

# Aerie News

**The Eagles Aerie News of the USAir Soaring Eagles**

**Third Quarter 2020**

**TABLE of CONTENTS**

Messages from your Officers  
Soaring Eagles Write

**Board of Directors**

President	Joe Kernan
1 <sup>st</sup> VP	Judy Schmidt
2 <sup>nd</sup> VP	Alvahn Mondell
Treasurer	Paul Sturpe
Secretary	Judi Todd
Past President	John Davis

Advisors to the Board – Bill Leefe, Bob Knapp, Butch Schofield, Ran Natalie

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

(276) 632-9941

Captain Joe Kernan

[Joekernandc9@yahoo.com](mailto:Joekernandc9@yahoo.com)

As I write this report, I am lamenting the fact that our reunion for 2020 had to be canceled. Clearly not the end of the world, but nevertheless disappointing to those who were looking forward to attending especially, first-timers. That said, I can assure you that the Soaring Eagles Board has already begun discussing ways to make the 2021 reunion one that will be long remembered by all who are able to attend. Save the dates, October 22, 23, and 24, 2021. Do it now and you can avoid any scheduling conflicts.

Please join me in welcoming our newest member, Brigadier General Charles E. McGee. General McGee's biography is already posted on the Soaring Eagles website where it was posted on Aug. 21, 2020 under the Special heading. Go have a look if you like and see if you do not agree with me that we are honored to have General McGee join the Eagles. General McGee was making history when most of us were growing up, and I am so happy that the General accepted our offer of Honorary Membership. If anyone would like to send the General a welcoming message his email address follows: [charles302@verizon.net](mailto:charles302@verizon.net).

From time to time I get calls from members complaining that they are not getting the bulk emails sent through Robly the service does our group messaging. I am no computer whiz, but I am advised that some servers recognize the emails as spam or junk. If you feel that you are in this category please check your spam or junk folder periodically, and if there are no Soaring Eagles messages there, let me know. I will find a computer "Geek" who may be able to help.

A year or so ago I made a concerted effort to make sure that every dues-paying member received a plastic membership card embossed with the member's name. If your dues are

paid up, and you have not received your membership card please let me know so that I can rectify the situation. [Joekernandc9@yahoo.com](mailto:Joekernandc9@yahoo.com).

Joe Kernan

**FIRST VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

(724) 378-7025

Flight Attendant Judy Schmidt  
Colbath

[schonewalds64@aol.com](mailto:schonewalds64@aol.com)

Fellow Soaring Eagles:

When the board was discussing the possibility of canceling this year's reunion, I was at first very resistant to the idea. After giving the subject more careful consideration, I decided that it was in the best interest of the membership to cancel and reschedule for 2021. I renew my challenge that each member brings a new member with them to the reunion in 2021.

So, what did I do during the Covid pandemic? Well I spent several days in August in the Beaver County Medical Center as the doctors tried to find out why I was feeling lousy. Covid was ruled out early on, and several possibilities were also ruled out such as lyme disease, heart etc., An unusual strain of arthritis which name escapes me was also considered a possibility.

Shortly after my release I went back to showing my dogs and continue to do that. I am completely back to normal, or as normal as one can be in these strange times. I renew my challenge and hope to see all of you in Tampa next October.

Judy (Schmidt) Colbath

**SECOND VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

(330) 277-6233

Captain Alvahn Mondell

[captalvahn@aol.com](mailto:captalvahn@aol.com)

Well, I've only gained 10 pounds over the past 6 months or so, the good news I've lost about 6 pounds !

It's been a sad period for most everyone. We had to cancel our reunion in TPA, as you all know. I was sure looking forward to seeing all my friends from the past! I'm sure everyone still looks the same!

Hopefully, everything will be heading back to what we use to call, NORMAL !?

Maybe after the election things will quiet down... I sure hope so!

I wish everyone well and look forward to seeing you all again, SOON!

Alvahn Mondell

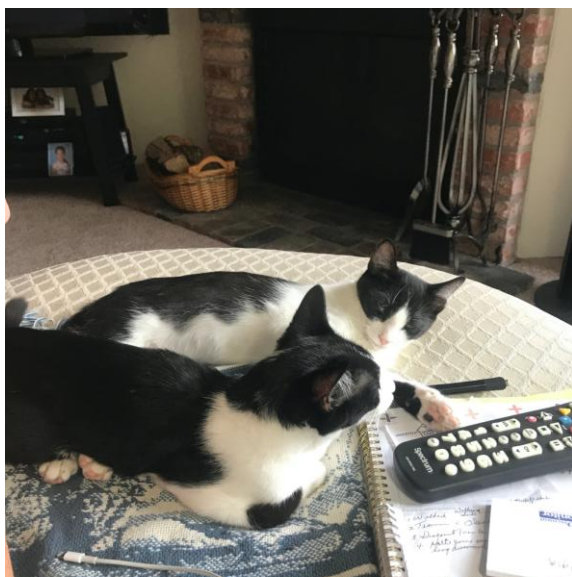
**SECRETARY'S MESSAGE**

(619) 417-7274

Flight Attendant Judi Todd

[judiwtodd@gmail.com](mailto:judiwtodd@gmail.com)

Since my last update I really am at a standstill. All my work, projects, volunteering etc. is still status quo. I have given up my coloring, knitting, etc. as it was so boring. I still walk 3.5 miles a day, now play tennis (doubles) 4 times a week. (sometimes I am really good and sometimes I am really bad. And sometimes it is in the same game). Go figure. NOW the big news: I have adopted twins Don't panic they are tuxedo kitties. A brother and sister. I named them (drum roll). Bonnie and Clyde. They are 5 months old and already driving me crazy. But I am so enjoying the companionship and surprises I find every day. Since I really can't travel or work it really works for me Will keep you posted on my sanity in the next Aires newsletter. Sure miss seeing you all and hope 2021 will have us all getting together in Tampa again. Good health and happiness to you all. Judi



**TREASURER'S MESSAGE**

(828) 478-1133

Captain Paul Sturpe

[sturpe@gmail.com](mailto:sturpe@gmail.com)

As I mentioned last quarter, I have been keeping the Soaring Eagles Web Site up to date although that is not specifically a job for the treasurer. So here is your chance to get

involved if you have web site skills. Just let me or your president know if you want to help out the Association in this way.

Check the Soaring Eagles web site often at <https://usairsoaringeagles.org/> The latest news is always posted there and we add new content every week or so. Look for “UPD” on the top menu items to see if there are recent changes or additions to that particular section.

We are still looking for history for all the airlines that made up USAir. We have good sources for Allegheny but need history information for most all of the other airlines. I want to thank Captain Eric Litt for providing a wealth of information, primarily for Mohawk Airlines and Captain Don McLane for a lot of pictures for most of the airlines that eventually made up USAir. This is great stuff and I’ll get it onto the web site little by little.

I would be remiss if I didn’t include a note about my primary responsibility which includes collecting the dues. Remember that 2021 dues are due by January 31, 2021 and I am happy to start taking them early. Just mark your check or PayPal payment as “2021 dues”.

So long until next quarter.  
Paul Sturpe, Treasurer

**USAir Soaring Eagles Website is available with current daily information**  
<https://usairsoaringeagles.org/>

**“SOARING EAGLES WRITE”**

It goes without saying 2020 will be a year we would all like to forget. We send our condolences to all those who have lost family members or friends. We send our prayers

to our fellow employees and industry counterparts who have lost their jobs during these turbulent times.

That being said, we must look forward to the coming year with optimism and hope for a healthy and prosperous 2021.

Having missed the opportunity to see my fellow employees at this year's Reunion, next year's Reunion will be even more special.

Best Regards,  
Seth Butch Schofield

Hello to my fellow flight crewmembers

So far, so good, we had one hurricane brush past us and not too many days to go in the season. The temperature actually slipped below 80 degrees, Yea!! I have a "new port knee" which is doing pretty well. I worked out pretty hard several months before and since which I'm sure helped a lot. We live in a rural area so COVID-19 is less of a threat but masks are part of the "uniform".

Joseph Hall

Guys and Gals,

I'm still flying with a year and a half to go. As I write this, the first of the airline furloughs has just occurred. Something like 1,600 pilots and 8,000 flight attendants will be on the street, just from AA.

During my last month of flying, most of my F/O's were on the furlough list. The post 9/11 cuts pale in comparison to the Covid cuts. LAX crew base will never return to its previous size, instead we will run at 50%.

At its darkest days I was amazed that US Airways was losing a million a day. Now AA's cash burn is a billion a month. Yes, a billion.

In spite of the above, my flying schedule is full. The transcon and Hawaii markets have dried up so now most every LAX trip starts with a leg to DFW, and then goes from there.

We have grandkids that live around the corner. In order to babysit I have been taking Covid tests on a regular basis. My city is a mandatory mask city. Speaking of masks, at the airline it's all masks, all day. The only exception is behind the closed cockpit door.

I re-read the above and it sounds pretty gloomy. Actually Jennifer and I are doing well. She continues to work from home (it's been 6 months now) and loves it. She does however miss being on the road.

Stay safe!  
Jeff Diercksmeier

Hello All

I hope that this note finds you well as we endure this difficult and stressful pandemic.

As some may know, I retired from US Airways in 2007, about two months short of being able to continue flying under the Fair Treatment for Experience Pilots Act. I guess that I wasn't experienced enough.

However, I did thoroughly enjoy my career at US Air. I enjoyed the people most; all were cordial and professional and all of the dear colleagues taught me something every day. Together, we endured some struggles, and, in the days after 9/11, we endured disaster. The difficulties after that day were devastating corporately and personally for many.

Time passed and it was 2007. I tried retirement for a couple of years, but I was still anxious to do something meaningful. I was only 61. I could only play so much golf. That said, I had a chance to fly as a Captain on the A340 in India internationally between India and the United States. However, the brand new airplanes were sold before I could get there because of the economy and the high fuel prices of 2008.

I closed that chapter as I heard of an opportunity with the FAA in Memphis from a former US Air Captain, Jim Reid. The job would be to join a Certificate Management Team to exercise federal regulatory oversight of FedEx. It would require a commute of about 7 miles when I was accustomed to commuting to Pittsburgh, Boston, or Philadelphia from Memphis.

Well, I got hired, and I was shocked to find what was behind the regulatory curtain. There were and are more processes, procedures, laws, and regulations than I ever realized existed.

Time has passed, and I am still working at age 73 – not because I have to now, but because I have been given an opportunity, a gift, to give back and share experiences of 53 years in aviation.

I am now the Supervisory Principal Operations Inspector in the FedEx Certificate Management Office and have a staff of 30. I am blessed to be able to continue to serve and contribute to aviation safety.

I owe a debt to US Air and its wonderful employees!

Thanks,

Hal

Hal J. Medling

Supervisory Aviation Safety Inspector

FedEx CMO

Many of you will remember Charles "Chuck" Copeland who passed away several years ago. This sad news is regarding his son David.

David Jay Copeland, 64, of Peters Township McMurray, passed suddenly due to a motorcycle accident on October 7, 2020.

Born on May 2, 1956, a son of Carol George Mullins and the late Charles Copeland. Loving husband to Bobbie Lynn Fazio Copeland. Cherished father to David and Matthew Copeland. Loving brother to Scott (Janet Aiello) Copeland. Dear son-in-law to Kay L. Fazio and the late Carl D. Fazio. Loving brother-in-law to Carl S. (Ashley) Fazio. David was also blessed with many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his brother Charles McKim Copeland. David will also be dearly missed by his dog, Mitzi.

David enjoyed his career as an airline pilot for 40 years. He was an active member of Westminster Presbyterian Church where he was a drummer in the worship band. David will be dearly missed by many, especially his loving family and friends.

Family and friends are welcome from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Monday, October 12, at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 2040 Washington Road, McMurray, PA 15317. A memorial service will be held at 12:30 p.m. at the church. Burial will follow at Forest Lawn Gardens in McMurray.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made in David's name to the Westminster Presbyterian Church, Washington City Mission 45 W Wheeling Street, Washington, PA 15301 or the Washington Area Humane Society, 1527 PA-136, Eighty Four, PA 15330.



Good Morning Soaring Eagles, Dave Johnson here. Hope all is well.  
My Update: Still Flying and conducted Helicopter Flight Tests.  
Last week a Private, Commercial and Instrument in Durango, CO.  
Activities - volunteer at the New Mexico Horse Rescue Ranch here in NM, got 4 hrs  
Flight Training in a Blimp,  
Fireman training in a 1928 Baldwin Steam Locomotive in Chama, NM. With train  
moving cab temp was 100 degrees shoveling coal and going over Cumbres Pass above  
10,000 feet.

Captain David R Johnson  
Retired USAir. 2005





## “HANGER FLYING”

Captain Corky Carson

Although I had a good time with all my co-pilots, I especially enjoyed flying with Corky. The story that I am going to relate here took place in the early part of 1986. I could not determine the actual trip number, but it isn't relevant to the story. I'm going to tell the story as accurately as possible, and leave the editing to someone else

A couple of weeks before this incident my son Frank, Corky, and the Piedmont BWI Chief Pilots Secretary Janice Williams, and I attended a Reba McIntire concert at Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C. Since we had over an hour to kill before taking off from BWI to Orlando we decided to walk around to the Piedmont Chief Pilots office to visit with Janice. I should note that my son Frank was a new Piedmont Pilot at the time. On returning to the gate where our aircraft was parked, we found flight attendant Joyce Hockady arms folded and her head on her arms crying. After calming her down we ascertained that she had been threatened by a female passenger who had an issue about where her five-year-old son was going to sit. This passenger purchased her ticket at the last minute, and was told on the phone, at the ticket counter, and again at the boarding gate that the Airline couldn't guarantee that she would sit with her son, but that they were reasonably certain that the flight attendant could arrange a seat swap to accommodate her needs. When Joyce explained that she would do all that she could to arrange such a swap, the passenger became irate and said, “If you don't seat my son with me, I'll take your black ass out on the ramp and kick the crap out of you.” After hearing this I queried each flight attendant to see if they had heard these comments, and they not only confirmed that they heard them but so did most of the passengers within earshot had as well.

Corky and I returned to the cockpit where I called Baltimore Operations and requested a Passenger Service Representative be sent to our aircraft. When the agent arrived, I advised him that I wanted the female passenger in seat 22A removed from the flight. The agent went to the rear of the aircraft, and after a couple of minutes returned and said, “I took care of it”. I replied, “I don't think you did, as I didn't see anyone leave the aircraft.” The agent says, “She has a five-year-old son with her.” I said, “Well she brought him onboard she can take him off with her.” My rationale was it was better to deal with it on the ground at BWI than at 35000 feet somewhere over Virginia

Corky and I resumed our preflight preparations, as we waited for two standby passengers to come aboard. As we waited there was a loud noise on my cockpit sliding window as the contents of the orange juice container full of orange juice were hurled against the window..... by guess who? Yep the gal from 22 A. I was out of my seat so fast, Corky reached over to restrain me, and said “Don't hit her Joe”, by now she was on the jetway hands on hips as I said, “Lady you'd better get your hind parts up that jetway because you

are really close to going to jail.” I pointed to the Maryland State Policeman that was at the top of the jetway, and “Said it won’t take him long to get here.” Her parting comment to me was, “I hope you crash.” I resumed my seat in the cockpit, and after Corky asked me if I was alright, I said, “I will be after I count to ten very slowly.” After counting to ten, I made the following PA announcement:

Ladies & Gentlemen, this is your Captain, either you are deaf or were sound asleep not to have heard that we had a little incident just now, and since we will not tolerate anyone abusing our flight attendants we decided that the offending passenger would leave us. Two more passengers are on the way, and once they are aboard, we’ll be off to Orlando chances are we arrive very close to schedule as we will probably make up some time. The irony of ironies the replacements were both black. (Kharma)

After an uneventful flight to Orlando as I was holding the aircraft off looking to grease it on, Corky says, “Don’t screw up the landing, you know she wants you to crash.” Corky would do anything to make better landings than me. The fact is he probably creased his landing on, and the pressure was on me to do the same.

As I said at the beginning of this piece Corky was one of my all-time favorite co-pilots to fly with, and I was not the least bit surprised to know that he was one of the most admired check pilots, Flight Managers, and all-around good guys to train with, and fly with.

As an example, I got a call from Corky one afternoon advising me that he was going to fly his first Captain trip, and had four tickets to a Reba McIntire concert at Patriot Center, and did I want the tickets? Hell, yeah says I. We arranged for me to pick up the tickets in my mailbox at DCA. Along with the four tickets was a fifty-dollar bill to buy a round of drinks. He wouldn't even consider taking any money for the tickets.

Corky Carson is number one in my book and I hope he enjoys his retirement, he certainly earned it.

Captain Joe Kernan  
USAir Retired