

Flying higher at 83

Lady pilot turns priest

United Press International
ST. PAUL, Minn. — It took Jeanette Piccard nearly 70 years to become what she wanted to be — a priest.

As an unpaid assistant at St. Philip's parish in St. Paul, she helps with the eucharist, visits parish members and gives a lot of speeches.

Being a priest, Mrs. Piccard said, "is very much the way I expected it to be. It is the greatest satisfaction of my life."

Along the way to the priesthood in the Episcopal Church, she became one of the first women graduates of Bryn Mawr, a wife and mother, and a pilot who set an altitude record in a balloon flight in 1934.

"I don't really know where the idea came from," said Mrs. Piccard, tall and silver haired at 83, "but I was 11 when I first told my mother I wanted to be a priest."

"She had come in to say good night and tell me about the birds and the bees...but I didn't know that. I said I wanted to be a priest and she burst into tears and ran out of the room."

"My father wanted me to study, but my mother wanted me to take the traditional grand tour of Europe and marry a Rockefeller or somebody just as rich."

World War I started, preventing the grand tour. After college graduation, her chances of becoming a priest appeared almost nil. It was clear she could not be accepted at a

seminary so she went to the University of Chicago for advanced work in chemistry.

There she met and married Jean Piccard, a young Swiss interested in the stratosphere. The Piccards spent seven years in Lausanne, Switzerland, where their three sons were born and Jean Piccard's twin, Auguste, explored the skies in high-altitude balloons.

Jean and Jeanette Piccard returned to the United States. In 1934, after six balloon flights, Jeanette Piccard got a pilot's license.

As one of the first women to explore space, she guided a pressurized gondola to 57,559 feet while her husband studied cosmic rays. "I was the pilot, he was the engineer and the inventor," she said.

The Piccards set a variety of altitude records. Mrs. Piccard held the women's record until Soviet cosmonaut Valentina Tereskova broke it in 1963. Jean Piccard died the same year, at age 79.

Mrs. Piccard was ordained a church deacon in the Episcopal church in 1971, attended General Theological Seminary in New York in 1972-73 and passed an ordination examination. In 1974 she was among 11 women ordained Episcopal priests.

But that year, although the Episcopal House of Bishops reaffirmed the principle of ordaining women, it found the ordinations violated church canon and ruled the 11 were not valid ministers.

Mrs. Piccard carried the fight to the general convention of the church in 1976 and won. The Minneapolis meeting reversed the church's stand and gave its blessing to female priests.

Texas hay supplies critical; more rain needed for relief

United Press International
With little time left for production, hay supplies are dwindling to a critical state in Texas, a forage expert from Texas A&M University says. Livestock producers may have to make some decisions soon about what to do this winter.

"Hay production is as much as 50 percent below normal in some areas, with a drop in production of 30 to 40 percent common in most counties," said Dr. Neal Pratt of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service.

"Unless we get some good rains quick, there will be little more hay made this year. So producers will have to make some choices soon on feed for their livestock this fall and winter."

"Hay is available from other states, but the cost is high. Grain supplies are good and prices should be reasonable so producers may want to consider stocking up on grain and other feed supplements. Of course, winter pastures can also take some of the pressure off feeding if there is sufficient moisture," Pratt said.

Mail is still best communication

United Press International
NEW YORK — Although spiraling postage costs are a big burden to many companies, most still consider mail the best and cheapest communications means, the Administrative Management Society reports.

The society, based at Willow Grove, Pa., has just completed a survey in which it got 255 responses from a 500-member panel of representative companies.

Exactly two-thirds of these said the first-class mail letter still is satisfactory for most of their requirements. Interestingly, the other third all said no. No companies seemed in doubt about this basic point.

Only 18 percent said recent postage hikes would make them shift to telephone calls from letters.

But just as business firms used the conventional telegraph for decades, they now make use of telephone cabled and wired facsimile. Facsimile appears to be overhauling the wired cable as the favorite alternative to mail. Thirty-four percent of the companies said they used facsimile and 32 percent wire cable. The growth of private courier service is even more startling, with 30 percent of the companies saying they used it. But almost one-third of the companies didn't answer the question at all, a probable indication that they still find the postal service adequate.

The biggest single departure from using the mails appears to be in fund transfers, for the obvious reasons that instantaneous electronic transfer prevents tying up money waiting for checks to be delivered by mail, cashed and cleared. The interest savings by electronic funds transfer can be significant.

However, the way the society posed the question caused the answers to reflect intentions rather than change already accomplished. Fifty-two percent of those answering the question said they planned to use electronic fund transfers and 47 percent said they did not, but 40 percent didn't answer the question.

Payrolls and accounts payable were given as the more popular uses for electronic transfers but 27 percent of the firms answering said they expected their customers to use the electronic transfer to pay their bills.

The Postal Service's domestic express mail service won the approval of about 53 percent of the respondents, but overseas express mail appears to be a dud. Only 12 percent of the companies said they were using it.

Increases in third class mail rates are not relished but only 12 percent of the companies said the higher cost would cause them to switch from direct mail to other advertising media. Seventy-four percent said they definitely would stick to direct mail.

Others favored newspapers as the first advertising alternative, television second.

In the matter of parcel post costs, the story was different. United Parcel Service, Federal Express and similar private carriers formed to take over the old railway express business when passenger trains were phased out and have bitten increasingly into the post office's parcel business.

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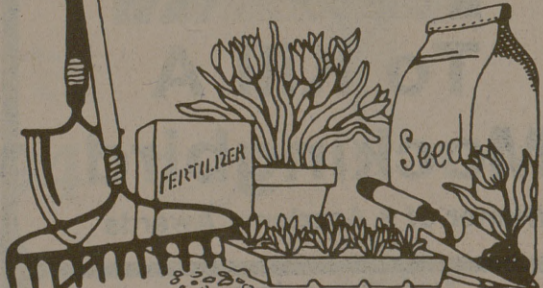
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