

THE CROSSWINDS

MIDSTATE AVIATION, INC.

www.midstateaviation.net

WINTER 2009

Fall Achievements! Congratulations!

First Solos

*Brenden Czech
Waylon Cork
Peter Reid
Brandyn Kaufman
Justin Berg*

*Nicholas Marinello
Mathew Meisner
Jeremy Hoffman
Eric Bruns
Chris Weholt
Joshua Balmer*

Private Rating

Daniel Creech

Instrument Rating

*Samantha McHugh
Trent Atkins*

Commercial

*Josh Soltan
William White*

Multi-Engine

*Nick Gibson
Domina Lasich
Jesse Hallenbeck
Kyle Halverson*

CFI

*Jacob Davis
Levi Locken*

The Aviation Cycle

Monte Thorn
Midstate Aviation Instructor

I've met some of you in the last month, but let me introduce myself and give you a little background about me. I started the Flight Technology Program in the fall of 1992 and graduated from CWU in the winter of 1996. After instructing at Midstate for three years, I was hired at Continental Express Airlines to fly ATR-42 turbo props and EMB-145 regional jets. Most recently, I have been working for Alaska Airlines as a first officer on the 737.

Why am I *back* at Midstate flight instructing? Because of the cyclical nature of the airline industry. There may be times in a flying career that you will question whether you've made the right career decision. It is a demanding job with a lot of rewards. You are required to have knowledge of many different aviation topics and expected to keep your skills current and polished. The best advice I can give a future airline pilot is to always be studying and increasing your aviation knowledge. There are a lot of distractions in life, but being a commercial pilot requires continued

professionalism, even when life doesn't progress as you've planned.

The contacts you make today and through the rest of your career may be your biggest asset. You never know where you may be working some day. One friend who's also on furlough is flying for his in-law's family business. Another is relocating airplanes to other parts of the world for the company his friend works for. If this airline slump has taught us anything, it's to be professional along the way, because you may need that recommendation or job contact some day. If you always give 100%, try your best, and have a good attitude, then that work ethic will pay off in the future.

The airline industry is in the low part of a cycle right now, but it will return. This is a great time to be getting your training, because as the cycle rebounds, there will be a lot of hiring and not a lot of stagnation. With a fast pace on a career path, you'll need to make sure you have all the skills necessary to do your job with proficiency. The only way to be prepared is to continually try to increase your knowledge and get as much flight experience as possible. Keep up the dedication and I look forward to meeting all of you in the near future.

New FAA Inspections

anonymous

With the number of airline disasters lately, the FAA now sends an inspector to the North Pole to check out Santa's sleigh before allowing him to fly on Christmas Eve.

The inspector arrives and checks the reindeer and they look good. He checks the harness and it looks okay. He checks the sleigh and it passes the inspection. Then he says, "Santa, let's take it up for a check ride and if everything looks good, I'll certify you to fly."

Santa hitches the reindeer up and taxis onto the runway and just as he's starting his takeoff roll he looks over and notices the inspector has a pump shotgun on his lap. "Hey! What's the shotgun for?" Santa yells.

The inspector says, "Well, Santa, I'm really not supposed to tell you this, but there is going to be an engine failure on takeoff."

CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS

Baseball Hats	\$21.00
Camo Baseball Hats	\$23.00
Knit Hats	\$12.95
Sweatshirts	\$25.75
Short Sleeve T-shirts	\$13.75
Long Sleeve T-shirts	\$17.25
Headsets, Pilot Supplies, Books, Gift Certificates	

Auto Pilots Need Not Apply

Captain Mike Watson
Conoco Phillips Aviation
North Slope Operations, Kuparuk, Alaska

When the base siren went off, my head snapped up from the book I was reading. I glanced over at Jeremy, one of the smoke jumpers, and he looked back at me and grinned. We were both thinking the same thing. Come on, one more blast. One siren blast was the lead plane, two was smoke jumpers, and three was tankers. There it was! I grabbed my flight suit out of my locker and slipped it on. The jumpers assigned to my aircraft had rushed into the ready room and were quickly putting on their jump gear and helping one another work through a labyrinth of straps, buckles and fasteners. This is where everyone has to be careful; move quickly, but don't lose your focus.

As the jumpers approached the airplane in single file, I had already started the right engine. I could see the spotter (jump master) Bob, calling off the names as the jumpers began to board. As they were getting settled, I received the GPS coordinates of the reported fire from base ops. As soon as Bob's head appeared in the cockpit I hit the starter on the left engine. We were airborne several minutes later.

Enroute, Bob was getting the latest intel on the fire from operations. He had a topo map on his left knee and we began to formulate a plan based on what we knew. He intended to drop four jumpers to begin with, and because of the higher terrain in the fire area I began a climb to jump altitude. The jumpers would be jumping a round chute, static line jump at 1500 feet AGL. If their main chute failed, they would have approximately two seconds to look up, recognize the failure, and pull the D-ring on their reserve chute; otherwise, there would not be enough time for it to open.

As we approached the fire, Bob headed for the back of the airplane to conduct the jump. Overhead the selected drop zone he threw out two streamers. I rolled the airplane to the left and as we watched the streamers we began a timing. When the streamers hit it gave us wind direction and velocity. The timing told me whether I was high or low on my jump altitude. As I turned inbound for the drop, Bob gave me a call, "jumpers in the door". We neared the drop point Bob gave me a couple of last second heading adjustments. Moments later I felt a double "whoomp" as the first stick of two jumpers exited the aircraft. Bob's calm

voice came on the intercom, "jumpers away". As I rolled into a left turn, I could see the two round chutes floating down into the haze, aiming for a very small clearing at the top of the ridge. After the second stick of jumpers were on their way down, Bob began preparing for the cargo run. This was vital to their mission and we needed to get it right. We would deliver their gear via a low altitude, para-cargo drop from 150 feet. Any lower and the chutes wouldn't have time to open. Any higher and the stiff breeze would carry the load off target. The jump had been Bob's show but the cargo run was mine. I rolled wings level, nose down and gave Bob an "on final" call. This was going to have to be a good toss. The jump area on the side of a ridge, was small, and if we missed, the load would drift off the far side and fall several thousand feet into the adjacent valley. When I was seconds away from drop, I gave Bob a "standby" and then "Kick It". The landing area was under us briefly and then flashed out of sight. The terrain fell away rapidly as we cleared the ridge. I made a climbing left turn to set up for a second pass and both Bob and I were relieved to see the cargo chutes laying in the drop zone. The subsequent cargo runs were a little easier, and before long we had all the gear down to the jumpers. We bid them good luck and I pointed the airplane back towards base.

The business of flying covers a wide array of missions. Those of us that have chosen this line of work usually find a little corner of it, that once you try it on, it fits. It may not seem to make sense to some, but being where you belong can be the difference between a purposeful life and one of indifference. As with many industries, aviation continues to evolve. Major airline companies have been changed dramatically over the last fifteen years. Corporate flying continues its evolution. Government agencies such as USFS, Fish & Wildlife, DEA, FBI and the U.S. Military are always looking for qualified personnel. There are opportunities from helicopter work to missionary support. As our business continues its metamorphosis, it's important for us to adapt as well. Just because something has always been, doesn't mean it always will be. If the situation isn't right, be true to yourself and find your place. This is your time. Start writing your story.

Dates to Remember

Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday - Jan. 18
President's Day - Feb. 15

We can email your monthly statements.

Drop us a line at

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