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## ForeWord This Week

### FOREWORD THIS WEEK 12.14.05

#### 1. UP, UP AND AWAY

One of the first women to fly a commercial plane helps others do the same.

#### 2. FAST FOREWORD

News, awards and announcements from our wire.

#### 3. FORE PLAY: NEA LITERATURE DIRECTOR DAVID KIPEN

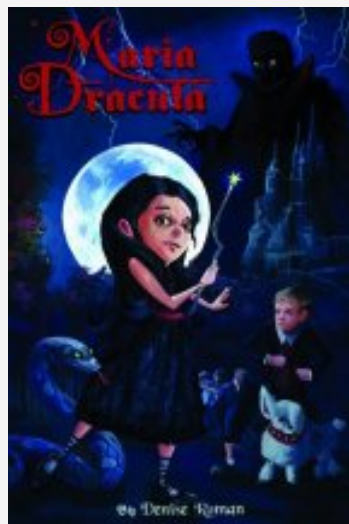
He reviewed one or two books a week for the San Francisco Chronicle as well as contributing regular reviews to NPR's "Day to Day" and KCRW's "Overbooked." Today, he talks about his new job and own book.

#### 4. FOREWORD FOOTNOTES

Titles of note from our review stacks.

### ADVERTISEMENT

#### Maria Dracula



"In this coming-of-age fairy tale, a ten-year-old orphan apprentice witch from Salem, Massachusetts, discovers that she is the great-granddaughter of Dracula -- Maria Dracula."

A member of the Author's Guild of America, Denise Roman is the author of *Fragmented Identities* (Lexington Books, 2003).

Lord of the Rings and King Kong films illustrator Angela Ursillo signs the artwork. [www.angelaursillo.com](http://www.angelaursillo.com).

Website: [www.mariadracula.com](http://www.mariadracula.com)

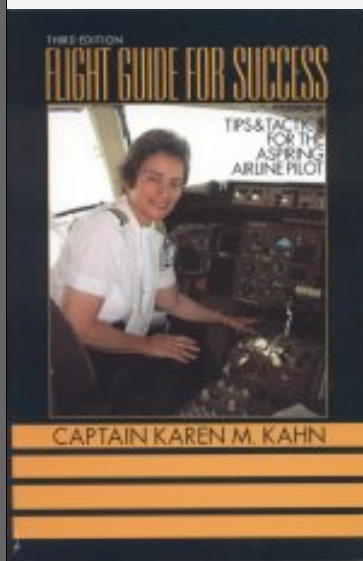
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## 1. UP, UP AND AWAY

When Karen Kahn was a teen, she went on a \$5 plane ride, an outing that would steer the course of the rest of her life.

She went on to pursue a career in the complex and, for women, elusive business of aviation. After years of climbing up and over a mountain of obstacles, she became one of the first women to fly for a major United States air carrier. Now addressed as Captain Kahn by her peers, she flies a Boeing 757/767 and is also the author of a career guide designed to ease others' journey from the classroom to the cockpit. Titled *Flight Guide for Success: Tips and Tactics for the Aspiring Airline Pilot* (Softcover, 288 pages, ISBN 0974172308), Kahn's book will help those trying to break into the incredibly competitive world of aviation, and it illustrates for job hunters how to land a career doing what they feel passionate about.



"Take out the word 'aviation' and substitute whatever word you want and this book will work for you," she told FTW from her office in Santa Barbara. Speaking about how to interview for a job, she said that her book is "about how to live your dream ... how to avoid the things that will do you in."

Kahn began her career in aviation up against seemingly insurmountable odds, but because she excels at turning negatives into positives, she never let the odds work against her. Instead she relied on her talents and a positive attitude to get what she wanted. The result has been a successful career as a pilot, author, speaker, and career counselor.

It took Kahn nine years to land a job as a pilot 29 years ago. "When I was hired in 1977 there were 26,000 applications for 95 positions," she said. Eleven years later, she became a pilot for Continental Airlines, and not long after that, she began speaking at career days. Developing a specialty in helping pilots improve their flying and communication skills, she founded Aviation Career Counseling in 1989 to help aspiring pilots navigate the rocky path to an aviation-related career.

"It struck me that I could help people who have training but who don't have enough time to get a job," she explained. "I started talking about how to save time and money getting there." Over the course of her career she also wrote columns for aviation magazines like *International Women Pilots/99 News*, *Flying Careers*, and *AOPA Flight Training*. Many of these articles have been updated and revised for the book, which is now in its third edition, she explained.

Kahn's upbeat attitude is woven throughout the pages of her guide. "This is not a how-to book, and it's not a memoir," she noted. Instead it is a collection of personal stories, both hers and others', covering such general career-related areas as setting goals, networking, learning from your mistakes, interview secrets, and writing a fabulous résumé. She also covers those topics specific to an aviation career, like what the life of a professional pilot is like, how to build flight time, and job opportunities for older pilots. "Everyone loves to read a war story," she said. "I try to help people through the wasteland. I tell them the résumé is your chance to tell your story and how to show passion even in a dull form like an online application."

When she first decided to gather her knowledge together for a book, she created Cheltenham Publishing, and released the first edition of her flight guide in 1997.

After the events of 9/11 she wondered if she should revise and update the book, if there would still be interest in the field. To her surprise, after the dust settled, she found that the passion and enthusiasm were still there. "In fact I found out that there was even more interest," said Kahn. She has decided to market her latest edition to libraries rather than bookstores, noting: "It's a career guide and it should be in every library."

Although she covers topics applicable to both men and women, Kahn includes a chapter on women's issues because the field can be especially tough for women to navigate. As one of the first 21 women hired as a pilot, she knows firsthand the difficulty that women may have landing a position where only 3-4 percent of pilots are women. "It's fun discussing it," she said. "I give them ideas to empower them, how to avoid pitfalls in the male-dominated world of aviation. There are several areas women need to be aware of. They need technical competence, assertiveness, and to be gender-savvy."

Kahn has designed her book to be picked up and read in no particular order. It is also intended for the newbie as well as the seasoned pilot. "This book is like having a good friend in aviation talking to you," she told FTW. "It's to inspire young people to go after tough careers in any field."

Kahn said that mandatory retirement means that she may only have a little more than three more years in the cockpit, although she hopes that might change between now and then. In the meantime, she will continue to give help and hope to aspiring pilots and anyone who wants, in the words of Joseph Campbell, to "follow their bliss."

Cymbre Foster, Editor [cymbre@forewordmagazine.com](mailto:cymbre@forewordmagazine.com)



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## ADVERTISEMENT

### FOREWORD MAGAZINE 2005 BOOK OF THE YEAR AWARDS

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## 2. **FAST FOREWORD**