

How Firm is Our Foundation; a Look at The 99s Endowment Fund

by Nancy Aldrich

I am proud to be a 99! I love the 99s and thank them for all the camaraderie and support I have received over the years. That is why I want the 99s to be around for many years, for our children and grandchildren to continue to benefit from and enjoy. This is a great organization and deserves our loyalty and support.

Several years ago, after becoming a Captain for United Air Lines, I decided to build my "Captain's home." It was a fun and exciting time in my life. I wanted a beautiful home, with hangar attached, of course! I had a great time designing all the features I wanted, choosing all the beautiful appointments, but I gave no attention to the foundation. I had a very good builder who took care of all the details. He took care of all the things I was totally unaware of, like setting piers down to bedrock, and making sure the foundation was strong and would keep my home sound and secure. I was only concerned about the making sure the superstructure would be something I wanted to live with and would be proud of.

As 99s, we have built a beautiful superstructure. First is our membership. We are a group of amazingly powerful and exciting women achievers. We have the Museum of Women Pilots; a great place to go and learn about our history, and research the history of aviation. We have the Amelia Earhart Birthplace Museum, in Atchison. What an exciting place to visit. We have the Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship Fund, which continues to help women from around the world achieve their goals. The four "wings" of our superstructure are substantial and impressive. However, we have not paid enough attention to our foundation.

The financial foundation of the 99s is the Endowment Fund. We are always short of operating funds at our Headquarters; we have very little money for repairs or everyday expenses. We are constantly debating raising

the dues on members. Financially, we have nothing to fall back on. Our foundation is weak, and needs attention.

The Endowment Fund is set up so that no monies can be withdrawn until the principal reaches \$1 million. At this time, we are at about \$400 thousand. When the principal reaches \$1 million, the income earned by the protected capital will be allocated for the perpetuation and advancement of the goals of The Ninety-Nines.

Each of the Trusts is structured individually and the monies cannot overlap. The Museum money must be used to support the museum; the Birthplace money must be used to support the birthplace; the scholarship money can only be used to fund scholarships, but all of that is dependent upon the organization, the 99s, being financially sound. That is what makes the Endowment Fund so important. The EF is our financial foundation! We must reach our goal of \$1 million before the EF can help support the organization.

There are many ways you can contribute to the EF. The easiest way is to simply write a check and send it to the Treasurer. Another way is to encourage your Chapter to include the EF in their annual contributions. Use www.goodsearch.com each time you search on your computer and we will receive a steady income. Set up a regular monthly donation on one of your credit cards. Include the Endowment Fund in your estate planning. There are many ways to support the 99s EF. The important thing is that each of us **does** something to achieve our goal.

My "Captain's home" is a beautiful structure, with a firm and solid foundation. It will stand proudly for many years. We want the 99s to stand proudly for many years and continue supporting women pilots around the world. Help us make sure the 99s is built on a firm and solid foundation by contributing generously to The Endowment Fund today!