
rupanews



Journal of the Retired United Pilots Association



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Denver Good Ol' Boys..... Tom Johnston

..... Stanley Boehm

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S.E. Florida Gold Coast.....

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May thru Sept., — Jim Morehead & Art Jackson

S.E. Florida Treasure Coast Sunbirds Bob Langevin

S.W. Florida Gary Crittenden

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Hawaiian Ono Nene's..... Larry Becker

Big Island Stargazers..... Linda Morley-Wells

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New York

New York Skyscrapers..... Pete Sofman

Ohio

Cleveland Crazyies Richard McMakin

Oregon

The Columbia River Geezers..... Ron Blash

..... Tony Passannante

The Intrepid Aviators of Southern Oregon Bob Niccolls

Washington

Seattle Gooney Birds William R. Brett

Brent F. Revert

Washington D.C.

Washington D.C..... E.K. Williams Jr.

The renewal date for dues is your birthday and is printed in the back cover address box.

Send your \$25 renewal check (made out to RUPA) and/or your updated information to:

RUPA, PO BOX 400, VINEBURG, CA 95487-0400

E-mail: rupasectr@aol.com

Change your mailing address for any reason, permanent or temporary, advise RUPA at the

above address or email. You can even phone: 707-938-7324

DO NOT forget to fill out the Post Office mail forwarding postcard!!

The P.O. will only forward the "NEWS" for 60 days, so tell everybody!

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President's Letter

NEW MEMBERS: The beauty of being retired is I get to see names of pilots who I met as a new hire hit the age 65 gate. The extra five years gave them the wonderful opportunity to rebuild some of what was stolen from us in the Bankruptcy. Hopefully they were able to improve their future and I welcome them to our fellowship. Please say hi to 16 new members: Captain Conrad Berdon, Jr, Evergreen, CO, Captain Melvin Griffin, Humble, TX, Captain Andy Anderson, St Helena Island, SC, Mr. Klaus Diefenbach, Middletown, MD, Captain Carl Wachtman, Ellicott City, MD, Captain Michael Coyle, Golden, CO, Captain Warren Nelson, West Chicago, IL, Captain Terrance Doran, Gloucester Point, VA, Captain Robert Woodmansee, Fort Collins, CO, Captain Neil Anderson, The Villages, FL, Captain Walter Clark III, Cumming, GA, Captain Paul Welch, Kent, WA, Captain Louie Litrenta, South Barrington, IL, Captain Douglas Mowery, Mills River, NC, Captain Dave Earnest, Burlingame, CA and Captain Mark Long, Kingswood, TX.

UNITED BAGGAGE CHARGES: One of our members recently reported that he bought a Full Fare ticket on United and was charged for his checked bags. As you should be aware, when traveling on a 20% Discounted Ticket or on a Pass, there is no charge for up to 2 bags weighing less than 70 pounds each. For whatever reason, United does not allow retirees the same courtesy even though you buy a full fare none discounted ticket. It doesn't make sense but that is the way they run the airline. Lesson learned is to buy the 20% Discounted Ticket and in addition to the 20% savings you will save the baggage fees. How often does it happen where paying less saves you more? Go figure!

ANNUAL DUES PAYMENT OPTIONS: Recently we have received inquiries from existing and potential new members as to whether the annual dues can be paid by a credit card rather than by check and snail mail. Cort and Leon have been researching the issue. We found that 50% of RUAEA members pay by credit card. We hope to make this option available in the near future and will advise you by Eblast once we have the system up and operating. Writing a check will remain a payment option for those who do not want to use a credit card.

RUPA DEMOGRAPHICS: In case you are wondering, here is a breakdown of our current group:

Age 60-69 543 members

Age 70-79 1,358 members

Age 80-89 785 members

And over age 90 171 members

And out of 2,857 members, 2,404 have an email address.

APRIL SHOWERS: I have a request for our East Coast members to send some moisture out to the West Coast. Without some April Showers there will be very few flowers!! And that is no April Fools joke!!

Jon Rowbottom RUPA President



Big Island April Luncheon Reminder

The Big Island Stargazers April RUPA Luncheon will be held on April 23rd at 1130 (the fourth Thursday) in Hilo at the Hilo Bay Cafe.



How to update your personal information!

Address changes, (Attention Snowbirds!!!!)

The Post Office will forward the *RUPANEWS* for only 60 days. We can keep two addresses in the database for each member. If you want your address changed, just let us know by one of the following methods:

RUPA, PO Box 400, Vineburg, CA 95487-0400 — or — E-mail: rupasectr@aol.com

Send your *DUES* to the above address (include your file number)

Check your RUPA Directory to make sure we have your correct information

A note from your *RUPANEWS* Editor



Please be advised that the May *RUPANEWS* will be late. This is because I will be on the RUPA Panama Canal Cruise which departs Ft. Lauderdale on April 11th and arrives in San Diego on April 27th, so I won't get the magazine to the printer until the end of April.

Secondly, I want to clarify something about dues checks and items and letters for the *RUPANEWS*. Many members seem to think that Leon Scarbrough "Sec/Treasurer" and I have staffs that helps us do our jobs. That is not the case; we are each a staff of one in our respective jobs.

The reason I'm bringing this to your attention is that I get several dues checks each month and have to put them in another envelope and send them to Leon. That's not a big deal, but it does take a little time and costs RUPA money for postage. Leon gets many checks with letters included. He either has to type the letters into an email or mail them to me. Leon has enough to do without taking the time to type your letters or mail them. The thing that amazes me is that many of you members send a handwritten letter even though you have email. Often, these hand written letters are difficult to decipher and then you run the risk of being misunderstood. If you have email, it's very easy to send your letter by email. You don't have to worry about formatting, just send the information as you do in any email message. It's not a big job for me to do what's necessary to enter a letter into the magazine. If you want to include a picture, just attach it to the email. I actually prefer that you send the original picture as is without doing anything to it and I will do whatever is necessary to make it look its best in the magazine.

To Summarize:

The May *RUPANEWS* will be delayed.

Leon and I are each a staff of one.

Send address changes and checks **ONLY** to Leon:

Mailing address: RUPA, PO Box 400, Vineburg, CA 95487-0400

Email address: rupasectr@aol.com

Send letters and other entries for the *RUPANEWS* to me:

Mailing address: RUPA, 1104 Burke Lane, Foster City, CA 04404-3636

Email address: rupaed@gmail.com

Use email to submit your letters or address changes whenever possible.

A thank you letter to our Sec/Treasurer, Leon Scarbrough

Dear Captain Scarbrough, You have no idea the wonderful gift you gave my family by sharing the Captain's Shoulder Boards you sent. Dad looked just like he did on his last flight he took for UAL! He had his UAL tie clasp and I put the RUPA pin you sent on his lapel too. The service was beautiful -- but much more fun -- that night at about 9:00 PM --the family went back to the grave and lit luminaires --and shared shots of Dad's favorite "Seagram's," and really precious stories about dad. We sent him heavenward in style.

I also want to send thanks to all of the RUPA folks who shared stories about dad! I forwarded them on to family. You all will be in my memory as wonderful friends of my Dad, Henry "Hank" Weigel.

Many Many Blessings, Barbara (Weigel) Kelly

"Laws They Don't Teach in Physics"

Law of Mechanical Repair - After your hands become coated with grease, your nose will begin to itch and you'll have to pee.

Vice President's Letter explaining Pass Rider Seniority

There seems to be confusion regarding our pass riding seniority for retirees and active pilots. Our pass travel seniority system is operating under ConU rules based on a sliding date which measures retiree boarding priority by subtracting years of service from today's date. On Employee Res this is shown as "Board Date." For active employees, their Board Date is their fixed date of hire (assuming no LOA or furlough). Active employee longevity for travel increases every day, while retirees remain static, and Board Date slides further forward in time every day.

When one retires, their accumulated longevity becomes fixed...no more longevity accumulation. Therefore the date for pass travel Board Date now slides forward from your date of hire with the calendar. This applies to all passes as retirees go behind any active employee, even one who is hired as late as last month for regular pass travel (SA2R). While it also applies to vacation passes, using those will get you ahead of active employees who are using Personal Passes.

FROM FLYING TOGETHER:

How does the company calculate my new board date for travel?

The calculation is based on the days, months and completed years of service to the company.

$(\text{Years of service} \times 365 \text{ days}) + (\text{Months} \times 30) + \text{days} = \text{total number of days}$

Example #1: 34 years, 6 months and 5 days of company service

$(34 \text{ years} \times 365 \text{ days}) + (6 \text{ months} \times 30) + 5 \text{ days} = 12,595 \text{ days}$

For a flight date of August 31, 2013, 12,595 days prior to August 31, 2013 is March 8, 1979.

Your board date for a flight on August 31, 2013 would be March 8, 1979

For SA2R regular pass travel, this hypothetical person still has a Board Date of March 8, 1979, but his/her effective boarding priority is after any active employee. By using a vacation pass, which is a higher priority, this person would have the March 8, 1979 Board Date and would be sequenced with other vacation pass riders by Board Date.....ahead of SA2R pass riders, no matter what their Board Date is.

→ Paying your RUPA Dues has just gone Hi-Tech ←

You can now pay your RUPA dues on line with a Credit Card.

Go to the RUPA website <http://www.rupa.org> as shown below.

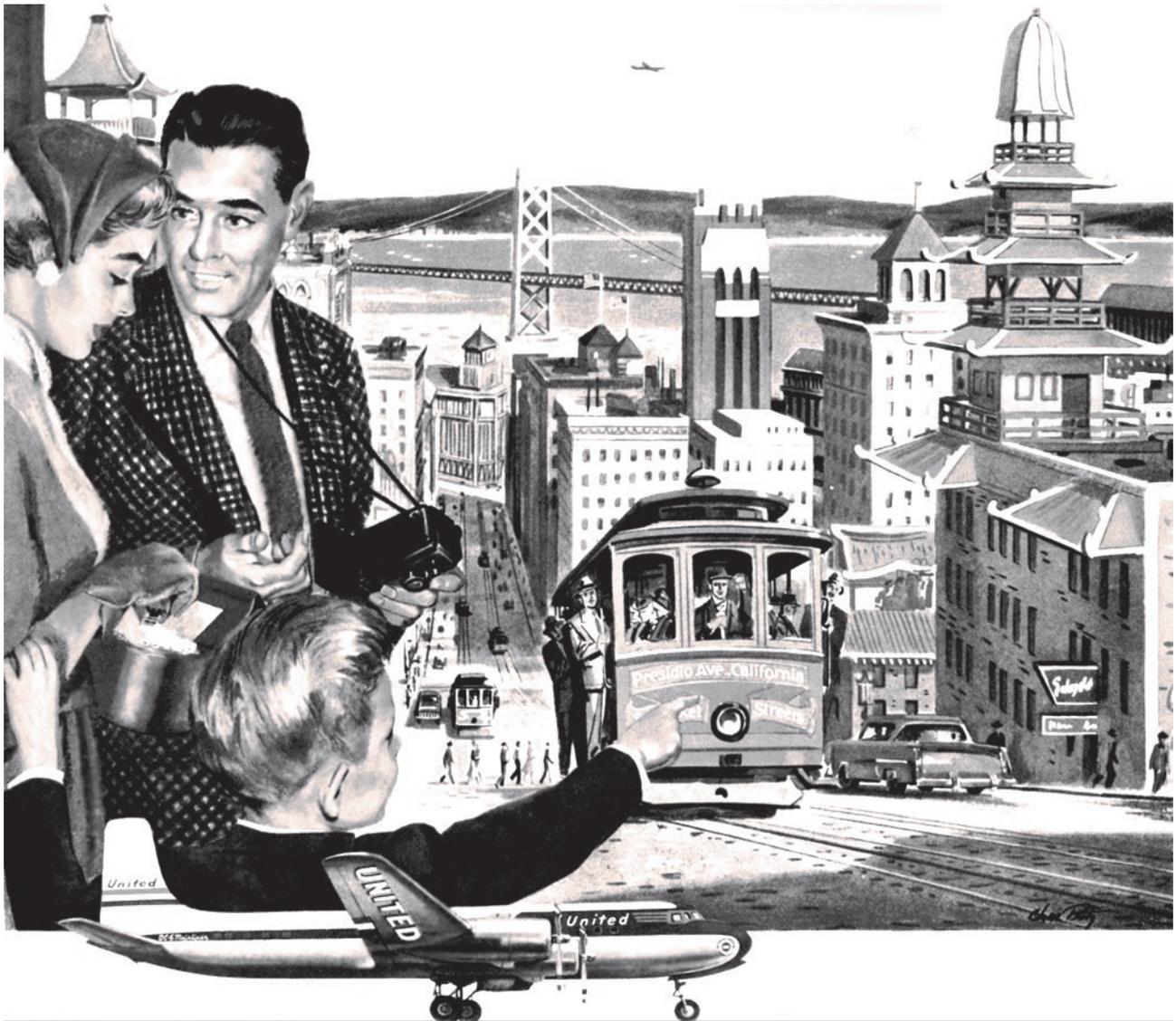
Click on the button and fill-in the information.

The screenshot shows the RUPA website interface. At the top left is the RUPA logo. To its right is the text 'Retired United Pilots Association' and the slogan 'Let's Fly Together!'. A navigation sidebar on the left lists various site sections. The main content area features a 50th Anniversary banner with a 'Pay Dues Here!' button. Below the banner is a collage of United Airlines logos and a photograph of a United Airlines aircraft.



United Airlines Historical Foundation

"Preserve the Past, Inspire the Future"



United - the only airline that linked the East, Midwest, *all* the Pacific Coast and Hawaii - You could go one route and return on another at no extra fare. Stopovers were allowed at no extra charge (within a one-year time limit) with a First Class ticket. For example: a "stopover tour" of four days at San Francisco included a hotel room and sightseeing was priced as low as \$26.52 plus tax.

Marvin Berryman DENTK Ret. from a "Saturday Evening Post" ad 4.17.54 Please mail your tax-deductible \$ contributions and donations of **United & Continental** Memorabilia & Artifacts to: **UAHF, Tom Goodyear, 7401 Martin Luther King Blvd., Denver, CO 80207.** - Website at www.uahf.org

United's New user-friendly pass rider enrollment system

We have integrated the system that maintains employee pass travel eligibility information and the system through which employees enroll their eligible pass riders and submit supporting documentation for pass travel privileges.

The new user-friendly system, which was launched on March 23rd, will help employees and retirees enroll pass riders and manage their information more easily while reducing processing time and improving our ability to assist them.

Effective March 23rd, retirees will use their 6-digit user employee uID, to access the system to enroll a pass rider for pass travel. When you access the following links, you will be prompted to use your 6-digit uID and password:

Flying Together > Employee Services > My Info > Travel > Pass Riders

Flying Together > Travel > Update Pass Riders

Information on how to use the enhanced system to enroll eligible pass riders is available on the Travel tab and employeeRES. Please direct any additional questions to the Employee Travel Center at ETC@united.com or 877-UAL-ESC9 (877-825-3729).

To find your uID:

1. Go to the Flying Together homepage.
2. Move your mouse over your name at the top of the screen: Welcome "Your Name".
3. View your uID on the pop-up. See screen shot below.



If you have not previously used your uID and don't know your password:

1. Input your uID in the Employee ID field.
2. Type your birthday using YYYYMMDD format in the Password field to be prompted to change your password.
3. Change your password for the next time you log in.

If you have used your uID and forgot your password:

Self-service option: Click on the "Forgot password?" link on the login page.

If you still require assistance, contact the United Service Desk at 1-847-700-5800 (option #1 for password resets)

Generic screenshot of the new user-friendly system to enroll a pass rider.

Keep in mind, retirees are not eligible for every type of pass rider or healthcare option listed below. This screenshot should be viewed for informational purposes only.

| Primary Family | | Enrolled Friends | | Extended Family | | Buddies | | View All | |
|-----------------|---------------|------------------|------------|-----------------|------------|---------|------------------|----------|--|
| DEPENDENTS | RELATIONSHIP | STATUS | HEALTHCARE | TRAVEL | DOB | GENDER | ACTION | | |
| 1 Lief S Goode | Spouse | Current | ☑ | ☑ | 5/9/1961 | Male | None | | |
| 1 Sonny Goode | Son | Current | ☑ | ☑ | 7/13/1989 | Male | None | | |
| 1 Belle Goode | Daughter | Current | ☑ | ☑ | 8/20/1991 | Female | None | | |
| 1 Sonny Daze | Father | In Process | ☒ | ☒ | 6/23/1922 | Male | Certify | | |
| 1 Hap E Daze | Brother | In Process | ☒ | ☒ | 8/26/1947 | Male | Pending Approval | | |
| 1 Isadora Belle | Sister | In Process | ☒ | ☒ | 3/26/1951 | Female | Submit Docs | | |
| 1 Vera Goode | Mother-In-Law | Current | ☒ | ☑ | 12/10/1921 | Female | Manage Election | | |

Greater Chicago Area RUPA Group Luncheon

Nick's Pizza & Pub in Crystal Lake hosted The Greater Chicago RUPA Group's regular luncheon on March 10th. Thanks to Claude and Rob for organizing the event, forty-two RUPA members and guests made the rendezvous on a semi-foggy day on Roads Of Snirt...the result of warming temps and all that now-uncovered junk below the melting winter fluff. Had it been a little closer to St. Patrick's Day, we might've been wearin' o' the green, but we celebrated greenery anyhow with the coming of Spring. And yardwork. Ugh. Kudos to our efficient servers Sydney and Abby who were good sports and typified the great hospitality we've come to appreciate at Nick's.

Bob Helfferich briefed us about the status and availability of the Retired United Pilots' Fund and Tom Conley added comments on the future of financial assistance (or not) for those requiring hearing aids. Recent retirees Pete Novak and Rick Miller gave us some of their perspectives on how they viewed the company operations, and next-most-recent retiree and former LCA Bob McCormick talked about "change in the company" while he was there. The most-voiced sentiment among our attendees seemed to be, "I'm glad I'm retired."



Like all our luncheons, tall tales and great stories were in abundance. Present were: Leroy and Eva Bair, Bruce Carey, Bill Cherwin, Tom Clemens, Tom Conley, Carl Eberle, Walt and Jan Fink, Jim Gesler, Bob Helfferich, Mike Hepperlen, Jim Higbea, Bob & Carolyn Kelly, Bob McCormick, Jim & Pat McCusker, Rob McCutcheon, Tom McFadden, Rick Miller, Bob & Shirley Moncur, Marjorie & Howard Nelson, Warren Nelson, Claude Nickell, Pete Novak, Glen Peterson and his son Tyler Peterson, George Pylawka, Dave Runyan, Dave Schultz, Dick Schultz, Bill Silvester, Ole Sindberg, Jim Stuntz, Bill Thompson, Sid Tiemann, Jim & Mary Jeanne Trosky, Tom Wedel., Dave Wege, and Ron Wilson.

The next scheduled Greater Chicago Group luncheon and meeting will be at Nick's on Tuesday, July 14th, 2015. Wielder Of The Pen, *Walt Fink*

N.E. Florida RUPA Luncheon

Below is a picture of the NE Florida February luncheon.



From L to R: Jim Meyers, Dick Russell, Faruza Hunter, Herb Hunter, Chris Ebert, Larry Horton, Janet Horton, Phil Harman, Gail Rankin, Bill Rankin, Dennis Mills, Steve Moddle, Lillian Moddle, and missing in the picture Rich DeVries, and Lowell Johnston. *Steve*

The Intrepid Aviators of Southern Oregon RUPA Luncheon

This year Spring is early here in the Rogue Valley, but with it a good turnout for all the local characters known as the Intrepid Aviators of Southern Oregon.

The Pony Espresso welcomed us once again, even though we took most of the seating! Typical of conversation around the table was talk of Luscombe's owned, Boeing's, good dining, tax time arriving and, the one that took my ear, Dan Kurtz's theory as to climate change being a real thing given the mares came into season a couple of month's early this year. Actually, I kid Dan about the climate change concept, but we certainly do look forward to visiting his ranch next year when he assures us we'll be able to watch the little ones being worked and taken to halter.

The weather has been beautiful here, but the snow pack is nonexistent in the high country even though the rainfall totals are close to norma l. Unfortunately the snow pack is what drives the summer irrigation around here and so the warm months may, as they say, be 'interesting'.



Our group, starting from the left front seated, Steve Fusco, Harvey Saylor, George Elliott, Banjo Bob Keasbey, Jim and Cheryl Jaeger, Leeann Fusco, Marty Niccolls and Bill Monfort. Standing left to right, Catherine Dimino (George's daughter) Bob Niccolls, Dan Kurtz and last but certainly not least Scot Lee.

With the traveling months upon us, any out there in RUPAland working their way to Southern Oregon please plan to drop by to join us. Third Thursday at the Pony Espresso in Jacksonville, Oregon. (the old historic town of Jacksonville alone is reason enough to head this way. Cheers, **Bob**

Monterey Peninsula RUPA Lunch Bunch

March 11th started with light rain showers, which we needed, into scattered clouds and a sunny warm afternoon. Those who attended were: Pete and Donna Walmsley (our hosts at Edgar's), Diane Emerson, Milt and Sunee Jines, Jack Cowles, Dave and Linda Mackie, Will and Fran Blomgren, Mike Donnelly, Barry and Sharon Nelson, and me. A number of our regulars were out of country or in the snow skiing!

Special guests were Phil Young from both Redding and Quincy, California and Jean Haley Harper from Denver. Jean was the 3rd woman pilot hired by United. I knew her parents who were crop dusters near Tracy, California and I remember so well when Jean got hired – local girl makes it to the airlines! Jean had started on the 737 flying with Milt on numerous occasions. Jean retired before she hit 65 in 2013. Her husband is still flying for UAL.

Discussion followed on the petition that is circulating concerning the PBGC funding, recent safety issues with United, pass travel, and a few war stories about captain hat sizes! Pete is going to check into dates and costs for our annual golf tournament at Quail scheduled probably in September early October. More information to follow. Out-of-towners are welcomed!

Next RUPA lunch at Edgar's is Wednesday April 8th. Please RSVP by noon the Tuesday before. No April Fools! *Phyllis Cleveland*

Phoenix Roadrunners (February) RUPA Luncheon

Was great to have so many to come to our regular luncheon on Tuesday February 10th at our usual place the Bobby Q Restaurant. This restaurant is great for us with their great staff and wonderful food. They take good care of us all the time.

We talked about how many of our pilots still pilot an airplane themselves. One couple has two separate airplanes. Several stories were told that revived a few memories for us. Everyone seemed to enjoy the time spent together.

This group included, Dick & Pat McCormick, Frenchy & Joan Bourgeois, Warren & Vichy Phelps, Tom & Renee Libuda, Dennis & Darlene Leahy, Fred & Judy Meyer, Ken Killmon, Jim Nugent, Mike Carlin, Dave Specht, Leif Jonassen, Harry Oas, John Gordon, Gary Dyer, Mike Clements, Charlie Schwob, Frank Soare, John Baczycki, and Cory Liston.

Our next planned luncheon will be on March 10th, 2015. *Ken Killmon*

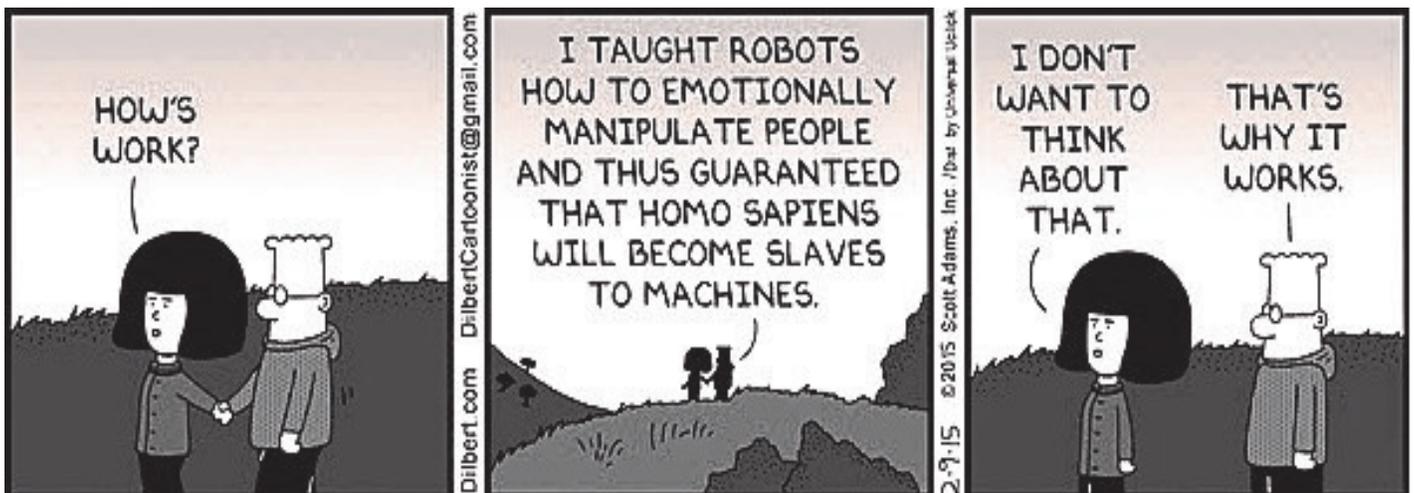
Phoenix Roadrunners (March) RUPA Luncheon

We met at our usual place, the Bobby-Q restaurant on March 10th for a nice get together and lunch.



The picture of our group shows in a zigzag fashion from left to right. Frank Soare, myself, Warren Phelps, Tom Libuda, Doug Lund, Renee Libuda, Vicky Phelps, Charlie Schwob, Joan Bourgeois, Mike Carlin (peeking over), Frenchy Bourgeois, Judy Meyer, John Baczycki (also peeking), John Gordon, Brenda Lund, Dave Specht, Mike Clements, and Fred Meyer. Not shown in the picture are Leif Jonassen and Jim Nugent.

Our picture was taken by a guest Scott Wilberg who is John Gordon's son-in-law and a Captain for Delta flying the A320. Our next luncheon will be on April 14th. *Ken Killmon*



Ohio Cleveland Crazies RUPA Luncheon

The February meeting of the Cleveland Crazies was a small but fun gathering. It may have had something to do with the 6 degrees on the thermometer and the minus 20 degree wind chill outside.

As usual the talk was inspired, the stories fun, and the jokes kept us laughing. Our favorite waitress, Vicki, was home after a successful operation so we were served by Michelle. She was warned about our group and she was well prepared for us.

A heads up for all Cleveland Crazies; Our speaker who was cancelled last October will be with us at our May meeting. He has an amazing personal story of his survival on 911. Put this on your calendar. You don't want miss this meeting and talk.



Those attending from left to right are: Joe Getz, Phil Jach, Jim Burrill, our waitress Michelle, George Bleyle, and Dick Sanders. Cheers, *Phil Jach*



We are PROUD to Celebrate 30 Years

June 27th, 2014

RUPA & The Cleveland Crazie's

Mid-Summer Do!

Directions (you should know by now)

From I-77 or I-71 go west on I-480 and then

or

From I-80 to I-71 North to I-480 West and then to Great Northern Exits, Take Exit 6A South on Rte 252 (Columbia Road) to the German Cultural Center (approximately 2 miles) on the Right. Parking will be there, or at our house 1 block east, in the drive. However drop offs are always available.



Former CLEVELAND CRAZY Flight Attendants and Operations Folks are always welcome!

At Richard and Carol McMakin's Home

24926 Nobottom Road

Olmsted township, OH 44138

RSVP to Carol or Richard - Phone: 440/ 235-7595 E-Mail: rmc makin@apk.net

We will start at approximately 4:00 pm. Come early and stay late!!!

WE ASK THAT YOU BRING A DISH TO SHARE AND ANY CONDIMENTS, WHICH MIGHT BE APPROPRIATE. ALTHOUGH AN EMERGENCY SUPPLY OF BASICS WILL BE AVAILABLE. PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN BEVERAGE SELECTION.

Los Angeles South Bay Luncheon

To All Ruparians and Friends, The Proud Bird Restaurant did us WELL! I always wanted to move our events there but could not as the place was running into short lease periods with threatened closure imminent. The LA Airport wanted all the land back for better paying leases including, I heard, a central Hertz parking garage and other car rental facilities and so on. Also, Proud Bird could not afford the rent proposed by LAWA.

So we stayed at the Hacienda Hotel for the last 20 plus years. But then breaks came our way. Surprise, surprise as the Proud Bird did reach an agreement for a new 20 year lease just days before their December 31, 2014 expiration date! Amazing! Great news for all the loyal customers who have waited for maybe more extensions. This included us now as well, we could move.

Also the Hacienda is dividing into two hotels and is being renovated and otherwise changed, so it has been difficult to find accommodations for our small and smaller group.

At the Proud Bird I had booked a table on the internet for twelve and called later to ask about over or under numbers. I thought 18 would come but, Wow! 24 folks showed up. The Restaurant took that all in their stride and simply moved more tables to our group. They had a nice buffet or regular lunch menu items and their service was impeccable. Our bill was about \$20 including tax and tip, not bad either. I hope we left a little extra.

The weather was super clear and warm so we could see landings on all LAX runways. Could have stayed longer on their patio outside and continued judging approaches!

The free parking is also a big plus and many of you had no trouble finding the place especially if you had been parking in lot (E x lot B) in the last few years. So clearly this was win-win for all.



And our participants were: Trudy (not Tony) correcting from the last report) Buck. Also correcting Trudy's Husband, his is Norm Marchment not Parchment. So Trudy Buck, Perry Cockreham, Shannon Crawford, Gary and Treva Forister, Jim & Karen Grosswiler, Bill Horne, our senior man, Linda May, Dick & Barbie McKay, Don & Gloria McDermott, Bill Myers, Loyd Kenworthy, Doug & Marcine Rankin, Tom & Helena Reidt, Ted & Gwynne Simmons, Walt Tyler, Arvid & Sue von Nordenflycht.

Our next luncheon there is scheduled for April 9th. Yours Truly, *Arvid*



S.E. Florida Treasure Coast Sunbirds RUPA Luncheon

Back to good Ole Shrimper's for another GR8 Luncheon in March. Although rather small, we had a very lively and talkative group with a variety of different conversations that took place. Among the Subjects that were discussed were: BHO, Medical issues and challenges, Pass Travel and United's Web Site, United's Mgt. 🤖 and the direction that UAL has been taking since the Continental merger along with the health (or lack thereof) of some of our members. Jim Dowd missed the meeting due to Dr's. App't., George Kane is in the hospital being treated for lung Cancer, Dick Starita is having a very difficult time walking as is the case with Del Gartner, Jack Boisseau is 50% on the way back from a shoulder replacement, Dave Hoyt is recovering from a hip (or knee) replacement.....and the list goes on.

AND 'they' (whoever in h--- 'they' are) call these the Golden Years, yeah, right 🤖???? Sure they are!!!! 🤖 In spite of the obstacles and challenges, a GR8 time was had by all. We had terrific/ideal WX (Sunny, lite breeze and a temperature well into the 80's) - not bad for early in March, especially when you read and hear about what is going on (WX wise) up North. I'm sure glad that Ponce De Leon found this place.....good job Ponce!!! 🤖

Those who attended were: Dave Hoyt, Bill Cole, Ted Osinski, Jack Boisseau, Dick Baese and myself, Bob Langevin.

Our Stuart RUPA Luncheon in April will be on the 14th at Shrimper's once again and hope that if you happen to be in the SE FL area around that time.....that you will join us, we'd love to have you. That's about all for now, but hope that our Northern friends are looking forward to the EARLY arrival of Spring...God knows, you certainly deserve it.....but there is ONE (1) saving grace that we can all be thankful for.....we don't have to work for United's new Management. Hallelujah!!!! 🤖

Sincerely with Best Regards, *Bob Langevin*

Denver Good Ol' Boys RUPA Luncheon

The February meeting of The Denver Good Ole Boys was held February 17 at The Tin Cup Bar and Grill, 50 S Peoria Street, Aurora, CO. This was a first time meeting at this location. Members began arriving at 11:00 for social hour. Lunch was served at 12:00.

As usual the meeting began with some humor. Members discussed the celebration of life memorials for Bill Fife and Jack Wilhite. Those who had been able to attend reported both were moving and uplifting services. In a previous issue we noted the high regard those who knew and flew with Bill held for him. At this meeting several who had flown with Jack likewise spoke of the high regard they had for him.

Next a guest speaker, 12 year Foreign Service Officer Les Johnston, addressed the group. He briefly covered his background and the process for becoming a member of The Foreign Service, the diplomatic corps which makes up the U.S. State Department. He stated that once one is qualified as a diplomat, one spends alternating tours of duty on foreign assignments and in the U.S. He said one attends a 10 month language school before being posted to an assignment requiring a language other than English. Les said he is fluent in French and Croatian and proficient in Spanish and Latvian. Next he described briefly the day to day workings of an embassy and its relationship with the various Washington "Desks"—the personnel in Washington who coordinate with the diplomats in the foreign countries. Currently Les is on assignment to the U.S. Embassy in Kiev, Ukraine. As soon as his home leave is over, he will return to that assignment. Members asked many questions on various topics related to the talk which resulted in a wide ranging discussion.

Next, after discussing the issue, members present decided by a high margin to continue using The Tin Cup for future meetings.

Attending were; Ted Wilkinson, Ross Wilhite, Tom Johnston, Les Johnston, Rick Bebee, Bill Hanson, Al Dorsey, Stanley Boehm, Bob Crowell, Ed Cutler, David Horwitz, Mack Connelley, Russ Ward, Denis Getman, Dick Kobayashi, Bob Dietrich, Ron Juhl and Joe Collard. Your co scribe, *Tom*

Southwest Florida RUPA Luncheon

Our 9 March 2015 luncheon was once again held at the Fort Myers, FL Olive Garden restaurant. Our new servers were Alexis and Gabby who caught on to our routine very quickly and even helped with taking the group photos. The weather was perfect with clear sunny skies, mild breeze and a few afternoon clouds. Could not have been better! It was our last luncheon for the season with the next one scheduled for November. Traffic delayed the arrival of a few attendees but on final count there were 18 – a pretty good turnout and more than the last few luncheons.

Gary Crittenden brought two guests - Bill and Margie Burg. They are members of Retired United Airlines Employees Association (RUAEA), also called the “SW Pelican Drop-Ins” who meet at Fletchers restaurant in Cape Coral, FL on the first Monday of every month. Bill worked in computers with United and Margie worked in Accounting. They added another dimension to the table conversation as did another guest Wallis Alves, the son of Wallis Alves (yes that’s right – same names – father and son). The younger Wallis works for Fidelity Investments in Durham, NC in the IT world and had some very interesting observations on how the internet is changing dramatically.

Three photos were taken in order to capture all our attendees (* denotes guest).



In Photo One (left to right): Wallis Alves (the younger), Wallis Alves (the father – standing behind the younger), Jim Sutton*, RUAEA guests Bill and Margie Burg*, Gary Crittenden, Harry Long*, Dot Prose and Janice Crittenden (seated front right).

In Photo Two (left to right): Marvis and Harry Long*, Jim Downing, Harvey Hallberg, Faith Osborn* and Mamie Thompson*.

In Photo Three (left to right): Gene Chapman*, Rip Curtiss, Jim Howard, and Don Kincaid.



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Attendees were reminded of the upcoming RUPA Day at Sun-n-Fun Fly-in at Lakeland, FL. The date to mark on the calendar is Thursday 23 April 2015. The fly-in runs from 21-26 April 2015. Another reminder is in the March *RUPANEWS*. Everyone is invited.

Gary Crittenden asked for a show of hands of anyone who would be interested in paying their RUPA dues by credit card using the RUPA web site. Half of the members present thought it was a good idea.

Dot Prose mentioned the work by RUPA member Larry Jobe from the San Francisco area who is President of the Flying Tigers Historical Organization and its efforts to build a museum in Guilin, China which will be

dedicated on 28 March 2015 and honoring GEN Chennault and his American Volunteer Group during the early days of World War II. They also are negotiating to buy a DC-3/C-47 to replicate a Hump Flight from India to Kunming, China and then to Guilin for display at the new museum.

Everyone seemed to be engaged in conversation which even extended beyond when the bills were paid so all must have had a good time!

Many attendees will be returning up North for the summer so the next luncheon will be on 9 November 2015, same time, same place. All welcome! Yours truly, *Gary Crittenden and Dot Prose*

San Francisco East Bay RUPARIANS Luncheon

Our lunch group met on our usual second Wednesday at 1:00 PM at the Primavera Ristorante in San Ramon, CA. This was our smallest group in a year, but had plenty of war stories as four old Navy guys picked on our rookie Steve. Steve retired early (not quite 65) so he is just a kid.

Bernard and Roger swapped a few stories of their South American flying from the old days. Bernard is our latest traveler - Paris (full fares), crowded skies.



Left to Right: Steve Kesinger, Roger Ehm, B. S. Smith, Jim Trierweiler and Neil Dahlstrom.

Our peerless leader Don Merucci, abandoned us this month, so I'm doing my best here.

Our next meeting, April 8, 2nd Wednesday, 1:00 PM, Primavera Ristorante, San Ramon. Truly Yours, *Neil*

2015 RUPA DAY at SUN-'n-FUN FLY-IN

Website: www.sun-n-fun.org

This year the Sun-'n-Fun Fly In at Lakeland, FL will be held from 21-26 April 2015. This will be the 41st annual Fly-In at Lakeland.

We have our traditional RUPA DAY get together on Thursday 23 April at the OX5 Club House (on the airfield next to the QB's Club House). The OX5 club has once again extended their hospitality for use of their facility (coffee, restrooms, snacks, lunch).

A group photo will be taken in front of the club house at 1:00 pm for the *RUPANEWS*.

Everyone is welcome. See you there!

Gary Crittenden SWFL RUPA and Dot Prose
(prose@prose.com)



The Big Island Stargazers RUPA Luncheon

It was a picture-perfect day as we gathered at The Fish Hopper for our February meeting. The town was crowded with snow birds and Chicago RUPA member Dick Kuhn and his wife, Maribeth (ret'd ORDSW) were enjoying our warm weather and joined us for lunch.

Dick talked about life in the Windy (and snowy) City while the rest of us appreciated watching the ice chill our tropical libations. Talk centered on our favorite subject of pass travel and the need to buy tickets if you want to get anywhere on time. And, of course, there were a few stories about "There I was at 35,000 feet..." We received word from Rich and Maureen Hurst that they are new homeowners on the island and will be joining us during the winter season.

Gerry and Joan Baldwin are on the mainland for medical care, but we anticipate their return in the near future. Al and Linde Rimkus had a good excuse for not being able to attend—they were celebrating Mardi Gras in Brazil.

Sam Wilson has been diligent in driving all the way from Hilo to attend our monthly lunches, so the group decided to give him a month off and **our April meeting will be held on April 23rd at 1130 (the fourth Thursday) in Hilo at the Hilo Bay Cafe.**

The Fish Hopper continues to amaze us with an abundance of complimentary pupus and excellent service. We always have room for guests, so please join us for some fun in the sun.



Photo Caption L to R: Sam Wilson, Don Di edrick, Lauren & Bill Cochran, Maribeth & Dick Kuhn, Bob & Linda Michael, Dave Carlson, Linda Morley-Wells, Grace & Dick Slinn.
(Not pictured: Beth Raphael & Walt Wells) *Linda Morley-Wells*, Scribe

The San Francisco Bay-Siders Luncheon

Harry's Hofbrau in Redwood City could have passed for an Irish Pub when the SFO Bay-Siders' arrived for our March luncheon. Shamrocks, Leprechauns, and all things Irish for St. Patrick's Day put us in the mood for the corned beef and cabbage offered on the menu.

Although we were a smaller group than usual, the conversations were as lively as ever. I had not listed myself for an SA pass on United since the merger and had to be shown how to do it. Bruce McLeod was my main instructor ably assisted by Gerry Delisle and Larry Wright. I'm going on the Panama Canal Cruise and had to figure out how to fly home to SFO from SAN. By George, I think I've got it. It wasn't as hard as I thought it would be, but I sure miss my old DOH seniority date.

We all signed a "get well" card for Capt. Floyd Alfson who has been hospitalized, and we continue to send good wishes for his speedy recovery!

In attendance were: Bob & Roz Clinton, Gerry Delisle, Rich & Cyndi Erhardt, Dave Forbes, Barry Hamley, Dick & Jeri Johnson, Gaylan Kessel, Bruce McLeod, Jan McNaughton, George Mendonca, Walt & Mary Ramseur, Cleve & Rose Spring, Gene & Carol Walter, Larry & Pat Wright.

Our Luncheons are always on the second Tuesday of the month 11:00am at Harry's Hofbrau, 1909 El Camino Real, Redwood City, CA. Cheers, *Cleve*

The Ham Wilson S.E. Florida Gold Coast RUPA Luncheon

Today, March 12, was a beautiful sun Drenched day in South East Florida with 18 members attending our luncheon. The usual sea stories were shared at the long table, with 9 on each side swapping stories with those seated close by.

Attending today were Lyn Wordell, Denny Keast, Les Eaton, Ed Wheeler, Jim Good, Bill Garrett(2 of our Naples area attendees), Bob Engleman, Rick Valdes, Raul E. Dominguez, Art Jackson, Ham Oldham, Wes Fetzer, Burt Olson (from northern Florida), Murray Warren, Stan Baumwald (ret. NWA pilot), Jerry Bradley Mike Warde, and yours truly Ned Rankin.

Jerry Bradley, read a letter from one of Ham Wilson's children thanking our group for the memories of her father, and her copy of the RUPA magazine from several months ago with the write up in it. As everyone knows, Ham cut a wide swath!!!!!! *Ned*

Letter of appreciation from Ham Wilson's Daughter

Ed, I just wanted to thank you again for the wonderful article about Dad in the RUPA magazine, and for getting all of us kids copies of the magazine. Most of all I want to thank you and all the guys for naming the local RUPA luncheon after Dad. He may not have said it, as he never wanted any memorial, but he would have been so proud and honored that he is remembered in this way. He so enjoyed going to the RUPA luncheons each month, seeing everyone, and talking about flying.

I can't adequately express how much this honor of him means to me and my brothers and sister. You have given us the best gift. We know that he will always be remembered for what he loved doing, flying.

I miss him so much. I still expect to see him walk through the door, sit down in his recliner and ask me for an ice tea.

Will you thank all the members of "The Ham Wilson S.E. Florida Gold Coast RUPA Luncheon" for us. Will you also thank Captain Oldham for giving his copy of the *RUPANEWS* to us and thank you for your copy. Hope you and your family are well. *Marlene*

Seattle Gooney Birds RUPA Luncheon

The Seattle Gooney Birds had a good time, judging from the lively conversations around the table. We gave special recognition to Bill Records and Ted Woods who we haven't seen for a while.

After a fine lunch we discussed Fred Sindlinger's battle with pneumonia, from which he is reported to be improving. Chuck Westphal was absent because it was reported that he fell off a ladder and suffered a broken bone. Hope to see you next time, Chuck, and we wish you a speedy recovery. We hope to see you back among us soon, Fred.

Ted Woods launched right into a bunch of good jokes, followed by Herb Marks and the Host while Bud Granley was taking group photos for the *RUPANEWS*.



In attendance: Howard Holder, Gerry Pryde, Bill Brett, Jim Barber, Bill Records, Bill Stoneman, Neil Johnson, Ted Woods, Bud Granley, Dave Carver, Herb Marks, Al Haynes, Jack Brown and Al Black.

Dana Point RUPA Luncheon

Great day in the harbor. Once again it was severe clear and a pleasant 75 degrees under the blue umbrellas. Parking was a little tight with Whale Festival on this week. The big Grey Whales are passing on their way to Alaska, so most of the parking was for the boats taking tourist out to view the whales. However, drinks and food service was quick and we quickly got down to visiting.

On the deck were: Al Pregler, Bill Rollns, Bill Stewart, Bob Brockmeier, Bob McGowan, Bruce Dunkle, Butch Tremble, Carlos Bernhard, Joe Udovch, John Arp and his wife Cherly, Park Ames, Ron Dye, Ted Simmons, Walt Bohl. In addition we had some of the LAX group which included Dick McKay, Loyd Kenworthy, and Bill Horn, and on top of the list was Bob Gillette who came in from Stone Lake WI.

Bob said he was going to stick around and have his wife Judy join him. Maybe make a meeting next month?

Bill Horn said he is now 97 and enjoying life. He looked great in his white turtle neck shirt... ready to go a round of golf! He did mention that he flew the Boeing 247 way back in 1942. He found that the 247 was faster than fighters of that day. This aircraft was considered the "first modern airliner" by Commercial Aircraft director.

Some talk of the PBGC raising our monthly payments. The date to see if this is true is April 1. All fool's day! We shall see.

Several of us stayed on after lunch for a few quick jokes led by Bruce.

Here are two pictures of pilots that our group has not seen for a long time. Bob McGowan from Villa Park, CA pictured with Bill Horn from Rolling Hills, CA, and Bob Gillette from Stone Lake, WI. Cheers *Ted*



San Francisco North Bay RUPA Luncheon

The usual group of members, spouses, and friends arrived at the Petaluma Sheraton on March 4 for lunch and plenty of conversations. The business meeting was clicked to order with a couple of clicks on Bob's trusty clicker. The possibility of paying our RUPA dues with Pay Pal or a credit card was brought up for discussion but no decision was made as to pursue the idea or let it die. A couple of other items and then it was time to eat.



Attending: Jules Lepkowsky, Ken & Shirley Corbin, Wayne Heyerley, Gardner "Bones" Bride, Bruce Milan, Don Madson, George Hise, Clyde Wilson, Dick Hanna, Jim Mansfield, John & Carol Reed, Bill McGuire, Deke & Merle Holman, Norm DeBack, Sam & Mickie Orchard, Bob & Doris Donegan and me, Bill Greene

The Columbia River Geezer's RUPA Luncheon

Spring is in the air here in the Great North West and today was a beautiful Oregon day. A small gathering of RUPA members identified as "The Columbia River Geezers" took place on Wednesday March 11th, 2015 at CPK's - The California Pizza Kitchen in Clackamas OR. Tony P. the only "known" Italian in the group had pizza, [wouldn't you know it?],...the rest of us had salads.



L to R: Dick Ionata, Tony Passannante, Doug Howden, standing, Mac MC Croskey, Fred Krieg and Ron Blash. Hoping to see more Geezers in April, second Wednesday, same time and place. *Ron Blash*

San Diego North County RUPA Luncheon

Another great Tuesday for the SAN gang. Bill and Evelyn Pauling, Paul Whitby, Bob Bowman, Colin Winfield, and me.

More new stories were traded, and the laughs were many. I call Colin the "spark plug" of the group, because he is younger than most of us, and the most recent retiree. He has new stories, and helps some of us to recall our stories that may not have been told before. We all like airplane based tales, but we are not tied to those. The subjects are many and varied. Brad and Rhoda Green are on their Panama Canal cruise, and as for Mark Mayer, I don't know. That's why there is no picture this month.

Although the St. Marc restaurant has been good, but it would shorten the trip from home to the eatery if we changed restaurants. The Lawrence Welk restaurant was discussed, and we have decided to switch over to Welk's for the May meeting, second Tuesday as usual. Therefore, that will give a month for anyone to decide if they want to meet us there. All present today were willing to change. I have been told that the menus and prices are on a par with St. Marc. Y'all come, heah?

I will take a ride to Welk's, check it out, and request a menu so I can tell you what to expect on your first visit.

Cleve, you and the entire *RUPANEWS* group who work so hard do a masterful job, and we love ya!

Fraternally yours, *Bob Harrell*

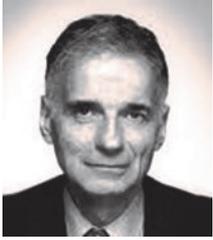
Seniors & Computers

As we Silver Surfers know, sometimes we have trouble with our computers. Yesterday, I had a problem, so I called Georgie, the 11 year old next door, whose bedroom looks like Mission Control, and asked him to come over. Georgie clicked a couple of buttons and solved the problem.

As he was walking away, I called after him, 'So, what was wrong?' He replied, 'It was an ID ten T error.' I didn't want to appear stupid, but nonetheless inquired, 'An, ID ten T error? What's that? In case I need to fix it again.' Georgie grinned. 'Haven't you ever heard of an ID ten T error before?' 'No,' I replied. 'Write it down,' he said, 'and I think you'll figure it out.' So I wrote down: ID10T.

I used to like Georgie, the little S---head.

Ralph Nader: Follow-up Letter to Jeff Smisek



Dear Mr. Smisek, I have not yet heard from you regarding my letter of February 13, 2015, but your employees who have read it are coming forward to describe their deteriorating working conditions. These are loyal UAL workers on the front lines, dealing with your aircraft and your passengers, some with tenures of 20 to 30 years.

Given what the workers have given up over the years during the low point of UAL's economic travails, it is disturbing, to say the least, for them to be saying these are the worst labor conditions they can remember. They are not only noting the demotion of many full-time workers to part-time, but also bringing to attention the outsourcing of jobs to vendors that hire low-paid and low-skilled employees, at a time of record-breaking profits for UAL. The workers are saying that they "just do not have the necessary manpower to provide our customers the service that they are paying for and deserve."

More than customer inconvenience, their remarks raise concerns about safety risks. One comment reads: "It truly hurts that the company that I have invested a good part of my life in, is being demolished and stripped of its goodness before my very eyes. Just last night, I survived what was one of the worst five days of my career...pouring rain, extra flights, a cancellation and not enough help."

A common theme of their comments referred to their understanding that in your testimony with Mr. Tilton before Congress urging government approval of the merger, you gave the reassuring impression that front line employees would not be adversely affected, outsourced or replaced. In reading the transcript of the House Committee on the Judiciary's hearing on June 16, 2010, it is not difficult to see how your front line employees received that impression.

On April 25, 2014, the Chicago Tribune reported that you received total compensation of \$8.1 million in 2013. Your 2013 compensation package included a salary of \$975,000, stock awards of \$5.7 million, a performance-based bonus of \$1.2 million, and perks valued at \$168,540. One might expect that from such rewards would come wise management over both the tangibles and the intangibles of labor/passenger/management relations. Yet you proceeded to devote \$320 million in 2014, with more buybacks promised, not to alleviating understaffing or outsourcing of jobs, not to denumbing your passengers' knees, but to buyback UAL stock. The singular unproductive purpose of this move is often to increase executive compensation packages. Many of your employees think that such waste of liquid capital, at the expense of worker and customer satisfaction, is shortsighted. They have emphasized their concerns through a petition, presently in circulation, to have you replaced. So far, over 10,000 people have signed on. Though it should not be, this is an unusual initiative by those who know best how you have managed worst.

At the 2010 Judiciary Committee hearing, you and Mr. Tilton praised Southwest Airlines. Why don't you compete with Southwest's labor practices (no layoffs since its founding by the inimitable Herb Kelleher) and its passenger policies (no normal baggage fees and no penalties for changing reservations)? Instead of a competitive race to the top, you seem to be engaging in a race to the bottom, mimicking the remaining few major carriers now comprising a tighter oligopoly than before de-regulation. A customer paying up to \$200 to change a reservation might note that such a sum could have bought them an entire one-way ticket on Southwest to a number of destinations. Something is out of sync here!

May I have your responses to the above worker/passenger treatments within the next two weeks, before I join with others to request a congressional hearing or inquiry into these matters?

How would you react if the Board of Directors or your shareholders, wishing to reduce your "high cost structure," were to put out a tender for bilingual airline executives with proven successful records in India and China to bid for your job and other top executive positions at a fraction of what you are all paid? If you're outsourcing the jobs of your workers, why not outsource your top jobs, while still giving you a chance to match your Indian and Chinese competitors? This would more amply address what your Jon Roitman has called UAL's policy of "market-competitive sourcing" in a missive to UAL workers this past February 12, 2015.

It seems like worker and passenger interests are converging.

Sincerely, Ralph Nader

United Warns Pilots after Cockpit Errors



Top officials at United Airlines have sent a dramatic safety warning to pilots following several serious incidents caused by errors in the cockpit. The bulletin, issued January 9 under the heading “significant safety concerns,” said it was prompted by four separate “safety events and near misses” in previous weeks, including one in which pilots had to execute an emergency pull-up maneuver to avoid crashing into the ground. Another flight cited in the document landed with less than the mandatory-minimum fuel reserves. The two-page memo, signed by United Continental Holdings

Inc.’s senior vice president of flight operations and its top safety official, didn’t provide specifics about the close calls, which hadn’t attracted public attention. But the unusually blunt language focused on the dangers of lax discipline and poor cockpit communication and coordination.

A spokesman for United Continental, created by the 2010 merger of United and Continental, said the company regularly communicates safety findings to cockpit crews, taking a proactive approach that “is direct, clear and open with our pilots.” Such a stance allows the company, now the nation’s second-largest by traffic, “to adjust our actions when we see some of these potential issues,” he said. Officials at the Chicago-based company declined to elaborate.

The last fatal accident for United occurred in 1991 and for Continental in 1987. Hijackers crashed two United jets in the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Both carriers are widely regarded as early champions of air-safety programs.

The bulletin’s substance and urgent tone are markedly different from typical companywide safety communications and updates from management, a number of current United pilots said. Pilots periodically receive summaries and descriptions of lessons learned from previous incidents. But those updates generally deal with events that occurred many months earlier, and they tend to focus on more-mundane slip-ups. In this case, the bulletin started off by saying recent incidents “have dictated that we communicate with all of you immediately.”

The document also highlights broader safety concerns stemming from demographic trends and personnel shifts affecting pilots, including retirements, new hires and pilots transferring to different aircraft types. Such change, according to the bulletin, “introduces significant risk to the operation.”

The company plans to hire about 700 pilots this year, averaging more than 50 a month—a challenging number to integrate into a workforce that already has more than 12,000 pilots. A minority of new hires go directly to become co-pilots on Boeing 757s flying internationally, which are considered particularly demanding routes.

The alert said “we know this is a brutally honest message,” noting that “the common thread with all of these [incidents] is that they were preventable.” It called for renewed attention to long-standing cockpit-management principles under which “every pilot must be willing to speak up if safety is in question” and “must also accept the input of their fellow crew members.”

A spokesman for United Continental said the company regularly communicates safety findings to cockpit crews, taking a proactive approach that is direct, clear and open with our pilots. A spokesman for United Continental said the company regularly communicates safety findings to cockpit crews, taking a proactive approach that “is direct, clear and open with our pilots.” Stressing the importance of conducting detailed pre-departure briefings and strictly complying with rules to keep planes from landing too fast or too far down runways.

One United pilot said the fuel incident highlighted in the bulletin occurred after the crew of a domestic flight headed for Los Angeles asked air-traffic controllers for a revised route, ran into stiff headwinds and then failed to properly monitor fuel consumption, divert to another airport or declare an emergency to get an expedited landing.

According to another pilot, concern has been building inside the carrier about potentially poor teamwork when some veteran pilots are paired with new first officers who may be reluctant to assert themselves. “The company wouldn’t have put out this memo if things weren’t bad,” the pilot said.

In response to the bulletin, union leaders for United’s Chicago-based pilots earlier this month said in a memo that the company’s concerns “are very valid.” But the union also complained of “shorter and less robust training,” degradation of respect for “captain’s authority,” “pilot pushing”—or pressuring them to skirt rules—and having oversight of flight operations by labor relations instead of a flight-operations executive.

United’s pilots agreed to a combined labor contract in late 2012, and a merged seniority list was adopted in 2013—big achievements in joining the two groups after the merger. But there are still cultural differences and friction between the two sides, some pilots contend.

In a recent update to pilots, Capt. Bob Sisk, chairman of the central air safety committee for United’s pilot union, listed a number of common threads linking serious incidents over the past two years, including poor teamwork. “Typically, the pilots didn’t brief together as a crew,” he said, while “the captain was generally a highly experienced pilot” paired with a co-pilot “who was a new hire, a returning furloughed, or was relatively new” on the aircraft type. Capt. Sisk also said a possible contributing factor in many of the incidents, “and an area of deep concern,” is that numerous pilots have reported significant discrepancies between how standard operating procedures “are presented in training and how they are implemented on the line.” *By Andy Pasztor at andy.pasztor@wsj.com and Susan Carey at susan.carey@wsj.com*

Council 12 Safety Update



Dear Fellow Council 12 pilots,

By now you have seen letters from both Senior Vice President of Flight Operations Howard Attarian and ORD Chief Pilot Cal Janacek stating their concerns and suggesting that we, as pilots need to be safer and avoid the types of situations that are unfortunately becoming more prevalent at this company. Of course, we have all also seen recent media reports highlighting United’s safety problems.

Management stated that they want to be “brutally honest” with us. We also feel it is important to be brutally honest with you.

Safety starts with a strong positive safety culture, characterized by learning from mistakes, investigating facts, and addressing reporting and prevention in a non-punitive manner. This culture is currently lacking at United Airlines. This is the hard truth that we all face every day when we come to work.

The hard truth is that management is destroying the type of positive safety culture, which was once alive at this company. Management is embracing a culture in which economics and schedule is placed above safety, the science of flight, and the law.

Safety has one definition. Contributing factors to safety such as training level, a pilot’s personal level of experience, recent experiences in similar situations, proficiency, crew level of experience, and fatigue level are but a few.

A good safety culture embraces and supports the professionalism and experience of our pilots. It supports our pilots by providing them with robust training and a system that promotes the highest safety standard. It supports our pilots by “trusting them implicitly” just like VP Safety Mike Quiello has stated. What we actually experience on the line belies management’s public statements.

We once had a culture that empowered crews to confidently use these personal and subjective tools combined with robust training and positive support to make operational decisions, absent of impunity. In today’s culture, management uses safety as a weapon against us. We are threatened and intimidated when we make good sound judgments but strongly reminded in blunt communications to be safer.

We have seen a pattern of behavior from the ORD Chief Pilot Office. This pattern of behavior includes threats, intimidation, and outright bullying. We are also seeing an alarming increase of punishment (real and

perceived) using the threat of re-training to “get a pilot’s mind right.”

Management brags about the safety culture and reminds us all of this in the recent communications. Unfortunately, management’s recent message is duplicitous and even offensive in nature based on their behavior.

Here is a list of some recent events and quotes, corroborated from individuals (pilots and others) involved in these events:

Recently, after showing up on the flight deck to insert himself into an operational issue involving crew rest seats, the ORD Chief Pilot told a Captain, “don’t throw that safety shit at me” as the pilot sat in the cockpit and tried to explain the issue at hand.

Recently, after a Captain determined that they were unable to safely operate an aircraft with a deferred APU (on an international flight covering hostile terrain with multiple and compounding deferrals). The pilot asked for the deferred APU to be repaired for the flight. The ORD Chief Pilot called this pilot at their hotel and aggressively counseled them for not operating the flight after they had raised safety concerns. After the pilot explained that the whole crew was in agreement on the decision to not operate the aircraft unless the APU was repaired, the Chief Pilot was quoted as saying, “You should have used CLR to get the other pilots to change their position.”

Recently, a crew had a maintenance issue with an aircraft shortly after departure. The crew ran the appropriate checklist and spoke to TOMC and dispatch but they were unable to get the aircraft into the state that the checklist was supposed to get to. After confirming the checklist multiple times and determining that the problem was of an unknown and unsolvable nature, the crew elected to divert to a closer airport and subsequently continued the flight in another aircraft. They all agreed that a diversion was necessary. After the crew landed a mechanic and a management representative met the pilots and supported and complimented them on their decision to divert. The ORD Chief Pilot, despite objections from our safety committee, training committee, and MEC and LEC officers, sent this crew to remedial training. They were sent to training despite the fact that the FAR’s required them to terminate the flight early based on a malfunction of an unknown nature of a critical system. Even though the crew was dealt a bleed problem, the training curriculum that the Chief Pilot sent to the training center was a full LOFT, with many different scenarios that were not related in any way to the crew’s problem. The “training” curriculum, which was several pages in length, was reminiscent of an “appendix H” type rating check-ride. Fortunately, the instructors figured out that this was a witch-hunt, designed to intimidate and coerce this crew to succumb to economic and management pressure to complete the mission without interruption in the future. When the instructors learned of the nature of the crew’s problem on that particular flight, they produced the actual bleed line from that aircraft! The bleed line was split, wide open, which of course allowed super-heated air to escape, presenting a fire hazard. The crew’s decision to divert avoided what could have been a very bad situation for the safety of the flight. In the end, the instructors and the FAA were complimentary of the crew’s performance and solid decision-making.

Recently, a Captain, who had less than 100 hours on the aircraft, objected to being ordered to fly as a relief First Officer, claiming that he didn’t feel safe flying in a seat that he wasn’t specifically trained for. The responses from the CPO were “your safety concern is not legitimate and I reject it,” and “you are putting your head in a noose if you don’t take the flight.” [This is exactly what happened to a PEOPLExpress friend of mine after they were taken over by CAL. He still refused and the scab chief pilot suspended him. No union at that time. Same thing happened when CAL took over EAL. Now that UAL has been taken over by CAL, turning it into ConU, the same shit is happening.]

Recently, an Assistant Chief Pilot bullied a crew off of a flight during a pre-departure event that involved a passenger who was being deported. The passenger had been held in isolation the previous evening in the Kenosha County jail as a precaution as there was concern about exposure to the Ebola virus. The Captain was in the process of obtaining all possible information, as there was tremendous (and understandable) concern and angst from the flight attendants. Some of the flight attendants, who would have had direct contact with the passenger, were actually in tears as management was telling them that if they didn’t take the

flight they would lose their jobs. The Captain was in the process of getting all available information to make a decision that would be in the best interest of the passengers and crew when the Assistant Chief Pilot, who was on the aircraft, gave them an ultimatum. The ultimatum was “go now, or get your belongings and leave the aircraft.” The crew was presented with the decision to rush and fly the flight with the situation unresolved or to leave the aircraft. They choose to leave the aircraft. The crew subsequently offered multiple times to take the flight after the issue was resolved and all crew members were comfortable with the situation, but were rejected by management. Absent interference from the CPO, this proactive Captain would have likely resolved the issue successfully.

Recently a crew had an issue with crew rest seats (which was resolved prior to the cabin door being closed). Unbeknownst to the pilot or flight attendant crew, an Assistant Chief Pilot ordered the jetway pulled back up to the aircraft, burst into the cabin with no coordination, (or even making sure the emergency slide was disarmed as it wasn't) and inserted themselves into this issue. Ultimately, the event distracted the crew to the point where a critical checklist was not properly run.

What do all of these events have in common?

Pilot pushing, intimidation, and a lack of regard by management for a positive safety culture.

The ORD Chief Pilot, and other managers will argue that they support “genuine” safety concerns. The key word in this sentence is “genuine.” This is the cop-out that they use when they (the managers who fly hand picked trips and fly less in a year than most of us fly in a month) decide to insert themselves into YOUR decision-making processes. Your safety issues are only legitimate to them if it doesn't interfere with economics. In the bathroom stalls at our training center, there used to be safety posters and propaganda. One that sticks out in our minds stated, “If you think safety is expensive, try an accident!”

How do you think the passengers would react if they heard a Chief Pilot use the words “don't throw that safety shit at me” while in the cockpit counseling a crew?

The recent safety deviations that management has based their communications to us are real. They are a warning sign. Hopefully management will see it as a warning that the culture is broken. We need to see it as a warning to not succumb to threats and intimidation.

While we, as pilots, are always responsible for what happens on the aircraft, we are only one link in a chain. That chain should be anchored to a culture that supports safety, air science, and law over economic pressures. That chain should also be solidly anchored by robust training. This is something that is also lacking as the curriculums are being shortened with more (less expensive) computer-based training and less and less (expensive) instructor based training. There is also less and less CLR training and general safety training.

Remember the training, which was at least a full day, if not more, covering evacuation and human factors during emergencies? Remember when we used to study, as a learning tool, past accidents and incidents? Remember when we used to train, side by side, with the flight attendants as part of our safety training? This training is now condensed into a couple of hours and a few short, sterile videos. We are no longer trained on evacuation commands and such, but briefly taught how to open and close the doors. We are expected to teach ourselves how to operate and fly the airplanes - economics once again trumping safety.

As pilots, we ask for only one thing from our management; the positive support and tools we need to do our jobs. We used to be told that our decisions, no matter how conservative, would be supported if we acted in good faith. This is no longer the case. We look forward to the day where a safety culture returns to this property where once again management takes a positive approach to safety. Hopefully, it doesn't take an accident to get us there.

Please continue to report safety issues and pilot pushing via the FSAP program and to us. We will continue to hold the line on your behalf!

Fraternally,
Eric, Carlos, and John

United Pilots Say Airline Hasn't Addressed Their Safety Concerns

By Ted Reed

NEW YORK (TheStreet) -- As United and its pilots continue to dispute the integrity of aspects of the airline's safety practices, the leader of United's pilots said the carrier isn't acting to correct safety problems the union brought to the airline's attention in January.

In a letter to members dated March 12, Jay Heppner, chairman of the United chapter of the Air Line Pilots Association, said pilot leaders met with airline officials on Jan. 28, and "reiterated our long-standing safety concerns that we believe are directly attributable to the company's actions or inactions. "We gave them a two-page list of these concerns," Heppner wrote. "In the last 42 days, the company has yet to make a commitment to a single item we highlighted in that meeting." A copy of the letter was obtained by TheStreet.

Heppner said the items were broken down into categories involving training, flight planning, captain's authority to refuse to operate certain aircraft, standard operating procedures, crew resource management and irregular operations reports filed under the Flight Safety Awareness Program, a safety reporting system.

United responded on March 15, in a prepared statement, saying: "At United safety is our top priority and we will continue to work directly with our pilots to ensure the safety of all of our employees and passengers. Further, we remain committed to collaborative and effective joint efforts with our union leadership as our safety standards and programs evolve," the carrier said.

The safety dispute surfaced in January, when two top safety officials at United formally warned pilots in a memo after four recent "safety events and near misses." Those events included a pull-up maneuver because an aircraft was too close to the ground and a plane that arrived at its destination with too little fuel.

The letter referred to a principle of aviation safety, that "every pilot must be willing to speak up if safety is in question (and) every pilot must accept the input of their fellow crew members on the flight deck." The authors acknowledged "this is a brutally honest message," but noted: "Bottom line: United is at a critical juncture in its history.

"We are currently seeing a lot of movement in the pilot group, such as retirements, seat movements and new hires that -- while welcome -- introduce significant risk to the operation," the letter said.

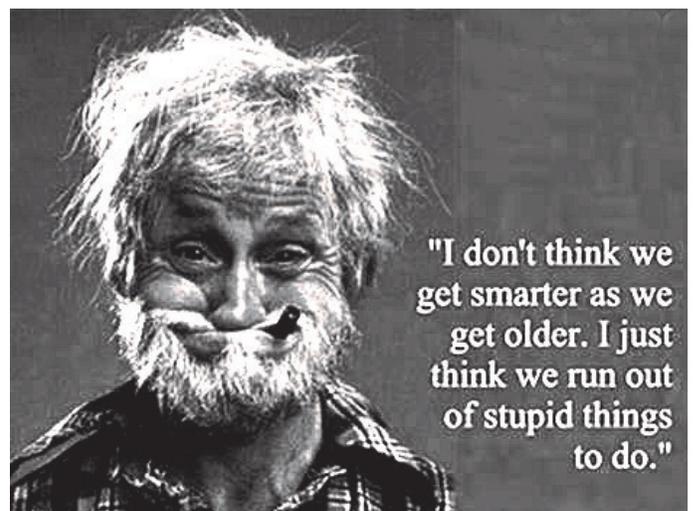
The Jan. 28 meeting came in response to the memo, Heppner wrote in his March 12 letter.

"United pilots are among the safest and most professional in the world (but) some comments in the press would have you believe that we need admonishment," Heppner wrote. "We would instead like to turn the spotlight on our company's desire to cut costs system-wide. This plan has been implemented without regard to its effect on the quality of our training or on customer service and satisfaction." In particular, Heppner noted that the only two people who should be involved in a decision not to fly an aircraft on a given flight are the captain and the flight dispatcher.

"While we have made progress in this area at many bases, too many chief pilots or their representatives still insist on inserting themselves in the process," he wrote.

"Captains must not fear repercussions for actions related to safety, and flight operations must understand that a refusal comes after the risk assessment has been completed by the person responsible for doing so, the captain."

A United pilot who asked not to be named said the concern reflects cases where chief pilots "are pressuring, harassing, intimidating, coercing, threatening captains into taking aircraft the captain deems unsafe." The pilot referred to the practice as "pilot pushing," which occurs "when they put schedule and economics" ahead of safety



United Airlines expects to use its cash pile to buy aircraft this year



(Reuters) - United Airlines expects to dip into its cash pile to help fund the purchase of new aircraft this year and rely less on debt financing, reflecting the U.S. airline industry's dramatic financial turnaround, the carrier's Chief Financial Officer John Rainey said in an interview. United, which had about \$4.4 billion cash on hand at the end of last year, may use some of that to pay for about half of the cost of individual planes, while borrowing the rest, he said. There are 25 planes entering its fleet in 2015 that it has yet to finance. Another 22 already have financing in place.

While cash-rich companies have been under pressure from shareholders to increase dividends, United, the fourth-largest U.S. carrier by market capitalization, has said it is focused on finishing a \$1 billion share buyback program and that there are no current plans to restore a dividend. It last made a payout to shareholders in 2008.

How to efficiently use excess cash is a relatively new issue for U.S. airlines. Major U.S. carriers grappled with losses and then bankruptcy after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. Mergers, new fees imposed on passengers, and caution about adding capacity have all helped to return the industry to profitability, and the picture has improved markedly in recent months because of tumbling oil prices.

"In my almost 18 years in this business, that would be the first time for me" to pay this much cash for aircraft, Rainey said, calling the move, "an indication of where this industry is." Airlines often finance their purchases of planes, which can cost hundreds of millions of dollars each, by leasing them from a trust of investors, through what is known as enhanced equipment trust certificates. While United will continue this practice, Rainey said the airline for the first time in recent history could rely solely on class-A certificates for future financing, with rates likely under 4 percent. The certificates require a borrower to put up more cash than other classes of certificate carrying higher rates.

"That's really affordable money," Rainey said, calling the focus on class-A "an effective way to de-lever" its balance sheet. Other airlines are paying lower interest rates in part because they have a growing amount of cash as well: American Airlines Group announced class-B certificates on Monday at 3.7 percent and class-A certificates at about 3.4 percent, down from about 4.4 percent and 3.7 percent respectively on similar certificates announced in September 2014.

United's use of cash for aircraft will benefit shareholders by curbing the company's debt and turning planes into assets against which United can borrow, said airline industry analyst Jim Corridore of S&P Capital IQ. "The number one thing that airlines should be doing with their cash is repairing their balance sheets," Corridore said. "The industry has come a long way."

The Big Three US airlines urged to release secret Gulf carrier report



Having achieved control over vast swaths of the US domestic airline market, the BIG 3 US airlines, with a healthy mixture of hubris, have now turned their sights on the international arena. As documented by recent media coverage, they are endeavoring to dictate to the US government, and other stakeholders, adoption of a self-serving public policy that is designed to shelter them from vigorous international airline competition and deprive consumers of competitive choice. They are collectively calling for the US to roll back access to the US marketplace for carriers such as Etihad, Emirates and Qatar – whose inflight and other services are world-renowned.

The BIG 3 US airlines are prepared to run roughshod over the compelling interests of other stakeholders who support vigorous airline competition--including consumers, US airports and communities (that have suffered greatly reduced air services as a consequence of airline mergers) and corporations that now pay more for commercial air services because of those mergers.

They are also urging the government to put their narrow commercial self-interest ahead of the national interest in air service trade and the tens of thousands of tourism-related U.S. jobs supported by growing Gulf

carrier service. Stakeholders who would be damaged if this gambit were to succeed also include U.S. cargo carriers such as FedEx, UPS, Atlas and ABX and their customers, U.S. airplane manufacturers and their suppliers and other U.S. carriers that challenge the BIG 3's hegemony over the U.S. skies, such as JetBlue.

Given these many other stakeholders, it is unconscionable that the three mega-airlines are jointly conducting meetings behind closed doors with U.S. and EU officials for the purpose of peddling a profound public policy switch that would have enormous negative consequences for everyone else. What's worse, as grist for their lobby and propaganda mills, the BIG 3 are relying on a secret report they paid for about these three carriers -- a report that they have not even shared with the very airlines they accuse of receiving government subsidies but do selectively share with media when they are angling for advantageous coverage.

It is a matter of fundamental fairness to be able to confront one's accusers -- a right that the Gulf carriers should be allowed to exercise by having access to the report that the airlines have been touting to the U.S. government and European Union as well as to a handful of journalists. In short, using a Star Chamber with undisclosed "evidence" paid for by interested parties with no ability for the accused to respond, is no way to make public policy. OpenSkies.travel calls on the BIG 3 to release the report publicly for fairness sake and to allow an informed debate among all concerned.

Once the report is publicly available, industry experts can evaluate the assertions and, of equal importance, analyze the economic value of the numerous direct and indirect subsidies and structural advantages of U.S. carriers. There would be many complex and controversial moving parts to such an analysis. Given it purportedly took the BIG 3 two years to compile these allegations, fairness dictates that each accused carrier have a sufficient period of time to meaningfully review and respond to accusations about it.

If one reviews the "Comments" posted on the Internet in response to recent articles on this issue, 99% of commentators see right through what the BIG 3 are seeking: namely, the "Mother-Of-All-Subsidies" -- protection from competition from innovative, well-managed airlines with faster connections, more destinations and better service than U.S. carriers.

The deep skepticism of these 99% is very likely shared by government officials, which is why the 1% are unlikely to succeed in corrupting U.S. Open Skies policy. The leadership and staff at the State, Transportation and Commerce Departments and the European Commission no doubt view airlines' refusal to share the report promptly for independent analysis as evidence that the report is likely deeply flawed -- another reason the 1% will fail in this scheme.

Vancouver Intl 1st in world to be named Best Airport 6 consecutive years



RICHMOND, BC, Canada - Vancouver International Airport (YVR) was named #1 Airport in North America for the sixth year-in-a-row by Skytrax World Airport Awards, the premier international airport awards voted on by more than 13-million passengers worldwide. This is the first time in Skytrax award history that an airport has maintained a #1 ranking for six consecutive years.

"This recognition for a sixth year-in-a-row is a testament to all the people who contribute to our shared success," said Craig Richmond, President and CEO, Vancouver Airport Authority. "I want to acknowledge and thank our community, passengers, partners and the 24,000 people who work and volunteer at YVR. We are both proud and humbled and will continue to collectively care for all our customers while connecting B.C. to the world."

Known informally in the travel industry as the Passenger Choice Awards, the Skytrax World Airport Awards are the global benchmark of airport excellence. More than 13 million passenger surveys were independently conducted across 550 airports in 112 countries. The survey measures 39 dimensions of the airport experience including check-in to border clearance efficiency, signage, transportation availability, design and layout, as well as shopping, service and dining options.

YVR was also named the best airport in the 10-20 million passenger category. Fairmont Vancouver Airport was voted Best Airport Hotel, North America.

US airlines need to stop seeking protection, reconnect with customers



The Business Travel Coalition (BTC) responded with disbelief to the statement by Delta Air Lines CEO Richard Anderson made during a CNN interview that drew a causal link between the terror attacks of 9/11, and later US airlines' bankruptcy proceedings, and the Gulf carriers. Anderson's statement was: "And it's a great irony to have the UAE from the Arabian Peninsula talk about that [U.S. airlines' bailout], given the fact that our industry was really shocked by the terrorism of 9/11, which came from terrorists from the Arabian Peninsula. That caused us to go through a massive restructuring."

"The logical error is breathtaking. Implying that the Gulf carriers were somehow responsible for the acts of 9/11 is as absurd as saying the U.S. carriers are to blame for allowing their planes to be used on 9/11 as weapons of mass destruction," said BTC chairman Kevin Mitchell. "To bring up a tragic event from a decade and a half ago shows how desperate some U.S. airlines are to get a leg up on successful competitors and stifle consumer choice. Moreover, it's just wrong to bring up terrible memories for those families that lost loved ones for the self-serving purpose of changing public policy to your commercial advantage," added Mitchell.

The overall impression from watching the U.S. airline CEOs is that the big network airlines want to lock out independent airlines that offer lower fares, newer airplanes, faster connections, more destinations and better service. Instead of offering consumers a reason to choose Delta, United and American for their international travel needs, they want to deny consumer choice by eliminating competitive alternatives. U.S. airlines appear to have lost touch with their customers and if they do not step up their game they will continue to lose international market share in a long but slow grind, the Coalition believes.

It's a fact that the Gulf States have policies that are designed to support aviation, which they see as the key sector for economic development. In fact, the US CEOs who now complain about these policies, not long ago publicly said they envied such pro-aviation growth vision and called for the U.S. to emulate them. Smart policies produce growing airlines and economic growth that boosts the region up-and-above what would normally occur without such policies. Geopolitically, deeper commercial connections around the world, facilitated by air travel, means greater job creation, more opportunities for travelers and shippers and a stronger global economy. There is no place for the type of protectionism being advocated by the U.S. mega carriers.

Every country has its unique collection of direct and indirect subsidies and structural advantages. The U.S. is no different. Our carriers can reduce expenses in bankruptcy proceedings, shift pension liabilities to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, benefit from general revenues from the U.S. Treasury that flow into the Airport and Airway Trust Fund and avoid ticket taxes on billions of dollars in revenues through ancillary fees and carrier-imposed charges. What's more, the industry has been consolidated to the very powerful BIG 3 mega airlines and they operate in and from the largest aviation market in the world and the most important and stable country, and a country whose greenback serves as the world's reserve currency. The list goes on and on and U.S. airlines have logically and deftly leveraged all these powerful advantages. However, in this instance, asking the government to protect them from new entrants would help only Delta, American and United, the three most profitable airlines in the world, at the expense of the traveling and shipping public.

As The New York Times editorialized: "Governments around the world own airlines and often support them with loans, favorable contracts and other benefits. In fact, the big American airlines have partnerships with several large government-owned carriers like Singapore Airlines, Air India and Air China. But the three American airlines argue that the subsidies being lavished on the three Gulf airlines are so extreme that the government must act." BTC would like to see the evidence that the Gulf carriers have received more direct and indirect subsidies than U.S. carriers and that it represents a material amount necessary to create an unfair competitive advantage.



United Airlines to upgrade airport lounge for United Club members



United Airlines announced it is transforming the customer experience in its United Clubs with upgrades including an overhauled, complimentary food menu launching this week, extensive club renovations and a hospitality-focused approach to customer service.

“We’re making major changes in our United Clubs to give our customers the elevated, hospitality-centric service and experience they deserve and expect. This year will be transformational,” said Jimmy Samartzis, vice president of customer experience. “Our new fresh, tasty and healthy food offerings, overhauled service approach, and systematic investment in renovating the rest of our 49 clubs worldwide will give our customers an

airport getaway for relaxing or being productive during the hustle and bustle of their travel day.”

In the coming year, the airline will renovate clubs in Chicago O’Hare, Washington Reagan, Hong Kong and Tokyo Narita. It will also build new clubs in Atlanta and San Francisco, and begin major changes in Los Angeles.

Each lounge will reflect the new, modern style with upgraded amenities showcased in the airline’s Chicago O’Hare, Boston, London Heathrow, San Diego and Seattle United Club renovations. The new design schemes incorporate both United’s unique aviation history and panoramic views of modern-day aviation in action. New and renovated United Clubs offer more and diverse seating arrangements.

United’s recent renovations at London Heathrow have been nominated by the American Institute of Architects for the Design Excellence Award for Interior Architecture. The London club is also a finalist for the 2015 Design Et Al International Yacht & Aviation Awards in the category of Commercial Aviation, First Class Lounge.

US Air Force Global Hawk aircraft flies in to Australia's Avalon Air Show



MELBOURNE, Australia - A Northrop Grumman Corporation RQ-4 Global Hawk unmanned aircraft system (UAS) landed Feb. 21 at the Avalon Airport in Australia for display at the Australian International Air Show. The system's ability to conduct high-altitude surveillance missions for greater than 30 hours is ideally suited for the vast Asia-Pacific region. "This is the first time that a Global Hawk has flown into

an international air show," said Ian Irving, chief executive for Northrop Grumman Australia. "This really speaks to the maturity and reliability of the system. As the Royal Australian Air Force seeks to procure the MQ-4C Triton UAS, a variant based on Global Hawk, they will be able to use the system's capabilities to transform the way they conduct maritime surveillance missions."

Last year, Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott announced the defense force's intent to purchase the Triton UAS for high-altitude, long-endurance surveillance missions to augment the country's current P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft. Northrop Grumman is the prime contractor for the Triton program and is currently working with the U.S. Navy to develop the system for operational use by 2017.

Mary Petryszyn, vice president, International at Northrop Grumman Aerospace Systems, said Global Hawk's arrival is another milestone to add to the list of major advancements for Northrop Grumman's family of Global Hawk UAS. "Korea, Australia and Japan have all made major decisions leading to the expected acquisition of either Global Hawk or Triton in the last year," said Petryszyn. "This is testament to the value and performance of these systems, and to the tremendous amount of actionable information they deliver to military commanders and government agencies."

In 2001, a Global Hawk flew non-stop from Edwards Air Force Base, California, to Royal Australian Air Base Edinburgh in Adelaide, Australia, becoming the first unmanned aircraft to cross the Pacific Ocean. The aircraft flew a total distance of 8,214.44 miles.

By 2013, the U.S. Air Force announced Global Hawk was the safest aircraft within the services' active aircraft inventory.

Airlines Could Be Tracking Their International Flights (Cheaply)

By: Dan Reed



It's been a year since Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 disappeared, literally, from the planet, and the world's aviation safety authorities continue to move at relatively glacial pace to implement a new system to track airplanes' positions virtually anywhere in the world (even after their transponders are turned off, as happened on MH370).

The International Civil Aviation Organization, the U.N. agency that attempts to set operational, legal and safety standards for airlines around the globe, has called on national aviation authorities to mandate the use of existing technology to automatically report planes' positions every 15 minutes - or even minute by minute if certain threatening conditions exist. But there's considerable debate about whether such a rule will be implemented by all nations by the Nov. 2016 target date set by ICAO. There's also questions about who will pay for what many assume will be a very expensive solution to a problem that, though devastating when it happens, remains very rare.

But a Denver-based aviation consultant and retired international airline captain says most airlines - including U.S. giants American, Delta and United, and all the leading foreign carriers - that fly long-haul international routes could implement such a tracking system by this summer, and do so for less than \$1 million a year per carrier in additional spending. What's more, he says, that modest expense would more than pay for itself by helping carriers shave time off flights, reduce delays, provide better service, and attract the loyalty of more and happier passengers. "All you would need is software that would alert someone whenever there's a deviation from the flight plan or some other issue that causes a plane not to be where it's expected to be. The cost of that likely is only about \$50,000 a month," says Michael Baiada, president of ATH Group. "It's not an exorbitant expense at all for companies that operate dozens, even hundreds of international range wide body jets that cost \$150 million or more each.

Baiada retired late last year from United Airlines, where he captained Boeing 747s on international routes - the kind of routes where accurately tracking the positions of aircraft in real time commonly is not done because those planes spend most of their time flying beyond the range of ground-based radar. As president of ATH Group Baiada has sought, largely unsuccessfully, to convince airlines that they can dramatically improve their on-time performance and other service quality performance items by applying Peter Drucker-inspired "operational excellence" managerial techniques and technologies. That's a tough sell to an industry that long has accepted, largely without question, that failing to provide what their customers most value - an on-time arrival - 30 percent of the time is not only acceptable but actually relatively good performance. Tracking flights, he says, should be a part of every airline's efforts to achieve operational excellence. Doing that would allow them to dramatically reduce costly delays and improve their brand image - and their bottom lines. "All it will take is for one carrier to adopt an operational excellence approach and it will be so popular with consumer and shareholders that all other airlines will be forced to follow," Baiada says. Being able to track all of their aircraft in near-real time would be a fortunate by-product of an airline's commitment to using operational excellence technology and techniques, he explains.

And even if airlines don't buy into his operational excellence philosophy, Baiada says that airlines could add positive flight tracking capabilities at very low cost simply by learning to use the automated data reporting capabilities already onboard most of their international aircraft. Tracking such data, he says, would have made the difference between Malaysian Airlines staff not knowing that MH370 was missing for more than an hour (as actually happened) and their recognition of the problem within seconds of its transponders being turned off and its course altered. "They could have called the Malaysian Air Force and had a search plane up trying to find MH370 within 30 minutes - instead of 10 hours later," he says. "Who knows if they could have prevented a tragedy? But they certainly would have been able to find the plane and we wouldn't still be looking for it today."

International range aircraft already are packed with an alphabet soup array of systems and technologies that

periodically report certain types of data either to ground stations or satellites. Everything from the plane's GPS position, speed and altitude to engine performance data is transmitted by those multiple onboard systems to various authorities (air traffic controllers, airlines, engine makers) or to technology companies that, in turn, can - and in some cases already do - relay that data to those parties who contract to receive it. The problem, Baiada says, is that airlines don't collect all the data they could, and typically don't bother to monitor or analyze what aircraft position data they do receive from their planes in flight. The good news, he adds, is that carriers would not have to spend much, if any additional money to acquire all the data that's already being transmitted by their aircraft. Nor would it cost much to acquire software that could compile that data for flight tracking purposes and alert existing airline operations staff whenever a plane departs from its planned flight path or changes altitude dramatically.

"They'd probably have to spend maybe \$50,000 a month that they're not already spending, and perhaps buy or build the software, which wouldn't cost very much" Baiada said. "For international airlines that's not very much money at all." Nor would it require hiring more people or installing new equipment on planes, he says. "And there would be significant commercial benefits because having that information in near-real time would allow them to dramatically improve their airport operations, reduce delays and fuel burn, better allocate resources and manpower and deliver better service to happier customers," he says. "A positive flight tracking system would pay for itself over and over every year."

Flight attendant union continues to push for better air quality



The Association of Flight Attendants-CWA (AFA) is pushing for improved air quality in aircraft cabins to protect both the crew and the passengers. AFA International President Sara Nelson went to London to steer the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) meeting on cabin air quality.

"AFA continues to lead the fight for better air quality in our aircraft," said AFA International President Sara Nelson. "Most Americans go to work with the expectation of breathing clean air, but until we achieve better standards for cabin air quality, Flight Attendants don't have this guarantee."

AFA's efforts to improve the cabin environment span the last three decades. From advocating for smoke free skies to today's current discussions on air quality, AFA remains steadfast. The union advocates that the airline industry either end the use of engine bleed air for cabin air supply or utilize filters to halt the circulation of contaminated air. Current bleed air systems can introduce potentially toxic engine oil fumes into the cabin.

"Tomorrow marks the 25-year anniversary of smoke-free skies on domestic flights," said Nelson. "We can all celebrate our smoke free skies on all international and domestic flights, but the smoking ban did not just happen. It came about thanks to AFA's advocacy and persistent action by our members. AFA is equally committed to and focused on achieving improved standards for cabin air quality." "Flight Attendants deserve clean air in their workspace, just as travelers deserve clean air when they travel," said Nelson

FRANK AND ERNEST | Bob Thaves



What Flying Was Like Before the Smoke Cleared

By Joe Sharkey/The New York Times



If you think the air travel experience generally stinks now, consider what it was like before smoking was banned on domestic flights 25 years ago. Tracy Sear, a flight attendant with US Airways, was looking over some Facebook posts from colleagues recalling those bad old days when a third or more of passengers on any flight puffed away, and cabins were foul with smoke. When I spoke with her the other day, she read one of those posts to me: "Suitcases, uniforms, hair - all stunk from cigarette smoke. And it's astounding that we didn't have more cabin fires."

It's probably difficult for anyone who isn't middle-aged or older to comprehend, but people could smoke cigarettes on airplanes until Feb. 25, 1990. That's when the federal government, after years of pressure from a union, the Association of Flight Attendants, finally banned smoking on all but a handful of domestic flights over six hours in duration. Ten years later, smoking was prohibited on flights between the United States and foreign destinations. Today, virtually every commercial flight in the world is smoke-free.

Ms. Sear's first flying job was as a flight attendant from 1968 to 1979 with Pacific Southwest Air-lines, which merged into a predecessor of US Airways in the late 1980s. PSA, as it was known, marketed itself as the "World's Friendliest Airline" and outfitted its stewardesses (as they were then called) in miniskirts and go-go boots during the late 1960s.

"Then we transitioned from wool skirts to polyester hot pants, which added a whole new dimension to the smoking issue," she said, explaining: "Passengers would have their elbows on the armrest and then plop their hand out into the aisle with a lighted cigarette in it. So we would have to try to dodge it. In a wool dress, it was less of an issue because you could brush off the ash, but when PSA went to polyester hot pants you'd often get a cigarette burn hole on your pantyhose, and you were lucky not to get a more severe burn on your leg."

It was a routine chore to get the cigarette smell out of uniforms during hotel layovers, at crew crash pads or at home. "A lot of flight attendants, particularly if their roommates didn't smoke, had to change in the garage or hang their uniforms on the balcony to air them out," Ms. Sear said.

Smells and first-degree burns aside, there were, of course, serious health hazards from intense exposure to secondhand smoke. Sara Nelson, the international president of the Association of Flight Attendants, started as a flight attendant in 1996 when smoking was still permitted on many international flights. Even as a passenger, "I remember getting off the airplane and feeling like I had to scrape off layers and layers of ick, with eyes stinging, throat hurting and all of the other symptoms of exposure to secondhand smoke," she recalled.

The flight attendants union began fighting for a smoking ban in the late 1960s, against fierce opposition from the tobacco industry. "It was a real uphill battle," Ms. Nelson said. "For us this was a workplace issue; we had members who were experiencing shortness of breath and all of the problems created by secondhand smoke, up to and including deadly diseases like lung cancer. We really were the tipping point that allowed for smoke-free work places in this country. "The smoke would hang in the cabin right at about face level, so the whole time you are working on the flight you were breathing in smoke," Ms. Sear added.

Robin Koval, the president of Legacy, a nonprofit organization that works to discourage tobacco use among young people, said that flight attendants' efforts were crucial in creating smoke-free workplaces for everyone.

"I was a smoker who quit in 1984, and I remember sitting on airplanes filled with smoke, all of us choking our way from New York to Los Angeles," she said. "Can you imagine spending six hours in a sealed sardine can where you are forced to breathe in toxic chemicals all day long? We wouldn't allow any kind of workers to do that today."

Most car rental companies in the United States say their vehicles are smoke-free and charge a stiff "cleaning

fee" (usually \$250) if smoking is evident in a returned vehicle. But there are, of course, still places where travelers who do not smoke routinely encounter secondhand smoke, she noted, including some casinos, bars, restaurants and hotels.

"Most airports are smoke-free, which is great," Ms. Koval said. Some have designated smoking areas but, she said, "studies have found that the smoke is not actually all contained in those smoking rooms."

On airplanes, and especially on long international flights, some passengers desperate for a smoke still try to get away with it, usually by trying to disable smoke detectors in lavatories, said Ms. Nelson of the flight attendants union.

"The first thing we have to do is make sure they haven't created a fire on board the aircraft, because a lot of times they'll throw the cigarette down into the trash bin," she said. "Then at the same time we're advising the passenger that they must comply and stop, and letting the cockpit know. Usually, the authorities will meet the flight when it lands."

US travel exports reach record high



WASHINGTON, DC – "2015 is off to a remarkable start for the travel, continuing the industry's pattern of export growth with another record high of \$18.9 billion in January. With this strong trend, travel now accounts for 10 percent of all US exports," said David Huether, senior vice president for economics and research at the US Travel Association, commenting on Friday's Labor Department employment report and the US Department of Commerce export report. He continued: "While travel exports rose for a fourth consecutive month, other exports of goods and services fell for a third consecutive month, posting the largest monthly decline in six years.

"In other good news for the industry, travel employment rose for an eighth consecutive month, expanding payrolls by 16,600 in February to 8.1 million direct jobs. So far, the industry has added 75 percent more jobs than the first two months of last year, while creation in the rest of the economy is only up by 50 percent.

"Since the employment recovery began, the travel industry has added 869,400 jobs, outpacing job growth in the rest of the economy by 33 percent.

"Although the overall trade deficit declined by \$3.9 billion in January to \$41.8 billion, the narrowing deficit in January was largely attributable to a labor dispute which caused a temporary halt at various West Coast port facilities. "Continued investment and improvements to US infrastructure at all points of entry— ports, airports and roads— will be vital to ensure the travel experience in the United States remains competitive and meets the expectations of all travelers, domestic and international."

U.S. Travel: Rosy Airline Forecast Holds Perils for Consumers

U.S. Travel Association President and CEO Roger Dow comments on the spring travel forecast from Airlines for America: "We obviously welcome the projection of increased travel demand over the next two years, which jibes with our own data. But just because the lines are longer at the DMV than ever before doesn't mean they're doing a good or humane job.

"My question for the Big Three airlines is: how do we make sure that capacity keeps up with demand? Every piece of evidence we have shows that our infrastructure is already straining under the current load, and that passengers are frustrated beyond words by overcrowded flights and delays in the terminal and on the tarmac. We also know consumers are traveling less than they otherwise would because of these problems. Where are the Big Three's solutions?"

"The travel community has said time and again that we need to work together to modernize and expand our system in order to maximize efficiency and let new carriers into the marketplace. We congratulate our friends the airlines for their increasingly robust revenue reports—we all want our carriers to be healthy and profitable. However, we're alarmed that the Big Three seem determined to stamp out competition and cling to the status quo, which fundamentally harms the consumer, particularly as demand grows."

SkyMall stumbles as airlines hone their sales pitches

By Joe Sharkey/The New York Times



WE might get a little more knee room in coach, now that the familiar SkyMall catalog is disappearing from that thick stash of printed material the airlines cram into seat-back pockets. O.K., so we'll only gain maybe a quarter-inch more space, but at least they won't charge us a fee for the minimally extra comfort. (I hope.)

As you perhaps have heard, Xhibit, publisher of those SkyMall catalogs full of weird and often wonderful products that you didn't imagine you needed till you thumbed through a catalog at 37,000 feet, has filed for bankruptcy protection. The company, which says it gets "substantially all" of its revenue from SkyMall, said that its retail catalog business had been suspended.

Two airlines rejecting battery shipments

By Joan Lowy/Associated Press



Two major U.S. airlines say they will no longer accept rechargeable battery shipments as new government tests confirm that explosions and violent fires are likely to occur when large numbers of batteries enclosed in cargo containers overheat.

Tests conducted last month by the Federal Aviation Administration show that rechargeable batteries, also called lithium-ion batteries, consistently emit explosive gases when they overheat or short-circuit. In the recent tests, as well as other FAA

tests last year, the buildup of gases - primarily hydrogen - led to fierce explosions.

An FAA video of one of the tests obtained by the AP shows an explosion knocking a cargo container door off its hinges and tossing boxes of batteries into the air. The container was engulfed in fire minutes later.

In the test, a cartridge heater was used to simulate a single battery overheating. The heater caused nearby batteries to overheat and the short-circuiting spread to many of the nearly 5,000 batteries in the container. It's common for tens of thousands of batteries to be placed in a single container.

Citing safety concerns, United Airlines on Monday informed its cargo customers it will no longer accept bulk shipments of the batteries, which are used to power everything from smartphones to laptops to power tools.

Delta Air Lines, quietly stopped accepting bulk shipments of the rechargeable batteries on Feb. 1. The airline said in a statement that it took the action in response to government testing and concerns raised by its pilots and flight attendants. A third major U.S. carrier, American Airlines, stopped accepting some types of lithium-ion battery shipments on Feb. 23. But the airline is continuing to accept small packages of batteries grouped together or "overpacked" into a single cargo container. Those are the kinds of shipments that the FAA has been testing and that are a greater safety concern. All three airlines said they will continue to accept bulk shipments of equipment containing batteries or in which batteries are placed in the same package as equipment. Placing batteries inside equipment like laptops or in the same package as power tools creates additional buffering and is believed to provide added protection, although safety experts say that theory hasn't been fully tested.

The decisions by United and Delta airlines could put pressure on other international carriers to refuse battery shipments or appear indifferent to safety. "I think it will cause everybody to take a look at their policies and procedures as far as carrying that cargo, and many will elect not to," said John Goglia, a former National Transportation Safety Board member and aviation safety expert.

Airline industry analyst Robert W. Mann said, "It's only a matter of time before a really serious event occurs."

Airlines "are essentially just trying to avoid that occurrence," he said.

Regulators Cite a New Danger in the Skies: Selfies

By Julie Turkewitz & Richard Pérez-Peña/The New York Times



WATKINS, Colo. — In an age of digital distractions, the lethal risks of driving — or just crossing the street — while looking at a cellphone have been well-documented. Now comes a new peril from mixing transportation and obsession with devices: a fatal airplane crash most likely caused by selfies.

When a light plane crashed near here on a cloudy night, killing the two people aboard, it was probably because the pilot had been taking pictures of himself and his passenger, with a flash, the National Transportation Safety Board has concluded. “It is likely that cellphone use during the accident flight distracted the pilot and contributed to the development of spatial disorientation and subsequent loss of control,” the safety board said. Investigators found no sign that anything was wrong with the plane. “Distractions from personal devices are in all modes of transportation — we’re seeing that more and more,” said Keith Holloway, a spokesman for the safety board. “But the self-photographs in an airplane, that’s something new for us.”

The pilot had used a GoPro camera to record some short flights he made with different passengers aboard his two-seat Cessna 150, to and from Front Range Airport here, east of Denver. He did not record the fatal trip on May 31, but did record one six-minute jaunt shortly before it. “The GoPro recordings revealed that the pilot and various passengers were taking self-photographs with their cellphones and, during the night flight, using the camera’s flash function during the takeoff roll, initial climb and flight in the traffic pattern,” the report said.

Distracted driving is a factor in more than 3,000 traffic deaths annually in the United States, and about one-tenth of those involve cellphones, according to the Department of Transportation. Several train accidents have also been blamed on engineers paying attention to their phones, including the 2008 collision of two trains in Los Angeles that killed 25 people.

So it seemed inevitable that the scourge of distraction by electronic devices would move into the skies. In 2009, the pilots of a Northwest Airlines flight from San Diego to Minneapolis were so busy using their personal laptops to figure out their work schedules that they overshot their destination by more than 100 miles. Last year, the Federal Aviation Administration prohibited the use of personal electronic devices in airline cockpits, but some pilots have not given up the habit of posting on Instagram scenic pictures they took seven miles aloft. The ban does not apply to private pilots, who often use tablet computers, and even phones, running software for navigation, weather forecasts and flight planning.

“It is of course the pilot’s primary and sole obligation to remain attentive to the flight,” said Steve Hedges, a spokesman for the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association. He said the group has made it a priority to train pilots on how to use electronic devices appropriately.

At the small airfield here, the “selfie accident” was the topic during lunches and snack breaks, and as technicians tinkered with engines and hobby pilots inspected their planes. An airplane is most vulnerable during the kind of low-altitude, low-speed maneuvering, and the pilots here said they would never take a self-portrait in that time, when absolute attention is needed. They said the modern pilot, like the modern driver, faces a growing number of distractions and technological temptations. There is the expanding number of screens inside the plane — the GPS device, the traffic collision avoidance system — and then there is the ever-more-present pressure to always be in touch.

**a bad day
only
lasts 24 hours**

European aviation safety set for serious reform



EASA
European Aviation Safety Agency

Europe's aviation safety watchdog wants cash-strapped EU nations to surrender some of their powers over safeguarding air travel in their own countries. The move comes with the publication of Vision 2020: EASA presents its Vision for the Future of the Aviation Regulatory System by the European Aviation Safety

Agency.

It is recommending to European transport chiefs in Brussels that when national authorities have a lack of resources or expertise, they should be able to delegate some of their oversight functions to other authorities or to EASA, in order to make sure that no safety risks are overlooked.

The proposals which meet what EASA sees as crucial requirements for the future of the aviation regulatory system have now been forwarded to the European Commission as an 'EASA Opinion' and represent the result of industry consultations since September. The agency is also proposing that its scope is extended in new areas such as airport ground handling, RPAS (drones) and security and that member states can opt to have their state aircraft (excluding military) come under EASA's regulatory remit.

'EASA, that means the agency and its sister national authorities, need to be prepared for the challenges ahead. With these changes, we will be more proportional, flexible and proactive to increase the level of safety in European aviation' said EASA executive director, Patrick Ky, 'I believe that although our proposals are ambitious they are also reasonable. There is nothing wrong with being ambitious about safety'.

The proposal will now be sent to the European Commission which will use it as an input for the amendment of the agency's current Basic Regulation during 2015.

Travelers weigh in on proper attire for air travel



Long gone are the days when people dressed up for flying. Today's travelers arrive in sweat pants, tank tops and flip flops, and apparently not too many care.

The GO Group asked their passengers their opinion on the subject. Of the 602 respondents, just 19 percent said they wished people dressed nicer; of those slightly more men (22 percent) were more particular than women, at 18 percent. Forty-six percent said they had no opinion on the subject, while a full 31 percent said as long as people paid for their tickets, they should be able to wear whatever they want. Just

three percent said airlines should have a dress code, banning certain items such as tank tops.

When asked how they dressed for leisure travel, most responded "nice but comfortable" such as jeans, casual pants and decent tops. Nine percent of women and six percent of men said they prefer to dress up, because they prefer to look their best. Just over a third of respondents (35 percent) said they dress differently for business travel; Thirty nine percent said this would depend on if they were going directly to an appointment or had time to change beforehand.

Comments from respondents varied. One said they "hated being told how to dress, but we should teach proper public behavior so dress codes wouldn't have to be written and enforced." Another noted they don't like seeing other travelers' under garments or pajamas and that sleeves and shoes should be worn. Another said they dress to be presentable, adding "if a person chooses to be a spectacle" they should be prepared to deal with the response of fellow travelers. Another respondent noted "this is a free country and not a dictatorship."

"In general, people seem uninterested in how other travelers are dressing, unless the attire is offensive or causes a nuisance," says John McCarthy, president of GO Airport Express.

The Rules of Chocolate!

If you've got melted chocolate all over your hands, you're eating it too slowly.

Tourists behaving badly



When traveling to some of the world's most special places, the generally agreed upon code of conduct goes, "take nothing but photographs, leave nothing but footprints." Unfortunately, some travelers don't seem to have gotten the memo. Like the two Americans facing charges for carving their names into the Colosseum and taking a selfie. We bring you 10 more embarrassing cases of tourists behaving badly.

1. **DO NOT TOUCH:** In 2013, an American man accidentally broke the finger off a 600-year-old statue at a museum in Florence, Italy. The statue, which is thought to depict the Virgin Mary, dates from either the 14th or 15th century. The tourist was reportedly attempting to "measure" the statue.
2. **EYE FOR AN EYE, EAR FOR A SOUVENIR:** A Finnish tourist was arrested in 2008 for trying to steal an earlobe from a moai stone statue on Easter Island. Marko Kulju allegedly tore the earlobe off one of the four-meter high moai, which fell to the ground and broke into 20-30cm pieces. The mayor of Easter Island reportedly said he wished he could rip off Kulju's ear as punishment.
3. **"DING JINHAO WAS HERE:"** It's the kind of thing any naughty teenage boy would carve into his desk at school - except Ding Jinhao took it to the next level by carving the declaration into a 3,500-year-old Egyptian temple. The 2013 incident triggered a public debate in China about etiquette and the country's image abroad, and the National Tourism Administration was forced to issue guidelines advising Chinese tourists on correct behavior.
4. **OH MY BUDDHA:** A New Zealand-based Dutch woman landed herself in hot water last year after she broke a Buddha statue at Angkor Wat. Willemijn Vermaat was found in the Bayon Temple, built in the 12th century, next to the statue smashed into four pieces. She was held for questioning by the Apsara Authority which looks after the UNESCO World Heritage site. She later said she was trying to move the statue because it was in the wrong temple.
5. **PYRAMID PORN:** Russian-speaking tourists recently created outrage in Egypt for a 10-minute video allegedly showing nudity and sex acts near the 4,500 year-old Giza pyramids and the Sphinx. The conservative Muslim country referred the footage to the public prosecutor.
6. **WAT WERE YOU THINKING?** Cambodian authorities are having to crack down on nudie tourists at its ancient temples, including Angkor Wat. Already this year five foreigners have been arrested and deported for taking nude photos at the sacred sites.
7. **PERU BUM BAN:** Last year a YouTube video of Australian and New Zealand tourists streaking at Machu Picchu went viral. The brazen pair were ordered to erase the offending images from their memory card by police, and the incident prompted increased surveillance at the Incan ruins.
8. **WE WILL SOBERLY REMEMBER THEM:** Australian and New Zealand backpackers in Gallipoli for the 90th anniversary of the Anzac landings in 2005 were slammed for their drunken antics. Around 20,000 pilgrims drank alcohol, listened to rock music - including Bee Gees hit Stayin' Alive - and left the sacred site strewn with rubbish.
9. **THE WORST SELFIE EVER:** Twitter user "Princess Breanna" last year shot to notoriety by posting a smiling selfie at the Auschwitz concentration camp. Fellow social media users questioned the tastefulness of the photo, taken at the site of some of the worst Holocaust atrocities.
10. **PENGUIN STEAL GONE WRONG:** In 2012, two British tourists broke into SeaWorld on the Gold Coast after a drunken night out and stole a penguin named Dirk. In the Hangover-style stunt, the pair woke up the next morning to find the flightless bird in their care. The bird was eventually taken back to SeaWorld and reunited with his girlfriend, Peaches, while the tourists were fined \$1,000 each.

Numbers may not give complete picture of Passenger Unruliness

By Joe Sharkey/The New York Times



In 2014, reported incidents of so-called unruly passengers were at the lowest level in 20 years, down 60 percent from the high of 310 in 2001, according to new data from the Federal Aviation Administration. But to quote the immortal entreaty of the estimable Chico Marx in the 1933 movie "Duck Soup": "Who are you gonna believe, me or your own eyes?"

So yes, let us note the government's sanguine numbers, reflecting the decrease in reported incidents under a catchall law covering passengers who "assault, threaten, intimidate or interfere with a crew member in the performance of the crew member's duties aboard an aircraft." But let's also consider a view through the eyes of Heather Poole, one of my go-to flight attendants for actual observations from the galley. Ms. Poole, the author of a funny 2012 book called "Cruising Attitude: Tales of Crashpads, Crew Drama and Crazy Passengers at 35,000 Feet," tends to speak in long sentences punctuated by rueful laughter.

"I don't believe at all that it's on the decline," she said. "It's not being reported as much because it's so much trouble to make a report, especially if your job is to keep the cabin calm, which means you're not doing your job if you report an incident. And besides, just who am I going to report this to? I don't have a supervisor on board, so let's say I get to Tulsa and I've been flying four legs a day, and my layover is eight hours. Am I going to spend an hour of my layover time doing paperwork when all I want to do is get to my room and go to sleep?" She goes on: "Some people on airplanes really overreact to minor things. Like I was walking down the aisle and somebody whacked me on the butt. I look and I see it's this woman who's freaking out because I stepped on her toe. Well, I didn't lean into her row to step on her toe, you know. Her toe was in the aisle, and I accidentally stepped on it and she smacked me. Where else but on an airplane can you smack someone in the butt and think that's O.K.?"

Most passengers, Ms. Poole agrees, are civil and cooperative. And incidents of violently disruptive or shocking air rage are in fact infrequent - though when they do occur they tend to be aggressively reported by crew members, by the news media and by social media, where any interesting in-flight disturbance is captured on video. "That's another thing to worry about," Ms. Poole says jokingly. "As soon as something starts going wrong on a flight you have to make sure your hair and makeup look good because you know it's going to be a viral sensation"

Of course, violent incidents in the confined spaces of an aircraft, often perpetrated by passengers who are mentally disturbed or in alcohol- or drug-induced rages, are no joking matter. On Jan. 27, a passenger who began screaming on a US Airways flight that had just left the gate at Charlotte Douglas International Airport punched and beat two flight attendants who tried to calm him, sending one to a hospital.

In the past, flight attendant unions in the United States have campaigned to ease reporting procedures for crew members, and to stiffen penalties for passengers who cause flight disruptions of all sorts. And declines in reports of unruly passengers in the United States notwithstanding, the International Air Transport Association, a global aviation trade group, expressed concern in a resolution last June that incidents of unruly behavior and air rage had risen sharply around the world in recent years.

In China, where commercial aviation has grown sharply, aviation officials alarmed about big increases in unruly behavior recently said they were considering compiling a blacklist to prevent passengers who have caused disturbances from flying. In China, aviation officials have said, millions of new passengers have never flown previously, and are less likely to understand in-flight behavior protocols.

Here and abroad, one big underlying problem is that fliers frequently are irritated, from those knee-crushed for hours in uncomfortable coach seats to frequent travelers frustrated by declining service and, at least in the United States, sharp reductions in schedules as airlines pare their routes to concentrate on international travelers who provide the most revenue. Related to that is an issue of definition of terms. We all know what true air rage is, but given sometimes tense relations between customers and crew members who are the face

of the airline business, the official definition of "unruly behavior" can be arbitrary. Sure, it definitely includes refusal to follow a crew member's orders - but does it also include "annoying behavior" or "verbal confrontation"? The International Air Transport Association, in its current guidelines, says it does.

Ms. Poole, 43, a flight attendant for more than 15 years, sees another underlying problem as an occasional lack of civility among strangers, crew members and passengers alike, in a crowded, confined environment. "Some passengers don't communicate till they're absolutely angry," she said. "I might get passengers coming to me yelling things like, 'Can you tell that passenger in front of me to put his seat back up?' And I'm like, why can't you do that? They're tattling on each other - to the point where I feel like a grade-school teacher."

Southwest Airlines named 2015 World's Most Admired Company



Southwest Airlines was named to FORTUNE's 2015 list of World's Most Admired Companies for the 21st consecutive year. Southwest was ranked as the No. 7 Most Admired Company, and is the only commercial airline to make the Top Ten. FORTUNE partnered with the Hay Group, a global consulting firm, and asked executives, directors, and analysts to rate companies in their industry on nine criteria, from investment value to social responsibility. Leaders chose from the top 25 percent of winners from last year's survey in addition to the top 20 percent in their industry.

"Southwest has the best People in the industry, and being recognized 21 times as a Most Admired Company in the world is a tribute to them," said Gary Kelly, Chairman, President, and Chief Executive Officer of Southwest Airlines. "Our common purpose—and passion—allow us to serve our Customers better than anybody else. Our People have set us apart since the beginning, and I congratulate them on this honor."

668 companies from 29 countries around the world were surveyed by over 4,000 participants in the process of creating the 2015 list. Southwest has been in the top 10 of World's Most Admired for sixteen out of twenty one years on the list.

Southwest Airlines enters the international long haul market

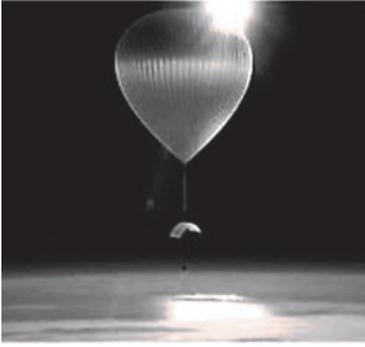
Going The Distance: Southwest Airlines Launches Service To Central America And Flies New Caribbean Route From Texas. Costa Rica becomes carrier's seventh country served with daily nonstop service between Baltimore/Washington and San Jose, Costa Rica. Seasonal weekly service between Houston (Hobby) and Aruba previews growing international future.

The People of Southwest Airlines inaugurated two international routes that brought new long-haul service for Customers using two of the carrier's growing gateways, Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport and William P. Hobby Airport in Houston. Each of the new routes is longer than 2,000 miles each-way and marks historic milestones for the carrier both by connecting Central America to the Southwest network of destinations and by offering its longest-ever nonstop scheduled service from any of Southwest's Texas Triangle of original cities of Dallas, San Antonio, and Houston. SWA operates nonstop service between San Jose, Costa Rica, and Baltimore/Washington on a once daily basis, and Aruba and Houston (Hobby) seasonally, once every Saturday through Aug. 8, 2015.

On March 8, at Houston's Hobby Airport, Southwest Employees celebrated the first Aruba-bound morning departure. Later, Customers on the first inbound international flight deplaned directly into a celebration in the main domestic concourse, following their U.S. Customs and Border Protection Preclearance processed prior to departing the Caribbean island. This is the first-ever international flying offered from Houston Hobby. This October, Southwest is scheduled to complete the construction of a \$156 million international terminal project which will give Houstonians and Southwest Customers from across the network access to more international destinations.

The countdown continues toward the carrier's new international offerings for local and connecting Customers who use Hobby Airport. Houston Airports System (HAS) is concurrently improving parking facilities and airport roadways to support additional flights. Southwest's schedule and fares for initial international service from Houston (Hobby) will be published this spring.

World View one step closer to manned near-space voyages



TUCSON, AZ - World View, the commercial balloon spaceflight company, is one step closer to launching manned voyages after successfully flying the first parafoil from the edge of space at a record-breaking height of 102,200 feet this morning. With extremely limited air pressure and density at this high altitude, flying a parafoil is an incredible feat. This achievement signifies a major milestone for World View as this is the same altitude at which future manned flights will transition to the parafoil, which will be responsible for easing passengers gently down to Earth from the stratosphere. While World View has flown high-altitude balloons to this height before, this is the first time a parafoil has been flown at the edge of space.

With this flight, World View announces a partnership with United Parachute Technologies (UPT) in conjunction with Performance Designs, which co-designed the breakthrough technology and will provide parafoil systems for both unmanned research flights and journeys to the edge of space. As the global leader in parafoil and recovery systems, UPT brings decades of experience and expertise to help World View accelerate forward and continue to make breakthroughs in technology. In the months ahead, UPT will work closely with World View's aerodynamic systems team to design and build an advanced descent system capable of returning payloads of increasingly higher masses.

"The accomplishments of this flight further our two main objectives of manned spaceflight and advancing research," said Taber MacCallum, World View's Chief Technology Officer. "The successful flight of the parafoil at this altitude brings us closer to flying private citizens safely to the edge of space and also allows us to continue our research and education program by providing safe access to the near-space environment."

This flight's payload contained experiments from two universities. Montana State University tested a computer system designed to achieve increased reliability in extreme environments as well as a low-cost tracking and high-definition video link, which they hope to use to capture the 2017 solar eclipse on video. The University of North Florida flew experimental technology to measure the ozone gas profile in the stratosphere using a nanocrystalline gas sensor array. All three experiments are a result of student efforts over multiple years. The research and education payloads flown by World View are part of the company's commitment to opening routine access to high-altitude balloon flights as well as its dedication to advancing STEM programs in schools

Healthy Lifestyle Tip

Reaching 100 Years of Age May Be More About Attitude



University of Georgia research has provided new clues on surviving to be 100 years old. How we feel about ourselves and our ability to adapt to an accumulation of challenging life experiences may be as or more important than health factors. The research found that critical life events and personal history along with how people adapt and cope to stressful situations are crucial to explaining successful aging.

"Understanding health in these terms has huge implications for quality of life," said Leonard Poon, director Institute of Gerontology, UGA College of Public Health and lead author of the study. "What is happening to you matters, but more importantly, it is your perception of what is happening to you that is really important for your individual health."

"An individual confronted with a stressful situation can either find a quick emotional solution or ruminate on the problem," explained Poon. "One is very destructive in terms of general well-being, and the other is very adaptive." *Source: medicalnewstoday.com*

Paraproductians

Where there's a will, I want to be in it.

Reading on tablets late linked to worse sleep



A study has found that reading from a light-emitting device, such as an e-reader, before bedtime can shift your body's natural clock and delay the onset and characteristics of your sleep. And that could leave you feeling groggy the morning after, according to the study published online in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

A dozen people checked into the sleep lab at Boston's Brigham and Women's Hospital and stayed for two weeks. During that time, each spent five consecutive evenings reading a book for four hours under reflected light, and five evenings viewing an iPad for the same duration (the order of the five-day blocks was randomly assigned). All had a mandatory bedtime of 10 p.m. and a 6 a.m. wake-up. Blood tests showed those who read from the computer tablet had suppressed evening levels of melatonin, and on the next day, the increase in that hormone occurred 90 minutes later, an indication of a shift in their body's circadian cycle, according to the study. Long-term suppression of melatonin by nighttime light exposure has been linked to increased risk of certain cancers, the study noted.

The study subjects using e-readers also took 10 minutes longer to fall asleep and had nearly 12 minutes less rapid-eye-movement sleep, a stage that has been linked to memory consolidation, the study found. Tablet reading participants also rated themselves as less sleepy in the evenings, a subjective measure that also correlated with weaker electroencephalogram, or EEG, readings that are associated with transition to sleep, the study found. Those who used the e-readers also described themselves as more sleepy the morning after, and needed more time to feel fully alert.

"We really didn't anticipate it would have an effect the following morning, especially after an eight-hour sleep opportunity - and study subjects slept the same amount of time," said neuroscientist Anne-Marie Chang, a biobehavioral health expert from Penn State University who works at Brigham's division of sleep and circadian disorders.

Although the magnitude of the melatonin shift was large, the smaller REM and sleep delays also may contribute to the morning-after effects, Chang said. Researchers suspect the quality of the light from computer devices matters more than its overall intensity relative to reflected light cast on a book. "These devices are enriched for short-wavelength light, which is in the blue range," Chang said.

Previous studies have shown that exposure to such wavelengths strongly affects the body's circadian clock, compared with exposure to light of longer wavelengths. Researchers warned that the effects they measured in a laboratory, with a mandatory lights-out, may understate the problem in the real world.

"If you're in a home environment and you're reading on a light-emitting device and you're not feeling sleepy, chances are you're not going to stop and go to sleep at the time that you're supposed to," Chang said.

PICKLES | Brian Crane



The Trouble with Advance Directives

By Paula Span/The New York Times



The man had written an advance directive four years ago, before his advancing dementia had made communication difficult. He had been very specific. In case of a life-threatening condition, “he wanted comfort care only, no heroics,” said Dr. Rebecca Aslakson, a critical care anesthesiologist at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. But last month an uncontrollable nosebleed caused the 79-year-old to begin vomiting blood. The nursing home that cared for him sent him to a hospital, where doctors put him on a ventilator. They slowed the bleeding, but couldn’t stop it. After a week and two surgical procedures, the patient was transferred to Johns Hopkins. There, physicians stopped the nosebleed, performed a tracheostomy (a procedure to create an opening in the throat that would permit long-term ventilator use) and placed a feeding tube in his stomach. Two weeks after that, a surgeon happened to find the

patient’s advance directive in his medical chart. None of the other health care providers had noticed it, which meant they had all inadvertently violated it.

Such missteps occur more commonly than most of us, with our carefully composed documents stored in drawers somewhere, would like to think. They help explain why researchers and medical staff working with patients near the end of life have grown increasingly disenchanted with advance directives, including living wills and powers of attorney for health care.

The patient’s son, who had agreed to life-prolonging treatment, had never been given a copy of the document. “He very much wanted to follow his father’s wishes,” Dr. Aslakson said. But he hadn’t known what they were.

The patient, able to breathe after the ventilator was withdrawn, has returned to his nursing home with Maryland’s version of a Physician Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment, or Polst, form, specifying comfort care only. That should prevent another round of unwanted treatment. At the moment, though, “maybe severe dementia is not a quality of life he values,” Dr. Aslakson said.

Ever since Congress passed the Patient Self-Determination Act in 1990, health professionals and consumer advocates have urged Americans, especially older adults, to draw up advance directives and distribute them to families and doctors. The documents allow people with terminal illnesses to accept or reject medical interventions and to appoint surrogate decision makers if they become incapacitated. The campaign does seem to have paid off in one sense: Among Americans over age 60, the proportion who had advance directives when they died rose to 72 percent in 2010 from 47 percent in 2000, according to data from the national Health and Retirement Study.

Too often, though, an advance directive hardly seems to matter. Stories abound of documents misplaced, stashed in safe deposit boxes, filed in lawyers’ offices. Dr. Aslakson remembers a frantic search to unearth a directive that was eventually found tucked into a Bible.

Frequently, “the directive never gets to the right place, or isn’t referred to when a decision needs to be made,” said David M. English, chairman of the American Bar Association’s Commission on Law and Aging.

And when hope trumps documentation, the patient’s instructions can be overridden. A hospice staffer told me of an older woman whose directive prohibited life-sustaining measures. Nevertheless, her sister assented to feeding tubes, which a physician had encouraged “just to see if it would help.” The woman lived for months with interventions she had expressly rejected.

But advance directives also fail because they are not medical orders. Their vague or outmoded language — When is a condition “terminal”? How long must a “persistent vegetative state” last? — doesn’t tell physicians exactly how to proceed. “The ambiguities can result in receiving treatment for a longer time while they’re ironed out,” said Dr. Susan Tolle, director of the Center for Ethics in Health Care at Oregon Health &

Science University. Moreover, emergency medical personnel operate under standing orders to attempt resuscitation, whatever an advance directive says. (Only a state do-not-resuscitate or Polst form can prevent that.) “You may already be on a breathing machine before you pull into the E.R.,” Dr. Tolle said.

The Polst form does a better job than advance directives of keeping dying people out of hospitals, research has shown. Completed by health care professionals in consultation with patients, this document can stipulate that only comfort measures be applied, or full life-prolonging interventions — or various options in between.

But a Polst can’t always substitute for an advance directive. It is meant for people with severe illnesses: Asked if the patient’s death within a year would be a surprise, their doctors would say no. “Most people over 65 are still too healthy to have a Polst,” Dr. Tolle said.

Besides, putting Polst into effect requires a coordinated statewide system involving hospitals, nursing homes and hospices. Oregon and West Virginia, the pioneers, have well-developed systems with electronic registries, said Dr. Alvin H. Moss, who directs the West Virginia University Center for Health Ethics and Law.

Another 15 states have programs endorsed by a national task force, and 24 more are developing them, “so about 40 out of 50 states are well along,” he said. (Confusingly, states use varying nomenclature to describe these documents: Molst in New York, MOST in Colorado, Lapost in Louisiana.)

In the meantime, people who aren’t sick or frail, but have strong feelings about what should happen when they are, can’t rely on a Polst or an advance directive alone. What they really need, experts say, is an ongoing series of conversations with the relatives or friends who will direct their care when they no longer can. In a crisis, doctors will turn to those people — more than to any document — to learn what the patient wants.

Triggering those discussions may be the most useful thing an advance directive accomplishes. (Websites like The Conversation Project and Prepare can help.)

“Talk about what things make life worth living for you,” Dr. Aslakson advised. People feel reassured, even downright virtuous, when they have completed their paperwork, “but if the family doesn’t know about it, if the medical team doesn’t know about it, it might as well not exist.”

A Lapse Or A Loss?

Some memory changes are a normal part of aging, while others are not.

Normal Aging

- Walking into a room and forgetting why you entered.
- Having trouble retrieving the names of unfamiliar people.
- A change in memory compared with young adulthood.
- Memory changes similar to others of the same age.

Abnormal Aging

- Getting lost in familiar surroundings.
- Having difficulty remembering important details of recent events.
- Having difficulty following the plot of a television program or book because of memory.
- Memory changes that are worse than others of the same age.

Human Mysteries

It's possible for your body to survive without a surprisingly large fraction of its internal organs. Even if you lose your stomach, your spleen, 75% of your liver, 80% of your intestines, one kidney, one lung, and virtually every organ from your pelvic and groin area, you wouldn't be very healthy, but you would live.

Older Really Can Mean Wiser

By Benedict Carey/The New York Times



Behind all those canned compliments for older adults — spry! wily! wise! — is an appreciation for something that scientists have had a hard time characterizing: mental faculties that improve with age. Knowledge is a large part of the equation, of course. People who are middle-aged and older tend to know more than young adults, by virtue of having been around longer, and score higher on vocabulary tests, crossword puzzles and other measures of so-called crystallized intelligence.

Still, young adults who consult their elders (mostly when desperate) don't do so just to gather facts, solve crosswords or borrow a credit card. Nor, generally, are they looking for help with short-term memory or puzzle solving. Those abilities, called fluid intelligence, peak in the 20s.

No, the older brain offers something more, according to a new paper in the journal *Psychological Science*. Elements of social judgment and short-term memory, important pieces of the cognitive puzzle, may peak later in life than previously thought.

The postdoctoral fellows Joshua Hartshorne of M.I.T. and Laura Germine of Harvard and Massachusetts General Hospital analyzed a huge trove of scores on cognitive tests taken by people of all ages. The researchers found that the broad split in age-related cognition — fluid in the young, crystallized in the old — masked several important nuances. “This dichotomy between early peaks and later peaks is way too coarse,” Dr. Hartshorne said. “There are a lot more patterns going on, and we need to take those into account to fully understand the effects of age on cognition.”

The new paper is hardly the first challenge to the scientific literature on age-related decline, and it won't be the last. A year ago, German scientists argued that cognitive “deficits” in aging were caused largely by the accumulation of knowledge — that is, the brain slows down because it has to search a larger mental library of facts. That idea has stirred some debate among scientists. Experts said the new analysis raised a different question: Are there distinct, independent elements of memory and cognition that peak at varying times of life?

“I think they have more work to do to demonstrate that that's the case,” said Denise Park, a professor of behavior and brain science at the University of Texas at Dallas. “But this is a provocative paper, and it's going to have an impact on the field.”

The strength of the new analysis is partly in its data. The study evaluated historic scores from the popular Wechsler intelligence test, and compared them with more recent results from tens of thousands of people who took short cognitive tests on the authors' websites, testmybrain.org and gameswithwords.org. The one drawback of this approach is that, because it didn't follow the same people over a lifetime, it might have missed the effect of different cultural experiences, said K. Warner Schaie, a researcher at Penn State University.

But most previous studies have not been nearly as large, or had such a range of ages. Participants on the websites were 10 to 89 years old, and they took a large battery of tests, measuring skills like memory for abstract symbols and strings of digits, problem solving, and facility reading emotions from strangers' eyes.

At least as important, the researchers looked at the effect of age on each type of test. Previous research had often grouped related tests together, on the assumption that they captured a single underlying attribute in the same way a coach might rate, say, athleticism based on a person's speed, strength and vertical leaping ability. The result of the new approach? “We found different abilities really maturing or ripening at different ages,” Dr. Germine said. “It's a much richer picture of the life span than just calling it aging.”

Processing speed — the quickness with which someone can manipulate digits, words or images, as if on a mental sketch board — generally peaks in the late teens, Dr. Germine and Dr. Hartshorne confirmed, and memory for some things, like names, does so in the early 20s. But the capacity of that sketch board, called working memory, peaks at least a decade later and is slow to decline. In particular, the ability to recall faces

and do some mental manipulation of numbers peaked about age 30, the study found, “a fact difficult to assimilate into the fluid/crystallized intelligence dichotomy.”

The researchers also analyzed results from the Reading the Mind in the Eyes test. The test involves looking at snapshots of strangers’ eyes on a computer screen and determining their moods from a menu of options like “tentative,” “uncertain” and “skeptical.” “It’s not an easy test, and you’re not sure afterward how well you did,” Dr. Germine said. “I thought I’d done poorly but in fact did pretty well.” Yet people in their 40s or 50s consistently did the best, the study found, and the skill declined very slowly later in life.

The picture that emerges from these findings is of an older brain that moves more slowly than its younger self, but is just as accurate in many areas and more adept at reading others’ moods — on top of being more knowledgeable. That’s a handy combination, given that so many important decisions people make intimately affects others. No one needs a cognitive scientist to explain that it’s better to approach a boss about a raise when he or she is in a good mood. But the older mind may be better able to head off interpersonal misjudgments and to navigate tricky situations. “As in, ‘that person’s not happy with all your quick thinking and young person’s processing speed — he’s about to punch you,’” said Zach Hambrick, a psychology professor at Michigan State University.

The details of this more textured picture of the aging brain are still far from clear, and social measures like the Reading the Mind in the Eyes test have not been used much in this kind of research, Dr. Hambrick and other experts said. And it is not apparent from the new analysis whether changes in cognition with age result from a single cause — like a decline in the speed of neural transmission — or to multiple ones. But for now, the new research at least gives some meaning to the empty adjective “wily.”

A Firm Diagnosis Of Frailty

By Karen Pennar



Quick, define of frailty. Infirmity? Disability? Weakness? Shakiness? "For years, frailty was like pornography," says Dr. John W. Rowe, professor of health policy and management at the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University. It was hard to define, but you knew it when you saw it. For many people, even many doctors, frailty was a catchall description of the state of being old.

Linda P. Fried's work changed all that. After years of observing and working with older patients, Dr. Fried recognized objective hallmarks of frailty, and in the 1990s developed a definition of frailty in people 65 and older that called for the diagnosis when three or more of the following five criteria were present: unintentional weight loss of 10 pounds or more in the past year, self-reported exhaustion, weakness as measured by grip strength, slow walking speed and low physical activity. The presence of one or two of those criteria would identify a person as "pre-frail."

Now doctors could evaluate their older patients for the presence of these factors. They could learn who might be at greater risk of falls and suggest preventive measures, like changes in the home. They could determine who might have difficulty after surgery, and be more vigilant in care before and after operations. They might give a frail person, or someone at risk, a glucose tolerance test, to be sure that diabetes or prediabetes would be detected. Frailty researchers like Dr. Jeremy Walston, at Johns Hopkins, and others are investigating the biological markers of frailty to develop treatments and interventions that could help prevent it.

Today the frail who live alone and with families, not in hospitals or nursing homes, account for about 7 percent of people 65 and older and about 18 percent of those 80 and older; rates are generally higher for women than for men.

Although weight loss is one of the five components of the frailty index, Dr. Fried acknowledges that being overweight or obese - likely to characterize a larger proportion of the elderly in the future - can also figure in frailty. Being overweight may mask a "core frailty" Dr. Fried says, and the obese are at risk of sarcopenia, or extensive loss of muscle mass.

Alzheimer's study by UCLA Center on Aging



"The idea that Alzheimer's is entirely genetic and unpreventable is perhaps the greatest misconception about the disease," says Gary Small, M.D., director of the UCLA Center on Aging. Researchers now know that Alzheimer's like heart disease and cancer, develops over decades and can be influenced by lifestyle factors including cholesterol, blood pressure, obesity, depression, education, nutrition, sleep and mental, physical and social activity. Mountains of research reveals that simple things you do every day might cut your odds of losing your mind to Alzheimer's.

In search of scientific ways to delay and outlive Alzheimer's and other dementias, I tracked down thousands of studies and interviewed dozens of experts. The results in a new book: *100 Simple Things You Can Do to Prevent Alzheimer's and Age-Related Memory Loss*.

Here are 10 strategies I found most surprising.

1. Have coffee. In an amazing flip-flop, coffee is the new brain tonic. A large European study showed that drinking three to five cups of coffee a day in midlife cut Alzheimer's risk 65% in late life. University of South Florida researcher Gary Arendash credits caffeine: He says it reduces dementia-causing amyloid in animal brains. Others credit coffee's antioxidants. So drink up, Arendash advises, unless your doctor says you shouldn't.

2. Floss. Oddly, the health of your teeth and gums can help predict dementia. University of Southern California research found that having periodontal disease before age 35 quadrupled the odds of dementia years later. Older people with tooth and gum disease score lower on memory and cognition tests, other studies show. Experts speculate that inflammation in diseased mouths migrates to the brain.

3. Be a "Googler." Doing an online search can stimulate your aging brain even more than reading a book, says UCLA's Gary Small, who used brain MRIs to prove it. The biggest surprise: Novice Internet surfers, ages 55 to 78, activated key memory and learning centers in the brain after only a week of Web surfing for an hour a day.

4. Grow new brain cells. Impossible, scientists used to say. Now it's believed that thousands of brain cells are born daily. The trick is to keep the newborns alive. What works: aerobic exercise (such as a brisk 30-minute walk every day), strenuous mental activity, eating salmon and other fatty fish, and avoiding obesity, chronic stress, sleep deprivation, heavy drinking and vitamin B deficiency.

5. Drink apple juice. Apple juice can push production of the "memory chemical" acetylcholine; that's the way the popular Alzheimer's drug Aricept works, says Thomas Shea, Ph.D., of the University of Massachusetts. He was surprised that old mice given apple juice did better on learning and memory tests than mice that received water. A dose for humans: 16 ounces, or two to three apples a day.

6. Protect your head. Blows to the head, even mild ones early in life, increase odds of dementia years later. Pro football players have 19 times the typical rate of memory-related diseases. Alzheimer's is four times more common in elderly who suffer a head injury, Columbia University finds. Accidental falls doubled an older person's odds of dementia five years later in another study. Wear seat belts and helmets, fall-proof your house, and don't take risks.

7. Meditate. Brain scans show that people who meditate regularly have less cognitive decline and brain shrinkage - a classic sign of Alzheimer's - as they age. Andrew Newberg of the University Of Pennsylvania School Of Medicine says yoga meditation of 12 minutes a day for two months improved blood flow and cognitive functioning in seniors with memory problems.

8. Take D. A "severe deficiency" of vitamin D boosts older Americans' risk of cognitive impairment 394%, an alarming study by England's University of Exeter finds. And most Americans lack vitamin D. Experts recommend a daily dose of 800 IU to 2,000 IU of vitamin D3.

9. Fill your brain. It's called "cognitive reserve." A rich accumulation of life experiences - education, marriage, socializing, a stimulating job, language skills, having a purpose in life, physical activity and mentally demanding leisure activities - makes your brain better able to tolerate plaques and tangles. You can even have significant Alzheimer's pathology and no symptoms of dementia if you have high cognitive

reserve, says David Bennett, M.D., of Chicago's Rush University Medical Center.

10. Avoid infection. Astonishing new evidence ties Alzheimer's to cold sores, gastric ulcers, Lyme disease, pneumonia and the flu. Ruth Itzhaki, Ph.D., of the University of Manchester in England estimates the cold-sore herpes simplex virus is incriminated in 60% of Alzheimer's cases. The theory: Infections trigger excessive beta amyloid "gunk" that kills brain cells. Proof is still lacking, but why not avoid common infections and take appropriate vaccines, antibiotics and antiviral agents?

Excerpted from Jean Carper's newest book: 100 Simple Things You Can Do to Prevent Alzheimer's"

Panel Rejects Sternest F.D.A. Warning for Steroid Shots

By Sabiuna Tavernise/The New York Times



A panel of medical experts advising the Food and Drug Administration decided not to recommend slapping the sternest federal warning on steroid injections for neck and back pain, allowing their use to continue relatively unchanged. Millions of Americans get such treatments annually. The F.D.A. had asked the panel to weigh in on whether the agency should require labels for the injections to carry the toughest federal warning, a so-called contraindication, that essentially would have signaled to doctors that the risks of use outweighed any possible therapeutic benefit. The agency often takes the advice of its expert panels, though it does not have to. That wording was too broad, the panel decided, and it asked instead if there were any clinical situations in which the risks of steroid injections were greater than the benefits. The majority of the panel voted yes - 15 to 7—but nearly everyone who did so explained that the choice was made based on evidence showing the risks of a specific type of neck injection, a far narrower category of treatment that many doctors say is already being used less frequently.

"This is great news, it's Wonderful' said Dr. Houman Danesh, director of integrative pain management at Mount Sinai Hospital. "We've been doing epidurals for six decades. This reassures us that they are a safe and effective treatment." He added that the vote "just reaffirms that there may be increased risk" with the procedure the experts singled out - injections of certain steroids in which the needle passes very close to a cluster of small important arteries in the neck. Injecting steroids that have a granular texture can increase the risk that an artery will become blocked, causing a serious health problem. Dr. Danesh said that his practice had long stopped performing such injections because of concerns about just such risks.

Administration officials estimated that one million Americans get epidural steroid injections each year, but many experts consider that an undercount. Dr. Laxmaiah Manchikanti, who runs a pain clinic in Paducah, KY, and is chairman of the American Society of Interventional Pain Physicians, estimated that the number of injections administered was probably four million to six million a year. He said that the neck procedure that some on the panel had found questionable was known among clinicians to be risky, and that it accounted for only a small percentage of total injections. "Actually they should just ban that procedure," Dr. Manchikanti said. "It is very high risk, and so far there is no evidence that it works."

Dr. William Landau, a professor of neurology at Washington University in St. Louis, said he believed that the broader category of epidural steroid injections should get the toughest labels. He contended there was little evidence that epidural steroid injections reduced pain. "There's no positive excuse for injecting this stuff except for the profits:' he said. But many pain management specialists say that such epidural pain treatments work and are minimally invasive. They were seen unfavorably, the specialists say, only after a compounding pharmacy in Massachusetts distributed tainted steroid medication across the country in 2012, killing dozens and sickening hundreds.



Smart Luggage for the Connected Age

By Jane L. Levere/The New York Times



It wasn't long ago that the main selling point of a piece of luggage was its durability — think American Tourister and its rather excitable gorilla. Not for Kevin Harwood. Like many travelers today, he is looking for technology to go along with durability. He stumbled across a carry-on bag controlled by smartphone — with a Bluetooth-enabled lock, GPS tracking and a USB port for recharging a device. It has a built-in scale, too.

“I'm a little bit of a geek, always looking for products that extend from my phone, that connect my world and me,” said Mr. Harwood. Why should luggage be any different? At the crowdfunding site Indiegogo he was among the first to buy into a start-up called Bluesmart that is developing a connected bag. Mr. Harwood has plenty of company. Bluesmart raised more than \$2 million from more than 10,000 backers, far surpassing its goal. Bluesmart, which expects to deliver its first bags in October, is part of what has become a stampede of businesses — both start-up and established — into the nascent connected luggage industry.

Samsonite introduced a new line of GeoTrakR suitcases, containing a cellular-enabled baggage-tracking system from LugLoc, at the Travel Goods Association trade show in Las Vegas. Andiamo will introduce a new carry-on with a Wi-Fi hotspot, battery charger and other features. Samsonite said its new line of smart suitcases, made of ballistic-weave nylon, would be in stores by late summer and come in four models.

Even telecom companies are interested. Rimowa, a German luggage manufacturer, is jointly developing a smart suitcase line called Bag2Go with Airbus and Deutsche Telekom. The new bags, expected to be available next year, will interact with sensors in the cargo holds of Airbus aircraft to identify their location. “Adding electronic capability and communications to baggage makes a lot of sense,” said Frank Gillett, an analyst at Forrester Research. “What you're seeing is the first round of innovation that will take time to evolve. The goal is to improve the travel experience.”

Bluesmart is not the only luggage venture raising money through crowdfunding. Trunkster collected \$1.4 million from 3,500 investors through Kickstarter, easily surpassing its goal. Jesse Potash, a co-founder, said it would release a carry-on and a suitcase in late summer. Trunkster's bags will have a tracking system, a scale and a battery with two USB chargers, Mr. Potash said, as well as a roll-top entry providing quick access.

The push for the connected bag solves one of the most vexing problems for travelers — lost luggage. “The last thing that you want to have happen is an unwelcome surprise of a suitcase disappearing,” said Henry Harteveldt, travel analyst for Atmosphere Research Group. “This is peace-of-mind technology.”

Travelers who want to track their bags but not replace luggage they already own, or who are concerned about a suitcase's embedded tracking system possibly malfunctioning, have another option: free-standing devices. Beside LugLoc — which uses Bluetooth and GSM technology and costs \$70, plus additional search fees — there is Trakdot, whose GSM device texts and emails users the location of their checked suitcase when their plane lands and costs \$50, plus an annual service fee of \$20. Franck Dubarry, founder of Lev Technology, said his company would introduce a Smart Unit device this summer that will tell users where their bags are after flights. It will cost \$99, plus activation and other fees.

To comply with regulations governing personal electronic devices, the tracking systems are generally designed to automatically shut down once they are stored and to automatically turn back on once a plane lands.

Experts say this new smart baggage represents just the first wave of this equipment. “Products that make travel easier and better for customers quickly spread throughout the market,” said Michele Marini Pittenger, president of the Travel Goods Association. “To use recent examples, we've seen lightweight bags, expandable cases and four-wheeled luggage rapidly become the new normal,” she said.

London and the tube are getting it - happy tourists!



Tourists wanting to go out on a weekend in London no longer have to spend overpriced money on night taxis. They can now simply take the tube. In London all-night services are to run at weekends on most Tube lines, the London Overground and Docklands Light Railway.

Weekend trains are due to start running 24-hours on the Piccadilly, Victoria, Central, Jubilee and Northern lines by the end of the year. Night-time services will be extended to the Metropolitan, Circle, District, and Hammersmith & City lines by 2021. Services will be extended on the London Overground in 2017 and the Docklands Light Railway by 2021.

The plans are part of a six-point long term economic plan Chancellor George Osborne and London Mayor Boris Johnson said would add £6.4bn to the London economy by 2030 and create half a million new jobs.

The government said it will provide £10bn of funding for investment in new London transport infrastructure over the next parliament, including new Tube improvements, better roads, more buses and cycle lanes, amid predictions the population of the capital is expected to reach 10 million by the early 2030s.

The so called "night Tube" was announced in November 2013, with all-night services expected to run on Fridays and Saturdays on the Piccadilly, Victoria, Central, Jubilee and Northern lines from September.

Tube services from central London currently finish at around 00:30 GMT on Friday and Saturday nights.

Transport for London (TfL) also confirmed it will extend wi-fi to all below ground sections of the Tube by the end of the next Parliament.

TfL announced it is ordering 200 more new Routemaster buses this year and committing to 800 new vehicles each year from 2016 onwards.

Gulfstream G650ER Sets Round-the-World Record



A Gulfstream G650ER took off from White Plains, New York, with three passengers and four crew members on board. It flew 6,939 nautical miles eastbound to Beijing at an average speed of Mach 0.87 for a total flight time of 13 hours, 20 minutes. The jet then continued east another 6,572 nm to Savannah, Georgia, accomplishing the mission at an average speed of Mach 0.89 for a total flight time of 12 hours. The aircraft landed both times with fuel in excess of NBAA IFR reserves. For those of you doing the math, that's all the Earth's time zones traversed in less than 24 hours.

"There isn't another business jet capable of this mission," said Scott Neal, senior vice president, Worldwide Sales and Marketing for Gulfstream. "This flight proves just how powerful a machine the G650ER is. We promised customers an aircraft that could take them farther faster than any other. We delivered on that promise."

In addition to the two pending records, the extended-range G650ER set two speed records during flight testing last year when the test aircraft flew from Los Angeles to Melbourne, Australia, in 14 hours, 58 minutes and then flew from Hong Kong to Teterboro, New Jersey, in 14 hours, 7 minutes.

The G650ER can travel 7,500 nm at Mach 0.85 and 6,400 nm at Mach 0.90. It has a maximum speed of Mach 0.925.

It's true no other business jet can match the G650ER's feat. Bombardier is developing a longer-range version of its original Global Express dubbed the Global 8000 that promises a max range of 7,900 nm. Which begs the question, once you can fly halfway around the world nonstop, would you ever need to fly any farther?

WHEN INSULTS HAD CLASS

A member of Parliament to Disraeli: "Sir, you will either die on the gallows or of some unspeakable disease."

"That depends, Sir," said Disraeli, "whether I embrace your policies or your mistress."

LETTERS

SAM ANDREWS—Blanchard, OK

Greetings Leon, Renewal time again, mailed the dues and stamp money last week. Thank you and the fine workers that produce one of the best magazines that come to my house. I look forward to every issue and enjoy reading the adventures of all who write.

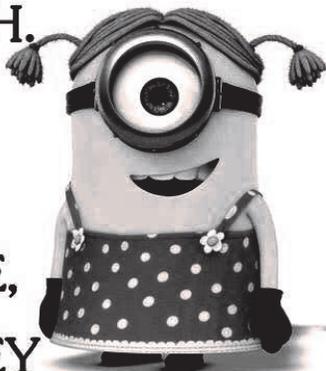
I don't recognize too many of the new members' names but after counting up the 27 years since I retired I think I know why! Cannot believe I will be 82 next week! When I was a kid I thought that was really old, I have now changed my opinion.

I can look through one of my logbooks from the 60's on and still have vivid memories of almost every crew member's name that I flew with. I see some of them are still attending the get-togethers. Someday I hope to show up at one of those. I also miss the Mechanics and Ramp personnel, they were a great bunch and I enjoyed the letters I received from them after I retired. Boy! I loved them all, and still miss them. They all had a hand in making my time with the old United the happiest years of my life. Thank you all.

Still able to cope with whatever comes up, thank the Lord. Still flying the Aeronca L-16, though I no longer fly in the airshows as not too many of them around anymore.

Thanks again everyone, "Blue side" goes up! *Sam*

**HUSBANDS ARE THE BEST
PEOPLE TO SHARE
SECRETS WITH.
THEY'LL
NEVER
TELL ANYONE,
BECAUSE THEY
AREN'T EVEN LISTENING.**



GENE ARMSTRONG—Vaughn, WA

Hi, First I want to thank all of you who send out the RUPA magazine. Many thanks for a wonderful job.

Another year of fighting off the ravages of Parkinson Disease. However I feel lucky that it is progressing, if you can call it that, slowly and I'm still able to do most of my daily activities with very little restrictions. Still able to get around in our motorhome to some of Washington's great state parks.

We're still in the same home we bought in 1975. Finally got smart and hire someone else to do most of the heavy work.

Haven't been on a UAL plane since retirement in 1996. Want to go someplace, just buy a ticket and join the herd (moooooo) at boarding time.

Here's to everyone to enjoy all the good things that life has to offer.

Check is in the mail. *Gene*, 1963-1996

MIKE BARRETT—Absecon, NJ

Hello to all, time for the annual pulse check, and check.

Nothing new to report, but then again we're all at the point in life where nothing new is a good thing, unless you're talking about grandchildren!

My wife and I celebrated our 40th anniversary in Oct. and drove California Hwy 1 from Half Moon Bay to the old layover haunt of Redondo Beach. Strongly recommended, spectacular scenery, do it before you get too old, the drive can be intimidating!

Keep well, *Mike*

BILL CHERWIN—Crystal Lake, IL

I have now completed sixteen years of retirement, and reached the age of seventy-six.

I retired from airshow flying with the Lima Lima Team at the end of the 2012 season, being the last founding member on the team. It was a great 26 year experience that I will always remember. They did bring me back to fly two shows in 2013, and I lead the Elmhurst Turkey Trot in 2014. I sold my T34 in October of 2013, and miss it every time I run across a photo of the old bird.

I have been able to maintain my class II medical, and my CFII ratings, so I give check-outs and Flight Reviews occasionally. I would not even attempt starting a brand new student out, as there are more

squares to fill than “Carter has Little Liver Pills.” (Bet you haven’t heard that one in a while.) I don’t have time to acquire my law degree to be able to fill out log books satisfactorily.

Still maintain a summer house in Grand Marais, Minnesota, where we spend the summers. Plenty of work up there, mowing the grass, tending the garden, cutting fire wood, and trying to keep the fish population in check.

Enjoy the breakfasts with the retirees, and the occasional RUPA luncheons. Just had a luncheon yesterday, and was startled to hear the horror stories of line flying today. Other than the bankruptcy, I guess I retired at the right time, after enjoying the “golden years.”

Bill C. ORD, CLE, JFK, SFO, & LAX

GARRY CLARK—Frisco, TX

Since all the airlines seem to be devaluing their mileage programs we made the decision to use all our American Airlines miles for a trip to Paris in business class last April (2014). I used to fly to Paris frequently on the 777, but Carol has never been so it was more exciting for her than me. Nevertheless, we both had a nice time culminated by dinner at Le Jules Verne atop the Eiffel Tower. Only 630 Euros without any wine. Good food and impeccable service but I wouldn't bother to go back. We really enjoyed the Louvre and spent 2 days there. Truth be told, I was not impressed with American's old clunky 767-300's. No seatback entertainment anywhere in the airplane and they gave us a Samsung tablet in business class to watch movies, etc. If I were paying I would be on one of the European carriers...LH, AF, BA.

In July we went on a road trip to So California to visit our son and family. Enjoyable but driving from Dallas was a LONG drive. I frequently though we should be on an airplane where I could take a nap.

Carol is still working at a part-time pharmacist job. Her paycheck goes into savings.

Thanks for all the hard work that goes into *RUPANEWS*. Check is in the mail. *Garry & Carol*
DC-6 to B-777, EWR JFK CLE DEN ORD

GERALD COSS—Rio Rico, AZ

The year has flown by once again. Your articles & jokes keep getting better thankfully.

We definitely appreciate keeping up with old friends (who unfortunately drop by the wayside, dog-gone-it!). i.e., Ken Ewing's passing broke my heart as he and Kathy have been wonderful friends to us. Ken was in the Denver Tower on my final landing to record, greet and shake my hand. A moment, I'll never forget!

Jaculine and I still love being where it warms our bones. Amazing how quickly your blood thins when you leave the snow and cold! Last year was the big surprise 80th birthday gathering, but she continues to find lots of projects for me to complete and fill my time. *Gerald*

RALPH DILULLO—Charlotte, VA

Dear Friends, Jodie and I are happy and healthy-54 years. Our farmer son continues to grow and prosper, our pilot son is doing well and I will be at Chino, CA annual airshow 2 May 2015.

My son clears his hanger at Chino and hosts a cook-out and Corvette show where visitors can enjoy good food, classic cars and a hell of a good airshow. If you are interested, call me for details, 434-452-5700. Show and food is FREE.

Marine son Lt Col Matt Dilullo is back in Reserve status. Best wishes, *Ralph*

CARL EBERLE—Geneva, IL

Hello All, April will mark 10 years since my last UAL flight (working), as well as my 70th birthday.

Not too much has changed. Still in Geneva, IL, our home since 1976. Still do two cruises a year, usually one river and one ocean. Last month we went to the Canary Islands which we had not been to before as well as some other ports in that area. Ship left from and returned to Barcelona and we had no trouble with SA travel. Took UAL ORD-FRA and Lufthansa FRA-BCN. Used the Business Class option on LH which works great. Lufthansa treats us very nice and the service on a 2 hour flight is terrific.

Domestic travel is mostly to visit our 33 year old son, Andy, who since high school has resided in LA, Berkeley, DC, Mumbai (NOT domestic and my wife would not go), and now back in DC. Also flew on UAL to ALB last July to watch Andy participate in the Lake Placid Ironman. Our other son Eric, 39, lives about 2 miles from us and we have the pleasure of our 5 year old grandson quite a bit. I still fly

occasionally with Bob Helfferich in a Challenger 600, but we no longer fly any charter so it is not very often.

I sold my share of the 1947 Bonanza that I was part owner of since 1994, but I get to go with Bob occasionally in his Cardinal. He's planning on going to Sun n Fun next month and I plan on going with. We will take along our fold up bikes and do some biking around south Florida. I continue to cycle around the local area but have lost my number one cycling companion, Wendell Jelm (UAL retired 1999) because he moved from St Charles (4 miles away) to a condo in Lincoln Park, about 40 miles away.

I still volunteer at Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry in the Boeing-727 exhibit.

My thanks to the volunteers that put together the *RUPANEWS*.

Carl Eberle ORD, LAX, SFO

JOE FABBO—Rancho Mirage, CA

Sorry Leon, I'm now 92 years old and handicapped. Not very smart! I also have home care girls. They try to take care of this old pilot. Thanks, *Joe*

STEVE FILSON—Danville, CA

Hello Leon/Cleve I'm a little late with the check this month but it's on its way. Here's my first letter to the mag.

Retirement has had its ups and downs like all of us. I'm still in the Danville area and in good health, but it would have been a lot sweeter had my wife lived a little longer to enjoy it.

My last two years though saw two great trips each year to the south of France in Aix-en-Provence with

side trips from there to just about everywhere. Was able to see my daughter and her Brit boyfriend finally get married in France during the same time last September. Now they're living in Brooklyn. They must have taken a wrong turn somewhere.

Sure do enjoy the fine work you all do putting out this publication. I look forward to each and every edition. Till next year, *Steve*

BARRY HAMLEY—San Jose, CA

I actually had two final flights. I was on the rope start 747 and the company decided to retire the planes early. The last month for schedules that the pilots could bid was in November, and being number 2 on the plane in SFO, I bid a HNL layover and brought my wife along. Other than kicking an unruly corporate pilot off at the gate, the trip was quite nice. (The cabin attendants thought that was great!)

For the final month of rope start flying, the company put us all on reserve - which pissed off most of us. I was on a layover in ORD when I was contacted by the number two guy at DENTK asking if I would like to fly one of the final flights. He stated it would be to KOA with a layover. That was really appealing since SFO-KOA was usually a turn. I got to select my good friend Harry Roffelson as the S/O and brought along my daughter and buddy Norm Justesen. (My wife was working and couldn't make it) Nice layover and even being a cheap pilot, I sprang for drinks for the whole crew in KOA. Incidentally this was partially arranged by Jon Rowbottom. He was in TK for 400 school and they asked him if he wanted it but Jon suggested me stating I was "a good ALPA guy."

That was my real final flight, and the airplane was ferried to the junk yard. Since I still had six months to my retirement date, the company paid me 400 pay for not going to work because training was so expensive. Regards, *Barry*

MIKE HEPERLEN—Crystal Lake, IL

I have a few aches and 2 store bought hips since UAL said goodbye to me 20 years ago. Boy, the time sure goes fast. I don't feel that I am 80, however, that is what my birth certificate says.

Peg and I still enjoy good health and we are planning on a road trip in the fall to visit some of our national parks in the Western USA.

The last project I worked on, an RV-7, flew last



Spring, and is now in the paint shop. I am looking for something else to occupy my time before I become too feeble to work on another airplane.

Check is in the mail. *Mike*

WILLIAM HORN—Rolling Hills, CA

I'm a bit late. When pushing one hundred, things go slowly. *Bill*

SIDNEY HUFF—Lake Tahoe, CA

Wow ninety six years old. Doc says I'm doing fine. California climate has been great having a winter without snow--cold and clear sky.

Last June my leg started hurting--went to the Doc who gave me a shot--didn't help, went back a month later and no help. So now I'm using a cane and walker. Have to give up golf after 62 years. I miss it.

No snow so far, I don't miss it, maybe in March. *Sid*

DAVE JONES—New Bern, NC

Dear Cleve, my yearly check in letter was due in December and it is the last day of February. Betty had a bout with bronchitis followed by pneumonia during the last half of December. On December 27 I had a stroke which adversely affected my speech, ability to walk, and other functions of the left side. I went to a facility which offered therapy. I was there for 6 weeks and left there with much improved speech and walking with a stroller. I am now going to continued therapy as an outpatient with the objective being to be able to walk using a cane.

Enough bad news. While all that stuff was going on, we moved into an independent living facility in New Bern, NC. No more yard care for me and no more house cleaning and cooking for Betty. We are in a nice 2 bedroom 2 bathroom apartment with lots of amenities and friendly neighbors. Life is good!

Many thanks to the creators of *RUPANEWS* and howdy to all RUPA retirees. *Dave*

TIM JOSLIN, SR.—Des Moines, WA

Fellow Ruparians, My lovely wife, Cheril, and I have been married for almost 23 years. It is the second marriage for both of us. Her 4 grandchildren are in college. I have one granddaughter who hasn't started kindergarten. Quite a range in ages, to say the least.

Cheril has always been a sports fan, so I have been dragging her to football games (Univ. of Wash and Seattle Seahawks) for the length of our marriage. Recently, the Seahawks have been doing rather nicely. They won the Super Bowl last year and were one play away from a repeat when an interception got in the way (SHOULD HAVE GIVEN THE BALL TO MARSHAWN!!). We are still depressed about that last play in the Super Bowl, however, the playoff game against Green Bay that got us into the Super Bowl, was a classic. I have had season tickets with the Seahawks since day one (38 years) and that is the most exciting game I have personally witnessed! My condolences to Green Bay cheese heads!! Regards, *Tim*

RICK KAAPUNI—Honolulu, HI

Thank you all who publish the *RUPANEWS*. Special acknowledgment to Captain GF De Forge for a well-written article "Justifiable Retiricide? Tragedy of The In-Betweeners" (August 2014). It was a painful and sobering reminder of who did what and to whom. Thanks, Glenn.

We continue to enjoy pass travel that allows us to visit mainland family and friends for celebrations. We even manage to get first class on some international segments - as we did to start a Med Cruise. Persistence and luck prevailed.

My active lifestyle is maintained with regular (sometimes irregular) workouts at the gym and paddle boarding off Waikiki. Keeps me fit for snow skiing (Park City in March), an activity I hope to engage in as long as this aging body and finances will allow.

Until next year, take care. *Rick*
1974-2004, SFO-HNL-SFO

BOB LANGEVIN—Tequesta, FL

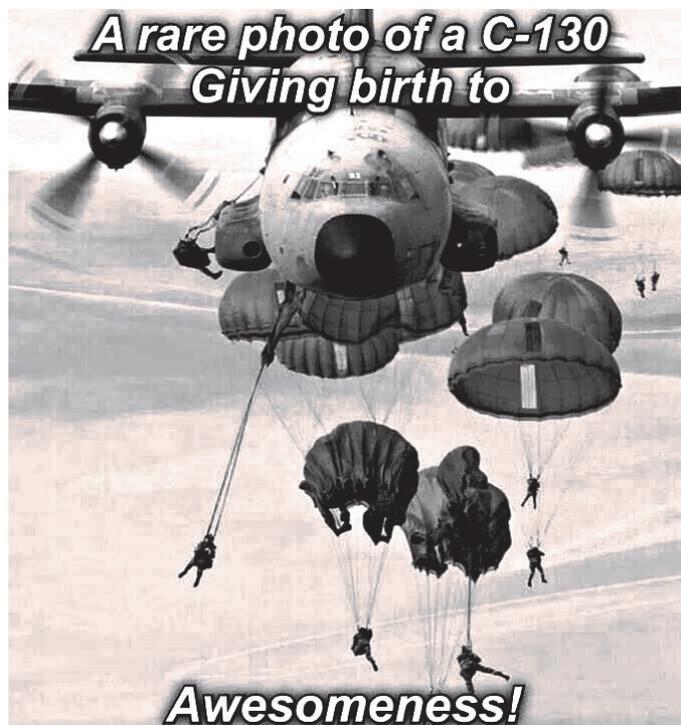
OK, it's March - so it's that time of year again. Yes, check is in the mail and I also look forward to and appreciate very much receiving The RUPA Magazine every month.....Thank you Cleve, you make a lot of Retired United Pilots very happy....and WE appreciate what you do each and every month. GR8 job my friend!!!

Not too much has changed since last year's report but I did move about 20 miles South - from Stuart to Tequesta.....I just couldn't take that WX up North any longer. My 71st B-Day is next week, my

health remains perfect (thank you Jesus); keeping the weight DOWN (149 this AM); continue to coordinate our Treasure Coast RUPA Luncheon here in the Stuart Area; am VP of the RUAEA Group that meets monthly in Stuart as well; remain very active and involved in Politics in Martin County; do a bit of Emailing (as some of you know); am Key Man (until Dec. 31st) in the QB Hangar here in Stuart (SUA); and very actively follow and root for my Miami Dolphins, Florida State Seminoles and The Boston Red Sox; continue to head South for an hour+ to spend some time with the FLL RUPA group at their Luncheons as often as I can when I don't have a conflict; and finally - I get to spend a few Wed. nights every month with Ret. UAL Capt. Jerry Bradley at our 7 Card Stud Poker game every other week.....the same game that Jimmy Carter was in for many years as well.....we miss ya Jimmy, "ya know what I mean"?.

That's it for now and I hope that my report to you next year will be as good, positive and upbeat as this one has been. Safe flying and travels to ALL along with GOOD Health as well. **Bob**

DON LEISSNER—Hilton Head Island, SC
Hi to all. The first full day of spring 21 March I'll turn 81, marking 13^{1/2} years of retirement. Rachel and I are both in great health. In July we flew to London, bus to Dover and a three week cruise.



Our oldest son is teaching and coaching swimming and water polo in the Chicago area. #2 son is now with Delta on the Airbus out of Detroit.

We both enjoy golf several times a week and all the other activities in warm sunny South Carolina.

Thanks for all your hard work. We really do look forward to the *RUPANEWS* each month.

Yours Truly, **Ken**

CHARLES MCKINNON—Saint Helena, CA
Somehow it just doesn't seem possible that 99 years have gone by since I was born. It has been a good run and I am grateful that I have had good health and so many wonderful friends who have made life such a joy.

We, in the aviation industry, seem to have had the best of all possible worlds. Working at a job that we loved, doing and being well paid for flying some of the greatest and best maintained airplanes built.

As a way of introduction I was hired by UAL in 1940 and sent to Tracy, CA to be trained as a co-pilot. In August of 1941 I was assigned to Chicago. This allowed me to be qualified on all aircraft and all of UAL routes. When WWII came on it became very difficult for Pat Patterson to get on a flight to many of his company board meetings and to Washington DC to meet with the CAA and the NTSB. Located in Chicago was a Boeing 247 that had been converted to a flight test bed and was used to test insulation of new equipment. This 247 was recon-verted to an executive configuration so that the UAL president could keep his appointments. Since only Al Smith (Smity) and I were still qualified on the 247 I was privileged to fly Mr. Patterson on many trips and we became good friends.

In 1953 Tom Watson, President of IBM, asked Mr. Patterson for help in finding someone to head up a new Aviation Division. Pat knew that I owned and operated an airport in La Grange, IL and was actively looking for a management job away from the airlines. He introduced me to Mr. Watson and in 1954 I was hired by IBM as Director of Aviation.

The past is prologue. IBM was the prime contractor for the Bomb Navigation system on the B-70 and also was responsible for all of the computer systems on all of the space programs. At the same time IBM developed a large flight operation flying many jets all over the world.

It has been so long since I flew for UAL that there

are only a few left that might remember me. It is possible that I am the last living "TracyAce". If there are any left I would like to hear from them. charlesmckinnon@comcast.net. 707-968-5005
May you have blue skies and a following wind at your back. *Chuck*

GEORGE NOLLY—Castle Rock, CO

A gigantic THANK YOU to Cleve and all the folks who make this magazine happen. I really enjoy each issue. My dues, plus a little extra, is in the snail-mail.

It's been an interesting year as I mark 10 years since setting the parking brake at United. I had been sim instructing for both Boeing (B787) and Omni Air International (B777) last year, but Boeing finally told me my "services were no longer needed." They didn't like my making myself available to Omni more than to them. I can't blame them much, but it still stung a bit to be fired for the first time in my life!

But, as the saying goes, when one door closes, another one opens. A few months after Boeing gave me the boot, I read an email on RETUP from Ann Meili saying she knew of someone looking for a 777 SME to do some contract work (thanks, Ann!). I applied, and now do some consulting on lesson plan development. And I work mostly from home, on my own schedule – a perfect job!

Our 36-year-old daughter is entering her third trimester with her first child (a boy!), and is living with us while her British husband is overseas trying to get his U.S. entry papers squared away. He wants to enter the country LEGALLY! Go figure. I haven't lived with a pregnant woman for 36 years, and it's been a bit of an adjustment for my wife and me.

Having our daughter living with us has had a residual benefit. She worked as an editor while she was in college, and performed miracles on my newest novel, *Frag Order*. It underwent a huge metamorphosis from the first draft until she said it was ready to publish. And it's much better for the effort.

My hearing has gotten progressively worse. It seems like the only thing I can hear clearly is the continuous, loud hissing in both ears. So I finally went to an audiologist and had a real hearing test – not the kind I used to get for my FAA medical. The results were about what I'd expected, and I have an

appointment to go in to get my hearing aids next week. I had been holding off, waiting for the VA to buy them for me, but I've been on their waiting list for 8 months now, and I'm getting hoarse from constantly saying, "what?" every time my wife or daughter says something to me. If/when the VA ever comes around, I guess I'll have two sets of hearing aids.

Other than my ears, my health has been excellent, and my wife is doing great also. We've really been blessed: we're healthy, we married our soul-mates 47 years ago, and we live in the greatest country the world has ever known. *George*

Doctor of Business Administration, 720-480-5572

BOB RAY—San Carlos, CA

Hi Leon. Thank you to the Officers, Directors and Committee Chairman, plus the Area Reps who keep RUPA flying along. *Bob*

DENNY SCHAAR—Rapid City, SD

Dear Cleve & Fellow RUPAIRANS, Greetings from the beautiful Black Hills of South Dakota and thanks to all who continue to publish this informative and up to date magazine. The articles are quite timely and I paid particular notice to the one last month concerning pilots and skin cancer. Having had several procedures to remove melanomas from my face and arms, I am sensitive to this issue. The dermatologist doctor that I see has been very proactive in treating me and recently gave me a copy of the entire article that you quoted from. Studies done on international (ie: long haul, high altitude, high latitude) flight crews wearing dosimeters showed that their level of radiation exposure was slightly below the acceptable level as established by OSHA standards. In other words, there is no need for the airplane manufacturers to build any safeguards into their products to protect flight crews and passengers from receiving unacceptable levels of radiation. I never flew long haul international flights, but after 35 years of mostly domestic flying I am still a victim of solar radiation exposure. The bottom line is for pilots to take precautions in avoiding excessive exposure to solar radiation by whatever means possible, both in the air and on days off.

The highlight of the past year was the ten days that I got to spend with our sons in Alaska. We camped in Denali National Park and were treated with decent weather for some sightseeing and hiking. We

flew to Ketchikan and spent time at Captain Larry McQuarrie's (UAL retired) Sportsman's Cove Lodge for several days of outstanding fishing and gracious hospitality. Captain Mac and his crew have built a first class operation that you could even bring your wife to and she would enjoy herself. We had such a good time that we are going back this summer.

Kathy and I flew to Charleston, SC to attend the Silver Falcon's (EAL pilots and F/A's that went on strike against Frank Lorenzo in 1989) annual reunion. My layovers there were always too short to take in any of the local sights and attractions, so we enjoyed availing ourselves of that as well as enjoying the local cuisine. It's always good to see my old friends from EAL, but sadly we lose a few of those intrepid aviators each year.

I did manage to put some venison, wild turkeys, and pheasants in the freezer this year so spending time afield is still part of my routine. The rest of the time is spent on activities with the Masons, Shriners, and Lions Club.

Health wise, we're doing okay with the usual aches and pains that come with the years, but fortunately have excellent practitioners and health care facilities to see to our needs.

The latchstring is always out at the Schaar house, so if your travels bring you to the Mt. Rushmore State, look me up.

Best wishes to all for a healthy and prosperous year.
Denny (ORD 1990-2001)

WHIT SIMPSON—Nashville, TN

Dear All; My son, Ted, is checking out as a United 737NG Captain as we speak. It only took him 18 years to make the Left Seat. Smile! (1996 new hire)

All is well with my health after my triple bypass heart surgery last year. The FAA made me undergo a Nuclear Tread Mill test to obtain a Third Class

medical certificate so I could continue to fly my Cessna 182. You don't know how much you miss slipping the "Surly Bonds of Earth" until the Feds won't let you.

All the BEST to everyone, and stay healthy! **Whit**

CURT TAYLOR—McAlpin, FL

In June it will be a short 17 years since becoming UAL retired. I was hired three times: 1960, 1963 and 1985. I just received good news from the PBGC. They owe me money instead of me owing them as was first stated. Many thanks to Doug Wilsman, the UPFJ guys and Kevin McBride.

I still split my time between Florida and Michigan. Not doing much flying although I still own the Luscombe 8E and Stearman.

I avoid flying on the airlines. UAL passes are a distant memory. My travelling has been limited to several Bahamas fishing trips and a trip to Cuba with my brother on his 65 ft Viking. Also flew to the Bahamas with a friend in his 172. And how many of you remember those famous quotes from the back of the DC6 compass card: "Eschew obfuscation" and "Illegitimi non carborundum."

And finally, thanks goes out to those who maintain this publication. **Curt**

JIM TROSKY—McHenry, IL

Another year, another dollar. Spending the winters in Chicago these days...sold out in Arizona, not the smartest move but necessary for a variety of reasons.

Sold my airplane and hangar so am effectively out of aviation that needs a physical to fly. Aeroncas are as much fun as you can get anyhow.

Married 53 years, same wife, kids, grandkids, great-grandkids and house here in McHenry, IL.

Enjoy you all's hard work on this publication. Check's in the mail. Thanks, **Jim** ORD-LAX-ORD Fair Winds and Following Seas - Semper Fi

ED WHEELER—Pompano Beach, FL

Birthdays come too fast anymore, here's my thanks for your hard work.

Not much change, sad to lose my great friend Ham-bone Wilson who we all loved and respected. Lost my companion Betty Cook also, but doing okay.

Elks and American Legion are close by. After 35



years with Miami Dade PD Reserve Office, I retired and now with Broward Sheriff Office doing community patrol.

Taking a cruise in Dec with my family, so far I think the count is around 20. 83 and good for another year. *Ed*, DCA-ORF-MIA-JFK-MIA

MRS EVELYN WILLIAMS—Houston, TX
Late again. Sorry, I'll blame it on age, just made 91.

I do enjoy the RUPANEWS. I also get a lot of news from my Granddaughter, Captain on the 757-767. She was Continental.

Thank all of you for your hard work.
Best wishes, *Evelyn*

DICK WOODIN—Kenai, Alaska
It's been awhile since I sent a report from the frozen north. Actually it's the balmy north this winter. Some of the sled dog races have been cancelled for lack of snow. And the Iditarod Race was rerouted for the same reason.

One friend lost a nice Cessna 180 by landing on a frozen lake, only to find the ice was only 2 inches thick. He spent a cold night in the wilderness before being rescued the next day. Lucky he was able to start a fire or he probably wouldn't have survived. Another group of fishermen went through the ice on a different lake and one of them perished.

I'm waiting for July to do my fishing. And fishing ain't what it used to be. When I moved here in 1988 we could expect to catch Kenai River Kings over 50 pounds any time you went. Now there are very few kings coming back to spawn and fishing is mostly closed.

There were too many guides and lodge owners making money off the fish and they fished the run to death. I hope the closure has come in time, so the run can recover. It probably won't happen in my lifetime.

When I renewed my CFI in 2013, at age 83, I thought it would be the last time. Now I find my services are still needed by the Kenai CAP squadron, as I am the only instructor/check pilot available most of the time. So I renewed again last month. This time I used the American Flyers FIRC. With them you pay one time and can renew every two years for no extra charge. How's that for an opti-

mistic, thrifty airline pilot attitude?
Dick Woodin, SEA 1954 - 1988

TOM WORKINGER—Tucson, AZ
Twenty-seven years since parking the DC-10 at ORD. Still volunteering at the UAL B-727 in the Museum of Science and Industry; we need more retired pilots to fill in the blank days and it would be great to have more of the Active UAL/CO Pilots to spend four hours (once a quarter.)

Bev and I are now in Tucson and will be here till June. I still drive the tram and give personal tours of the PIMA Air and Space Museum; we still have the UAL Caravelle but it needs a UAL paint job. It has been here for 20 years but the Restoration Moguls have not given it any priority. Maybe we need an "Angel" (retired Caravelle Captain) to start a fund drive. We also have a UAL B-727 that was supposed to go to the Smithsonian in DCA. It also needs a touch-up.

We recently got the test-aircraft (Kestral) for the U/K Harrier-jumpjet and we have an American made Harrier. We also have a jet that I found the tail number in my Navy log book, the FJ-4B Fury-2. The Fury-1 (FJ-1) was the fore-runner of the F-86.

Our Foundation also conducts tours of the Davis Monthan Air Force base (boneyard) storage area; we run four air-conditioned buses a day (during the week only.) (AMARG is the only part of the military that makes money.)

The UAL Retired Pilots Foundation is doing well financially but we need more UAL families or widows (or widowers) that need help to maintain a comfortable life. If you know of anyone who might be in need of assistance, have them contact us and the Board will send them an application.

Thank you RUPA volunteers for your service in keeping us informed and held together.

Tom, ORD 1955-1988

IN MEMORIAM

ALEXANDER JOSEPH CICIORA

Alexander Joseph Ciciora, 90, of Oak Brook, IL died February 18, 2015 in Elmhurst Memorial Hospital of a heart ailment, surrounded by his children.

Alex grew up in the back yards neighborhood of Chicago's South Side during the Great Depression.

His family rented the upper floor of their two flat on Winchester Avenue from the family of his future wife, Vera Nemecek, whom he married in 1953.

His early interest in amateur radio would serve him well in his professional career. Alex enlisted in the U.S. Navy During WW2, where he served as radio gunner's mate on the USS Norton in the Sound Pacific. After the war, he joined United Airlines as a radio mechanic on DC-4s. As commercial aviation expanded rapidly during the late 1950s, United Airlines needed more air crew quickly for the transition to the jet age. United offered Alex the opportunity to attend flight school. His first air crew job was as flight engineer on DC-7s. Alex moved on to Flight Engineer on the Boeing 720, First Officer and Captain on other aircraft including the DC-6, Boeing 727, Boeing 737, Boeing 747, and DC-10.

Alex's 36 year aviation career ended after suffering a major heart attack at the age of 58. The loss of flight crew status was a tough transition for him, but it did not stop his love of aviation. Alex decided to serve as a volunteer at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago at the United Airlines Boeing 727 exhibit. He is featured in the film that accompanies the exhibit and actually flew the plane N7017U that is installed on the second floor balcony at the museum. Alex had a passion for volunteering. He enjoyed conversing with museum guests about the 727, giving junior pilot wings to youngsters and letting them remote control the aircraft's moving parts. Over 17 years, Alex donated 575 volunteer hours at the exhibit through December 2014.

Alex was preceded in death by his wife, Vera, and survived by, five children and seven grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, donations to the Museum of Science and Industry Annual Fund are appreciated.

THOMAS MORGAN, JR.

Thomas Morgan, Jr. was born in Pittsburgh, PA in 1924 and flew his final flight on January 23, 2015.

Tom's long career in aviation began when he was 15 when his barn storming brother-in-law took him on his first flight. When he enlisted in the Army Air Corp right out of High School he became a cadet earning his wings on P-51's and P-40's. He was then commissioned a



Second Lieutenant. His career after the military was a long history of flying for Pennsylvania Central Air Lines, Capital Airlines and then 39 years with United Airlines. His last flight piloting a 747 was in December, 1984 from Chicago to and from Honolulu.

Tom was a thoughtful and giving person. He loved his family and his career. He suffered a long illness of dementia, but never lost his sense of humor or concern for his family. He was a gentleman in every way.

Tom is survived by his wife, Carol, of 57 years, a daughter and three grandchildren.

JOYCE S. "JOE" SVENDSEN

Joyce S. "Joe" Svendsen, 88, passed away peacefully on December 11, 2014 at the Gordon Hospice House in Statesville, North Carolina.

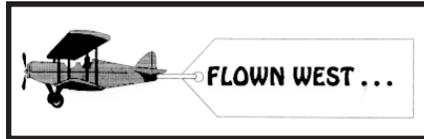


Joe was born August 16, 1926, in Norris, Illinois. He was a World War II veteran, serving in the United States Army in the Philippines from 1945-1947. Joe started: his airline career in the 1950's in a Capital Airlines DC-3 and retired from United Airlines on the DC-10 in 1986 while based in LAX

After retirement, Joe traveled extensively. He visited 67 different countries as well as every state in the USA. He enjoyed traveling and meeting people from all over the world. An African Safari, the Great Wall of China, the Taj Majal, Machu Pichu, The Amazon River, and the Midnight Sun in Norway, just to name a few! Joe was an avid golfer with a pretty low handicap. He even won a few RUPA tournaments, which he was very proud of! He was an active member of the Sons of Norway, a stamp collector, enjoyed reading, and working on his computers. Joe loved "flying" on his flight simulator! He was a positive person with a great sense of humor, a love of life and especially enjoyed spending time with his family. He was loved by so many, and, is missed so much.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Betty, and is survived by a daughter, two grandchildren, and five great grandsons.

Memorials may be given in Joe's name to the Gordon Hospice House, 2341 Simonton Road, Statesville, NC 28625



| | |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Alexander J. Ciciora | Feb. 18, 2015 |
| James A. Edelen, Jr. | Feb. 23, 2015 |
| William A. Fife | Jan. 01, 2015 |
| John E. Fortanas | 2014 |
| Thomas L. Grey | Mar. 08, 2015 |
| *Curtis A. Guild | Oct. 2014 |
| *Archibald J. Kingsley | Mar. 2015 |
| Thomas Morgan, Jr. | Jan. 23, 2015 |
| Eugene F. Paquette | Oct. 20, 2013 |
| *George L. Stevenson | Oct. 2014 |
| Joyce S. "Joe" Svendsen | Dec. 11, 2014 |
| Donald L. Trunick | Mar. 14, 2015 |
| Merrill D. Wetherington | Feb. 26, 2015 |
| <i>*denotes RUPA non-member</i> | |



HIGH FLIGHT

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth
 And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
 Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
 Of sun-split clouds, - and done a hundred things
 You have not dreamed of - wheeled and soared and swung
 High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,
 I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
 My eager craft through footless halls of air....
 Up, up the long, delirious, burning blue
 I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace
 Where never lark or even eagle flew -
 And, while with silent lifting mind I've trod
 The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
 Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.

John Gillespie Magee, Jr., September 3, 1941

United Airlines Retired Pilots Foundation, Inc.
 Send memorial and other donations to: Capt. Thomas Workinger, Treasurer
 9550 W Higgins Rd, Rosemont, IL 60018

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Vineburg, CA 95487-0400



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RUPANEWS Deadline: 15th of Each Month

RUPA's MONTHLY SOCIAL CALENDAR

Arizona

Phoenix Roadrunners (2nd Tuesday)—*Bobby Q Restaurant* - 623-566-8188
Tucson Toros (Jan. 22, 2013)—*Tucson Country Club* - Randy Ryan, 520-797-3912, randyryan40@msn.com

California

Dana Point CA (2nd Tuesday)—*Wind & Sea Restaurant* - 949-496-2691
Los Angeles South Bay (2nd Thursday, even months) - *Hacienda Hotel* - 310-541-1093
Monterey Peninsula (2nd Wednesday)—*Edgar's at Quail Lodge*—*Please RSVP* - 831-622-7747
San Diego Co. (2nd Tuesday)—*San Marcos CC* - 760-480-7420
San Francisco Bay-Siders (2nd Tuesday, 11:00 AM)—*Harry's Hofbrau*, Redwood City, CA, 650-349-6590
San Francisco East Bay Ruparians (2nd Wed. 1:00 PM)—*Primavera Restaurant*, San Ramon, CA
San Francisco North Bay (1st Wednesday)—*Petaluma Sheraton*
Thousand Oaks (2nd Thursday on odd months)—*Sunset Terrace, Janns Mall*, Thousand Oaks, CA 805-497-4847

Colorado

Denver Good Ol' Boys (3rd Tuesday 11:30AM)—*American Legion Post 1* - 303-364-1565

Florida

N.E. Florida (3rd Thursday, Feb, Apr, Jun, Oct, Dec)—*Spruce Creek CC* - 386-760-0797
S.E. Florida Treasure Coast Sunbirds (2nd Tue.)—*Shrimper's restaurant, Stuart, FL* - 561-756-4829
The Ham Wilson S.E. Florida Gold Coast (2nd Thursday)—*Galuppi's Restaurant & Patio Bar*
S.W. Florida (2nd Monday, Nov, Jan, Feb, Mar)—*Olive Garden, Ft. Myers* - 239-540-9112
Tampa, Florida Sundowners (3rd Thursday)—*Daddy's Grill* - 727-787-5550

Hawaii

Hawaii Ono Nene's (To Be Announced, Call Larry Becker, 808-262-8785)—*Mid Pacific Country Club*
Big Island Stargazers (3rd Thursday 11:30AM)—*The Fish Hopper, Kailua-Kona*, 808-315-7912 or 808-334-1883

Illinois

Greater Chicago Area Group (2nd Tuesday, March, July and November)
(Nick's Pizza and Pub, 856 Pyott Rd, Crystal Lake, IL)
The Joe Carnes 31North-Illinois RUPA Group (2nd Tuesday, January, May and September)

Nevada

Las Vegas High Rollers (3rd Tuesday)—*Memphis Barbecue* - 702-558-9422 or 702-565-7175
Reno's Biggest Little Group (4th Wednesday)—*Sparky's Sports Bar* - or—*BJ's Brewhouse*
Call Gary Dyer 775-250-2672 or Lyle U'ren 775-232-0177

New York

New York Skyscrapers (June)—*Rock Spring Golf Club, West Orange, NJ* - psofman@gmail.com
New York Skyscrapers (October)—*The Assembly Steak House, Englewood Cliffs, NJ* - psofman@gmail.com

Ohio

Cleveland Crazy's (3rd Thursday)—*TJ's Wooster* (Always coed.) - 440-235-7595

Oregon

The Columbia River Geezers (2nd Wed monthly 11:00)—*California Pizza Kitchen, Clackamas Town Center*
503-659-0760—Ron Blash - rblash@mac.com - (H) 503 636 3612, - Tony Passannante - hotshotcharley@aol.com
The Intrepid Aviators of Southern Oregon (3rd Thursday)—*Pony Express, Jacksonville* - 541-245-6896

Washington

Seattle Gooney Birds(3rd Thursday)—*Airport Marriott* - 360-825-1016

Washington D.C.

Washington D.C. Area (3rd Thursday, Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct)—*Marco Polo Rest, Vienna, VA* - 540-338-4574