

Sharing the Journey

Newsletter of the Family Assistance Foundation

Volume 1, Issue 2

April 2002

Community Workshop Schedule



Boston
June 20/21

Minneapolis
November 1/2

Stay tuned for more workshop announcements

Visit us online at:
www.fafonline.org

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- ◆ Foundation Status Update
- ◆ Book reviews
- ◆ Spotlight on new members
- ◆ Interviews with survivors
- ◆ Updates on the Symposium and workshops

America West: Newest member of the Foundation

An airline with almost 12,000 employees, America West's family assistance and emergency response programs are gathering speed as new members join the teams each month.

America West employs a family assistance team of approximately 500 volunteers, called HpEART members. HpEART stands for Hp Emergency Assistance Response Team. These team members attend a two-day initial training class conducted by the airline's Emergency Planning & Response Department staff as well as an instructor from Higher Resources, Inc. AWA team members are required to have at least six months tenure with the company and management approval before joining HpEART.

HpEART has been around informally at AWA for years. The formal program as it is known today began in 1996. Since then AWA has hired two individuals to fill positions in the Emergency Planning & Response

Department to support HpEART, in addition to planning Go Team deployment, drills, logistical support for accidents, station emergency response and much more.

AWA plans to increase its team size to approximately 700 members. Christa Chastain, Manager—Emergency Planning & Response states, "Even though we plan to grow our team to 700 members we see the Foundation as a way to cost effectively increase our response capabilities and introduce additional language capabilities into our team."

The Foundation proudly welcomes America West as our newest member!

Editor's Note: For those of you who are not airline folks, HpEART is not a typo. HP is the two letter airline code for America West.

Captain Al Haynes to Keynote 2003 Symposium

March 4-5, 2003 have been set for next year's annual Family Assistance Foundation Symposium in Atlanta, Georgia. The Symposium will once again be hosted by Georgia State University.

We are privileged to announce that Captain Al Haynes will kick off the Symposium with our keynote address on March 4. Captain Haynes was at the helm of the ill-fated United Flight 232 on July 19, 1989 when the number 2 engine of

the DC-10 he was flying suffered a catastrophic engine failure causing the loss of all three of the aircraft's hydraulic systems and rendering the flight controls virtually useless. Captain Haynes and his crew managed to get the aircraft to Sioux City, Iowa where they crash landed and miraculously 187 passengers and crew survived.

Captain Haynes will talk about what he considered the critical success factors in

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Community Response to Aviation Disasters— Nationwide Workshops Continue

The Foundation continues its schedule of workshops all around the country that are designed to educate mental health, nursing professionals, clergy, EMS personnel, airline personnel, and others on these two primary issues:

1. The overall plan for response to aviation disasters, i.e. who the players are; what happens at time of the event; and how a volunteer can become involved- using actual airline accidents as the primary example for planning, in an effort to foster maximum education and cooperation of all involved;
2. Sources of stress experienced by passengers, families, aviation employees, responders and other personnel involved

More information on upcoming seminars can be found on our website at www.fafonline.org or contact the Foundation directly for more information.

The LAX Workshop Experience—A Survivor's Story

Editor's Note: Marilyn Chamberlin, who's daughter Candy was killed in the ValuJet 592 crash in May of 1996, spoke at our LAX Workshop on March 16. Here are some excerpts from a letter about her experience.

I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak at your conference this past weekend— and really encouraging me to do so. I was quite sure no one wanted to hear my story any longer.

I felt quite out of practice and had not been looking forward to this day. But my reception quite surprised me and I heard so many nice things. The people actually felt that I had something to give. Some even suggested that I would make a good motivational speaker and that I should get my story out as often as possible...

I was surprised. That was quite an interesting group of people you had there— many so compassionate....

Thanks again for thinking of me and taking such good care of me. I would be interested in other workshops if my message is appropriate.

- Marilyn Chamberlin

Workshop Participant Shares His Thoughts About Workshop, and the Foundation

David Kessler was a participant in the LAX Workshop and has joined the Foundation as part of our Professional Support Team.

David is a well-known counselor and author. He co-authored **Life Lessons** with Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross (she is author of **On Death and Dying**). These experts on death guide readers through the practical and spiritual lessons we need to learn so that we can live life to its fullest in every moment.

David's first book **The Needs of the Dying** is a guide for bringing hope, comfort, and love to life's final chapter. Dr. Kubler-Ross states on the front cover "It is now, fortunately, my time to face death. David Kessler is my friend and student. He carries on my work, and his book will help.

David has assisted families of many people as they struggle through this time of transition. This book is endorsed by Mother Teresa and Marianne Williamson. The book provides examples of what dying people need and many practical ways in which compassionate others can fill those needs.

Dr. Carolyn Coarsey, the Foundation's co-founder and vice-president, recently interviewed David on his thoughts about the workshop and the Family Assistance Foundation.

CC: *What did you expect when you registered for the workshop?*

DK: I did not know what to expect. Normally when I am involved in an activity related to an airline disaster, I am responding to the event. My entire focus is on helping the people with their needs. I can't really help and concentrate on what I am learning at the same time. At an incident, I am in the moment. Coming to the workshop allowed me see the bigger picture.

The survivors who came in person and the ones on the videos allowed me to see how the survivors really feel. I could see how they feel years later.

CC: *What was particularly helpful?*

DK: I got a better feel for what airlines are dealing with. I will know better now who to go to and what to expect.

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2003 Symposium

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why nearly 2/3 of the passengers and crew survived such a horrific accident and the importance of communities and responders in preparing for the worst in supporting survivors and families.

Panel development for the Symposium is well underway and we're excited about the sessions for next year. Currently panels are planned on the following topics & issues:

- ◆ The accident investigation process—what airline emergency managers need to know
- ◆ A primer on the legal process; who are the players and why do things happen the way they do
- ◆ Information management—how to effectively deal with information overload in disaster response
- ◆ The multi-disciplinary approach to working with families: airline care team members, psychologists, and chaplains discuss their real experiences
- ◆ Passenger and family survivors provide feedback from recent disasters
- ◆ A panel of medical examiners/D-MORT team members discuss recent disasters and recommendations for airlines and other responders
- ◆ Notification of next-of-kin of pilots and flight attendants following aviation accidents
- ◆ Airline care teams in the post 9/11 environment. How airlines are using their care teams in non-disaster situations

Check our website at www.fafonline.org for more details and additional information as it becomes available. More to come also in future newsletters.

A Special Thanks...

To Ken Jenkins of founding airline member American Airlines and Penny Neferis of our other founding airline member, JetBlue Airways.

Ken and Penny gave outstanding presentations at the LAX workshop that were extremely well received. Many participants commented on how little they truly understood the role of the airline in a disaster response. They were also pleasantly surprised to hear just how well prepared many of our airlines are today.

Thanks Ken & Penny!!

LAX Workshop Participants Provide Feedback

As with all Foundation educational activities, participants were asked to complete written evaluation forms. Our goal is to ensure that all education and training meets the needs and expectations of our members and participants. Listed below is a summary from our 114 participants of how we did at our LAX "Community Response to Aviation Disasters" Workshop held on March 15-16.

Two separate evaluations were required because of Continuing Education credits offered.

For those not seeking CE credits the ratings range was 1-5, with 1 being worst and 5 being the best:

CATEGORY	AVERAGE SCORE
Content	4.3
Setting (Facility)	4.3
Faculty/Presenter Effectiveness	4.3

For those seeking CE credits categories were slightly different and ratings ranged from 1-7, with 1 being worst and 7 being the best:

CATEGORY	AVERAGE SCORE
Quality of Instruction	6.1
Instructor Expertise	6.0
Program Content	6.1
Physical Facilities	6.4

Overall performance on a scale of 1-10, 1 being worst, 10 being the best: **8.9**

Comments from attendees:

"Extremely useful to present to Red Cross workers the viewpoints of airline personnel.... All speakers were extremely knowledgeable and able to share their experiences...."

"Excellent balance between support for all parties and willingness to apportion responsibility— a very difficult and important topic."

"This was an enlightening and powerful two days!"

And we'll try harder!:

"It would be helpful to have more handouts from the presenters."

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Working Together is the Answer



David Kessler on the Family Assistance Foundation

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At the time of the incident there is no time to talk to people from the airline side. This is a wonderful forum for working together and to get the perspectives of all involved in the response.

CC: *Were there other parts of the program that you found particularly helpful?*

DK: I have worked with pilots and flight attendants following air disasters. So I feel that I have a feeling of what they are going through. But coming to this workshop allowed me to see what family members of the airline employees experience. Hearing from a deceased pilot's mom and families of flight attendants allowed me to identify more with their needs.

Understanding the needs of employees are very important. I remember working with a grief stricken mechanic because he feared that his work was somehow connected to a plane that had crashed resulting in deaths. The ownership that airline people feel is important for us to understand and your workshop makes this possible. Others may not get to see this.

CC: What do you think about the concept of the Family Assistance Foundation?

DK: I was really happy to see what you are doing with the Foundation. I have responded to accidents where airlines helped each other and I think that this is great. But I think that training and preparing employees in advance is extremely important. Employees that are asked to help in a disaster should know what to expect. What the Foundation offers in terms of training employees and preparing them to help families is extremely important.

You can find more information about David Kessler, his books and links to other helpful resources on his website at: **www.davidkessler.org**.