Hudson River's heroic pilot relives landing for Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

"I'm not sure we can make any runway."

"We're gonna be in the Hudson."

"Say again captain."

That is some of dialogue between airline Capt. Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger and the control tower moments before he landed US Airways Flight 1549 into the Hudson River in New York on Jan. 15, 2009.

The black box recovered from the cockpit is privileged information and contains everything Sullenberger and first officer Jeff Skiles said in the 208 seconds after Canada geese took out their two engines on the Airbus and the 155 aboard the plane landed in the 36-degree water. (The air temperature was 21 degrees that day.)



Capt. Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger, left, on Aug. 24 talks to stunt pilots who will be in the air today at Lake Tahoe Airport. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Everything happened so fast the only announcement Sullenberger made to the passengers was to brace for impact. Even the flight crew didn’t know there was about to be an emergency water landing.

Sullenberger relayed this and other aspects of the harrowing experience to a crowd of about 175 people Aug. 24 at Embassy Suites in South Lake Tahoe.

“You would have thought that we had been working together for years,” Sullenberger said of himself and Skiles. They had met three days earlier. Now they are like brothers.

It was their years of experience that allowed them to be calm, act on instinct, and ensure not a single person died as they descended at a rate of two stories per second.

Pilots don’t get to practice these types of scenarios. There is no simulator that allows them to practice a water landing.

“The only way to train is theoretical discussions in a classroom,” Sullenberger said.

While the two pilots were not high-fiving or slapping each other’s back after the successful landing, Sullenberger said they did turn to each other and simultaneously said, “That wasn’t as bad as I thought.”

The plane was damaged so much it could not be flown again. It has since been restored a bit and is on display for the public in North Carolina.

In the time since Sullenberger reached hero status he has spent his time working on air safety, giving talks and getting kids interested in aviation. Plus, he has written two books – “Making a Difference Stories of Vision and Courage from America’s Leaders” which came out in May and “Highest Duty: My Search for What Really Matters” which was published in May 2010.

He and Skiles are the honorary co-chairs of the EAA Young Eagles program that gets young people interested in aviation. He will be at Lake Tahoe Airport on Aug. 26 for the Young Eagles flights.

His wife, Lorrie, and daughters Kate and Kelly joined him on this trip to Tahoe. The Bay Area residents are regular visitors to Lake Tahoe, having owned a place at Incline Village in the past.

They are avid skiers, with most of their time spent at Northstar. Biking the Flume Trail and hiking parts of the Tahoe Rim Trail are other athletic pursuits they enjoy, Lorrie Sullenberger told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The couple has a romantic tie to Tahoe, too. In the late 1980s they were passengers in a friend's four-seater plane when Sullenberger proposed while flying over Lake Tahoe.

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Note: Lake in the Sky Air Show is today at Lake Tahoe Airport. Opening ceremonies are at 10am, though the pancake breakfast starts at 8am. Closing ceremonies are at 3:30pm.

LTWC golden eagle release

open to the public

Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care will be releasing the first golden eagle of the season Aug. 26 at Carson Pass.

Everyone is invited to see what exactly the third “R” of wildlife rehabilitation is all about.

Every bird and animal that is received by LTWC has one goal – release.

Meet at LTWC (1485 Cherry Hills Circle off Elks Club Drive in Meyers) at 11am to carpool to Carson Pass. The release should take place about 11:30am.

For further information, call (530) 577.2273.

Attempt to overhaul CEQA dead in the water

By David Siders, Sacramento Bee

A late-hour bid to overhaul the California Environmental Quality Act fell apart Thursday, with Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg saying the upper house will not take up the measure before the legislative session ends next week.

“The Senate will not take up comprehensive CEQA reform in the last days of the legislative session,” Steinberg, D-Sacramento, told reporters at the Capitol. “This law, for all of its strengths and its faults, is far too important to rewrite in the last days of the session.”

The announcement cheered environmentalists, who had been lobbying furiously against the bill.

The proposal, backed by a group of business interests and some lawmakers, would have limited the reach of California's signature environmental law, insulating from litigation certain projects that comply with a city general plan or other planning document for which an environmental review already has been done.

"I'm relieved," said Sierra Club California director Kathryn Phillips, who called the bill "one of the worst attacks on environmental protections that we've seen in the 40-year life of this law."

State Sen. Michael Rubio, who had been seeking co-authors for the bill as recently as Wednesday, said Thursday morning – just hours before the announcement – that the legislation remained viable. Later, standing beside Steinberg, the Central Valley Democrat said, "We always have to read the dynamics of the building."

Read the whole story

Opinion: Apologizing to Live at Lakeview promoters

To the community,

I want to make a correction or retraction for comments I made during a slightly heated debate thread about the Lakeview Commons summer concert series.

I mistakenly made these comments because I was under the assumption that the city was financing this event and because of that I thought we should have more local bands. I was wrong.

As it turns out OnCourse Events finances these events themselves as well as with sponsors. In my opinion, that means they can hire anybody they want to play their events.

If the bands aren't to my liking … well so what … clearly by the success of the event, they are to many peoples liking.

I realize now that many of the kinks that the series is having are getting worked out in the first year. This week an ordinance was passed by the city that there is to be no smoking of any kind in any South Lake Tahoe parks. And even though there was a little wafting through, it was nothing like it was.

Also, Rob made numerous announcements about rules and common sense etiquette throughout the night. Not much more can be done on that front.

I'd like to thank CarolAnne from OnCourse Events for taking the time to set me straight. I should have done my homework a little better.

Here's to continued success on your venture.

Lisa Quick, South Lake Tahoe

Deal prevents Nevada horse

race betting from shutting down

By Steve Green, Las Vegas Sun

Nevada’s $59.5 million horse race-betting sector will continue operating after the Nevada Gaming Commission pressed Thursday for the industry to avert a shutdown that threatened to take effect as early as today.

The shutdown was threatened after the state’s 83 race books were unable to agree on a new contract with Las Vegas Dissemination Co., the lone facilitator of pari-mutuel wagering in Nevada.

For a fee, the company disseminates information on races throughout the country and arranges for funds wagered in Nevada to be included in the pari-mutuel pools for each race at each track. In pari-mutuel wagering, bettors bet against one another on the outcome of races with the tracks and sports books taking a cut of the dollars wagered.

Read the whole story

Fall writing workshops available in Truckee

Tangled Roots Writing resumes its Monday Night Workshops on Sept. 10 in Truckee.

The 6:30-8pm six-week sessions are a way to invigorate your writing and how you think about your creativity. Classes

explore different approaches to inspiring people so you aren't waiting around for inspiration.

Use the workshops to develop ideas or come with an open mind to write something you had never though.

For more information, click on the flyer or call (530) 386.3901.

Changing forests evident in how fire has been handled

By Andrew Prince, NPR

Intense forest fires have been raging across the western United States this summer. So far this year, nearly 43,000 wildfires have torched almost 7 million acres of land.

As NPR Science correspondent Christopher Joyce and photographer David Gilkey report from Arizona and New Mexico this week, the forests of the American Southwest have become so overgrown that they're essentially tinderboxes just waiting for a spark.

This "tree epidemic" stems from Forest Service policy dating back to the early 1900s of aggressively fighting all forest fires. But regular, small fires clean out dead wood, grasses and low brush – and if fires are quashed, the forest just grows into fuel. And that's why we see more of these mega-conflagrations today.

In trying to tell the story of our changing forests, we turned to the U.S. Forest Service for some historical context. Buried in the back of General Technical Report No. 23 was the pay

dirt: a stack of 13 series of photos, more than 88-years in the making.

Read the whole story

Car strikes motorcycle; 2 people hospitalized

By Kathryn Reed

Two people were hospitalized Friday after the motorcycle they were on was hit by a car in the middle of South Lake Tahoe.

Shirley Kravan was in the vehicle behind the motorcycle on Highway 50 heading west and saw the whole thing unfold. She told *Lake Tahoe News* a car came from the right on Lodi Avenue and hit the motorcycle.



The man driving the motorcycle is taken to the ambulance Aug. 24. Photos/Kathryn Reed

"I saw her fly in the air and he was by the bike," Kravan said

of the riders.

She estimated the woman, who was riding in the back, flew 40 to 50 feet. She literally came out of her tennis shoes.

Names of the victims and driver of the car, who was not injured, have not been released.

The motorcycle driver was being taken to Barton Memorial Hospital. He never lost consciousness and was clearly moving his hands when he was loaded into the ambulance abut 12:30pm Aug. 24.

CalStar airlifted the woman, according to police Sgt. Josh Adler, to a Reno hospital.



Packs on the downed motorcycle could indicate they were visitors to Tahoe.

Kravan, who is an emergency room technician, said the female was unconscious at first. She, along with an EMT and first responder, was the first on the scene. She said when paramedics began administering care the female victim became responsive.

Highway 50 was being rerouted headed west at River Drive and was backed up to the Y. Headed east, it was slow at Lodi.

Officers were still on scene collecting information, with the motorcycle on its side and one helmet lying in the middle of the street.

West Nile outbreak may be worst in U.S. history

By Donald G. McNeil Jr., New York Times

The nation is heading toward the worst outbreak of West Nile disease in the 13 years that the virus has been on this continent, federal health authorities said Wednesday.But it is still unclear where and how far cases will spread. Dallas declared an emergency last week, and West Nile deaths have been concentrated in Texas and a few nearby states, including Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma and South Dakota.

So far this year, there have been 1,118 cases and 41 deaths reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Lyle R. Petersen, who heads the agency's division of vector-borne diseases, said in a telephone news conference Wednesday.

"That's the highest number of cases ever reported to the CDC by the third week of August," he added. "And cases are trending upward."

Because it takes some time for symptoms to develop and cases to be reported, those people were probably bitten by the mosquitoes that infected them two to three weeks ago, he said, but the agency expects cases to keep increasing through the end of September.

It takes three days to two weeks after a bite for symptoms to come on, but they may then be rapid and overwhelming.

Read the whole story

Pancake breakfast at Tahoe Douglas fire house

Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District is putting on a Firehouse Pancake Breakfast for the residents of the Tahoe Douglas Fire District on Sept. 1 from 8:30–11:30am.

It will be at Fire Station No. 3, 193 Elks Point Road, Zephyr Cove.

Cost is adults $5, kids under 12 free. All proceeds go to local charities.

Meet the fire chief, firefighters, and fire board trustees, tour the station, play fire safety games, learn how to use a fire extinguisher, and more.