

# Aerie News

The Eagles Aerie News of the **USAir**

First Quarter 2024

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1 <sup>st</sup> VP	Judy Schmidt
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Treasurer	Andy Skiba
Webmaster	Paul Sturpe
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)

Narrowing the gap.

Back in 2012 when I was elected as Second Vice President, I served along with Bob Knapp who was the First Vice President to President John Gilbert. Back then everyone just moved up without much attention to elections. After the IRS visited with Captain Bill Leefe the Treasurer at the time and insisted that formal elections had to take place, we started a formal election process, and if the First V/P wanted to move up we used the election process to accomplish our goal.

Back then the conventions began on Friday evening with the Meet & Greet from 4-6PM at no cost to the members. Just as today two drink tickets per person and light hor d'oeuvres The Soaring Eagles distributed drink tickets to the members, and the hotel charged us \$6.00 apiece for each ticket redeemed. On Saturday evening we had what was called the International Buffet, and each member paid \$55.00 per person, and was able to redeem two drink tickets at that event. That event has since been replaced by the dinner cruise on Tampa Bay which has become quite popular. The first time we did the cruise was for lunch, and an unidentified benefactor split the cost with the Soaring Eagles. In 2022 in recognition of the fact that we had collected dues for 2020 and 2021 but had to

cancel due to covid the Soaring Eagles paid the full cost of the cruise in 2022. In 2023 the member paid \$70.00 dollars for the cruise, but the cost to the Soaring Eagles was \$72.00 plus the bus transportation to the vessel which resulted in a total cost of \$115.00 for the cruise. Sunday nights we started with the cocktail hour again with two drink tickets per person approximately \$6.00 per ticket, and \$55.00 for the meal. On Sunday night 2024 we did increase the charge to the member to \$60.00.

In 2017 after the Constitution & By-Laws were changed to allow the Flight Attendants to join, we began to hear from them that \$55.00 for the buffet on Saturday and the Banquet on Sunday was too steep for their budgets, so it was decided to reduce the charge to the member to \$45.00 per attendee, per event.

To my knowledge nothing has gone down in price since 2017, but we have held the line at \$45.00 for the Sunday meal until 2024 when we charged \$60.00 which recently became a buffet meal which almost everyone seemed to favor. The Meet & Greet continued to be a free event. Free to the member that is as in 2023 the Meet & Greet cost the Soaring Eagles nearly \$8000.00 dollars which included the two drink tickets which are now valued at least \$12.00 apiece. All of the provisions that the hotel has to obtain to provide for our event have certainly increased while we have tried to hold the line on fees. Unfortunately, the gap between what we take in, and what we pay out has widened considerably. As an example, in 2023 we took in \$13,000.00 but paid out \$33,000.00. I am advised that the hotel actually reduced the retail cost of the food items for the 2023 Meet & Greet by 50%. The drinks would normally have been \$12.00.

Although the outgoing Treasurer Paul Sturpe and the new Treasurer Andy Skiba will tell you that we're in good shape, it would be irresponsible of us not to address this situation before it becomes a problem. I have stated in my state of the organization message that we intend to be fiscally responsible, and good stewards of the funds entrusted to us.

Here is what we plan to do in 2024 in order to narrow the gap between what we take in for convention/reunion fees, and what we pay out for the various events. What was formerly known as The Meet & Greet will be replaced by what will be called. A gathering in the "Crew Room" formerly known as the Hospitality Suite for as long as the members wish to stay. There will be adequate beverages and snacks for everyone to enjoy. By moving the Meet & Greet to the Crew Room it will save a minimum of \$8000.00 dollars, even though it remains free to the members. The theme for the Friday event will be "Recurrent"..... not training, but reminiscing. After Friday evening we will revert to the use of the term Hospitality Suite.

In the past on Sunday mornings, we would have our Business Meeting in a room provided by the hotel and catered with coffee and pastries which cost the Soaring Eagles \$2500.00 dollars for an hour or so. That event will also be moved to the Crew Room

which when combined with the new location of the Friday Meet & Greet results in a savings of nearly \$11,000.00 dollars.

Additionally, the following changes will be made for the cruise on the Yacht Starship which will be \$80.00 dollars per person, and the Sunday night buffet will be \$70.00 per person.

Even with these changes the Soaring Eagles are still providing a substantial subsidy to the members. Recall that the title to this message is narrowing the gap, not closing it.

Joe

**FIRST VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

(724) 378-7025

Flight Attendant Judy Schmidt  
Colbath

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**Recurrent**

Remember when we used to get the notice that we were due for recurrent training? I never could get too excited about it, but I found out once I was there I actually had a good time spending time with the Guys & Gals that I hadn't seen for a while, or flown with since they may have been based somewhere other than PIT.

I've had a glimpse of Joe Kernan's article outlining some changes for the upcoming convention/reunion, and I'm actually excited about the prospect of a different type of recurrent. No Emergency evacuation slides, no unruly passengers, or in-flight emergencies. This Recurrent will be different..... just several hours of fun reminiscing with old friends in the "Crew Room"

In the coming months there will be more information about the upcoming convention/reunion, but now would be a good time to circle the date on your calendar Oct. 25,26, and 27. You don't want to miss Recurrent.

See you in Tampa,

Judy

**SECOND VICE  
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**  
Captain Steve Flom

[stevav8or@aol.com](mailto:stevav8or@aol.com)

Dear members,

As Joe has indicated we are making some adjustments to the convention to be good stewards of the member finances. Unfortunately, everything in life costs more than it used to. Pilots and Flight Attendants generally do not like change. We are usually comfortable with the way things have been done in the past and like to know what to expect. Every Time there was a procedural change to the flight manual there were a lot of words used in the cockpit about the change that probably heated up the voice recorder. But....

sometimes change is not only good but can be fun as well. Keeping the cruise on the schedule and focusing on important events for socializing and having fun has been key. Speaking of important events, if you have memorabilia that is in the attic or someplace just gathering dust that you are not sure what to do with, donate it to the auction. We will repurpose it to a needy pilot or flight attendant that is willing to bid on it.

Steve Flom

**SECRETARY'S MESSAGE**  
Flight Attendant Judi Todd

(619) 417-7274

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I am sitting here in San Diego with my kitties (Bonnie & Clyde) on my lap reading Joe's President report and Judy's Ist VP report (I'm the Editor of the Aerie) and started thinking of changes and wondered back to what I was doing before Allegheny. Well, I was a PA for Northern Pittsburgh Medical Associates in Sewickley, Pa and engaged to one of my patients. Eastern Airlines was hiring and his sister wanted to go for an interview and didn't want to go by herself. So.....finally here is the story. I went with her and the recruiter said since I was there I should fill out an application. Well, I was accepted for a second interview but it was in Florida. So Long story longer this is in February in Pittsburgh and my mother didn't raise any dummy. Free flight , nice weekend , warm weather, etc. so I went, got hired and then found out there was no base in Pittsburgh. Went through this again with United and then American. Same thing. Then "someone mentioned Allegheny Airlines. I went to the greater pit airport, went up to the office on the second or third floor , walked in and met Don Slept. I said "I am going to fly for Allegheny Airlines, what date do you want me to start". He stammered and stuttered and shuffled some papers and said there is a hostess class next week and I said sign me up. That's how I became an "Airline Hostess" in 1964. Stay tuned and next Aerie, I'll tell you about my first flight. Or you could join us at the reunion in October and hear lots of stories from your fellow pilots and flight attendants Hope to see you there.

Judi

**WEBMASTER'S MESSAGE**

From your Webmaster, I don't have a lot to report. I keep busy posting obituaries and keeping up the list of Pathfinders. This is not what I would like to be doing. I have some ideas for the Soaring Eagles website, but tell me what you would like to see there and I'll see if I can add your requested content. So long until next quarter.

Paul Sturpe, [Webmasterwebmaster@usairsoaringeagles.com](mailto:Webmasterwebmaster@usairsoaringeagles.com)

**TREASURER'S MESSAGE**

(239) 693-9285

Captain Andy Skiba

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After a successful quarter as your finance officer, the checks and payments for your 2024 dues are being recorded on our member database. Paul Sturpe has guided me through the computer setup and banking access so I can process your payment totally from my home.

Keep those checks coming.

On another note, I am also the guy who now keeps our database up to date.

If you have a change of any type such as email address or phone number, etc, send me those updates when appropriate.

Hope to see many more of our members at our next reunion in Tampa.

Keep the Blue Side Up.

Andy Skiba

## “SOARING EAGLES WRITE”

OK, here goes: I'll be as brief as I can. Greetings to all from Baker City, or in the Eastern hinterlands oh the state, 5 hrs on I-84 to "Portlandia ". 6 to SEA. I retired from USAIRWAYS on Oct 12, 1999. I turned 60 the next day & just ended a 4 day trip flying out of CLT on the F-100. Time flies way faster than I ever did. I'm a Continental transplant. My wife Patti is a former F/A flying international routes & also retired RN. We have 5 g'children who are young adults & 3 are in college & 1 who graduated from UC Santa Barbara. Son Jason is an attorney as is wife Lin. Their oldest, Jackson is on his 2nd yr @ the USCGA & has his pvt pilot license & wants to fly in the military as I did in this man's Army. His kid sis is @ Tx A&M Corps of Cadets in their equine program. She's all about ponies! We're doing better than just ok but the state of our wonderful if imperfect country & the world at large concerns us. The constant in this life & world is change it seems & not necessarily for the better. The 2 of us are doing well. I'm pretty involved in the "Protestant Mafia " as Carl Dornheim (code for the Masonic Fraternity) called it. 3 time past master, former Grand Lodge officer & 33rd Scottish Rite & Shriner. Happy Easter to those who observe it & keep the blue side up. Be safe & well, all. Cheers & all good things to you & yours. Don Burrows out

west. Capt. Don Burrows, retired US Airways

Hi Judi,

I enjoyed meeting you and talking about how Burt was involved with the training at The Atomic Energy Commission on the F-227 when I flew there.

You did a great job of keeping the Soaring Eagles's hall facilities tidy, fully stocked with treats and drinks, creating a pleasant, "I want to visit" atmosphere. The hospitality area was always inviting with plenty of airline photos and mementos to generate conversation. The food events were also spectacular-high quality, delicious, and abundant in all three locations. The Friday reception area Hors D'oeuvres started everything off in high quality and stimulated great conversation opportunities. Our yacht trip was very enjoyable, and as mentioned, highlighted with great cuisine which was very tasty and plentiful.

The last night's buffet was also fabulously appetizing with many choices. Joe Kernan is a fantastic caring president who absolutely energized the entire event. All of the leadership team devoted great care in the preparation for the reunion and all participated in making it enjoyable and orderly. These efforts from our leadership's team created a wonderful atmosphere for great conversation and relaxation. You know, nothing is greater than laughing and sharing stories from our wonderful days at USAir and in my case Allegheny Airlines previously.

Those times remain some of my fondest memories. No one really understands the life of flying as a crew on a daily basis throughout all the seasons with weather conditions, maintenance issues, passenger issues, scheduling issues, and so on. That's why these events are so important. We all traveled to many wonderful destinations and had great fun doing it because we did it together.

Please tell everyone that if they possibly can, to come to the Soaring Eagles 2024 celebration of the greatest airline in the world. USAir!

Jim Medlock

2/12/79 New Hire Class -US Airways Retired Captain

B-737, B-757-B-767