribbean cruise. The Care Team assisted Judy in traveling to Mexico where she boarded the ship to be with her father, who otherwise would have been alone on the ship. Together Judy and her dad brought her mom home and Judy described a compassionate response, which she felt exceeded any expectations she could ever have had about a company's response.

*Pictured left to right: Cindy Rocha & Judy Schwartz (Judy was ecstatic to finally meet Cindy. Up to this point Cindy had been the compassionate voice on the other end of the phone, while making Judy's travel arrangements to meet up with her dad.)*



**Tony and Cora Lander's** provided the audience with a detailed account of how the Carnival Cruise Lines Care Team assisted them when Tony became ill on a cruise with a rare condition called Sudden Death Syndrome. Tony praised the ship's medical crew and described how their quick and professional handling of the acute illness saved his life. Vera talked about how the shore side Care Team assisted her with their support including bringing family to her side to support her while she aided Tony in his challenging recovery.

*Pictured left to right: Ana Delgado, Vladimir Lindor, Cora & Tony Lander*

# Sharing The Journey™

**AWARDS PRESENTED AT FAF CRUISE CONFERENCE - MAY 2009**



*Penny Shifrin, family survivor, presented the Sharing the Journey award to Joseph Duenas, Royal Caribbean Cruises, Ltd., for going above and beyond his daily job responsibilities in helping survivors.*



*Dr. Art Diskin, VicePresident and Global Chief Officer, Royal Caribbean Cruises, Ltd., presented the Sharing the Journey award to Hal Ruchelman for his efforts in empowering other survivors following tragedy.*

## FAF Staff & Friends at Survivor Reception



# Cruise Line Care Team and Leadership Panels



**GREG CRICK, HEATHER VAN DER WAL, ROB HON**  
HOLLAND AMERICA LINE RESPONDERS



**RAY GONZALEZ  
VLADIMIR LINDOR  
GLORIA SCHLEMOVITZ  
ANDREA PHILLIPS  
EDI MEADOWS**  
CARNIVAL CRUISE LINES  
RESPONDERS  
"THE BELIZE TUBING  
INCIDENT"



**RICHARD MORRIS**  
ROYAL MARINE INSURANCE GROUP



**ANDREW BALDWIN**  
CARNIVAL UK RESPONDERS  
"THE NAPLES BUS CRASH"



**BILL SERA  
DENISE MINAKOWSKI  
CINDY ROCHA  
MELANIE SANDERS  
ADRIANA NUNO**  
ROYAL CARIBBEAN/  
CELEBRITY  
RESPONDERS  
"THE DOMINICA BUS  
CRASH"



**TONY & CORA  
LANDER**

**JUDY  
SCHWARTZ**  
SURVIVOR  
PANEL



# *Cruise Line Industry Practices As One Comprehensive Family Assistance Team*



# '09 Aviation Conference Planning Committee



**Carolyn Coarsey**  
*Program Chair*

**Barb Webster**  
*Co-Chair, WestJet*

**Amy Cann**  
*Event Director*

**Jolene West**  
*FAF*

**Tim Horton**  
*WestJet*

**Scott Andrews**  
*WestJet*

**Russ Sabo**  
*WestJet*



**Tricia Grier**  
*Air Jamaica, Ltd*

**Zairil Zainal**  
*Royal Brunei Airlines*

**Lisa Swartzwelder**  
*Limited Brands*

**Rich Anderson**  
*Family Survivor*

**Marie Anderson**  
*Family Survivor*

**Joan Pontante**  
*Family Survivor*

**Jim Hurd**  
*Family Survivor*

## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR AVIATION CONFERENCE SPONSORS

*FAF Wants To Thank Our Co-Sponsor,  
WestJet For Their Generosity In Hosting  
The 2009 Aviation Conference*



**Jeff Arnold - Survivor**  
GLOBAL AEROSPACE

