

# BUSINESS/MIDWEEK Section B

Wednesday, February 1, 1984



Globe-Democrat Photo by Bob Diaz

Air 1 Chairman Paul J. Rodgers and one of Air 1's jetliners

## "Mr. Aviation" of St. Louis building Air 1

**Paul Rodgers sells new airline while promoting aviation industry here**

By Ted Schafers  
Globe-Democrat Senior Editor

There have been a number of people who through the years have contributed greatly to the development of airline transportation for St. Louis, but probably no one more deserves the title of "Mr. Aviation" here than Paul J. Rodgers, chairman and chief executive officer of Air 1 Inc.

Rodgers, now 85, has accumulated more than 40 years of service in the airline industry. In 1945 he joined Trans World Airlines' International Division in New York, following World War II service overseas with the Military Air Transport Command, where his job had been to help set up supply routes in Europe, Asia and Africa.

A chance to be part of a new airline lured him back to St. Louis in 1947. Here he worked with Oliver L. Parks (founder of Parks Air College) who had won government approval to start a small airline between St. Louis and Chicago and planned later expansion to 70 midwestern cities.

However, another group of businessmen, including the late Barak T. Mattingly, attorney and Republican

power, had the same idea. They organized Ozark Air Lines about the same time and began competing for federal permission to fly the same routes. This resulted in some hints from federal aviation officials that the two merge operations, which was done. Rodgers became employee "No. 6" for Ozark and played a major role in that airline's success over the next 32 years.

THREE YEARS AGO last Sept. 30, Rodgers retired as Ozark's vice president of marketing and public relations to begin the long and sometimes frustrating battle to develop an entirely new concept in commercial aviation with Air 1. This was to provide first class service at coach fare prices.

"Sometimes my friends think I should have signed in as a patient at Bellevue, after hearing about our trials and tribulations during the first two years trying to get this airline started. Yet every year in aviation here has been a tremendously rewarding experience and it still is," he said.

Fourteen years ago, when the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics honored Rodgers for some 22 years of "notable contributions to airline service in the St. Louis area," it was estimated that the genial St. Louisan had spoken before some 1,300 group meetings with a total audience of 3 million people.

While still a freshman at St. Louis

University, where he met Mary Margaret, his wife of 38 years, Rodgers won top honors for extemporaneous public speaking. He never is at a loss for words when it comes to talking about the history of St. Louis aviation. He's still an easy catch as a speaker today, especially if he can throw in a few bouquets for Air 1. Asked what his public appearances now total, he laughed and replied:

"I THINK THE MEETING count now is more than 1,900 and, if I keep up the present pace, it will pass the 2,000 mark sometime this year. I gave up trying to keep a cumulative audience count long ago."

The walls of his Air 1 office at 4433 Woodson Rd. are covered with mementos and awards from other airlines and industry associations. He especially treasures a silver tray presented by the Interline Association in 1960, which represents some 90 airlines worldwide. It is considered the "Oscar" of the industry.

"I guess Charles A. Lindbergh first aroused my interest in flying," he said.

Years later, Rodgers was to lead a successful 10-year fight to have the only replica of Lindbergh's Ryan Monoplane "Spirit of St. Louis" hung in the International Wing of Lambert St. Louis International Airport.

WHEN RODGERS JOINED Ozark, the newly formed airline had just four

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### Air 1 expands non-stop service

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"For competitive reasons, we are withholding details of our schedule fares and choice of airports until a later date," said Mark G. Morris, president.

Two of the latest Boeing 727 jets

acquired are undergoing reconfiguration to all first class seating, and the 1984 training classes of flight attendants and pilots are now ready to meet expanded service requirements. A second class of attendants will begin training late this month, Morris said.

"We still are seeking applicants for these and other airline positions that will open in the company during the next two months," he added.



# "Mr. Aviation" at the controls as Air 1 increases altitude

Continued from Page 1B

DC-3s — acquired from Parks. Today it operates 45 jets to 60 cities. Total employment the first year was 40; now it is 4,000.

Asked why he would leave the relative security of a successful airline to cast his lot with Air 1, he replied:

"There's already room for improvement in this business. I felt the concept conceived by Mark Morris, our president, needed to be tried. And after three years, I think we are now going to succeed."

Rodgers may have had one of the shortest retirements in Ozark history.

"I left my desk at Ozark at 4:30 p.m. and reported for work as Chairman of Air 1 at 8:30 a.m. the following day," he said.

Sale of 6.9 million shares of common stock last year gave Air 1 the financing needed to pay off old bills and acquire new planes to expand its nine round-trip daily flights to five cities from St. Louis. (Service to Houston begins March 15 and to Los Angeles April 1.)

"Our only marketing problem is just getting more people, used to flying with the big carriers, to try our service. Once they have flown Air 1, we keep them as customers," said Rodgers.

**ABOUT THE ONLY TIME** Rodger's smile-creased face turns into a frown is when he talks of the trips he had to make around the world to obtain the funds needed to buy the first airplanes and set up a functioning airline organization.

"The Bank of St. Ann was the only one in St. Louis or the State of Missouri that loaned us any money to survive until our successful stock sale last year. Once, we had to go all the way to the Wing-On Bank in Hongkong for help," he said, adding:

"I'm glad to see Gov. Bond flying to Japan and to Europe to lure new businesses to Missouri. We were a new business and we now employ 395 people, but Gov. Bond has yet to call on us with any offer of support."

"However, with the help of the St. Louis investment firm of Burns, Paul & Co. and Sherwood Securities Corp. of New York, plus the faith of our shareholders, we have overcome some of our most serious financial problems."

Two public issues of Air 1 stock were quickly oversubscribed, despite warnings in the prospectus that the new stock "involves a high degree of risk and immediate substantial

dilution."

Apparently like Rodgers, the shareholders felt that an airline offering first class service at coach prices merited their support.

**THE RODGERS FAMILY** of one daughter and four sons certainly is airline oriented. Daughter, Mary Patricia, is a TWA reservations agent at Northwest Plaza; Paul Jr. flies for Western Airlines and was part of the cockpit crew that brought in that airline's first Salt Lake City-St. Louis inaugural flight on Dec. 16. Kevin, now an attorney in San Francisco, once worked for American Airlines in sales; son Timothy, a vice president of D'Arcy Advertising, once worked for Ozark; and Stephen, now in the legal branch of the U.S. Navy in Hawaii, once worked as a ramp agent for Delta and Eastern Airlines here.

Even his wife, Mary Margaret, worked as a TWA passenger agent before her marriage.

"The only reason my wife has accumulated fewer air miles than I have is because she won't go on business trips anymore where we come home the same day we left," said Rodgers. Then he added with a salesmanlike twinkle:

"The only exception to that rule is when we fly Air 1."

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Index

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MIDWEEK REPORT

Compiled by David Grebler, Globe-Democrat Business Writer

Dollar parer... gold rises... Exchange value of the dollar dropped in the United States on Tuesday after moving higher in Europe.

Currency dealers attributed the dollar's advance in Europe to the U.S. government's report of rising U.S. home sales.

Here is how the dollar fared against other major currencies in U.S. time, compared with Monday: 2.8145 West German marks, down from 2.8186; 2.2450 Swiss francs, up from 2.2445; 8.5900 French francs, down from 8.6196; 234.62 Japanese yen, down from 234.79; and 1.2484 Canadian dollars, down from 1.2493.

Gold prices climbed steadily in busy trading.

On the Commodity Exchange in New York, gold contracts for February delivery climbed \$3.66 an ounce to \$272.88. In later trading at Republic National Bank, gold was quoted as of 4 p.m. EST at \$273, up \$1.25 from Monday.

Silver prices also gained. In London, silver closed at \$3.475 a tray ounce, a 17-cent jump from Monday. On New York's Comex, silver contracts for February delivery advanced 24.7 cents to \$3.605.

Midway Airlines to end St. Louis Service: Midway Airlines will terminate all flight service between Chicago and St. Louis, effective Feb. 28, the airline's president announced Tuesday.

"We regret having to make this decision," said Neal F. Meehan, Midway's president and chief operating officer. "However, due to over-capacity in the market, we will re-deploy the St. Louis aircraft to more profitable routes."

Midway had served the St. Louis market since June 1, 1983. Meehan said the six full-time and five part-time employees affected will be offered work at Midway's other 10 stations.

U.S. Steel has huge quarterly loss: U.S. Steel Corp. last \$1.14 billion in 1983. Including \$803 million in the fourth quarter, the fourth-largest quarterly deficit in U.S. corporate history, the company reported Tuesday.

Chairman David Rockefeller said the worst quarter in the history of the nation's largest steel producer set the stage for a "major turnaround" in 1984.

The latest quarterly loss compares with a loss of \$363 million in the same period in 1982. Sales rose 9.3 percent to \$4.7 billion from \$4.2 billion in the final three months of 1982.

The 1983 fourth-quarter loss was the largest in the company's history. Its previous record was \$68.8 million in the fourth quarter of 1979.

U.S. Steel's annual loss of \$1.16 billion widened from its \$281 million loss in all of 1982. Annual sales fell 6 percent to \$17.5 billion in 1983 from \$18.9 billion a year ago.

VW to drop Rabbit, introduce new model: Hoping to appeal to more Americans by being more European, Volkswagen of America Inc. will try to get its U.S. car sales out of the slow lane in 1984 by abandoning the Rabbit for a new model.

The last U.S.-built Rabbit will roll off the assembly line in mid-June at VW's plant 35 miles east of Pittsburgh, where employment has been halved due to poor sales.

The company is spending about \$200 million to retool and retrain employees for the new offering to be introduced for the 1985 model year.

The new model, as yet unnamed, will be "larger, roomier, more powerful and will have better fuel efficiency" than the four-cylinder, front wheel drive Rabbit, said plant spokesman Chet Behn.

Volkswagen offered America the Beetle for about 30 years and the Rabbit for about 10 years and has never been accused of being overly style-conscious.

USDA always credit for Egypt: A new \$112.2 million credit package has been approved for Egypt to buy U.S. farm commodities this year, the Agriculture Department announced Tuesday.

Melvin E. Sims, general sales manager for the department's Foreign Agricultural Service, said the package includes \$64.8 million of "blended" credit — \$35.4 million in regular loan guarantees and \$29.2 million in interest-free government credit — and \$47.8 million under the department's regular export credit guarantee program.

The idea of "blending" regular loans with an interest-free portion is to sell U.S. commodities at interest rates that are competitive with other countries.

Sims said the arrangement calls for delivery by Sept. 30 of about 46,000 metric tons of wheat under the blended credit portion of the package. The regular export credit will allow the purchase of \$40 million worth of tobacco and \$7.8 million for poultry products.



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power, had the same idea. They organized Clark Air Lines about the same time and began competing for federal permission to fly its own routes. This resulted in some hits from federal aviation officials that the two merge operations, which was done. Rodgers became employee "No. 1" for Clark and played a major role in that airline's success over the next 22 years.

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University, where he met Mary Margaret, his wife of 38 years, Rodgers won top honors for contemporaneous public speaking. He never is at a loss for words when it comes to talking about the history of St. Louis aviation. He's still an easy catch as a speaker today, especially if he can throw in a few bouquets for Air 1. Asked what his public appearances now look like, he laughed and replied:

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Washington University's Executive MBA program gains recognition, enthusiasm

By Bob Blanchard, Globe-Democrat Business Editor

Washington University's new Executive MBA program is receiving the support of area corporations.

Dr. C. William Emory, associate dean for the program in the business school, said the 23 students in the first class "are enthusiastic and highly motivated."

The enthusiasm extends to the officers of the companies where the students work full-time, Emory said in an interview.

"I've talked with at least a dozen of the major corporations (which are sponsoring students in the program),

and they are all satisfied with the experience. They say they'll support us next year," he said.

The program — designed for mid-career managers — was launched last September. The two-year course of study leads to the Master's in Business Administration degree. It's a rigorous program for high achievers who can combine demanding academic work with full-time employment.

SENIOR PROFESSORS in the university's business school conduct the classes one day a week on alternating Fridays and Saturdays.

"They feel it is reinforcing to have such enthusiastic students. And it's also challenging, as they must field all sorts of questions. The students are

not bashful," said Emory. Some students, who had been away from classrooms several years, "had to recapture their study skills, get organized and set priorities."

The managerial experiences and backgrounds of the students are used as a learning resource, officials pointed out.

To begin, the class will go to Washington, D.C. for five days of studies on government and business. And next spring, the class will complete their study with a trip to Japan.

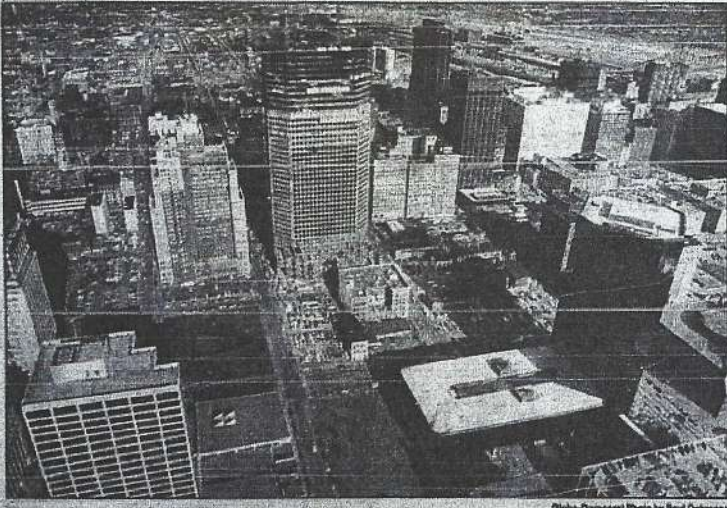
Emory gave credit to Robert L. Virgil, dean of the business school, for his "entire support" of the program. Virgil calls the Executive MBA an "extremely important program" of the business school, and he pledged it will

be of the highest quality attainable in its facility, teaching, participation, curricula, educational experiences, and accommodations.

Some firms make the Executive MBA program an integral part of their management development program for selected executives.

SPONSORING A STUDENT in the program "is an investment in the company's human capital," said Emory. Such an investment can have a quick payoff when an executive discovers a new technique for solving a company problem. Officials say the major benefit to the sponsor, however, is the long-run impact of the enhanced competence evidenced by its students.

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Bell tower: The 44-story One Bell Center, shown in the center of this aerial photo that is looking north across Market Street, is a dominant feature of the downtown skyline. Skanska Construction Co. is building the tower. Photo by Paul DeRosier.

will house 4,000 Southwestern Bell Corp. employees. While it is the state's tallest building, it is less than half the height of the Sears Tower in Chicago (1,450 feet), the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City (1,100 feet).

Lower natural gas rate will save \$11.7 million

St. Louis area residents will get a reduction in their gas utility bills starting March 1 under a price readjustment announced Tuesday.

The rate change will save the typical St. Louis area gas customer an average of a little over \$2.60 per month, according to a spokesman for Laclede Gas Co.

Mississippi River Transmission Corp., the pipeline company that supplies natural gas to Laclede Gas, will reduce rates by \$1.8 million, or 1 1/2 percent on an annual basis, for the six-month period starting March 1.

The pipeline company has filed a statement of the reduction, a regular semiannual purchased gas adjustment (PGA) with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. The change is subject to approval by the commission.

The price adjustment means a rate reduction of about \$11.7 million for Laclede Gas, estimated William Otto, director of public relations for the utility.

"Our rates automatically reflect all increases or decreases in what the pipeline charges," Otto said.

The latest natural gas price adjustment is in addition to a reduction of \$30 million, on an annualized basis, which Mississippi River Transmission put into effect last Oct. 1.

The two reductions together represent a reduction of about 7 1/2 percent annually in natural gas rates for the St. Louis area, a spokesman for the pipeline told The Globe-Democrat.

Len M. Liberman, chairman of Laclede Gas, noted at the utility's recent annual meeting that gas rates were being lowered.

— and not because of higher rates for natural gas.

Theodore M. Armstrong, president of the St. Louis-based Interstate natural gas pipeline company, said the reduction moves "are the result of MRT's continuing efforts to reduce its gas costs."

The PGA filing affects only Mississippi River's utility and municipal distribution customers in Missouri, Illinois and Arkansas. Benefits of cost reduction efforts for the company's industrial customers are passed on under separate individual sales contracts with those customers.

Mississippi River Transmission, whose principle market is the greater St. Louis area, is a subsidiary of MDC-Cos. Corp., headquartered in Lombard, Ill., a suburb of Chicago.

Food index reverses; rises

Dow and Bradstreet's Weekly Wholesale Food Price Index rose 1.7 percent to 131.95 on Jan. 17, reversing a two-week trend during which the index declined.

The largest price increases were for pork, beef and significant price gains were also reported for beef, lamb, eggs, and steers. Prices for flour, oats and beans also increased.

Noteworthy price decreases were reported for wheat, corn and cash. Significant price decreases were reported for sugar, hogs and lambs.

Dow and Bradstreet's Wholesale Food Price Index represents the cost of the most per pound of 31 raw foodstuffs and meat in general use. It is designed to show the general trend



### Pulse of the marketplace

<b>NYSE ups, down</b>	<b>AMEX ups, down</b>	<b>OTC ups, down</b>
<b>NYSE Leaders</b>	<b>Amex Leaders</b>	<b>Money Rates</b>
<b>Spot Metal Prices</b>	<b>Dow Jones</b>	<b>A.P. Stocks</b>
<b>World Gold Prices</b>	<b>Standard &amp; Poor's</b>	<b>A.P. Bonds</b>
<b>Hourly Trends</b>	<b>Within Index</b>	<b>Cash Position</b>
<b>Gold Coins</b>	<b>Odd Lot Trades</b>	<b>Value Line Index</b>
<b>Midwest Stocks</b>	<b>The Market in Brief</b>	<b>Local Clearings</b>
<b>Commodities</b>	<b>Trend of Stocks</b>	<b>Dow Jones Bonds</b>

## SAINT LOUISANS By Roy Cummings



**Janning** Kaminski Miller Ryan Sanders Norris

**Sanders** Norris has been elected vice president, corporate manufacturing at Emerson Electric Co. Most recently president of the Alco Controls Division, he replaces WAYNE J. BENNETT, who has retired.

**KAMINSKI OF ST. LOUIS** has elected four senior vice presidents. They are THOMAS KAMINSKI, who heads the bank's real estate and construction lending division; ORLEN MILLER, who heads the credit and national discount division; THOMAS RYAN, head of the bank's consumer loan division; and JOSEPH SANDERS, who also serves as legal counsel and secretary for the bank.

**CHARLOTTE NORRIS** of the Salem College of Hairdressing, Salem, has been installed for her second term as state president of the Missouri Association of Cosmetology Schools. Other officers are JEAN KAUFMAN, JUDY KEMNER and JOYCE WILSON; COTT, vice president; CAROL ABBOTT, secretary; and HANS GRUNDL, treasurer.

**HELEN E. RAMEZ** has been promoted to group product manager, gastrointestinal/home health care products for the Argyle Division of Sherwood Medical. She had been product manager of the General Surgical Product unit of Argyle.

**GEORGE R. VOGLT** has been named a vice president of E. F. Hutches and Company Inc. He continues as assistant branch manager and tax shelter coordinator in E. F. Hutches' Clayton office.

**EUGENE L. SNOWDEN** has been appointed vice president and general manager of Western Equipment Service Co., which rents construction and industrial equipment in Missouri, Illinois, Indiana and Kentucky.

**DOUG PODE** has joined Hoch Creative Services Corp. as producer in the Multi-Media Operations Department. The company is wholly owned subsidiary of Ashcraft-Branch Companies Inc.

**JOHN G. VOGEL JR.** has been appointed second vice president of the St. Louis Blue Cross Plan. He was formerly general counsel of Illinois Federal Savings Bank.

**BRUCE A. VASITS** has joined Price Waterhouse, public accountant, as a manager and telecommunications specialist in the Management Advisory Services Group. He had been a systems manager at AT&T Information Systems.

## Futures Prices

<b>Grain</b>	<b>Livestock</b>	<b>Gold Bullion</b>
<b>Crude Oil</b>	<b>Orange Juice</b>	<b>Aluminum</b>
<b>Sugar</b>	<b>Treasury Bonds</b>	<b>Copper</b>
<b>Flour</b>	<b>Treasury Bills</b>	<b>Platinum</b>
<b>Fresh Produce</b>	<b>Butter, Eggs</b>	<b>Loaded Gasoline</b>
<b>National Stock Yards</b>	<b>Spot Cattle</b>	<b>Cash Markets</b>
<b>Merchants Exchange</b>	<b>Egg Prices</b>	<b>Spot Cattle</b>

### Mutual fund quotations

<b>Fidelity Investments</b>	<b>Investment Company</b>	<b>Investment Services</b>
<b>Investment Research</b>	<b>Investment Management</b>	<b>Investment Planning</b>
<b>Investment Analysis</b>	<b>Investment Advisory</b>	<b>Investment Consulting</b>
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# BUSINESS MIDWEEK

Monday, February 1, 1984 • Pages 1-6

NYSE 4B Amex 5B OTC 5B Options 6B

Dow Jones  
Stock Index -0.94  
Closed at 1220.58

## MIDWEEK REPORT

Compiled by  
David Grabber  
Globe-Democrat  
Business Writer

Dollar per ounce in mixed; gold rises: The exchange value of the dollar dropped in the United States on Tuesday after moving higher in Europe. Gold and silver prices increased.

Currency dealers attributed the dollar's advance in Europe to the U.S. government's report of rising U.S. income taxes. The effect seemed to wear off in later trading in the United States, however, and the dollar retreated a bit.

Here is how the dollar fared against other major currencies in U.S. trading, compared with Monday: 2.8115 West German marks, down from 2.8106; 2.3456 Swiss francs, up from 2.3446; 8.5560 French francs, down from 8.5109; 234.82 Japanese yen, down from 234.76; and 1.2661 Canadian dollars, down from 1.2653.

Gold prices climbed steadily in busy trading.

On the Commodity Exchange in New York, gold contracts for February delivery climbed \$3.67 an ounce to \$372.90. In later trading at the New York Mercantile Exchange, gold was quoted as of 4 p.m. EST at \$374, up \$1.25 from Monday.

Silver prices also gained. In London, silver closed at \$8.575 a troy ounce, a 17-cent jump from Monday. On New York's Comex, silver contracts for February delivery advanced 24.7 cents to \$8.695.

### Military Airlines to end St. Louis Service: Midway Airlines will terminate all flight service between Chicago and St. Louis, effective Feb. 29, the airline's president announced Tuesday.

"We regret having to make this decision," said Neal F. Meenan, Midway's president and chief operating officer. "The airline has no over-capacity in the market, we will re-employ the St. Louis aircraft to more profitable routes."

Meenan had served the St. Louis market since June 1, 1980. Meenan said the six full-time and five part-time employees affected will be offered work at Midway's other 19 stations.

### U.S. Steel had huge quarterly loss: U.S. Steel Corp. lost \$1.18 billion in 1983, including \$983 million in the fourth quarter, the fourth-largest quarterly deficit in U.S. corporate history, the company reported Tuesday.

Chairman David Rockefeller held the worst quarter in the history of the nation's largest steel producer since the stage for a "major turnaround" in 1964.

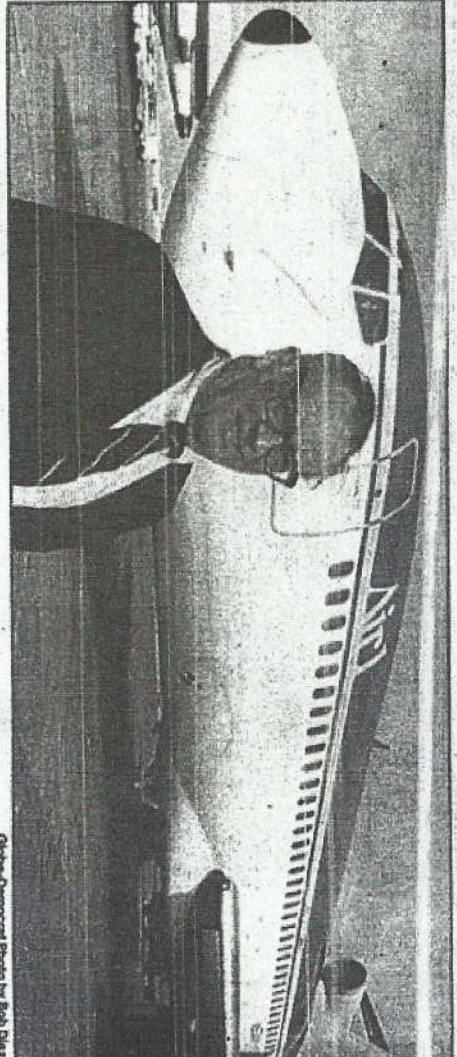
The latest quarterly loss compares with a loss of \$383 million in the same period in 1982. Sales rose 8.3 percent to \$4.7 billion from \$4.3 billion in the final three months of 1982.

The 1983 fourth-quarter loss was \$682.9 million in the company's history; its previous record was \$682.9 million in the fourth quarter of 1978.

U.S. Steel's seasonal loss of \$1.4 billion widened from its \$391 million loss in all of 1982. Annual sales fell 8 percent to \$17.3 billion in 1983 from \$18.9 billion a year ago.

### VW to drop Rabbit: Volkswagen is dropping the Rabbit for a new model. The last VW Rabbit will roll off the assembly line in mid-June at VW's plant 35 miles east of Pittsburgh, where employment has been halved due to poor sales.

The company is spending about \$200 million to retool and retrain



Air 1 Chairman Paul J. Rodgers and one of Air 1's jetliners

## "Mr. Aviation" of St. Louis building Air 1

Paul Rodgers sells new airline while promoting aviation industry here

By Ted Scharler  
Globe-Democrat Senior Editor

Paul Rodgers, now 65, has accumulated more than 49 years of service in the airline industry. In 1945 he joined Trans World Airlines' International Division in New York, following World War II service overseas with the Military Air Transport Command, where his job had been to help set up supply routes in Europe, Asia and Africa.

A chance to be part of a new airline lured him back to St. Louis in 1947. Here he worked with Oliver L. Parks (founder of Parks Air College) who had won government approval to start a small airline between St. Louis and Chicago and planned later expansion to 70 intermediate cities.

However, another group of businessmen, including the late Sen. T. Mattingly, attorney and Republican

power, had the same idea. They organized Ozark Air Lines about the same time and began competing for routes. This resulted in some shifts from federal aviation officials that the two merge operations, which was done. Rodgers became employee No. 70, for Ozark and played a major role in that airline's success over the next 25 years.

Rodgers retired as Ozark's vice president to manage and public relations to bring the long and sometimes frustrating battle to develop an entirely new concept in commercial aviation with Air 1. This was to provide first class service at coach fare prices.

At 1, the St. Louis airline which offers first class service at coach fares, is expanding its non-stop service from St. Louis to Houston on March 13 and to Los Angeles April 1, with connections to other airlines and some of the other cities the airline serves.

"For competitive reasons, we are withholding details of our schedule, fares and choice of airports until a later date," said Mark G. Morris, president.

Two of the latest Boeing 727 jets

### Air 1 expands non-stop service

acquired are undergoing reconfiguration to all first class seating and the 1984 training classes of flight attendants and pilots are now ready to meet expanded service requirements. A number of attendants will begin training late this month, Morris said.

"We still are seeking applicants for these and other airline positions that will open in the company during the next two months," he said.

When Rodgers joined Ozark, the newly formed airline had just four

"Sometimes my friends think I should have signed in as a patient at Bellevue, after hearing about our jobs and situations coming up first two years trying to get this airline started. Yet every year in aviation here has been a tremendous learning experience and it still is," he said.

Fourteen years ago, when the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics honored Rodgers for some 21 years of notable contributions to airline service in the St. Louis area, he was estimated at that time the general St. Louis had spoken before some 1,200 group meetings with a total audience of 3 million people.

While still a freshman at St. Louis University, she met Mary Margaret, his wife of 38 years. Rodgers won top honors for examinations public speaking. He never is at a loss for words when it comes to talking about the history of St. Louis aviation. Rodgers still an easy catch as a speaker today, especially if he can turn in a few bouquets for Air 1. Asked what his public appearances now feel, he laughed and replied:

"I THINK THE MELTING POINT now is more than 1,800 and, if I keep up the present pace, it will pass the 2,000 mark sometime this year. I give up trying to keep a conservative audience count long ago."

The walls of his Air 1 office at 4433 Woodson Rd. are covered with memoranda and awards from other airlines and industry associations. He especially treasures a silver trophy presented by the Institute of Aeronautics in 1980, which represents some 90 airline executives. It is considered the "Oscar" of the industry.

"I guess Charles A. Lindbergh first aroused my interest in flying," he said. Years later, Rodgers was to lead a successful 10-year fight to have the only replica of Lindbergh's Ryan Monoplane "Spirit of St. Louis" hung in the International Wing of Lambert St. Louis International Airport.

WHEN RODGERS JOINED Ozark, the newly formed airline had just four