

# Aerie News

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

Second Quarter 2022

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Soaring Eagles Write

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Secretary	Judi Todd
Past President	John Davis

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

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(276) 632-9941

Captain Joe Kernan

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

As I write this message, Paul Sturpe advises that we have more than seventy (70) individuals signed up for the cruise which indicates that we are on a pace to have one of the most well-attended conventions in our forty-five-year history. Rooms are still available at the Soaring Eagles rate of \$119.00 per night, and I urge those of you that have not already made your hotel reservation or registered with Treasurer Captain Paul Sturpe to do it now, so it doesn't become a problem when rooms become scarce. Go to [usairsoaringeagles.org](http://usairsoaringeagles.org), open the First Quarter issue of the Aerie where you will find a link for making hotel reservations. Also, on the website is a tab where you can download the form for registering with Treasurer Sturpe for the convention.

One of the most important things we do at the convention is to elect officers for the coming year 2023. As you know, due to the cancellation of the conventions in 2020 and 2021 the board was carried over until we could convene to conduct elections. All officers of the board serve one-year terms, except for the Secretary, and Treasurer who serve two-year terms which are staggered.

*SECTION 3. Each year at the annual meeting a **President, a First Vice President, and a Second Vice President** shall be elected for one-year terms by a majority vote of those members present.*

*The Recording Secretary shall be elected for a 2-year term in even-numbered years by a majority vote of members present.*

*The **Treasurer** shall be elected for a 2-year term in odd-numbered years by a majority vote of members present. The outgoing Treasurer shall maintain the position until the end of the year when and if there is a change, allowing the outgoing Treasurer to collect/maintain proper documentation required to file Soaring Eagles Annual Tax returns.*

As you can see at this year's convention, we will be electing a President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, and Recording Secretary/Aerie editor. The Treasurer position will not be up for election until 2023.

*SECTION 3. The President shall be the presiding officer at all meetings of the Executive Board and shall have the responsibility of calling such meetings from time to time as the business of the organization shall require.*

He/She shall also act as the presiding officer at the annual meeting of the membership.

*SECTION 4. The First Vice President shall execute the duties of the President in his absence at meetings of the Executive Board and at the annual meeting. He/She shall also carry out duties as assigned by the President.*

*SECTION 5. The Second Vice President shall assume the duties of the President in the event neither the*

President nor the First Vice President are present. He/She shall also carry out duties as assigned by the President.

*SECTION 6. The Recording Secretary shall record and distribute the minutes of all meetings of the Executive Board and of the Annual Meeting; and shall be responsible for editing and publishing "From the Eagles Aerie".*

*SECTION 7. The Treasurer shall assume all responsibility for the financial affairs of the organization submit an annual financial report to the membership at each annual meeting and carry out other duties as assigned by the president.*

If anyone has an interest in seeking election to any of the positions listed, please contact a member of the nominating committee who are listed below.

Captain Bill Leefe [Wleefe@comcast.net](mailto:Wleefe@comcast.net)

Captain Bob Knapp [summitgus@aol.com](mailto:summitgus@aol.com)

Captain Bob Flom [flyrlf@aol.com](mailto:flyrlf@aol.com)

I had hoped that Mr. Colodny, and Mr. Schofield would be joining us this year, but both of their physicians have advised them against exposing themselves to crowds, especially those whose medical status is unknown. As most of you know Mr. Colodny just celebrated his 96<sup>th</sup> birthday, and Mr. Schofield is a heart transplant survivor.

I am still working on the entertainment for the banquet.

For those who will be attending their first convention, the hospitality suite is open generally when there is no other scheduled event taking place. Our Secretary Judi Todd has agreed once again to manage the hospitality suite, and can always use some extra help. If anyone is interested in volunteering to help Judi out you can contact her at [Judiwtodd@gmail.com](mailto:Judiwtodd@gmail.com)

I am looking forward to seeing everyone in Tampa, especially the new members.

Welcome to our newest Soaring Eagles

Larry Quick, Jr. Many of you may remember his father Larry Quick Sr. and his stepmother Connie Quick who is a Flight Attendant Larry Jr. was hired in February 1985 by USAir and is still flying the B787 out of PHL.

Michael "Mike" Loxtercamp is another second-generation pilot whose father Dave Loxtercamp is probably familiar to most of you having flown out of DCA and PIT. Mike was hired in October of 1988 by USAir and is also still flying. I am uncertain as to the equipment and base.

Claudia Wiegers was hired by Allegheny Airlines as a Flight Attendant in May of 1978 and retired on May 1, 2020

Irvina Flood was hired by Allegheny Airlines as a Flight Attendant on May 22, 1972, and is still flying.

John Golly was hired by PSA as a pilot on December 5, 1978, and retired from USAir on June 13, 2013.

Mary Golly was hired by Eastern Airlines as a Flight Attendant in 1983 and then by Piedmont in 1988 just prior to the merger of Piedmont with USAir, and yes she is married to John Golly. Indeed, this is sounding like a family affair.

Joe

Look who's coming:

Paul Sturpe	Suzanne Sturpe
Joe Kernan	Donna Kernan
Tom Jurewicz	Nedra Jurewicz
Dave Johnson	
Janet H Bachowski	
J Peter Schuetz	Hilda Buf Schuetz
Ron Natalie	
John Rusty Shelton	Pamela Dunlap
Andy Skiba	Betti Skiba
Janice Wardyga	Steve Wardyga
Tammy Hansen	Bruce Elliotte
Diane Smyth	
Arthur Hiatt	Carol Young Hiatt
Laura Wilkins Emrich	
Maryann Barnett	Rebecca Conger
Barbara Gonzalez	
Jeannette Elliott	Brooke Elliott
John Golly	Mary Golly
Eric Litt	Janice Litt
Mary Kelly	Frank Landgraff
Greg Papin	Pat Papin
Bob Flom	Carol Loxtercamp
Vicki Frakes Johnson	
Johce Gallagher	Gerry Gallagher
Gayle McGlinn	
Lynda Axelsson	Jane Lemon
Lela Mullins	
Leon Young	

Judi Todd	
Anita Burke	George Burke
Marion Borek	
Carol Baker	
Tom Kreamer	Susan Kreamer
Frank Burns	Mary Landers
Jack Hansen	Lois Hansen
Susan Lee	
Jerry Hostomsky	Lissa Hostomsky
Irvina Flood	John Flood
Wm Brad Kelly	Diane Kelly
Erna Kostanoski	
Shelvy Graybill	
Steve Pierce`	Jeanne Pierce
Bob Klenke	Anne Klenke
Deborah Souter	
Michael Loxtercamp	Denise Loxtercamp
Kathy Cox	
JoEllen Zerilla	
Jodi DiMauro	
Joanne M Trihey	
Judith M Schmidt	

**FIRST VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

(724) 378-7025

Flight Attendant Judy Schmidt  
Colbath

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

I don't know about you, but I'm ready to party, and according to Treasurer Sturpe so are a lot of you. So, let's get the party started Tampa, Oct. 28, 29, and 30.

I am really looking forward to seeing everyone after the long dark days of covid cancellations, and I can't wait to meet the new members that have joined since our last convention in 2019. I am so pleased that we continue to add new members so that we can keep this organization viable and continue to reminisce over the good times we had while working for the "Best Airline" there was.

See you in Tampa,

Judy Schmidt Colbath

**SECOND VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

(330) 277-6233

Captain Alvahn Mondell

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

Hello all you lucky folks preparing for the Tampa Florida trip . I just talked to President Joe Kernan, and it appears that this year, the Soaring Eagles get-together will be the best one yet !

It has been an honor for me to have served on the Soaring Eagles for the past three years; for personal reasons, I will be stepping down . I do wish the Soaring Eagles the very best in the many years ahead!

Have a great time in Florida !

Alvahn

### SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

(619) 417-7274

Flight Attendant Judi Todd

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

Yea!!! We really are on for our 2022 Soaring Eagles reunion. Can't wait to touch base with all of you. Hurry and make your reservations while you are now thinking about it. As you read in the President's message, I am again in charge of the "Hospitality Suite" and as we do spend a LOT of time there I would like some input from you as to what amenities you would like me to provide (example: certain brands of drinks, snacks, different food items, etc etc etc). I also would love volunteers to man the room when I have other duties to attend to as I would like to have the room open as often as possible. Thanks for thinking about helping and choices and can't wait to see you all. Judi  
My email is [judiwtodd@gmail.com](mailto:judiwtodd@gmail.com).

### TREASURER'S MESSAGE

(828) 478-1133

Captain Paul Sturpe

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

First, thank you to all who have paid your 2022 dues.

I thought maybe you would like to see some statistics, so here goes. We have a total of 1328 members. Of that number there are 457 that are exempt from paying dues.

The 457 that are exempt from dues include Life Time Members (spouses of deceased members), Honorary members, "Friends" and those who are exempt from dues because they were over 80 before the rules were changed (although some of these continue to pay dues).

That leaves 871 members who should be paying dues. To date, 311 members have paid. This compares to 405 members who paid dues last year.

One reason that members don't pay dues is because they just don't remember to do so. We no longer send an individual reminder to each person on our roster. If you are not sure if you are paid up or not, send me an email [SoaringEaglesTreas@gmail.com](mailto:SoaringEaglesTreas@gmail.com) and I'll check for you.

Later this summer I'll send a bulk email to those eligible to pay dues who have not done so. I am also proposing a few changes to our Constitution and Policy Manual that will be voted upon at the Convention in October. One of those proposed changes will be to **define what criteria should be used to drop non-paying members**. For example, should

we continue to keep people on our roles who have not paid dues for the last 4 years, 5 years? Come to the business meeting in October and give us input on this and other items.

That's it for now. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone in October.

Paul Sturpe, Treasurer

## **“SOARING EAGLES WRITE”**

**After about 4 months at the Pittsburgh crew base a bid opened up in Newark and I was able to get that and start living at home again in NJ. Life got infinitely better. Not only was I home but I was also flying much more and getting that \$1.00 an hour per diem when I was flying for the airline which supplemented my base salary. The airline was converting the piston engine Convair 440's to the turboprop Convair 580. The 580 was a great machine with two 4000 HP turbo prop engines and upgraded avionics with a fully integrated autopilot. All of which the 440 did not have. We hand flew the 440 on every flight. My new hire class was the last one to be trained on the 440. When I got to Newark, I was the bottom copilot qualified to fly the 440. As the company hired additional copilots and based some of them in Newark, I would still be the last copilot on the list to fly the piston engine 440. This would be significant on a March early morning flight that I would be assigned to fly.**

**One late evening in early March I got a call from crew scheduling telling me I was needed to fly an early morning ferry flight from EWR (Newark) to BOS (Boston). The airplane would be used to make up a scheduled passenger flight originating in BOS. Our only assignment was to fly the empty airplane to BOS and then we would deadhead back to Newark. Deadheading meant flying as a passenger to or from a city-based on company needs. Since we were flying an empty airplane we did not need a flight attendant or need to fly in our uniform.**

**We were scheduled for a 5:00 AM departure out of EWR. Early enough to have the airplane ready for its 7:00 AM scheduled departure from BOS. The Captain I was flying with was one of the nice guys that I had flown with frequently since I got based in EWR. It was normally a 45-minute drive from my home in central NJ to the Newark airport but as I checked the weather the evening before the flight, it was forecasted for a heavy snow storm hitting the entire northeast US. I got up very early and, wearing my company-lined raincoat, I headed for Newark. As per the forecast, it was snowing very heavily and the only vehicles on the roads at that early hour were some snow plows heading for their assigned routes.**



Me and my four-wheel-drive vehicle was the only other one on the highway and I made good time to the airport. I headed for ops and found Al, my Captain. We gathered up all our paperwork, checked the latest weather, and headed for our company hangar where our aircraft was being deiced for our flight. A last-minute check of the weather let us know that Newark was at our take-off minimums and going lower shortly. We took off on schedule with just me and Al, the only ones on the airplane. We were fully in the clouds and snow from takeoff and throughout our climb out. Al was checking our wings and windshield for icing. The Convair 440 used hot air from an exhaust shroud around the exhaust stacks to provide heat to the leading edge of the wings and other aircraft structures as needed. In order to increase the heat, movable vanes in the shrouds could be adjusted by a switch in the cockpit. With the vanes fully closed to provide maximum anti-ice, we were still picking up heavy ice on the wings. As we headed north on our IFR clearance to BOS we were continuously in the weather. Al asked me to check with Air Traffic Control and see if they had any top reports from any aircraft in the area. The controller told us the only aircraft he had was an international flight heading for JFK. He checked with the flight and they reported that they were on top of the clouds at 23,000 feet. We were at 17,000 feet and solidly in the clouds from our takeoff and climb out. Al asked me to request 21,000 with ATC. They gave us the higher altitude and as Al applied climb power to the engines, the left engine gave a big BANG and both fire detection loops and the fire bell went on for the engine. Al immediately throttled the engine back to idle and since the lights remained on, he feathered the left engine.

Once the engine fuel was cut off and the engine feathered the fire lights went out. Al told me to declare an emergency to Air Traffic Control and get a lower altitude and a clearance direct back to EWR. I was so calm and professional on the radio as I told the New York center that we were declaring an emergency, had an engine shut down, and needed an immediate lower altitude and clearance direct to EWR. ATC was on the ball and gave us a turn back toward EWR which was about 60 miles south of our position, and gave us a lower altitude as requested. Once we got turned around, Al told me to get the emergency checklist and make sure he got all the necessary items on the checklist done while he concentrated on flying the airplane. The whole time I was talking to ATC I sounded as if I was on a beautiful spring day in clear weather with a fully functional airplane. John Wayne would have been proud of me. As I put the laminated checklist across my knees to read it and double-check that everything was done I noticed that my knees were shaking so bad I could barely read the checklist. While we were descending and heading back to EWR, ATC advised us that the weather at EWR was below our landing limits with heavy snow. We checked LaGuardia's weather and they were also below limits. JFK, Kennedy Airport, was just at the limits for an ILS approach and going down

fast. Even though our airline did not serve JFK, Al and I agreed that that's where we were heading for. The JFK approach controller gave us our clearance for the ILS approach to runway 13 and provided a PAR backup. A PAR is like a civilian Ground Controlled Approach using radar as the backup. AL and I briefed the approach and since we were on one engine and loaded with ice we both agreed that if we didn't spot the runway at the approach minimum, which was 200 feet above the ground, we would just continue to fly the airplane to the ground since we could never make a missed approach and go around on one engine and a load of ice.

As we got lower during the approach, Al told me to focus looking out the windshield for any sign of the runway we were heading for. As we flew below 200 feet we were still in the heavy snow and at about 100 feet I saw the runway edge lights shining up through the snowy runway and called "Runway in Sight". Al immediately throttled the good engine back to idle and we gently settled on the runway at JFK. The control tower asked us if we were on the ground and what our position was. It was snowing so heavily that once we confirmed that we were safely on the ground they shut down Kennedy Airport operations due to weather and runway conditions. We had cleared the runway at a high-speed exit and were stopped just off the runway to gather our wits. Probably to check my pants also. We tried to taxi to a parking area but as we applied power to our only operating engine on the right side of the airplane it just turned the airplane sideways in the taxiway which was covered in heavy snow like the entire airport. We finally told the ground controller that we would need an aircraft tug with chains to pull us into the gate. Finally, after about an hour's wait, a big aircraft tug with snow chains on the tires came out and slowly pulled us to a parking area where our Newark mechanics would drive over to repair or replace the bad engine. After our mechanics showed up and we talked to our crew scheduling, they arranged a limo service to drive us back to Newark and our parked cars. Ironically the blizzard blew itself out by late morning and the temperatures did a rapid climb which melted most of the snow on the roads before we got back to EWR.

That may have been my last flight in a Convair 440 but it was one for the books.

**Andy (Brown pants) Skiba**

Excellent story Joe!

I think we all have had similar stories in our careers. I remember one night, when we didn't take gate holds the time, it was snowing.... the heavy wet junk, and en route from DCA-BUF in a 111 and in line with multiple other aircraft. We were looking at a lengthy delay. The F/A came up to the cockpit with a napkin that had a drawing of a stick figure holding a gun up to the captain's head. I made a PA announcement that we had to return to the gate (I can't remember the reason I gave the pax) and the company called security

and they removed the passenger and we proceeded to BUF with a turn back to DCA.

When we got back, we talked to the authorities. The passenger was a post office employee in BUF and was spending the night in a DCA jail cell. Never found out what happened to him, but he found out the hard way!

Jerry Clark

Hi Guys,

Well it's all over, including the shouting! I flew my last trip on May 18, 2022 OGG-LAX onboard an almost new A-321 NEO. It was the trip of a lifetime as I had 30 family members and friends onboard.

The whole group had headed over to Maui six days prior to enjoy all the island had to offer. Then it was on my plane for the final leg of my airline career.

My F/A crew were all original PSA who have been my friends for 36 years and bid the trip to fly with me. They decorated the entry and forward galley with Happy Retirement banners and each presented me with a beautiful flower lei.

My F/O was a great guy who had just flown his fathers retirement flight a few months previous at AA. On the jumpseat was an Endeavor Airlines pilot who I have mentored for the last 5 years. He acted as our videographer.

OGG ARFF hosed us down on the taxi out thanks to a mainland call from my old pal Capt Sully and 5 hours later I rolled it on runway 25L at LAX.

During the flight my wonderful wife passed around a memory book in the cabin and had every passenger sign it, and include a Polaroid picture (yes, Polaroid is still a thing!) The result was unbelievable. We had people writing in French and Spanish. There were Boeing employees giggling at me about being on an Airbus. There were many congratulatory notes and some were quite personal.

As I walked off the jet for the last time, everybody had lined up in the jetway for a final goodbye. It was beyond cool.

Now I'm off to my next adventure, Captain Grandpa. I am blessed with 3 grandkids who live close by and need a ride to swim team, day camp, sailing camp, basketball camp etc etc.

It was an honor to fly for PSA, US Air, US Airways and American Airlines. The almost 37 years went by fast.

Jeff Diercksmeier  
[jcdiercksmeier@gmail.com](mailto:jcdiercksmeier@gmail.com)

### **The Pastor's Pontiac**

Newbie pilots are usually on a very tight budget and I was no exception. While one can live in a hovel, eat cheap “glow in the dark” surplus food, and garb oneself at “Goodwill”, reliable transportation is an absolute necessity. Being late for a flight is like being a little bit pregnant, only worse.

If one let passion rule and opted for that inexpensive cute little British sports car only to find out it was cheap because it wouldn't go in the snow nor start in the rain—well, you were going to face being a “no show”.

There were no cell phones back then so calling in an excuse from the road or ringing up a cab were not options. (“Über” was an unheard German word that might get you a tanned hide, but not a ride—hostility still existed). Being late usually meant being fired.

In my case, as I moved up the food chain I knew I would have to upgrade. My 1955 Ford was gasping its last with 125,000 miles on it. Purchased for \$125 it had served well and I was overjoyed to get \$75 back, considering its asthmatic state.

Being both pragmatic and parsimonious limited options in finding a reliable car but I was saved, oddly enough for a stalwart agnostic, by religion. I found a 1956 "Pastor's Pontiac", mechanically sound, with new tires and only 33,000 miles on the odometer for \$300.

I was not deterred by it being a decade old—nor by its ugliness—this was an “arranged marriage” not a love affair.

It had the character of a casket—a solid black pillared 4-door sedan, sloppy 3-speed on the column shifting a standard transmission, it lacked any accouterments.--no white

walls, electric windows, seat belts or air-conditioning. Calvinistic gray cloth upholstery contributed to the somberness.

The lack of power steering was made plain by the size of the steering wheel--most certainly cribbed from GM's Bus division— it barely reduced the physical effort to parallel park this two-ton, long-wheelbase behemoth. On a hot day this maneuver could consume a stick of deodorant and more calories than a "Big Mac" held.

Unofficially dubbed the "Pastor's Pontiac" this basic model provided bench seating for six without being so ostentatious as to offend a conservative, penny-pinching, congregation. It fit in equally well at a funeral or wedding and the trunk was cavernous—well able to hold all that was needed for a church supper.

There was no danger of Rock n' Roll infecting one's soul while in this vehicle—it had no radio either.

All said, the Pontiac was purchased and pressed into service and it did so admirably. With nothing to break, nothing broke.

When I wrangled an interview with Mohawk I was offered a free ticket from Hartford to Utica for the event. Schedule reliability was not the airline's strong suit and I elected to drive the 250 miles from New London—I was not alone in not wanting to risk missing an interview with a "just in time" airline flight.

A month later the Pontiac carried me, and all of my belongings, to training in UCA—and then, a month after that, paralleled the Hudson to our combined LGA/JFK "New York" base.

As a "tail-end Charlie" with no seniority, and Mohawk rescheduling constantly, being mobile was a necessity.

8 months later "my ride" would take me in a different direction—a mechanics strike caused a reduction in service and I was furloughed.

Luckily a friend found me a job driving a Twin-Beech in Detroit and so the Pontiac and I headed west to Buffalo then onto our northern neighbor's highways as the quickest way to "Motor City".

**(In those days Americans couldn't go to the Moon but we could go to Canada. I ponder the idiocy of the reversal in place now.)**

The day I arrived the paychecks of my prospective employer bounced and locked chains encircled the props of the hapless D-18s. I was now both homeless and unemployed in Detroit—a bleak place most of the year, bleaker yet in a snowy January.

I had no concern over finding a job or a roof over my head—I had saved enough cash to avoid camping in my car and liked to work so doing “scut” work to survive didn’t alarm me.

My real dilemma was a little more complicated. Mohawk required that all new hires either possess or pass the ATR (now ATP) written in the first year. The problem was that for us “yoots” you could not even apply to take the written test before you were 23 and it would be 4 months before I could do that.

Once passed, if you retained employment as an airline pilot, it didn’t expire. Leave the airline, for any reason, and you went into “countdown” mode and the written expired 24 months after successful completion.

I was paranoid about this—having failed my first attempt by a single point (my knowledge about trans-oceanic navigation and weather systems, etc was anemic) and a “69” was a point shy of passing.

I did pass on the second try but it taxed my brain to the breaking point to achieve a meager “71”.

I did not know, but learned, that I could go to a flight school in Florida, take a one-week “ATR” single-engine training program and, with the written in hand, become an “ATR” rated pilot.

The Pontiac and I headed south and the further south we got the more attention the snow tire-equipped black sedan got.

I found a room, a bath down the hall, in a rundown but clean hotel in the Cuban section of Miami for \$15 a week.

I didn’t think about it but the car apparently radiated a presence—the Cubans, religious, left the car and its belongings alone. On the other hand, it did resemble a second-tier

gangster's wheels—who else would be so naive or brazen enough to park their car in an area that the tourist brochures would never feature? Either a minister or a mobster, obviously.

In whatever New England township that harbored the original owner it was certainly wished that the vehicle be unmemorable.

In South Florida, it stood out like a Puritan at a Polka Party and could probably be parked anywhere unmolested. If stolen it would be identified in seconds.

Flight training was quick and cheap.

The check ride, officiated by a young FAA guy of good cheer, was ad hoc. We both agreed that a “canyon approach”—a standard maneuver at the time—required some high terrain and was probably not best executed among the condos on Collins Avenue.

Ditto a single-engine ILS in a single-engine airplane.

I suggested, and he agreed, that aviation would be best served if we went off somewhere where he could practice take-offs, steep turns and dead stick landings.

We both enjoyed the jaunt and I no longer had to worry about my written expiring—I was now ordained.

Armed with an ATR I had no problem picking up low-level flying jobs to survive the winter but, by March, Florida was wearing thin and I was restless.

I called Mohawk's Chief Pilot—Ed Rooney, an especially nice guy who treated everyone with humor and respect, and asked when I could expect to be recalled—he gave me the bad news—not likely before June. The Convair-240s had been sold and training on our new FH-227s would begin as soon as they arrived.

For reasons unknown, I elected to once again pile all my earthly goods in the Pontiac and head north. With youthful zeal and stupidity, I elected to drive the 1200 miles back to Connecticut pretty much non-stop—only brief truck stop naps taken. Military service taught tricks to stay awake for extended periods but while eyelid position was documented proof that you were awake, alacrity was not tested. I took position behind 18-wheelers and let them drive while I followed.

34 hours later I arrived at my “safe house” unscathed. It was where friends took my phone messages and forwarded mail. Two hours after I arrived the phone rang—for me—and I was stunned to find it was from Crew Scheduling—they wanted to know if I would be able to fly a trip the next day. I clearly could not.

Three days later, uniformed but sans “Jeps” (Charts & Approach Plates), I deadheaded to ALB where I was to get “three bounces” by a line pilot (Chet Jakubowski) in the middle of a trip—he was as amazed as I was at this bizarre request.

That done, log book signed, I went across the ramp and got in the vacant co-pilot's seat of a trip in progress and was once again an airline pilot.

I am not going to reflect on the changes from that time nearly 6 decades ago—you can dredge up your own—but a few thoughts:

While my Pontiac was perfectly safe on the poorer streets of Miami in the 1960's I cannot imagine how quickly a **Pontiac Chieftain** sporting a **Mohawk Airlines** bumper sticker could avoid vandalization in a liberal enclave like Cambridge today—where gender, never mind heritage or ethnicity cannot be mentioned in irreverent terms—and “they” decide, daily, what is acceptable and what is not.

(I find this pretty funny as my great-grandmother was half Mohawk Indian and I have a thousand times more “real” Indian DNA than necessary to qualify as a Massachusetts senator.)

Back in the day, airline CEO's made 10 times the average salary of their employees. Communications were poor, aircraft reliability could not be depended on, there were no computers and bad weather caused major shifts of aircraft and crews—some forgiveness should be shown about crew planning.

*Thankfully, today airline CEOs, all “cream of the crop”, Ivy-league educated MBA's, are being paid close to 1,000 times the average employee's salary and with the luxury of powerful computers, extremely reliable aircraft able to land in almost any weather—surely the American public would never again have to endure canceled flights due to pilot shortages——(sic)....*

Post probation, I made a puny profit from selling the Pontiac—something that would never happen again in the rest of my life. There was no “post parting pain”—the



replacement was to be something with a lot more verve—a new 1967 Volkswagen. It cost \$1600 which was a little over 2 months' pay at the time.

It was nearly as austere as the Pontiac—a solid dark green (that gleamed brightly). Standard transmission—but 4 on the floor and delightful to shift. No power steering—not needed with the engine in the rear and lesser weight in the front. No air-conditioning but it did have wing-vent windows—and seat belts. Small, it could be parked in a place that could hardly harbor a Harley—a boon in traffic-clogged cities.

The pious pastor would have approved of the plain simpleness of the car except for the one evil lure lodged in the dash—the Volkswagen had a radio and surely, being so young, I would be too weak in character to avoid listening to the “devils” music filling the airways.

I was.

Vis-a-vis visibility—The “Bug” had the opposite problem of the Pontiac— the airline employees' parking lot at JFK had, at any given time, a thousand of them, and unless you carefully wrote down where you parked you would join the parade of lost souls searching endlessly for your ride home—a dreary job on a rainy night that I learned the hard way.

Pete Snyder

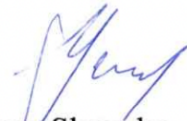
Hi Paul: 

Attached, please find my dues for 2022; time goes by, and I am sorry that this is a bit tardy.

I had a laryngectomy in March of 2020, and worked through the process to have my Class I Medical reinstated in October of 2021. I have been Flight Instructing in a local flying club here in the Fort Myers, FL, area, based out of KFMY. I also completed re qualification in the Phenom EMB-505-300S, with NetJets, and am working through the remainder of the qualification process to resume flying business jets. Due to some of the logistics issues with NetJets, I may be retiring with them at the end of the year, and possibly flying with a smaller local operator.

All glory to God, for navigating me around the "turbulent weather" of my health issues, but I see clear skies ahead. I pray all is well with you and your family.

Fraternally, Blessings,

  
Gary Skogebo

With all the craziness going on in the skies, for all my non-airline friends who are trying to understand; and finally, for when you ask my opinion please read the following. Informative:

This was written by a commercial airline pilot who shall remain unnamed. I have a feeling most of my aviation friends will agree with what he wrote. And for my friends who only see what is "on video" or "their side" it's important you KNOW there are reasons we do what we do.

*"Let's get some facts on the table. As an airline captain, I am the sole authority on the airplane. With that authority comes great responsibility. Likewise, FAR 91.1 states that I am solely responsible for the safe operation of the flight. Therefore, I am responsible for each and every one of you once you cross the threshold of the airplane door. Keep that in mind as we progress. In other words, you break a rule and I could lose my license. My livelihood is not worth your inability to comply. That aside, let's look at why the Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR's) are what they are."*

*Most pilots will agree that the FAR's are written in blood. Every one of the rules was written as the result of the loss of life (a crash.) For example, most of you don't get why you have to have your seat-back and your tray table up for take off. Fact is, the most dangerous part of your flight is the high-speed takeoff regime-- that point from approximately 100 mph to lift-off. I don't need to get into the reasons why, but it is. Should an engine fail and the captain decide to stop on the runway, the odds are great that the plane will sustain damage and emergency evacuation will be likely. Imagine that situation with the moron in front of you having reclined his seat to the aft position and the idiot in the seat between you and the aisle having his tray table down. The FAA knows this and regulates against it because the FAA certifies airplanes based on a full airplane evacuation in a set amount of time. They do not take into account idiots like the guys ahead of you and next to you. In this scenario, you will likely burn and die. Those non-compliers blocked your egress, and you suffered. I wish our Flight Attendants could tell you all this. Maybe you would police each other for your own safety. Then, our flight attendants would not have to tell you to put your seat up and hear words like "witch" uttered under your breath. This is just one example of rules made by the FAA to protect YOUR safety.*

*Fast forward to this situation. Do you remember 9/11? Do you remember Pan Am 103? There are so many security protocols of which you are not aware. Seats assigned must match names. Luggage must match seats assigned. You cannot book on two flights simultaneously. The computer systems know this. You cannot merely give a seat to another person. That is kinda how Pan Am 103 happened--seat bought for someone then someone else showed up and took the seat. As a result, the security systems in place at every airline can immediately send me, on the flight deck at Flight Level 350 (35,000 feet), everything I want to know about you. I can conference call every government security entity that I so desire. I plan to go home to my son and the other Captain (my wife) at the end of every flight, so guess what? I'm not giving an inch on security. I get paid to get ALL 220 people there safely, not just you and your whiney, self-centered issues. Your refusal to play by the rules like the rest of us and merely change the name on the seat is no better than any other law-breaker.*

*At some point, all this arguing on the ground in the back of my airplane becomes a threat to FAR 91.1, my edict that I ensure the safe operation of the flight. If you cannot follow orders on the ground, it's highly unlikely you will do so at FL 350. Get one thing straight, once you board a US airliner, you are entering a DICTATORSHIP. IT IS NOT A DEMOCRACY. I AM THE DICTATOR. NORMALLY, I AM A VERY BENEVOLENT DICTATOR, BUT A DICTATOR, NONETHELESS! DON'T FORGET THAT. It is my ship. I am in command. I have the full faith and backing of the Federal Aviation Administration (thus the US Government), my company, and my co-workers. There are NO "ifs", "ands", or "buts" about it! I don't care about your lawyers, or your camera phone. I have one job to do, and that responsibility--the safety of the other 199 people--trumps*

*your wants or needs. And, if I do not do that job, including removing you for being disruptive, I could lose my licenses, livelihood, and even end up in jail. Therefore, when push comes to shove, I WILL WIN. You can take that to the bank.*

*Let me take a moment and explain this. 99.99999% of the time, all goes great. I meet wonderful customers for whom I am sincerely thankful for their business. I take kids to see Mickey Mouse; military sons to reunite with their families; and, even fallen heroes home to rest. But, every now and then, there is one. There is one person who cannot play by the rules; one person who thinks their situation is more important than all the others on the airplane; one who just cannot follow instructions.*

*Imagine for a moment you are a Captain on a flight with someone who just cannot follow instructions, whether it be not turning off their phones for takeoff (there really is a reason for this), or someone won't put their tray table up. You know all this before take off because the flight attendants keep calling. Would you take this insolent passenger for a ride knowing that if everything goes great, no harm done, but if one thing goes wrong, you could be called to sit before the NTSB and answer questions about your judgment and likely lose your career? You have a passenger on board who will not comply with simple flight crew requests on the ground, and you stupidly take them flying. Now you are at FL350. You cage a motor; conduct an emergency descent; and, ask your flight attendants to prepare the cabin for an emergency landing. There are deadheading flight crew in various seats in the back. They are fully trained on the operation of the over-wing exits, slides, rafts, and evacuations. As Captain, you tell the flight attendants to move the crew to the emergency exit rows to facilitate a fast evacuation giving the most number of passengers a fighting chance at survival. However, your insolent problem who refused to put up his tray table is now refusing to change seats with the trained deadheading pilots. The lives of 200 people are in your hands. What do you do?*

*Now, perhaps, you understand why the law of the sea governs the skies. You know why you need that dictator at that point who knows their job, and can fly the \$hit out of that plane. And, you know why the majority of us pilots will get problems removed before we ever get in the air."*

Mary Golly