



Wally Funk (Photo courtesy of Ninety-nines website)

# Wally Funk

*gives a special presentation*  
hosted by the Honors College

## Women of the Mercury 13

**Monday, Oct. 26, 2015**  
**2:00 pm**  
**in the Honors Forum**

lower plaza level Student Health Center, UNM Main campus

For more than 50 years, Wally Funk has been a pioneer for women in the aviation and space industries. After growing up in a working class family in Taos, NM, Ms. Funk became part of a group of women known as the Mercury 13. These women passed a series of tests in the early 1960s to see if women could handle the rigors of space. The tests were similar to those NASA used to screen its earliest male astronauts. As one source notes, the Mercury 13 women “paved the way for female astronauts like Sally Ride, Eileen Collins and many others that now support the U.S. Space Program.” In addition, Ms. Funk was the first woman to complete the FAA’s General Aviation Operations Inspector Academy course, which covered pilot certification and flight testing procedures and she was the first female air safety investigator hired by the National Transportation Safety Board. She also invented a device for checking the integrity of an airplane’s propeller. Among Ms. Funk’s many honors are: induction into the Library of Congress; invited speaker for the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in the IMax Theater; induction into the Oklahoma State University’s Aviation Hall of Fame; and the VFW Aeronautics and Aerospace Award Gold Medal and Citation.

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Wally Funk from the 1960s. (Photo courtesy of CBSDFW.COM)