

Aerie News

The Eagles Aerie News of the **USAir**

Fourth Quarter 2022

Soaring Eagles

TABLE of CONTENTS

Messages from your Officers

Soaring Eagles Write

Board of Directors

President

Joe Kernan

1st VP

Judy Schmidt

2nd VP

Andy Skiba

Treasurer/

Paul Sturpe

Webmaster

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

Merry Christmas & Happy Hanukkah

Best Wishes for The New Year

Wishing all Soaring Eagles, a Happy and Blessed Christmas, and a meaningful Hanukkah celebration. We hope that the New Year will be full of contentment and that all your hopes will be fulfilled.

For The Board

Joe

By any measure the recent Soaring Eagles Convention/Reunion was a success. Don't take my word for it, go to Usairsoaringeagles.org website and look at the evidence. We had over 100 Soaring Eagles and their guests in attendance. This group included many who were attending their first Convention/Reunion either as new members, or simply attending for the first time. Most if not, all have indicated that they intend to return next year for the 46th Annual Convention/Reunion.

The Meet & Greet on Friday was held indoors this year, and it turned out to be a wise decision, as the weather was steamy and not conducive to comfortable mingling outdoors. The positive vibe was

palpable during the entire three days as old friends reunited after years of separation, not to mention the interruption caused by Covid.

I have not heard one negative comment about the dinner cruise on Saturday Evening. The food was fantastic, the service was top notch, and by a show of hands a majority if not all indicated that they would return in 2023 if we decide to do the cruise again.

Upon our return to the hotel following the cruise I conducted an auction of various airline memorabilia that had been donated by. Oz Lamonds, Barbara Pressley (Dan Friel), JoAnne Trihey, Eric Litt, Linda (Carter) Axelsson, Chubby Kernan (by me), and Mary Louise Leonard. Since my hearing aids had failed me, it was an interesting and lively affair. Much friendly banter and competition. I think everyone had a good time, and we raised almost \$1200.00 dollars for the S. O. S. fund. I almost have my voice back to Donna's consternation.

During the business meeting several changes were voted to the Constitution & By-Laws and policy manual. Those who have not paid dues for more than three years will be given the opportunity to do so or be dropped from the roles. If they subsequently decide to rejoin, they will have to fill out a new application. A new board position of Webmaster was established, and Treasurer Paul Sturpe was elected to that position, as no one else offered to serve in that position. Paul was already doing that work and will have a dual role until next year's election.

Elections were held, and the candidates that had indicated their interest in serving in the various positions were elected. The floor was opened for nominations. None being offered the following officers were elected. President Joe Kernan, First Vice Judy (Schmidt) Colbath, Second Vice President Andy Skiba, Secretary Editor Judi Todd, Treasurer/Webmaster Paul Sturpe.

The Banquet was the culmination of the great time everyone was having . Again, the camaraderie and positive vibe was on display. Just as Eric Litt and I had finished offering Christian and Hebrew Blessings before dinner, we had a surprise visit from a "Mohawk" Stewardess. If her skirt had been any shorter it would have been a belt. The pretty little gal in the orange uniform was Brooke Elliotte daughter of Jeanette Elliotte . Brooke's impromptu appearance sort of set the stage for a very enjoyable evening. After dinner I had the pleasure of presenting awards to my fellow board members for their service during the year. Judy Schmidt Colbath for her recruiting efforts. Judi Todd and her daughter Gloria Collett for getting the Aerie published every quarter, and finally, Paul Sturpe was given a Soaring Eagles statuette for his outstanding job as Treasurer. Outstanding job doesn't come anyway near to describing how invaluable Paul has been to me personally, and to the Soaring Eagles On the lighter side we had a comedian and non stop laughter for almost an hour, and a saxophonist who played during the cocktail hour and banquet very muted during these times, but after the banquet he set up as a disc jockey, and they were still dancing at 11:00PM when I went up to bed.

I consider it an absolute honor and privilege to preside over such a great group of airline professionals.

Plans are already underway for the 2023 Convention/Reunion, and as we move into the New Year you will get plenty of updates. Meanwhile I urge everyone who attended to spread the word to your friends and colleagues that they should join us next year for a good time.

We only have one problem..... how do we outdo it next year? We need you to be there.

Our family, our heritage, and our legacy, Joe

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(724) 378-7025

Flight Attendant Judy Schmidt
Colbath

schonewalds64@aol.com

Well, we promised you a party, and it was every bit of that. I think the attendance may have set a record, and it was clear that everyone had a great time. It was so nice to see so many new faces, as well as those that have become regulars. The cruise was over the top, and the pictures that Bob Brock took prove the adage that a picture is worth a thousand words. In this case maybe more than a thousand. I have been tasked with coming up with a menu for next year's banquet, so the pressure is on for me.

On a personal note, I was honored to once again be elected as your First Vice President. During the auction on Saturday night, I really had my heart set on that beautiful DC3 print that Joe Kernan was auctioning off. Through a very gracious act on the part of Bennett Chamberlin I ended up the successful bidder. I was delighted. My good fortune continued after I got back home when one of my Pugs was judged a Champion during a dog show in Columbus Ohio.

If you were at the 2022 Reunion, please come back in 2023, If you weren't in attendance consider joining us, and I guarantee you'll have a good time

Judy

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(239) 693-9285

Captain Andy Skiba

aeskiba@cs.com

This was my first reunion/convention since I became an active member of the Soaring Eagles.

Since half of my hiring class has passed away I wanted to return and share the memories and stories of my Airline flying career with the people who were part of that era and exciting time of my life.

I was not disappointed at all. Although the faces and bodies showed the aging process, the stories and personalities were just as strong as they were during my active flying years. In many cases, the stories got better with aging.

Our President, Joe Kernan, said this was the best convention ever. All I know is that my wife and I had a marvelous time. The USAir family atmosphere was evident in all the activities and especially strong during the hospitality suite gettogether when we all met those old friends and made new ones.

I urge all the Soaring Eagles that have become inactive to sign up for our next convention before all the rooms are gone. I guarantee you won't be disappointed...

Andy Skiba

SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

(619) 417-7274

Flight Attendant Judi Todd

judiwtodd@gmail.com

Our last and BEST convention/reunion in Tampa at the end of October still reverberates among our Soaring Eagles conversations . What a really great time we all had together. The Hospitality Room was our connection to every attendee this year. Plenty of conversations, food/Snacks drinks and conversations were had by all I do want to thank everyone who helped me keep the activity going whenever a scheduled event was not happening. A big thank you to Jane Lemon for all her assistance. What a big help she was/is. (I'm hoping for her participation again next year (hint)) The Meet and Greet on Friday, the Yachting on Tampa Bay, the Business meeting and the Sunday dinner entertainment did keep us quite busy but the "down time" at the hospitality room was the glue for us all. Thanks again for all the help and suggestions for next year's event. Looking forward to seeing you all back again. Judi

TREASURER'S MESSAGE

(828) 478-1133

Captain Paul Sturpe

sturpe@gmail.com

Last quarter I told you that I was proposing some amendments to our Constitution and Policy Manual. Some of the changes (listed below) were minor in nature. Others are a little more substantial. I have indicated the outcome of the six items.

1. Change all instances of "USAirways" to "USAir".
 - a. Passed and implemented.
2. Change all instances of "reunion" to "Convention" in accordance with Article VI of the constitution.
 - a. Withdrawn pending further investigation.
3. Reconfigure the duties of the Treasurer and Secretary/Editor to make the work flow more efficient and reflect what is really happening.
 - a. Passed and implemented.
4. Add a new officer position, Webmaster, to take over responsibility of maintaining the Soaring Eagles Website.
 - a. Passed and implemented.
5. Define what criteria will be used to drop non-paying members.
 - a. Passed. Members who are required to pay, but have not done so for 3 consecutive years will be dropped from the database.
6. Redefine what data should be kept in the Membership Roster.
 - a. Passed and implemented.

The above changes are contained in the latest Constitution and Policy Manual. Those documents are available by going to the Soaring Eagles Web Site <https://usairsoaringeagles.org/> then clicking on the "Resources" tab then selecting Constitution and ByLaws.

Your 2023 dues are due by the end of February now. Previously they were due by the end of January. Moving the due date back a month is primarily at my request in order to spread out the Treasurer's work load. January is a busy month to begin with, and delaying dues payments will help me out and maybe help you too.

Look for a new way to pay those dues. By the time you read this there should be a new button on the web site titled "Pay Dues". Clicking on that button will show you the option to pay your dues via PayPal or credit card. We hope this will make it more convenient for you to pay dues.

So long until next quarter.

Paul Sturpe, Treasurer/Web Master

"SOARING EAGLES WRITE"

After action report of Soaring Eagles convention.

After joining the Soaring Eagles after all those years of waiting I had to wait for 3 more years but the wait was well worth it.

The Soaring Eagles check-in table in the lobby next to the Marriott check-in desk worked out simple and easy on both counts.

Our room was very impressive in the size and quality of the room.

Once we unpacked it was time to hit the hospitality suite and renew old friends and start making new ones. Needless to say, that was amazingly easy. Several of the Flight Attendants that I flew with on a regular basis during my career were working the bar and looked pretty good after all these years. With beverages in hand My wife, Betti, and I met my old classmate, and settled in to reminisce about the good old days and brought each other up to date on our current state of health and family history. The meet and greet at the pool was a good mixer and a great opportunity to make new friends.

On Saturday, the dinner cruise was outstanding both in the quality of the food and the service as well.

After returning to the hotel we all headed for the hospitality suite again to start bidding on all the memorabilia items that were donated by the members. The bidding was lively to say the least and I was out bid on several items that I would have liked to get. I did manage to get a winning bid on a USAir coin celebrating the creation of USAir on October 28th, 1979. A Happy addition to my challenge coin collection. The auction managed to collect over \$1300.00 which will be donated to the SOS (Save Our Stinson) restoration project which is restoring to original condition the Air Mail Pick Up aircraft which All American Airways used prior to becoming Allegheny Airlines.

On Sunday morning the business meeting was chaired by Joe Kernan, our President, and was brief with a minimum of business to conduct. The slate of officers was reelected with one exception. I had thrown

my hat in the ring to run for 2nd Vice President if no other candidate were interested. Obviously as your newly elected 2nd VP no one else was interested in serving. In another organization that I was active in we had a term for a certain category of member. The term DMO (Drinking Member Only). The majority of the Soaring Eagles are DMO but that is great because we are here to have fun. Renew old friendship and continue the tradition and legacy of our respective airlines. In addition to the Soaring Eagles hats and T-shirts, Allegheny, Mohawk and Lake Central were well represented

was really when all the attendees were having the most fun and bonding.

Monday morning checkout was efficient and payless. We bid goodbye to several of our old and new friends in the lobby before heading to Ft. Myers.

When Betti and I got home, we talked about the great weekend we had and how much fun this convention (Reunion) was.

According to Joe Kernan, this was the highest attendance and the best convention the Soaring Eagles ever had. We are looking forward to next year's gathering and one of my assignments as 2nd VP is to start a recruiting drive from our pilot list. All you retired guys can expect a phone call or email from me in the future to encourage you to become an active member of the Soaring Eagles.

Andy Skiba (last of a vanishing breed of original Allegheny Airlines pilots)

I had a great time at the reunion meeting 3 of the 8 flight attendants that were on my last trip. Also talked with a 4th on the phone that happened to call while I was talking to one of them. That was Jackie Sigee. Also talked with Sandy Stuart in the past month. Since I was based in Cleveland, Wash. D.C. Pittsburgh 4 times, Boston twice and Charlotte I met quite a few pilots and F/A's around the system. Looking forward to next year's reunion.

Leon Young

Chris Polhemus was expecting a simple breakfast with some local pilots at the Greene County Airport Saturday morning.

What he found instead was a room full of loved ones and colleagues he had not seen in several years who had come together to watch the Federal Aviation Administration award him with the agency's most prestigious honor for pilots.

"Flabbergasted, is probably the one word. It's amazing," Polhemus, of Carmichaels, said as he received the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award, which goes to pilots with 50 or more years of flight experience.

"I look around the room here, I see so many guys that I've known for so long in aviation who also would deserve this award just as much as I do," Polhemus added. "I'd like to thank so many people, starting by thanking God for all the blessings he has given us."

Wendy Grimm, manager of the Allegheny Flight Standards District Office, presented Polhemus with the award after detailing his aviation history.

“Chris had a godfather that flew the B-17, and paid for Chris’ initial flight training. He also had an uncle who was a naval aviator in World War II. These aviation aficionados inspired Chris to pursue an aviator’s path,” Grimm told the crowd of about three dozen people.

Polhemus took his first solo flight July 19, 1972, the point from which the FAA begins tracking years of experience.

Polhemus and his wife Katherine own Blomster Field Farm in Carmichaels, where there is a runway on the property.

Grimm presented Polhemus with a plaque, as well as two pins for both him and his wife. Also part of the award? A “blue ribbon package” that contains every record and document kept by the FAA throughout his aviation career.

She explained to the crowd that the FAA sifts through these records to verify the detail’s of a nominee’s career.

“But then we thought, what a nice gift to give that person. Those memories – all those names, the people you’ve flown with and so forth, as a memento after receiving that award,” Grimm said.

Polhemus’ passion for aviation has carried on through his children, who put together the award ceremony without his knowledge.

Chris Polhemus Jr. went through the process to nominate his father for the award.

“I know how much he has done for the aviation community, specifically in Greene County, and all the people that he has mentored to get into airline jobs and aviation-related jobs. I figured this would be a great way to reward him for everything that he has done,” he said.

The younger Chris Polhemus is himself a pilot in the U.S. Navy. From a young age he fell in love with the work of his father, who was happy to be his teacher.

“I think we’ve got pictures of my first flights where we had to put two cushions up on the seats so I could actually reach the controls,” Chris Polhemus Jr. said. “I think 10 years old is when I started to log flight time with my dad.”

Emily Capule, Chris Polhemus Sr.’s daughter, also learned to fly from her father when she was in high school.

“I’m just really excited for him. He deserves this, aviation is his whole life. I just love seeing people come together to celebrate him,” Capule said.

After receiving the award, Chris Polhemus recognized his children and fondly recalled a lifetime in the skies.

“They both learned how to fly in the backyard, it was great,” Polhemus said. “The flying that I’ve done has just been unbelievable.”

Good job Chris we’re proud of your accomplishment

Soaring Eagles

Dear Joe + Donna,

Just a note to say
thank you, Paul the 2 Jedi's
and everyone who took part
in making the convention
a wonderful success.

The hotel staff went
out of their way to make
us feel welcome.

The boat ride was
perfect, all + all everyone
had a fantastic time.

It was great to get together again!

thanks a million

See you next year

Kathy Cox (Cox)



Hi Joe,

Since I retired in '05, I've been busy writing. I first worked for 5 years as an editor for the FISHERMAN magazine and then wrote two books, both of which are aviation-themed, one novel and one nonfiction. I've also almost completed another nonfiction book that will (hopefully) be out no later than the coming spring. If anyone would like to view the books that have been published, they may do so at www.georgejehn.com

Thank you,

George

It was my first one & what a great one!! A big thank you to
all! Jan Bachowski