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# rupanews



**Journal of the Retired United Pilots Association**



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## President's Letter

I must begin by wishing you all the very best in the upcoming year. And so, we all hope for good health, prosperity and good friendships. One way to maintain the embodiment of friendships is through your membership in RUPA. This is such an ideal catalyst for maintaining this camaraderie we have all sustained through the years. And, an avenue to sustain these friendships is through the missives that are sent to our editor. It does not require much to let us know how you are doing. A sentence or two or even a book, if you so desire, to let us know how you are doing.

In that vein, I am very proud to announce that we have a new editor beginning on May 1, 2020. His name is George Cox. George will be taking the reins from Cleve Spring after many, many years serving as both the President and editor of RUPA. He and Rose have done so much for RUPA that I do not know where to begin to thank them for everything they have done for this organization. Anyone who reads the *RUPANEWS* magazine is well aware of their dedication and determination to produce such an enjoyable magazine. I thank them and on behalf of the executive committee, the Board of Directors and the members of RUPA and we wish them well in their future endeavors. With regard to our future editor, George is both a retiree of the US Air Force and had been with United for many years. He flew a bundle of years on the B-747-400 based in San Francisco. George and his wife split their time between Colorado Springs and Naples, Florida. We welcome him aboard. Needless to say, George has some big shoes to fill and I am quite confident in his ability to produce a quality product with our *RUPANEWS* magazine. George will be assisted by Cleve and Tad Gordon who will periodically provide articles for our magazine.

We now have a retirement and insurance person on the staff to help us with some of our most pressing concerns. Bob Engelman, our past President, has stepped up to the plate and has volunteered to provide us with information that may be relevant to us as retirees. I have asked Bob to begin by writing an article on Required Minimum Distributions (RMD). The law has changed so it will behoove you to read his article this month. Bob will have other interesting articles in future *RUPANEWS* magazines.

We have lost one of our area reps in Captain Ken Killmon who resided in Peoria, Arizona. Ken was the area rep for the Phoenix area and he passed away on Dec 19, 2019. He will be greatly missed, and we wish his family all the best in the future. We thank him for his service to RUPA.

In 2000, MetLife announced it would be discontinuing Group Universal Life, GVUL, effective June 1, 2000. With accomplishing the change form, there was a question about your smoker/non-smoker status. The form was ambiguous, and many pilots filed it out incorrectly. In essence, many pilots may have been overcharged for being classified as a smoker when, in fact, they were not. Bob Engelman, the new R&I rep, will have more info concerning this issue in his R&I commentary.

As many of you are quite aware, United Airlines has chosen a new CEO. President Scott Kirby, will assume that leadership role this May. Oscar Munoz will then transition to becoming the Executive Chairman of the BOD. I have written a letter to President Kirby congratulating him on behalf of RUPA with his new position. I indicated that RUPA has worked closely with United Airlines World Headquarters with regard to retiree affairs and I hoped this tradition will continue in the future.

United has announced many exciting route additions and changes. We will have a non-stop flight from SFO to Dublin, will have flights from SFO to New Dehli and more service out of Chicago to include flights to Beijing, Shanghai, Sao Paulo and Haneda. As previously announced, we have a non-stop flight from Newark to Cape Town, South Africa. United will order the purchase of 50 new Airbus 321XLRs.

Welcome to our new members:

Antonio Navarrete, Spouse Lourdes, SFO, Arvada, CO

Donald Bright, Spouse Laura, LAX, Independence, CA

Larry Austin, Spouse Jackie, SFO, Las Vegas, NV

George Bustillo, Spouse Marlene, EWR, Stuart, FL

Rick Siegfried, Spouse Randi, ORD, Downers Grove, IL

Still Flying High,

*John Gorczyca*

Mike Gasper, Spouse Tena, ORD, Gibsonia, PA

Jay Young, Dawsonville, GA

Nancy Parnell, DCA, Fredericksburg, VA

Duff Muir, Spouse Mary, DEN, Denver, CO

Bill Bold, Jr. Spouse Paula, DCA Annapolis, MD

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## RUPA Retirement & Insurance

Your officers asked me to become the RUPA R&I guru, and I might have made a big mistake in agreeing to do it. Hopefully, once we get the initial articles done, as well as the new tab we'll set up on the RUPA.org website, the workload will decrease. We'll post the following short articles there. My new RUPA email address is rupari@rupa.org  
Bob Engelman

### **REQUIRED MINIMUM DISTRIBUTIONS, aka RMDs**

Our Worthy Grand Chief, a term from my fraternity days, meaning our esteemed President, John Gorczyca, asked me to write something about this since many of our members are reaching this age. So here goes.

#### **This is from the IRS.gov website:**

“Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) generally are minimum amounts that a retirement plan account owner must withdraw annually starting with the year that he or she reaches 70 ½ years of age or, if later, the year in which he or she retires. However, if the retirement plan account is an IRA or the account owner is a 5% owner of the business sponsoring the retirement plan, the **RMDs must begin once the account holder is age 70 ½, regardless of whether he or she is retired.**”

Retirement plan participants and IRA owners, including owners of SEP IRAs and SIMPLE IRAs, are responsible for taking the correct amount of RMDs on time every year from their accounts, and they face stiff penalties for failure to take RMDs.

When a retirement plan account owner or IRA owner dies before RMDs have begun, different RMD rules apply to the beneficiary of the account or IRA. Generally, the entire amount of the owner's benefit must be distributed to the beneficiary who is an individual either (1) within 5 years of the owner's death, or (2) over the life of the beneficiary starting no later than one year following the owner's death. See Publication 590-B, Distributions from Individual Retirement Arrangements (IRAs), for complete details on when beneficiaries must start receiving RMDs.”

However, you may qualify for an exception from taking RMDs from your current employer-sponsored retirement account, such as a 401(k), 403(b), or small-business account, if:

- 1. You're still working
- 2. You do NOT own more than 5% of the business you work for
- 3. You have an employer-sponsored retirement account with the business you work for

If you meet all the criteria above, you may delay taking an RMD from the account until April 1 of the year after you retire. Keep in mind that this does not apply to IRAs or other accounts you may hold with companies you no longer work for.

#### **There has been a recent change to the age, and the following refers to legislation:**

“**The Secure Act increases the age after which you must begin taking RMDs from 70 1/2 to 72.** But this favorable development only applies to folks who reach 70 1/2 after 2019. So, if you turned 70 1/2 in 2019 or earlier, you're unaffected.

In a little plainer English, “If someone turned 70 1/2 on Jan 1, 2020, they are not required to take a required minimum distribution until age 72. If someone turned 70 1/2 on Dec 31, 2019, they would be required to take an RMD and would be required in subsequent years.”

### **MEDICARE PART D PREMIUM**

**IRMAA.** No, not your old girlfriend, but an income-based adjustment to your Medicare premiums. I was contacted by several of our members asking if I knew anything about us being charged for Medicare Part D. I didn't, so I did some digging, and then I was contacted by more members. It doesn't apply to everyone.

#### **This is one of the enotes I got:**

“I just got off the phone with UAL Employee Benefits. Here's what I know now: The new Retiree “Medicare Advantage” works thru Medicare Part B AND D. Which means for all of us who use the UAL “Medicare Advantage” The Retiree Post-Medicare Insurance, are ALL automatically enrolled in Medicare's PART D! So for those of us who fall into the “TWO YEAR LOOK-BACK” “problem” will be socked with the cost of PART D Premium PLUS the IRMAA (Medicare speak for “you are a high income earner which we here at Medicare hate you people, so we are gonna bleed your rich asses till it hurts.”)

Then I got this from member Pete Friedman's wife, Marcia, who was in the benefits business for many years and has been a fantastic resource for us:

“IRMAA applies based on income and I'm surprised UAL was not advised to remind retirees of this when they decided to move us to SilverScript. The income threshold is \$174K for married filing jointly and \$87K for single folks. Seems to me UAL decided it wasn't their problem if their retiree was doing well with

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income. It will likely impact more folks that hit 70.5 and have to start taking Minimum Distributions from any other retirement plans they may have. It wouldn't matter if they were enrolled with the UAL plan or opted out and picked another Part D provider, they would still get hit with the IRMAA surcharge. Reported income for 2018 determines your premium [for 2020]. It's on the Medicare.gov website and financial planners (if you use one) should be talking about this with their clients."

Here's a link to the Medicare site explaining it in detail:

I highly recommend that you use this link and read the details on the Medicare site. <https://www.medicare.gov/drug-coverage-part-d/costs-for-medicare-drug-coverage/monthly-premium-for-drug-plans>.

Because of the two-year lookback, most all of us would have been hit with a large Part B premium increase, since our income two years before our retirement was still high. BUT, **Social Security Form SSA-44**, allows for a waiver of the premium increases because of a LIFE EVENT, which in our case was "**work stoppage,**" i.e. **retirement**. You then put in an estimate of your next year's income, and if it falls below the specified thresholds, you get the waiver. If you'll still have a large income, you won't get the waiver. You must submit this form every year. In my case, since I don't work, once the two-year lookback no longer included my UAL salary, I didn't have to submit it anymore.

Getting back to the Part D premium. From two different sources I've been told that Aetna did not tell United about this. It seems to me that Aetna and United should work out a plan so none of us get smacked with the additional premium. We didn't under the old Aetna/Caremark plan, so why should we now? I was also referred to **the large booklet, titled "Evidence of Coverage, that SilverScript mailed to us**. Most of this is spelled out on pages 12-13, although it fails to mention the Form SSA-44. I wish I'd waded through that extra-large booklet before I started hearing about this Part D premium.

We'll still use the [www.caremark.com](http://www.caremark.com) website, but you'll have to call SilverScript at (844) 819-3074 to set up new log in credentials since it's a new account. Once that's done and you log in, you'll see all your previous information, including your prescriptions, right there as before.

Regarding copays and max out of pocket costs for the year, they're a little confusing, with several "tiers" of drugs involved, as well as brand names versus generics. Take a good look at the SilverScript booklet and their website, and if you have questions about your specific situation, you can always call them.

The following may not apply to a lot of you, but for those who it does, this could mean a lot of money. A lot.

### **GVUL INSURANCE SMOKER/NON-SMOKER ISSUE**

Below is from an MEC R&I Committee update on an issue with MetLife insurance premiums. It may not affect many, but for those who are affected, it could be a lot of money. There has been a class action lawsuit filed, so if you are one of those affected, after reading below and finding you have been overcharged on your premium because they changed your status to "smoker," first try to get a refund from MetLife. If you are turned down, please let me know at [rupari@rupa.org](mailto:rupari@rupa.org) and I can put you in touch with the plaintiffs in this case.

#### **From the ALPA R&I Committee**

"We have heard from a few pilots who are signed up for MetLife GVUL Insurance and are being incorrectly charged life insurance rates based on being a smoker, which carries a larger monthly premium.

This most likely impacts L-UAL pilots who had a GUL or Term Policy back in 2000. When the life insurance transitioned to GVUL pilots had to inform MetLife that they are non-smokers to get the lower rates. If pilots did not take that step, then they were defaulted into paying smoker rates this entire time.

We recommend calling MetLife at the number below to verify your status.

To confirm if you have smoker or non-smoker rates you may contact MetLife at 800-756-0124 Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. CT."

Last, and certainly not least, is the following link to the [www.ALPA.org](http://www.ALPA.org) website, and directly to the 2019 MEC R&I Committee Retirement Seminar synopsis. It's extremely lengthy, about 287 pages, so we're not going to publish it here, and probably not on the RUPA.org website either. Even the link is long!

<https://www.alpa.org/ual/-/media/UAL/Files/eLibraries/Communications/committees/retirement-and-insurance/retirement-seminar-presentation.pdf>

You'll probably have to sign on to the ALPA website, so if you no longer know your log on info, you'll have to contact ALPA Membership at [Membership@alpa.org](mailto:Membership@alpa.org), Toll-free, 888-FLY-ALPA (888-359-2572), or 703-689-2270, then press "3" when you reach the automated menu, and you will be transferred to one of the Membership Services representatives. OR, send me an enote at [rupari@rupa.org](mailto:rupari@rupa.org) and I can send you the PDF via email.

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## About the Cover

This is Captain Mike Ray's 8th contribution to our cover. A 737 on approach to San Diego.

### The San Francisco Bay-Siders (December) RUPA Luncheon

We had a nice turnout for our December luncheon. We talked about cruises. Cyndi and I had just returned from a wonderful 15-day Panama Canal cruise. We have a number of cruisers in our group. We met three other United retired Captains onboard. Turns out one of them remembered Cyndi's father, who retired off the DC-8 in 1979. He remembered Cyndi's dad, Lester Good, as Les Bad. Others also called him Les Good, More Better.....small world.



Front table L to R: Rose Spring, Krista Terstiege, Barry and Ginny Hamley, Keltie Morris and Jerry Terstiege.



Front 2 tables L to R: Bob Kallestad, Pat and Larry Wright, Rich Erhardt, Cyndi Schwager, Gerry Delisle, and Cleve Spring.

We also talked about Scott Kirby replacing Oscar Munoz this spring as CEO. We all thought they had been and would continue to be a great leadership team for United.

Finally, it was great to have past Baysider stalwarts Cleve and Rose join us. They were down from Oregon visiting and replenishing provisions before returning to the wild northwest. Luckily, we still had their name tags and they will always be Honorary Baysiders. *Rich Erhardt*

### The San Francisco Bay-Siders (January) RUPA Luncheon

Everyone seemed to have a great holiday season. Of course, there are exceptions, and that would be me and Cyndi. We caught vira l conjunctivitis, aka pinkeye. Took us out for over three weeks. We will do better next year.

Sad news first, Bob Kallestad passed away. He had just returned to our meetings in November and December, after a daughter passed away in June. He was a solid guy and one of the good ones. He will be missed.

Craig Norris, son of Bob Norris a past RUPA member, and who is himself a Baysider, was able to be with us. He regaled us with stories from the line. He told of having a brand new First Officer and all new Flight Attendant crew on his Airbus flights. He almost turned in his iPad. Made us all feel like we were glad to be

inactive crew and active R UPA members.

Barry and Ginny are going on another marathon cruise with Crystal in March. They haven't done that many more cruises than most of us, but they go for distance and duration. They are as such our "Senior Cruisers", and hence a wealth of knowledge.



Picture 1 Left to Right: Carol and Gene Walters, Pat and Larry Wright.

Picture 2, L to R: Rich and Georgia Bouska, Jerry Terstiege, Barry Hamlin, Rich Erhardt, Cyndi Schwager, Jeri Johnson, Craig Norris, Gerry Delisle, Ginny Hamley, Bill and Bonnie Klett.

Our luncheons are always on the second Tuesday of the month at 11am.

Harry's Hofbrau, 1909 El Camino Real, Redwood City, CA. Come join us if you are in town.

*Rich Erhardt*

## The Monterey Peninsula (December) RUPA Lunch Bunch

The 11<sup>th</sup> annual Holiday RUPA Luncheon at the Beach House in Pebble Beach was superb! Despite Caltrans deciding to re-pave the road in front of the driveway to the Beach House, everyone followed the detour guidance from workers and arrived relatively on time!

Carlos and Judy Quintana have been our gracious hosts for the last 11 years. They've decided to step back and let someone else carry the baton. Thank you, Carlos and Judy, - it has been such a special event each year because of your generosity. Steve and Terry Filson and Diane Emerson immediately stepped up and will be our new hosts for next year's Holiday Luncheon! Thank you!

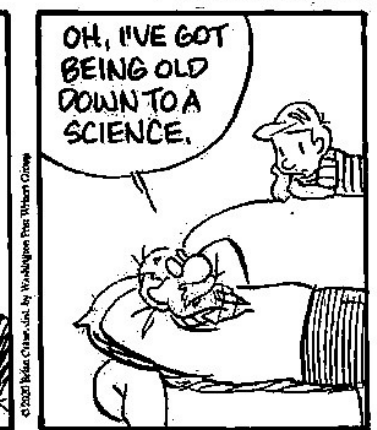
The food was fabulous, though skies were overcast the temperatures were mild, surf was high, and the camaraderie wonderful! Cleve and Rose Spring (our esteemed *RUPANEWS* editor) drove all the way from Medford Oregon! Bob and Cindy Benzies drove up from the San Luis Obispo area.

Others who attended were: Ken and Cheryl Bohrman, Pete and Donna Walmsley (our monthly hosts), Sunee Jines and friend, Marion Keyworth, Sharon Nelson and her daughter, Torchio Nicola, Gary and Diane Brauch, Ed and Pat Manning, Mike and Mary Lynne Donnelly, and yours truly!

We had a number of members who had personal or family emergencies, so our group was relatively small this year. We wish all quick recoveries and hope to see you very soon.

It is hard to believe another year has passed so fast! Our next RUPA luncheon will be Wednesday January 8<sup>th</sup>. Please RSVP to either Pete or me by noon the Tuesday before! *Phyllis Cleveland*

### Pickles



### Brian Crane

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## The Monterey Peninsula (January) RUPA Lunch Bunch

The first 2020 RUPA luncheon was January 8<sup>th</sup> – cool with scattered clouds. Those enjoying the luncheon were hosts Pete and Donna Walmsley, Ken and Cheryl Bohrman, Diane Ellis, Sunee Jines, Steve Filson, Wayne Aleshire, Jeff and Sue Mundle (current UAL 787 Captain with 1 year, 7 months, and 16 days to go to retirement – but who’s counting), Linda Mackie, Diane Emerson, and yours truly.

Ken updated the group about Ed Manning who is suffering from inoperable brain tumors and is under hospice care. Another regular member is suffering from shingles and didn’t attend as well as several cases of colds and flu! Jon and Jane Rowbottom are in North Star enjoying the snow!

A problem has been coming up with UAL covered retiree pharmacy costs being duplicated by Social Security. Bob Engelman, RUPA insurance guru, is looking into the appeals process to stop the double billing. Look for a possible article in the RUPANEWS.

Next meeting in our “leap year month” is February 12<sup>th</sup>. As always RSPV to either myself or Pete the Tuesday before by noon.

Phyllis Cleveland

Happy  
Valentine's  
Day

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## S.E. Florida Treasure Coast Sunbirds (Dec)RUPA Luncheon

That's it for 2019, our final RUPA Luncheon for the year was held on Wednesday, Dec. 11th at The Prawnbroker Rest. (in our own PRIVATE room) in Stuart, FL. As has become usual for December and February (in recognition of Valentine's Day) in our attempt to make our Luncheons SPECIAL (and upscale as well) we invite our wives or lady friends to join us. The Private Room that we are privileged to have creates an entirely different atmosphere and everyone seems to enjoy the venue and ambiance very much. The table arrangement (as you can see in the picture) provides a better than usual opportunity for lots of conversations and well wishes to take place. The food was delicious, and the service was outstanding - so we will be returning there in the future, including this coming Feb. 11th. At my suggestion, a number of us ordered and enjoyed the scrumptious Mid Pie Dessert that is a specialty of The Prawnbroker. Hmmm-Hummm - GOOD!!! ☺



Left Table: Denny & Shari Keast; Skip La Rocque and Barbara D.; Dave Damon; George & Marlene Bustillo.

Center Table: Bill & Lulu Cole; Bob Langevin & Sandy Ruggiero; Paul Ramdial; Dick and Zsuzsa Starita.

Right Table: Ted & Helevi Osinski; Don & Jane Jefferson; Jerry & Louise Hughes; Dick Baese and Linda Collins.

As usual, on January 14<sup>th</sup> we will be returning to Shrimper's...which our Members love as well. A few more of our Northern members will be back by then as well. So, if you happen to be in SE FL (Stuart) on Jan. 14th - come on over to join us at 11:30 AM, we'd love to have you.

Until next year (2020 sounds strange - doesn't it? ☺) - I want to wish everyone a very Merry CHRISTmas along with a Happy, Healthy and SAFE New Year. I realize that you will not be reading this until sometime in February 2020 - but it's the thought that counts.....Right?

Cheers and Blessings to all from SE FL, *Bob Langevin*



## S.E. Florida Treasure Coast Sunbirds (Jan)RUPA Luncheon

Oh yeah, they're back.....all 18 of 'em/us.....in full force. AND we would have had 2 more but they had to cancel the morning of our Luncheon due to Flu-like symptoms....or else we would have had 20!!! :-). Once again we were back at Shrimper's and had a terrific Luncheon experience.....how can you not when you are sitting there gazing over the calm waters of Manatee Pocket with all of those beautiful boats and yachts sitting there....and being served so well by our servers, Ashley and Jillian.



The 18 of us who attended were: Andy Lambert, Jack Boisseau, Dave Damon, Paul Liebisch (former Crew Scheduler from EWR, MIA and WHQ), Bill Cole, Jim Dowd, George Bustillo, Ted Osinski, Jerry Hughes, Ed Potter & Denny Keast (from the FLL/PMP RUPA group), Paul Whiteford (former MEC Master Chm.), Dan Kurt (FLL/PMP RUPA group), Duff Daily, John Pinter (back from CLE), Gary Breland, Les Hare (from Toronto, Canada) and Bob Langevin. It should be noted that Ed Potter, Denny Keast and Dan Kurt made the 1+ hour drive up from the Boca Raton/Pompano Beach area to attend our Luncheon and we appreciate them making that effort. BTW, Les Hare is the current President of RAPCAN (Retired Airline Pilots of Canada) and Les is a Regular attendee of our RUPA Luncheons when he is down here in FL during the Winter. Les is a GR8 and 'interesting' guy and we enjoy his being with us. On a SAD note, Denny Keast informed us that FLL/PMP RUPA Member - New Rankin had "Gone West" (due to health reasons following a fall) earlier in January. RIP Ned!!! :-)

Our Luncheon in February (on the 11th) we be Co-ed and will be held at The Prawnbroker Restaurant (in our own PRIVATE ROOM) AT 3754 SE Ocean Blvd. in Stuart, FL. Even though it's Co-ed because of Valentine's Day.....If you happen to be solo, you are welcome to join us as well. If you are vacationing in SE FL on Feb. 11th, come on by and join us.

That's about it from here in SE FL for now but hope that everyone in our United family is doing well and experiencing a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Cheers and Peace, **Bob Langevin**(MIAFO, CLEFO and ORDFO)

**I can only please one person a day. Today is not your day.  
Tomorrow doesn't look good either.**

## DCA RUPA (December) Breakfast

The DCA chapter of RUPA had a wonderful post-Thanksgiving and pre-Christmas breakfast at the IHOP (no advertising intended) in Leesburg, VA on the 6th First Friday of December 2019.



L to R: Dave Strider, Stokes Tomlin (responsible for all of this!), Bill Davis, Hugh (Bugs) Forsythe, Howard Marcus, Gary Cook (the originator of this fracas), EK Williams, Chris Stevens (an import from Maryland!) and Bob Gilbert.

We discussed everything about AVIATION and WORLD EVENTS to the MAX! Haha!

See you next month! *Stokes Tomlin*

## DCA RUPA (January) Breakfast

A wonderful breakfast get-together was held this morning, Friday, January 10, 2020, at the Golden Corral restaurant in Manassas, VA.



L to R: Our senior member, Jim Foster, Bill Davis (almost as senior!), Hal Cockerill, Stokes Tomlin ( who loves his Apple I Phone camera), John King (of Flying Circus fame...he recently purchased an historic FUNK airplane...look them up!) Gary Cook, Fred Streb and, holding down the right side of the table, Gene Couvillion (our resident Cajun and sponsor of the occasion).

Of interest to all was the story told by Jim Foster about his wife who tripped and fell while Jim was outside the house...Thanks to the recent purchase of her Apple I-watch, the Paramedics were summoned automatically and She was helped to her feet with only a small scratch or two.

Jim is now a "true believer" in the watch and all its many advantages!

We will all gather again next month, same time (0900), same date (second Friday of the month) and, of course, the same place. Submitted by *Stokes Tomlin* Sent from my Remington typewriter

## The Big Island Stargazers (November) RUPA Luncheon

Again, we had a lovely November meal at Fishhoppers. Our RUPA group makes for lively conversation. We were visited by Norm and Kristina Paulsen from Washington state. Walt and Linda Wells were missing as they were in England.



Pictured left to right: Don Deidrick, Roger Pickard, Beth Raphael, Gerry & Joan Baldwin, Linde & Al Rimkus, Ebby & Lex Pinson, Bonnie & Joe Schwirian.

In the other picture are Norm and Kristina Paulsen.

The group discussions included Beth and Roger's trip to the RUPA Reunion in Dayton, OH. Well worth every penny! It's a must do next time. The USAF guys talked airplanes they've flown and a couple (not just women!) are knitters! It's always amazing talking with our RUPA groups, so interesting, never dull.

Hope you all have a Happy Thanksgiving, *Beth*



## The Big Island Stargazers (December) RUPA Luncheon

In December we celebrated our 6th Annual Christmas Party at the Kohala home of Lex and Ebby Pinson. It was a nice fall evening and we were treated to a beautiful, golden Hawaiian sunset. Members and guests brought wonderful pupus, desserts and libations for the potluck.



Left to Right: Richard & Gigi Morley, Joan Baldwin, Bill & Linda Hayes, Walt Wells, Linda Morley-Wells, Beth Raphael, Lex & Ebby Pinson, Al & Linde Rimkus, Gerry Baldwin, Don & Jennifer Diedrick

We hope our fellow Mainland Ruparians had a great holiday season, and we wish everyone a Happy New Year. If your winter travel plans bring you to The Big Island, please join us at our luncheon for some excellent camaraderie. Linda Morley-Wells

**We didn't have bottled water as kids.  
We had a garden hose.**

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## Los Angeles South Bay (December) RUPA Luncheon

We met at the Tin Roof Restaurant in El Segundo on December 12<sup>th</sup> to celebrate Christmas and the end of the year.



Left to Right: Don and Sharon Crawford, Michelle Botkin, Barbara Bradfield, Bill and Sheryl Meyer, Jeanne and Rick Shaw, Adrienne Short, Loyd Kenworthy, Greg Reinhart and Richard Jones.



Left to Right: Ellen Hunnell, Perry Cockhram, Ron and Mary Matsuda, Fabio Silveira, Tom and Helena Reidt, Sue and Arvi von Nordenflycht and Christina Lyons.

We enjoyed having Fabio Silveira talk to us about United's status and outlook, including growth at LAX. Michelle Botkin explained how convenient it is to use an Apple iPhone to board flights. Perry Cockhram helped us remember the friends we lost this year.

It was a good gathering, sharing memories, enjoying good food and friends on a beautiful day. *Sharon*

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## The Intrepid Aviators of Southern Oregon (Nov) RUPA Luncheon

A beautiful November day brought a full group to The Pony Espresso in Jacksonville for our gathering. While snow is forecast for next mid-week, today was absolutely beautiful...as it has been for the entire fall thus requiring a drive with one of the toy cars.



Seated L to R: Pam and art Lumley, Chris and his dad, Banjo Bob Keasbey and Harvey Saylor. Standing L to R: are Bob Niccolls and Marty Niccolls, Bill Monfort, Rose Spring, Scot Lee, Cleve Spring, Jim Jaeger, Michael Bennett, Leeann and Steve Fusco.

With the great day and our large numbers, we took most of the Pony's space. It was a pleasant surprise to have one of our Floridians, Bill Monfort in from his Florida digs and also good to have a chance to see the

pics of the latest grandkids. Our other Floridian, Michael Bennett will be heading there in a few days for the winter as he heads to warmer weather for the next few months.

Comments around the table included having the Russian Antonov here the other day to pick up An Erickson Skycrain headed for Korea and firefighting there. Interesting is that years ago, here in the valley, a couple of guys started Ag spraying which later graduated to fire bombing. Today the firebombers across the world carry a distinct and direct line to those folks, many in the local QB hangar. One local story had it that years ago a local drag strip had a race between a local dragster and a surplus Grumman Wildcat! The Wildcat, stripped of armor, guns etc. ran well and the story goes he carried the local speed record for some time. Dick Foy, local QB and inventor in firebombing techniques, flew the wildcat and said he couldn't return to the strip because he blew all the trophies off the table and would not be well received back. Cheers to all and the very best of thanksgivings to you all! **Bob**

## **The Intrepid Aviators of Southern Oregon (Dec) RUPA Luncheon**

Oops, another year almost gone...how did that ever happen? What happened to all those months and the well-intended resolutions of 2019? Ah well, look ahead, so here's CHEERS to a new year!



Seated L to R: Harvey Saylor, Art Lumley, Banjo Bob Keasbey and his friend Bob, Cleve and Rose Spring, Leeann Fusco and Marty Niccolls.

Standing L to R: are Steve Fusco, Scot Lee and Bob Niccolls.

Our merry group gathered at our favorite haunt, The Pony Espresso in Jacksonville on our third Thursday and, while missing a few, we had a good group for our end of year celebration of our Intrepid Aviators meetings....gatherings that have been going on now for some twenty five years. Twenty five years....really? What happened to the days when the 'old guys' were fifty and we were thirty? Well, whatever...but now is now and we find great enjoyment in gathering, sharing those distant times and, as important, enjoying the good stuff of now.

Winter is a great time in our valley here in southern Oregon. Snow in the high country surrounding, but mostly temperate in the valley. Skiing a half hour away and steelhead fishing but the same half hour albeit in a different direction. Plays in Ashland and wine tasting rooms abundant and close by all contribute. cheers to a great 2020 for all in RUPA land! **Bob**

## **How to pay your RUPA dues**

**Go to our website [www.rupa.org](http://www.rupa.org) and pay your dues there with your credit card (Easy for you and for the Secretary Treasurer)**

**Or send your check to:**

**RUPA  
PO Box 757  
Stowe, VT 05672-0757**

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## Seattle Gooney Bird (December) Luncheon

By the time this issue is distributed we will be well into 2020, but never too late for a well-deserved "thank you" from all SEA Gooney Birds to our RUPA officers, Board of Directors, Committee Chairmen and Area Reps. We appreciate your efforts of the past year and wish for all a healthy and happy 2020, and a special nod to our Editor Cleve Spring.



L to R: Alan Black, Jack Brown, Herb Marks, George Compton, Bob Wulff, Bob Howard, George Brown, Larry Knechtel, Bob Wulff, Jim Barber and Phil Scott.

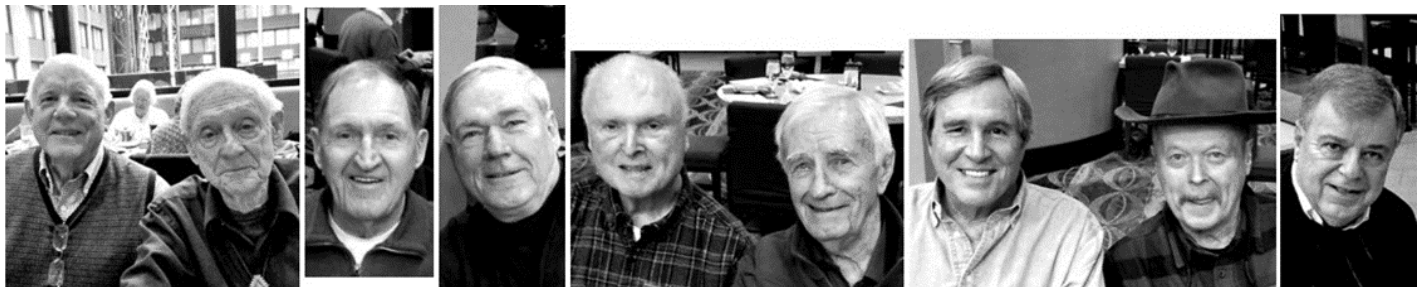
We also thank the SeaTac Marriott folks and their entire kitchen and dining room crew for their hospitality and excellent fare.

To all our Gooney Bird regulars, semi-regulars, and occasional diners it is always good to see you and I look forward to dining with you throughout 2020.

And thanks to Bud Granley for the photography and Bob Howard for handling the details of the December lunch. For the flock, *Hank Kerr*

## Seattle Gooney Bird (January) Luncheon

Seattle Gooney Bird's first lunch of 2020 was well-attended: 6 wives and 14 pilots. It was a typical Seattle winter day: gray, light rain, and a 24 hour hi-lo temp spread of a mere 2 degrees.



L to R: Hank Kerr, Jack Brown, Alex Dunn, Peter Velzeboer, Alan Black, Dave Mosby, Phil Scott, George Compton and Lex Mitchell.



L to R: Bob Reid, Chuck Westpfahl, Tom Smith, Bob Howard, Bill Records, Margie Reid, Mary Brievik, Cynthia Scott, Faith Records, Donna Westpfahl and Kathy Black.

Two subjects dominated conversations, the Iranian downing of a Ukrainian 737-800 and Boeing's ever-increasing problems stemming from its 737 Max 8 decisions.

We welcomed our newest member, Peter Velzeboer, who brings an aviation background including USMC, Pan Am, and UAL (beginning in 1992). Peter spins a good yarn and appreciates one as well. He was joined by his guest Lex Mitchell, also a former USMC pilot.

It is hard to believe that 20 years has passed since Y2K speculations and fears dominated the news as the deadline approached. I recall flight planning in the late afternoon of 12/31/1999 for a Seahawk team charter SEA-EWR for their Meadowlands game. In the months prior United's position had been that Y2K would be

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a non-event and that pilots had nothing to be concerned about. In checking the dispatcher's fuel figures the breakdown included the usual burnout, holding, alternate, and contingency amounts. In addition, there was a category I had not seen before or since: an additional 10,000 pounds of fuel labeled "Y2K contingency". We had a good laugh over that one!

In closing, Seattle Gooney Birds wish for all retired UAL RUPA pilots and their families good health and happiness in 2020 and beyond. For the flock, *Hank Kerr*

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## Phoenix Roadrunners (December) RUPA Luncheon

We had our December luncheon with 8 of us attending. Several of the regulars were gone visiting or other reasons. We did have a good time, the usual stories and never dull.



Those handsome folks in the picture are: Frank and Jeanette Soare, Werner Schmid, Dennis Leahy, Mary and Gary Dyer down from Reno, and Tom and Renee Libuda, and in the mirror, our photographer "Hector". We always like when the Dyers can be with us.

Our leader, Ken Killmon, was in the hospital for a week for a serious medical procedure and asked me to spearhead the luncheon. He plans to try to be back for the January luncheon.

We know that there are retired pilots who come down here for the winter and also newly retired pilots living in the Phoenix area, and we'd like to invite them to come to our luncheons. They are all coed luncheons. I think that the women even enjoy some of our stories.

The Phoenix luncheon is kind of a mix of previous domiciles, as retirees come for the winter or move down here. Our attendees are from all domiciles, and chances are that you may know someone already here.

We really enjoy our meeting place, Bobby Q's, kind of in the middle of town and not difficult to get to. Bobby Q's is one street west of I-17, exit at Northern and go North on 27th Ave. It is about half a mile hidden under the trees and rated one of the top BBQ places in the Valley, also have a lunch menu and full menu. And we need new stories. Best Wishes for a great New Year, *Frank Soare*

*Just a note: For the friends, and those who knew Ken Killmon. Ken's wife Sandra, called a few days after our luncheon and said that Ken had died. He had been in the hospital to get an aneurysm repaired and then some kidney attention. The doctors said that his kidneys failed him, which was the cause of death. Ken was our fearless peerless leader for many years, always a gentleman and a good friend. We will miss him, and he would want us to keep going, which we shall do.*

**Would you like to receive the RUPANEWS by E-Mail?**

**If so—Please send an email to our Secretary/Treasurer**

**[rupasectr@rupa.org](mailto:rupasectr@rupa.org)**

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## The Ham Wilson S.E. Florida Gold Coast (Dec) RUPA Luncheon

We had a great turnout and they kept adding tables to accommodate the crowd. About every three months we compete with a bigger group of FPL employees at Galluppi's, so we live with it. We have a great group of people and it is broken into two pictures so at the South end tables, we have Bob Engelman, Diana Engelman, Francie Garrett, Bill Garrett, Jim Good, Paul Livingway, Ham Oldham, Mark Strasfeld, and Reggie Banks.



And in this Corner on the North End, we have Burt Olson, Suzi Olson, Gene Anderson, Jim Morehead, Dave Friend, Bill Cavanaugh, Bev D'Amico (MIA FOSR), Ed Potter (PAA), Denny Keast, Ned Rankin, Bob Engelman, Diana Engelman, and around to Francie Garrett.



Welcome to the Florida Winter Season and you can see that everyone is dressed for the harsh climate which we must endure!

Our Next lunch will be the second Thursday in January which is January 13th as we get into the year of 2020.

*Jim Morehead and Art Jackson*

## The Ham Wilson S.E. Florida Gold Coast (Jan) RUPA Luncheon

The Ham Wilson SE Florida Gold Coast RUPA luncheon was held at Galuppi's restaurant at 11:30 AM on January 9th. We had a good turnout with a lively meeting. Galuppi's food is always good and the service does a good job of handling separate checks for our RUPA aviators and guests.



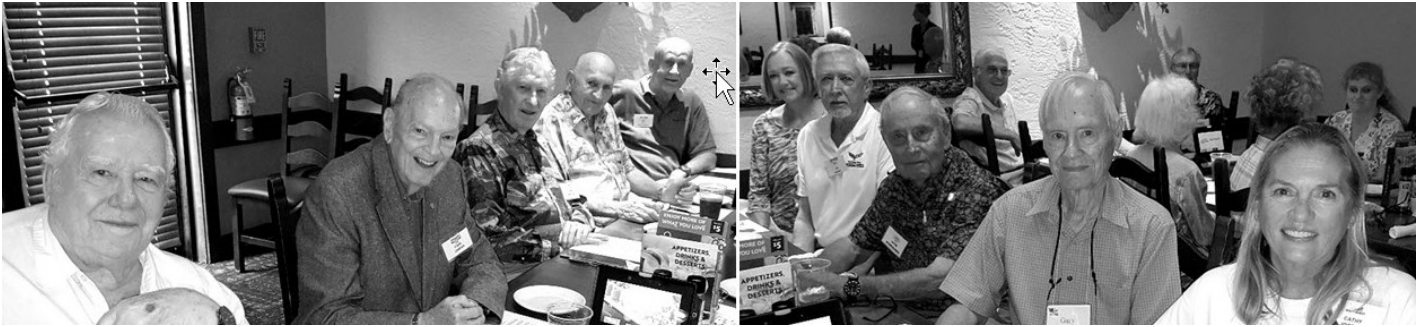
Attending: Jim Morehead, Mark Stansfield, Ed Potter PAA, Denny Keast, Paul Livingway, Gene Anderson, Bob Bevis, Bill Garrett, Francie Garrett, Mike Ward, Stan Baumuald NWA, Bob Engelman, Dan Kurt, Dave Friend, Paul Kelly, and Lyn Wordell.



We had some sad news about one of our regular attendee, Captain Ned Rankin, had flown west. Everyone enjoys getting together to hear old stories and jokes. Our next luncheon will be on February 14, 2020 (always the second Thursday of the month at Galuppi's in Pompano Beach) and all RUPA members, friends, and guests are welcome. I hope to see you there.

## Southwest Florida RUPA Luncheon

Our January 13, 2020 luncheon at the Fort Myers, FL Olive Garden restaurant had quite a nice turnout of 20 attendees. Perfect weather. Our server was Brittany who was efficient, hardworking and personable. The manager stopped by to ensure we were happy with the seating arrangement and to see if we needed anything. We've been fortunate to have been coming to this Olive Garden for over 20 years.



L to R: Wallis Alves, Carl Jordan, Jim Sutton, Gene Chapman, Neil Bretthauer, Judy and Jim Rigsbee Jack Sodergren, Gary Crittenden, Cathy Jordan,



Terry Bowlds, Faith Osborn, Kathy Sodergren, Dot Prose, Rip Curtiss, Jim Howard, Tina, caregiver to Mamie Thompson sitting next to her, Jim Bowlds and Bruce Jorgensen.

For our entertainment effort we encourage attendees to “show and tell” anything that might be of interest to the group. Dot Prose managed a short trip back to hometown Chicago and stopped by the Boeing Headquarters and gift shop which had a nice array of souvenirs. She tried for a coffee mug with a Boeing 247 on it but was told this was too far back! So she bought a Boeing 737 MAX coffee mug. It might be really valuable one day. Both Carl Jordan and his daughter Cathy (retired Southwest pilot) attended and presented a table full of some of Carl's history from his Capital Airlines days, including several aircraft models one of which was a nice model of a Capital Airlines Constellation in its vibrant red and white colors.



There was the usual energetic conversation over the two tables, and everyone really seemed to enjoy themselves.

**Attendees were reminded of the 2020 RUPA Day at Sun-n-Fun Fly-in at Lakeland, FL on Thursday, April 2. The fly-in runs from 31 Mar – 5 Apr. The new official name is now Sun-n-Fun Aerospace Expo.**

The next luncheon is the second Monday in February on Feb 10, 2020 at 1130 at the Olive Garden in Fort Myers. All welcome (United and Continental)! New retirees and their spouses/partners/visiting offspring are especially welcomed. Yours truly, *Gary Crittenden and Dot Prose*



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## SAC Valley Gold Wingers (December) RUPA Luncheon

We had one great Sacramento Goldwinger Christmas dinner. The decorations, desserts and music were the best. Lori Muir, Mary Harty and Sharon Gorczyca provided the cookies. The music was set up by Dave Ulm. The decorations were provided by Sharon Gorczyca and Kathy Lynch. As always, our waitress, Julie gave us excellent service. Thank you to all.



L to R: John and Sharon Gorczyca, Tedd Stiles, Joni and Karl Winkelbrandt, Margo and Chuck Kolesar, Terry and John Petts, Diana Stiles, Lori Muir, Dave Ulm.



L to R: Vivian Stolp, Rosemary and, Bill Authier, Marv and Debbie Alexander, Trudy and Lance Engeldinger, Ann and Jerry Blalock, Ed and Julie Akin and Linda Akin.



Left to Right: John and Jenny Kallio, Frances Kozumplik, Mary and Jim Harty, Steve and Julie McBride, Tom and Deb Dunipace, Joan and Wayne Mooneyham.

## SAC Valley Gold Wingers (January) RUPA Luncheon

We made it through the holiday season and are now on course for a great spring and summer season. It was a beautiful, crisp day for our monthly luncheon. Our waitress, Julie, once again provided the finest of service for our group. We have the greatest of locations for our monthly luncheons as our restaurant overlooks the American River which feeds into the Sacramento River. We overlook bicycle trails, restaurants and small intimate stores in old town Folsom, kayakers on the river and a westerly exposure that provides the most beautiful views. We truly are lucky to have such a picturesque setting. Any Ruparian is welcome to visit us to verify my comments.



Front row, L to R: Tom Wright, Bruce Milan, Ken Ledwith, Joni Cordano, Karl Winkelbrandt, Sharon Gorczyca, Trudy Engeldinger.

Back row, L to R: Wayne Mooneyham, John Gorczyca, Jim Harty, Bill Authier, Gary Webb, Don Wolfe (Wm), Tom Dunipace, Mark Alexander, Andy Fossgreen, Lance Engeldinger and Dave Leippe.

As I mentioned in my agenda items to the group, the big news for United Airlines was the new CEO, Scott Kirby, who will assume his position in May of this year. Oscar Munoz will assume the Executive chairman of the BOD at that time.

As with the previous luncheons, we discussed the future of the 737 Max. It was reported that there were some wiring issues when the Max was being developed. Will the problems with the Max airplane ever diminish?

Dave Leippe reported on the progress of the California Capital Airshow which will feature the Canadian Snowbirds. The airshow will take place this fall at Mather Air Base.

I was very sad to report that one of our staunch Goldwingers, Jim Whittington, sustained a heart problem while standing in line at a CVS pharmacy. We were very thankful for a nurse to be present to assist him medically. Jim and his wife, Judy, are wonderful people with such positive attitudes. As it stands, I presented an article that was in the RUPANEWS magazine that was entitled "For a Longer Life, Get Moving, Even a Little". Jim has absolutely no problem with this as he is in tremendous shape. He rides his bicycle, walks and occasionally runs. He is the epitome of excellent health. It is so vital for us all to take care of ourselves.

Still Flying High, *John Gorczyca*

### Attention Snowbirds

It has been brought to our attention that some of you are not aware that the Post Office will only forward magazines to your new address for 60 days. That is why you must notify John Rains, our Sec/Treasurer, when you head to your seasonal residents. Both your addresses are kept in our database, so it is easy for him to switch them. Please let him know by E-mail or by Snail Mail.

E-mail  
[rupasectr@rupa.org](mailto:rupasectr@rupa.org)

Or mail to:

RUPA  
PO Box 757  
Stowe, VT 05672

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## San Francisco North Bay (December) RUPA Luncheon

The North Bay meet was at the Sheraton Tolay at the Petaluma marina, our home away from home where we are treated so well. A light turnout but a lively round of tall tales during lunch. What fun.



L to R: Dick Hanna, Bill McGuire, “Bones” Bride, Bob Billings, Mike Tar, Bob Grammer, Don Madson, Carol and John Reed, Jules Lepkowsky, Barney Hagen(behind the camera).

Sending regrets for not being able to attend, Bob and Doris Donegan and Sam and Mickie Orchard.

Come join us, first Wednesday of the month at the Sheraton Tolay, Petaluma marina. 12:00 o’clock meet and sit down at 12:30, done by 2:00.

Merry Christmas, Joyeux Noel, Happy Holidays, and a Very Happy New Year. Per Ardua, *Barney*

## San Francisco North Bay (January) RUPA Luncheon

Nine spirited airmen (and Dee Whyman) from another era gathered on this gloomy day to share well-worn stories we’ve likely all heard before but love to hear again. Two stalwarts, Donegan and Barney were amiss but duly noted. attending: Bob Billings, Gardner Bride, Bob Grammer, Wayne Heyerly, Bob Lang, Jules Lepkowsky, Rick Saber, Mike Tar and Dee & Larry Whyman.



It was mentioned that the George Mendonca inscription planned for his beloved 737 cockpit at the Hiller Air Museum is still well short of funding so this will be rectified in a coming *RUPANEWS*. An unseen and almost long forgotten button pin got laughs and a few guffaws when Bob Lang sported same on his shirt collar....who could forget the famous “Dump Dick Ferris” badges many o f us wore in 1985? now coming up on the thirty-five year anniversary of the end of the Ferris imposed strike by 95% of our pilots.

\*this edition lovingly reported by your Cub Reporter Rick " Emperor Norton I" Saber

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## San Francisco East Bay Ruparian's Luncheon

Turned the page on the calendar and Whoa, it's a new year! How did that happen? Well, hope you all had a good year and let's see what this new year brings. It's going to be a little harder to get through since it has an extra day, being leap year and all that.

So our first luncheon of the year went off without a hitch. Seven of us attended and we must have had a good time since we hung around till all of the other diners were well gone before we even thought of leaving. Good food and good conversation tends to do that to us old folks.

We missed Jerry Udelhoven and he says his heart problem is under control and will be back with us next month.



Around the table on the left: BS Smith, Georgia and Rich Bouska, Neil and Tammy Dahlstrom, and Shirley and Lee Francis.

Remember, we meet at 1:00 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month at the Primavera Restaurant in San Ramone. Come by and join us. *Rich Bouska*

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## Dana Point (December) RUPA Luncheon

The ten of us in attendance for our December meeting at the Wind & Sea restaurant enjoyed another great get-together on a beautiful day in the Dana Point harbor, but our numbers were impacted by those who begged off because of one ailment or another, specifically the fact the December meeting occurs during the height of the cold and flu season. But we also had Jim Grosswiler who was wearing a "boot" because of a physical problem with his Achilles tendon and his wife, Karen, was coping with another physical problem with her back. At our age we can all understand back problems which seem to occur to all of us in one way or another. We thank those who stayed away to keep from infecting the rest of us with their germs, but of course, we missed their presence. Our intrepid photographer, Bruce Dunkle, didn't attend because his wife Peggy was under the weather with a cold.

The rest of us welcomed a new couple, Mark and Monika Kerce, to our meeting who live in the same retirement community as Reata Glen, just East of San Juan Capistrano, which is home to several of us.

The rest of us were Bill Stewart, Bill Rollins, Bob Fuhrmann, Jim Grosswiler, Joe Udovch, John & Cheryl Arp and Rico Santamaria.

I personally enjoyed the Calamari strips, which were a favorite of Ted Simmons, and were just the right amount to eat, but some folks thought just because they were advertised as an appetizer, that they should also order a full entree in addition. Too much!

That concludes this episode of the Dana Point news, and until next time, I am your correspondent.

Cheers, *Joe Udovch*

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## The Joe Carnes RUPA Luncheon

Our first luncheon of the New Year was blessed (spared, maybe) by the Illinois snow-and-cold machine's taking the day off so folks were able to drive to and from the Golf Club with only the standard potholes and traffic to contend with.



Our guest speaker was ORDFO 777 Captain Bill Thacker, who flies the EAA's Ford Trimotors for their Airtours program. Beginning with a history of Ford and aviation, Bill gave us a great slide presentation of his flying and the people he's met along the way with the aircraft. Included were snippets and screen shots from a 1929 black-and-white movie made to introduce and commemorate the new-at-that-time Coast-to-Coast travel on *The Airway Limited*.

"Coast To Coast in 48 Hours" was the title of both Bill's presentation and the movie. Of the eleven legs on *The Airway Limited's* NYC – LAX journey, the first was via the Pennsylvania RR and the seventh was via the AT&SF RR. The Trimotors handled the other nine.

RUPArians and guests present were: Tom Balboni, Larry Cabeen, Bruce Carey, Sig Chrzanowski, Tom Conley, Barry Davidson, Jim Downing, Bill Duzet, Carl Eberle, Clark Farrell, Walt and Jan Fink, Kirsten Freund, Jan Gawenda, Mac Gregory, Bob Helfferich, Tom Helms, Denny Holman, Wendell Jelm, Warren Jepson, Dick Kane, Bob and Carolyn Kelly, Les Kimmel, Russ Kuhlen, Dick and Maribeth Kuhn, Wes Lundsberg, Karol Marsh, Bob McCormick, Tom McFadden, Steen Munter, Howard and Marj Nelson, Larry and Mary Sandford, Bud Schrautemyer, Rick Siegfried, Ole Sindberg, Dave and Linda Strohm, Jack Taylor, Bill and Janis Thacker, Jim Trosky, Gus Tuit, Mike and Diane Webb, and Dave Wege.

Lots of kudos to Bob Kelly and Dick Kane for handling the clerical duties of registration (and taking folks' money), and to Wes Lundsberg for providing photo coverage of the lunch crowd. A good time was had by all.

We welcome and invite our retirees, active pilots, spouses, and guests to attend our luncheons. Our next gathering will be Tuesday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020, at the Golf Club of Illinois in Algonquin. Duly Scribeth, *Walt*

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## Denver Good ol' Pilots' RUPA Luncheon

On December 10<sup>th</sup> 27 good ol' pilots and guests assembled at The Tin Cup Bar and Grill in Aurora for social hour and lunch. Social hour began at 11 with lunch served at noon. After lunch Ted Wilkinson provided some humor. Members remembered Russ Ward and Bob Harding who had flown west recently. Next there was some discussion of travel issues. Once again, the subject of positive space discount travel on United for retirees and employees came up with a generally favorable opinion regarding the program.

It has been our policy to introduce new attendees to our group so we can get to know them. Last month we welcomed a new attendee Bill Carter who recently relocated to the Denver area. We asked Bill to speak about his flying career. Here is a summary. Bill attended Notre Dame University on a naval ROTC scholarship. As part of that scholarship he received some flight training at Notre Dame where he soloed as a sophomore and earned his private pilot license. Upon graduation in 1970 he entered Naval flight training earning his wings in 1971. While on active duty he flew the P3 antisubmarine warfare aircraft out of Moffat Field, CA. After completing his active duty commitment, he flew in The Naval Reserves until being hired by United in 1978. Prior to being hired at United Bill had gotten his DC-8 FE rating in Oct 1977 through a third-party organization which utilized United simulators. His first assignment at United was in the back seat of a 737 followed shortly by 727 FE. In 1985 he moved up to 727 FO. He completed IOE just prior to the strike of 1985. According to Bill, the management pilot who conducted the IOE treated him well and made it a

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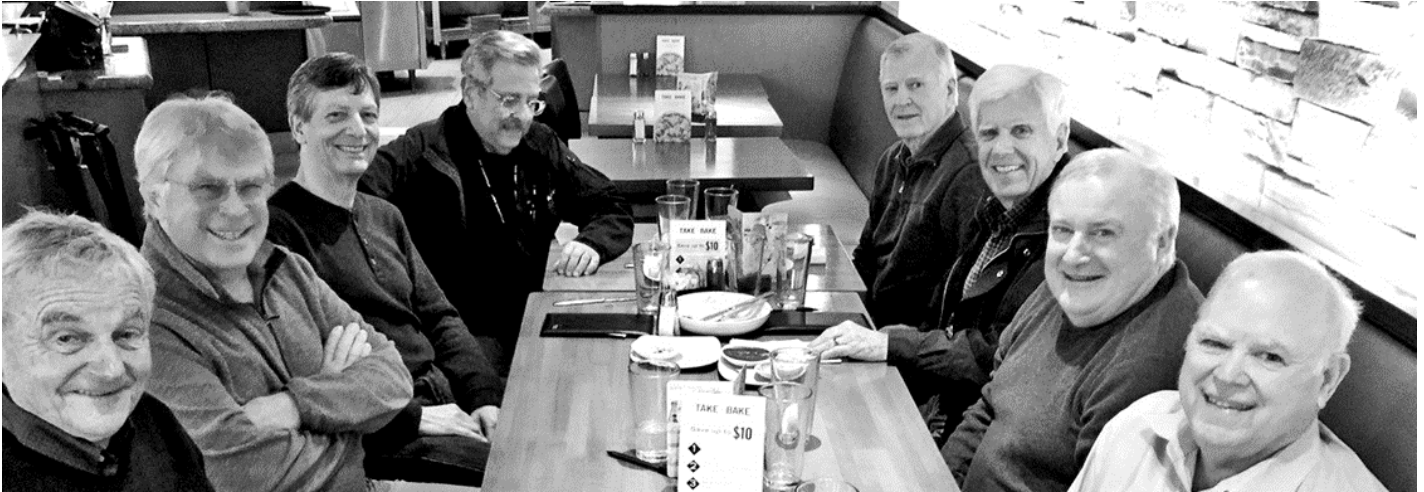
pleasant experience but upon completion said something like (paraphrase) “ You did a nice job but I’m sorry to say this will probably be the end of your career at United.” Eventually, Bill served as 727 Captain, 767 Captain, B747-100 and 200 FO and Captain, 747 400 Captain as well as flight manager and chief pilot of the HNL domicile. He had an experience of being in route from LHR to the U S on 911 and having to return to LHR. Bill retired in 2012 after spending the last 10 years flying the 747-400 out of SFO.

Attending were: Darrel Ankeny, Gerry and Reatha Baker, Rick and Gayle Bebee, Bob and Ann Blessin, Ray Bowman Chris Bruce, Bruce Feinstein, Dick Grant, Bill Hanson, Mike Hutchinson, Steve Jacques, Tom Johnston, Cliff Lawson, Jim Lee, Mark McGurk, Joe Rozic, Bob Sannwald, Rob Schmidt, Rick Steele, Casey and Gail Walker, Ted and Rose Wilkinson. Your Scribe, *Tom*

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## The Columbia River Geezer’s (December) RUPA Luncheon

Eight RUPA Geezers sat down for lunch today at CPK's in Clackamas Oregon. We originally had nine Geezers, however Rusty Harrison had to leave early and was not in our pictured group.



Left to right are: Bill Park, Bill at 83 years young, rides his bike religiously. At his age he points out that he is not yet in the need of reverting back to a trike. Bill told me today that while in the Canadian Air Force one of the fighters he flew was the Mc Donnell F2H Banshee. He also mentioned there were 895 of them built and he is one of 12 pilots still alive who flew the aircraft in active service. Next Ron Blash, Jeff Greco, Tony Passannante, Tony dropped by on his way to work. Today Tony was flying a turnaround from Hillsboro to SJC in the late afternoon. John Cooper, former US Air Pilot and flight instructor, and will be giving me my next Basic Flight Review in my Carbon Cub. I asked him what he would charge and he said “How about a ride in your Cub?” DONE! Rich Warden, recently flew a multi-day Citation trip, his only trip in November. The citation he flies is certified for single pilot IFR but the owner requires two pilots. So, Rich’s son, Matt, who is a F/O for a major 121 carrier was able to accompany him, good times. Steve Barry, after the holidays will be leaving on a trip to the Far East with his wife. A heads up, Steve has volunteered to step into the duties of managing and hosting our RUPA Geezer Luncheons going forward and will be starting in February. Both Tony and I are retiring after having been involved for 11 or 12 years. However, we will be available when Steve is not in the area. Last at the table is Mike Thomas. Sam Richardson called the day before our luncheon to say that he will not be able to make the luncheon. Sam has purchased a beautiful Luscombe aircraft and apparently, he is disassembling the aircraft and preparing it for shipping down under to New Zealand. Sam and his wife spend the NW winter's in New Zealand but misses flying about when in NZ, so down under goes his new Luscombe.

See you all at our next luncheon in the New Year on the second Tuesday in January.

*Ron Blash and Tony too.*

### Information for RETUP Members

From Pete Sofman co-Moderator at RETUP

For those of you who belonged to RETUP at Yahoo groups, and who haven't joined us in our move from Yahoo, or any other Retired United Pilot who's interested in joining our new discussion group. Please send an email to: [ualretup+subscribe@groups.io](mailto:ualretup+subscribe@groups.io)

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## Manassas (December) Breakfast



L to R: John King, Bill Kellenberger, Jim Foster, Gene Couvillion, Sim Stidham, Hal Cockrill, Don Reinhart.

We had an enjoyable pre-holiday, festive breakfast. All joined in with our Christmas hats and John King made the commitment by not shaving for this very photo. Sim Stidham bravely attended, recovering from a nasty fall. Thanks to Jim Foster for providing everyone with a jar of Pohick Applebutter, made by members of his church, inscribed with "If ye be willing, and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land."

Merry Christmas to all from our group. *Gene*

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## Oregon Coaster's (December) RUPA Luncheon in

We had a lovely lunch at the beautiful Florence Golf Links in Florence, Oregon and dined in their private dining room at The Grill.



L to R: Dick Markee, Crystal Farnsworth, David Baird & Marie Baird, Tom and Bonnie Vanderwest, Larry Farnsworth, Cathy Brownfield, Sam Spayd..

Dick reported on his wonderful Tahitian cruise with fiancée, Thelma Walker. They visited many of the wonderful islands including Huahine, Moorea, Bora Bora, Rangiroa and a few other tropical isles. Even at his advanced seniority, Dick was out on the wave runner plowing through large swells and remained aboard the whole time. (or so he reports...we don't actually know for sure...!) They further enjoyed snorkeling, the glass bottom boats, the terrific scenery, dining at Bloody Mary's. They also reported that they got a little tired of the staff on the ship, the Paul Gauguin, treating them like visiting royalty at every turn.

David and Marie Baird gave a report on their terrific Hawaiian vacation. They had a great time and enjoyed their vacation.

Sam Spayd is continuing to put his brand new RV12 through its paces and learning the intricacies of flying this light sport aircraft with a Rotax engine. He has a stunning paint scheme on this very capable aircraft.

Larry Farnsworth gave a primer on the use of vacation passes and several of our members logged into their Employee Res accounts (for the first time in a decade!) only to discover that they have 40 (Count'em, FORTY) vacation passes to use that have super seniority. More to be discussed here later!

Everyone enjoyed a tasty lunch and we shared plans for Christmas and the New Year. Speaking of the New Year, we will have our next Oregon Coasters RUPA Luncheon on Wednesday, January 8<sup>th</sup> at The Grill at Florence Golf links. All are invited to attend. *Larry*



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## The Florida First Coasters (December) RUPA Luncheon

The Coasters met on December 3<sup>rd</sup> at Pussers Restaurant in Ponte Vedra. We had a record crowd, nine members and guests.



Seated L to R: Liliana Preble (guest), Laurie Reeves, Nancy Johnson (ret. FA), Jacquie Mathes (ret. FA).  
Standing L to R: Chrispy (ret. FA) and Jim Peterson, Jerry Bradley, Bill Gander and George Mathes

The group I sat with sounded like the reception desk at a medical convention. I think we all added to our knowledge of the health field, which makes for good conversation. Laurie Reeves brought a very pleasant neighbor with her from Florence, Italy. Jim Peterson discussed his building and sailing a small sailboat on a retention pond in his backyard. Someone in his neighborhood association told him that he can't do that. This brought up the subject of people that can't bring themselves to mind their own business. We all agreed on the summary of that discourse.

If anyone would like to be advised on future meetings, email Jim at [jepeter44@gmail.com](mailto:jepeter44@gmail.com). Until next month, this is *Jerry Bradley for Jim Peterson*.

## The Florida First Coasters (January) RUPA Luncheon

The Coasters met on Tuesday, Jan 14th at the Bahama Breeze restaurant in Jacksonville for our first get together of the 2020's.



L to R: Jim Peterson, Steve & Lillian Moddle, Bill Gander, Bernie Foerster, Laurie Reeves, Chrispy Peterson, Jerry Bradley.

We had eight members in attendance and had a pleasant conversation. Steve Moddle and his spouse drove up from Daytona and we enjoyed their company. Steve and I were some of the first United pilots to go to a Capital base, Steve to Washington and me to Miami. Brought memories of the old saying, we taught them how to fly and they taught us how to lay over.

Next meeting will be on February 4th at 1PM at the Bahama Breeze in Jacksonville. Our leader Jim will get out a reminder a couple days before then. Hope to see some more new folks.

*Jerry Bradley for Jim Peterson*

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## Cleveland Crazies (November) RUPA Luncheon

The Cleveland Crazies gathered for lunch on Thursday November 21<sup>st</sup> at TJ's Restaurant in Wooster. As usual we had a great lunch, great service from our server Maddy and time together. We remembered the crazies that have passed this year. Dick Sanders passed the hat to replenish our treasury. Joe Getz recommended the new movie Ford vs Ferarri. Dick Sanders and Joe Getz kept us laughing with their jokes. And Pat Morris treated us to wonderful chocolates for our dessert.



Standing Left to Right: Phil Jach, Linda Jach, John Cusick, Pat Morris, Harvey Morris, John Hochmann, Rich McMakin, George Bleyle, Dick Sanders, our server Maddy, and Bob Olsen.

Seated from left to right are: Joe Getz, Jim Burrill, Vickie Getz and Monica Burrill. Cheers, *Phil*

## Cleveland Crazies (December) RUPA Luncheon



Standing L to R are: Phil Jach, Linda Jach, Pat Morris, Harvey Morris, John Hochmann, Rich McMakin, George Bleyle, Carol McMakin, Vickie Getz, Bob Lang, and our server Maddy.

Seated L to R are: Monica Burrill, Dick Sanders, Jim Burrill, Mary Lou Sanders, and Joe Getz. *Phil*

## Cleveland Crazies (January) RUPA Luncheon

The Cleveland Crazies January luncheon was well attended with eleven members and wives.



Standing L to R: Phil Jach, Linda Jach, Harvey Morris, Pat Morris, John Hochmann, Bob Olsen, George Bleyle, Jim Burrill, Rich McMakin and our server Maddy. Seated are Bob and Dawn Lang.

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Our luncheon was excellent as usual and the service perfect from our server Maddy. The talk was lively and the stories interesting, but we had no jokes for the group. George Bleyle shared a very interesting story with in depth information concerning a Quantas A-380 that had an emergency landing in November of 2010. And Pat Morris supplied us with her wonderful chocolates for our dessert as she does for every gathering. Cheers, *Phil*

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## The Sarasota Sunsetters RUPA Luncheon

Once again a wonderful lunch with our RUPA members and active UAL pilots. We encourage spouses/significant others to join us. Discussions revolve about everything but primarily how different people are handling SSA, PBGC and of course what is the company doing. Winter in Florida brings us a few extra participants and we are grateful to have them.



In no particular order we were honored by: Jim and Melissa Kelly, Jeff and Jane Munzell, BOB Martin, Skip Irwin, Ken Earnst, Ed Ripper, Bill and Lauren Cochran, Bob Bourlier, Chris and Peg Wingardh, Chris Bird and Karen Anderson, and Paul Rice. See you all on March 10, same place same time. *Chris*

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## United Shows Biggest Improvement on BTN Survey



Business Travel News (BTN) released the results of its 2019 Airline Survey on Monday, and with a score of 4.0 (on a 5-point scale) United nabbed second place, landing us behind Delta (DL) but ahead of both American Airlines (AA) and Southwest Airlines (WN), respectively.

The better news? Our customers are noticing our efforts as United improved in all 11 categories! Additionally, of the four airlines, United was the only one with a drastic improvement in our score, which jumped 0.27 points year over year, considerably cutting the gap between us and DL, which earned an overall score of 4.39 -- unchanged from its 2018 score. With a 3.66, AA maintained its score from last year, while Southwest improved slightly with a score of 3.53.

“I’m incredibly proud of how the entire Sales team pulled together around this effort, and we couldn’t have made such dramatic improvement across the board without the support of departments throughout the company,” said Worldwide Sales SVP Jake Cefolia. “I’m encouraged by the progress we’ve made, and I’m confident that we’ll soon earn the number one spot.”

Each year, BTN surveys top corporate travel professionals to rate U.S. carriers in various categories. Click here to learn more and to see where we landed in each category compared to our competitors.

### How to send a letter or article to the Editor

The best way to send a letter, article, etc., is by email to ([rupaeditor@rupa.org](mailto:rupaeditor@rupa.org))

If you must send a letter by mail, please print or type it to make sure it’s legible.

Send to:

RUPA, 2209 Quail Point Terrace, Medford, OR 87504

The deadline for having things printed in the magazine is the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

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## United Airlines CEO Oscar Munoz is stepping down



Three years ago, United Airlines CEO Oscar Munoz hired the president of American Airlines and made him the No. 2 executive at the beleaguered airline.

Come May, Scott Kirby, who built a reputation as a detail-oriented executive over three decades in the commercial airline industry, will take over the top spot at United, Chicago's hometown carrier.

The company announced that Munoz, 60, will step down in May and become executive chairman, a post he will hold for a year during the transition. United's current chairman, former Federal Aviation

Administration chief Jane Garvey, will retire after serving on the board for more than a decade.

Under Munoz and Kirby, the airline has improved its financial performance, grown its network of routes and strengthened relations with employees and its labor unions while working to restore its image after a rocky period that included a 2017 incident in which a passenger was dragged off a flight.

"With United in a stronger position than ever, now is the right time to begin the process of passing the baton to a new leader,"

Earlier in his career, Kirby held senior leadership roles at America West and US Airways, where he was named president in 2006. He became president at American when the airline merged with US Airways in 2013.

"There's no questions about (Kirby's) knowledge and acumen. If there's any question at all, it's whether he can also be a big-picture leader." At United, Kirby has been heavily involved in the airline's strategy, including a focus on growing the airline's network of routes and building connecting traffic through domestic hubs in a bid to win back market share.

United said it added 93 routes and flew more passengers and more flights than ever in 2018. But it still ranks fourth in terms of number of passengers flown, according to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics. But if United is no longer the "hot mess of an airline" it was a few years ago, it still lags rival Delta Air Lines in on-time performance and some amenities, said Henry Harteveltdt, travel industry analyst and president of Atmosphere Research Group.

It's also in the midst of negotiations with the union representing its pilots and faces industry-wide challenges including slowing economic growth and disruption from the ongoing grounding of Boeing's 737 Max aircraft as well as growing concerns about climate change and sustainability. "Is it where it needs to be? Absolutely not. ... But when you look at it and compare it to where it has been, it is financially more successful and operationally more successful," Harteveltdt said.

When Munoz, who had been president at railroad company CSX and a longtime United board member, was named CEO in September 2015, he took charge of an airline struggling with employee relations, on-time performance and a difficult merger with Continental Airlines. Its reputation with customers had slipped, and Munoz's predecessor, Jeff Smisek, resigned unexpectedly amid a federal corruption probe.

"Oscar became CEO at one of the most challenging points in United's history, and his focus on putting customers and employees first has transformed United's culture today and successfully positioned the company for tomorrow," Garvey said in a news release.

Smisek had led the company since its 2010 merger with Continental. United tied his exit and the firing of two of his top lieutenants to internal and federal investigations into allegations that executives had improperly curried favor with then-Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Chairman David Samson. United reinstated a money-losing route from Newark to an airport near Samson's South Carolina vacation home.

"There was this question in the minds of a lot of people of whether there was just something structural about United that made it impossible to run successfully," said Kaplan, who described the airline as "mired in mediocrity for decades under very different management teams."

The years that followed weren't smooth. Just weeks after becoming CEO, Munoz suffered a heart attack and received a heart transplant in January 2016. In 2017, a social media firestorm ensued after a 69-year-old

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passenger was dragged from a United Express flight in Chicago. Munoz's initial response to that incident — he defended employees while calling the passenger disruptive — deepened outrage. Munoz later apologized, gave up his bonus and promised to change the culture at United, starting with policy changes including additional employee training and limiting use of law enforcement on aircraft.

Other airlines chimed in with plans to limit problems resulting from overbooking, and new procedures were implemented across the industry.

Our CEO, Oscar Munoz, will transition to the role of Executive Chairman of our Board in May 2020. Scott Kirby, President, will succeed Oscar as CEO.

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## United Airlines Pledges Millions of Miles to Non-Profits



United Airlines continues its Miles on a Mission campaign by pledging to match customer donations up to a total of 10 million MileagePlus® miles to featured Miles on a Mission partners. The campaign is a first-of-its-kind crowdsourcing platform that gives customers a simple, and easy way to donate miles to non-profit organizations and charities in need of air travel. Brian Kelly, founder and CEO of The Points Guy, will kick off a holiday donation drive today in Terminal C at Newark Liberty International Airport by meeting and encouraging MileagePlus members to donate miles to the effort.

The inaugural round of Miles on a Mission assisted 12 charity campaigns, which raised more than 11 million MileagePlus miles in just 28 days. MileagePlus members can now visit [united.com/donate](http://united.com/donate) to make contributions to non-profit organizations in need of air travel.

“As our customers begin to think about ways to give back this holiday season, we are proud to offer more options to use miles in support of causes and charities that are meaningful to our customers,” said Sharon Grant, vice president and chief community engagement officer at United Airlines. “We know many of our customers are looking to make a difference and we want to give them opportunities to make the giving of their miles go even further. Donating miles is a powerful way to contribute to an organization.”

The following non-profit organizations are participating in the Giving Tuesday campaign:

- A Walk on Water: Surf Therapy organization serving families of children with unique needs by offering transformative experiences at the beach.
- Compass to Care: Chicago-based organization that assists children suffering from cancer with travel to receive life-saving cancer treatment. Thirty percent of children diagnosed with cancer do not have treatment options within 60 miles of their homes.
- The Extra Mile: Chicago-based organization that gives flights to those in need of visiting terminally ill loved ones, who cannot otherwise afford the trip to say their final goodbyes.
- I AM ALS: I AM ALS is uniting patients, advocates, and the scientific community to reshape public understanding of ALS, provide key resources to the community to fight ALS, and empower them to lead the search for treatments and cures for this currently terminal disease.
- PeaceJam: A global peace organization teaching young people the skills they need to tackle today's most pressing issues. Your miles will support youth to work directly with PeaceJam's 14 Nobel Peace Laureates at summits around world.
- Rainbow Railroad: Organization that helps those who identify as LGBTQI seek asylum from their countries of origin. They will use the miles they raise to book flights for individuals they are helping to travel to safety.
- The Station Foundation: Organization committed to protecting and empowering U.S. Special Operations veterans returning from combat, their spouses, families and Gold Star children.
- Up2Us Sports: Organization that works to engage, train and support sports coaches to serve as mentors and role models to youth in underserved communities all across America.

**Sometimes it takes me all day to get nothing done.**

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## United Travel Information

I've got some good news to share! Beginning April 1st, retirees can now make online payments for their pass travel tax withholdings through the Your Benefits Resources (YBR) website.

If paying online is not your thing, don't worry you can still pay for your tax withholdings by check or money order. Please keep in mind, failure to pay an invoice may result in a suspension of your pass travel privileges until the invoice is paid.

Pay by check or money order:

- Make check or money order payable to United Airlines
- Be sure to write your account number 024510004 on your check or money order
- Always enclose the bottom portion of the invoice (coupon) with your payment
- Mail your payment to the address shown on the coupon
- United Airlines, P O Box 3788, Carol Springs, IL 60132-3788

Online payment:

- Go to Flying Together > Employee Services > Health & Insurance (YBR)
- Click on the Pass Travel Tax Withholding tile
- Select the Pay Now tile on the right side of the page
- Follow the prompts in the Payment Center to submit your online payment

Helpful Resources:

- Visit our W-2 Pass Travel Tax Reporting page for a complete list of resources and tools
- Contact the Employee Travel Center:
- Use Help Hub to submit an inquiry or
- Call 1-877-UAL-ESC9 (from the U.S.) or 1-847-UAL-ESC9 (outside the U.S.)
- Hours: 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Central Time, 7 days a week
- Say "employee travel" then "travel questions" to speak to a team member

Michelle Pritchett: Employee Travel Policy and Procedures Representative, Human Resources

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## United: New eRES improvements

December 11, 2019

We're continuing to listen to your feedback and make improvements to employeeRES. Here are a couple of changes that went live last night:

**Selecting travelers:** You told us that you didn't like having to select a traveler every time you searched for a flight, so we now default to having you selected as the traveler. If you're listing someone else and you aren't also traveling, just select the other traveler(s) first, and then unselect yourself before submitting your search.

**Pass rider usernames:** Times change, and so do cyber security needs. To make sure that all of our pass riders' eRES usernames meet modern security standards, we've worked with United IT Security to implement new username requirements for pass riders. Going forward, when setting up eRES access for a pass rider, you'll see that the username will need to:

- \* Be a minimum of six characters in length
- \*Not contain any spaces
- \*Not use the format of a United ID (one letter followed by six numbers)

For your existing pass riders, if you discover that their usernames don't meet these criteria, you can go to eRES > My profile > Manage profile > Traveler profiles, select the traveler, and select "Remove login access" under the Permissions section. You can then re-add login access with a new username. Employees and retirees who have current pass riders impacted by this change will be notified in early 2020.

**Questions?** As always, if you have questions about pass travel or employeeRES, you can find lots of information in the Travel section of Flying Together, and you can also reach out to the Employee Travel Center through Help Hub or by calling 1-877-UAL-ESC9 (1-877-825-3729) toll-free within the U.S. and Canada or 847-825-3729 (toll call) for international and following the prompts for "employee travel" and "pass travel questions."

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## New planes! United orders 50 Airbus A321XLRs



United announced an order to purchase 50 new Airbus A321XLR aircraft, which we plan to begin inducting into our fleet in 2024. The order enables us to begin replacing and retiring our existing Boeing 757-200 aircraft and further meet our operational needs by pairing the optimal aircraft with select transatlantic routes. We will continue to operate our 757-300s. The state-of-the-art A321XLR aircraft, which we expect to introduce into international service sometime toward the end of 2024, will also allow us to explore serving additional destinations in Europe from our East Coast hubs, EWR and IAD.

“The new Airbus A321XLR aircraft is an ideal one-for-one replacement for the older, less-efficient aircraft currently operating between some of the most vital cities in our intercontinental network,” said EVP and Chief Commercial Officer Andrew Nocella. “In addition to strengthening our ability to fly more efficiently, the A321XLR’s range capabilities open potential new destinations to further develop our route network and provide customers with more options to travel the globe.”

The next-generation A321XLR offers customers an elevated inflight experience and features modern amenities, including LED lighting, larger overhead bin space and Wi-Fi connectivity. We are in the very early stages of selecting features and amenities for this aircraft. However, we do plan to feature an intercontinental configuration for the A321XLR.

Additionally, the new aircraft lowers overall fuel burn per seat by approximately 30% when compared to previous generation aircraft, enabling us to further minimize our environmental impact as we move toward our ambitious goal of reducing our carbon footprint by 50% relative to 2005 levels by 2050. We have been looking for Boeing 757-200 replacements for quite some time and are confident that the A321XLR is the right replacement aircraft, since it has better fuel savings, better economics and the right range for these specific transatlantic routes.

Additionally, we will defer the delivery of the Airbus A350s we ordered several years ago until 2027 to better align with our operational needs. By year end 2019, United will have approximately 800 mainline aircraft, a record for the mainline. We maintain a strong orderbook to meet our growing network and capacity needs and expect to take delivery of over 64 mainline aircraft next year, consisting of 787s, 777-300ERs, 737 MAXs, used A319s and used 737 Next Generation aircraft.

On the widebody side, we have taken delivery of 12 787-8s, 25 787-9s and nine 787-10s, with 13 787-9s and five 787-10s still on order. We have accepted delivery of 18 777-300ERs and expect four more. We currently have 45 A350-900

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## United Is Improving Onboard Wi-Fi?



Both our Wi-Fi service and our associated Personal Device Entertainment (PDE) products are complex systems that we actively monitor on every single flight. This, of course, helps us get a better handle on what works well and what needs more attention.

Improving onboard Wi-Fi has been a long-standing priority for us, but over the last year, we’ve put extra emphasis on taking a closer look at where Wi-Fi fails. We’ve done this by digging into feedback from both our employees and customers, which helps our digital technology IT and Tech Ops teams improve our software and hardware reliability.

This has led to some big improvements recently.

We’ve invested in a number of system improvements which include equipping high-speed Wi-Fi on additional aircraft, increasing performance monitoring capabilities to quickly address issues, and upgrading aircraft and network software to provide a better customer experience.

The best part? Our customers are seeing the difference, and they are consistently providing us with positive feedback.

Customer feedback is trending up and we are seeing spikes in a few major areas, including:

- 62% decrease in maintenance write-ups year-to-date
- 28% reduction in customer Wi-Fi refunds year-to-date
- 25% increase in Wi-Fi purchases onboard year-over-year
- 16% improvement in customer satisfaction of onboard Wi-Fi year-over-year

“Providing reliable Wi-Fi to our employees and customers is an absolute priority for our support teams,” explained EVP Technology and Chief Digital Officer Linda Jojo. “When Wi-Fi falls short onboard, it’s frustrating for everyone, especially our inflight and flight ops crews. Our expectation is that Wi-Fi performs as it should every time, and we are working very hard every day to make that goal a reality.”

But it doesn’t stop here. We are continuing to investigate more ways to invest in new technology and increased reliability.

## DEN Flight Training Center expands



On Jan.14, we opened the new G building at the Flight Training Center (FTC) in Denver. Already impressive, the FTC now boasts an additional 76,000 square feet of training space for our flight crews.

With this new addition to the FTC, the Western Hemisphere’s largest flight training center continues to grow. By September of this year, our pilots will be training in 37 full flight simulators and 16 fixed training devices! Our flight crews now have more than 550,000 square feet of training space available for new hire and recurrent training. In addition to pilots, the FTC is also utilized by Inflight training, Maintenance training and Move Team

training.

“Adding a new building that seamlessly integrates into a campus that has already stood for more than 50 years was an aesthetic and operational challenge, particularly as simulator technology is changing so rapidly,” said Flight Operations Consolidation Senior Manager Graham Smith. “We focused on creating a functional, durable and flexible new building that will handle anything the next 50 years may throw at us.”

Aviate, our new pilot recruiting program, will continue to grow over the next several years; having state-of-the-art training facilities is a huge advantage when we compete with other carriers for pilots. The new building features eight full flight simulator bays, four fixed training device bays, 24 briefing rooms, several large classrooms and a break room.

Based on feedback from our pilot instructors, we increased the size of our briefing rooms to better accommodate training demands and installed adjustable training platforms to handle any future simulator design changes. The bays were designed for Electro-Magnetic Motion (EMM) devices, which means no more hydraulic devices. These EMM devices reduce our operating costs and our environmental footprint by improving reliability, reducing our power consumption and minimizing our hazardous material creation.

“We are proud of this state-of-the-art flight training facility,” added Flight Operations SVP Bryan Quigley. “This new building with eight simulator bays will be instrumental in achieving our strategic plans.”

As we continue to expand our DEN footprint, this new building reaffirms our commitment for caring for our employees, our environment and our community while putting safety at the front of all that we do.

## Which Airlines Reject the Most Compensation Claims?



Latest investigation by an air passenger rights organization reveals United Airlines rejects 40% of claims that have been identified as eligible, and American Airlines and Delta each reject 27% of valid claims. These wrongful rejections directly contradict the European law EC261, which covers passengers on flights that took off in the EU on any airline or that landed in the EU on an airline that is headquartered in the EU.

If a flight has been cancelled, delayed for over three hours, or in an instance of denied boarding, passengers on flights covered under EC 261 would be



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eligible for financial compensation of up to \$700 per person if the cause of the disruption was under the airline's control. However, many airlines intentionally apply delaying tactics or pay passengers less than what they are entitled to.

For example, in 2018 United Airlines rejected 23% of valid compensation claims, compared to 40% in 2019. This revelation adds to a long list of woes for United passengers after one of the most disruptive years in air travel to date. Due to mass cancellations and delays along with the threat of strikes, airlines left thousands in turmoil across the globe.

The research shows airlines aren't playing fair, and it is no wonder that 73% of U.S. passengers give up on the compensation they deserve after their initial claim was rejected. The investigation into the reckless claims handling by airlines exposes their blatant attempts to shirk their legal responsibility and reveals how much support passengers need to exercise their rights.

It is wildly unfair for airlines to reject compensation claims as a tactic to avoid giving passengers what is rightfully theirs. On average, airlines have rejected over 30% more claims this year than in 2018. EC261 is in place to empower passengers and to prevent airlines from using smoke and mirrors to trick customers and avoid their legal responsibility.

Of the airlines investigated, Tunisair rejected the highest number of claims in the first instance (99.9%), followed by Vueling (99.9%) – a 35% increase compared to 2018 – and Ernest Airline (99.9%).

Approximately 169 million passengers have been affected by flight disruptions in the U.S. in 2019, thousands of whom will now be embroiled in legal battles and who are continuing to face an impossible struggle to claim the money they're entitled to.

If passengers believe their claim has been wrongfully rejected by an airline, they should not give up. Passengers should keep hold of all travel documents as these are crucial if their claim needs to be escalated with legal assistance. Affected travelers should also note that they have three years following a flight disruption to file a claim.

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## **A Comment on the 737MAX Article in the November Magazine**

By Captain Ross "Rusty" Aimer, RUPA member

Dear Cleve,

The words cannot describe the appreciation and gratitude for you and other volunteers who keep our little group informed and up to date about what is going on in the world we grew old in and dedicated our lives to.

I noticed in the article on page 21 in the November magazine, a mention about what I had said to a reporter in one of the numerous articles published about the 737MAX debacle and, as usual, taken out of context.

Although I still believe lack of experience and training was a contributing factor in the two MAX crashes, by no means I absolve Boeing for their terrible design and more so their criminal coverup and withholding critical information and training material from customer pilots.

I had no intentions of blaming dead pilots for this tragedy and as I learned more about this faulty design, I am more convinced that even the best trained and experienced pilots could have possibly failed to recognize and handle this "out of control monster" we later learned to call MCAS!

I did not fly the MAX but flew every other Boeing and Douglas commercial jetliners ever designed. (Did not actually fly the 787 either but learned a lot about her while at Boeing.)

Like the rest of us, I loved and admired every one of those fantastic flying machines and trusted my life and that of my passengers to them.

Digging deep into the history of the MAX design and my own personal experience at Boeing Training after retirement, I lost that trust and no longer believe the current upper management at Boeing are capable of truly addressing this perhaps the greatest failure in aviation history! The trusty old 60's 737 was finally stretched way too many times and pimped up to satisfy the greed at Boeing and the love affair with Southwest and Ryanair, her biggest and the most influential customers. Best regards, *Rusty*

**Being an adult is like folding a fitted sheet.**

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## Consumer Attitudes Towards Service Animals During Travel Revealed



The results of the consumer survey dealing with attitudes and perceptions relating to the presence of service and emotional support animals during travel were released today.

78.8% of people in the survey stated that service animals should be allowed in the passenger cabin of a plane.

51.7% of people thought a restaurant is the worst place you can take a service dog or emotional support animal. 55.4% of people believed pet owners abuse service animal policies.

The survey, based on reporting from almost 1,000 respondents, included several hundred persons who use either service dogs or emotional support animals, as well as persons who use neither. The survey sought feedback about attitudes regarding the presence and/or use of animals in various public venues, including while traveling.

Although federal law mandates that businesses (including airlines) must accommodate requests from consumers for service animals, there are distinct differences between service animals (usually dogs) and “emotional support” animals, in terms of the training necessary for each, the cost of that training, as well as fees assessed by airlines for booking them on flights.

One of the key findings of this study is that there are significant differences of opinion on the question of accommodations for service dogs versus emotional support animals: 53% stated that both types of animals should be equally accommodated – but 47% disagreed with that proposal. Also noted was the “skepticism” factor: most survey responders believe that pet owners abuse service animal policies to their own benefit.

A significant factor coming into play was the specifics of the situation/setting in which service animals were being used – 49% stated that their use was not appropriate in restaurants and 35% of the responders did not wish to see them in grocery stores.

With reference specifically to air travel, greater than 10% of the survey responders had either observed an in-flight issue with a pet while flying or were directly involved in a situation themselves.

Surprisingly, most of the survey responders who used service dogs indicated that they chose not to fly with them, and only 1 in 11 of those with emotional support animals chose to fly with them.

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## IATA: MP14 Boosts Efforts to Tackle Unruly Airline Passengers



The International Air Transport Association (IATA) looks forward to the entry into force of Montreal Protocol 2014 (MP14) on 1 January 2020. MP14 enhances the capacity of states to curb the escalation in the severity and frequency of unruly behavior on board aircraft.

This follows the 26 November 2019 ratification of MP14 by Nigeria, the 22nd state to do so.

MP14, properly named the Protocol to Amend the Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft, is a global treaty that strengthens the powers of states to prosecute unruly passengers. It closes a legal gap under the Tokyo Convention 1963, whereby jurisdiction over offenses committed on board international flights rests with the state where the aircraft is registered. This causes issues when unruly passengers are delivered to the authorities upon landing in foreign territories.

Unruly and disruptive passenger incidents on board flights include physical assault, harassment, smoking or failing to follow crew instructions. These incidents may compromise flight safety, cause significant delays and operational disruption and adversely impact the travel experience and work environment for passengers and crew.

“Everybody on board is entitled to enjoy a journey free from abusive or other unacceptable behavior. But the deterrent to unruly behavior is weak. About 60% of offenses go unpunished because of jurisdictional issues. MP14 strengthens the deterrent to unruly behavior by enabling prosecution in the state where the aircraft lands. The treaty is in force. But the job is not done. We encourage more states to ratify MP14 so that unruly passengers can be prosecuted according to uniform global guidelines,” said Alexandre de Juniac, IATA’s

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Director General and CEO.

States should also review the effectiveness of the enforcement mechanisms available to them in line with ICAO Guidance on Legal Aspects of Unruly and Disruptive Passengers (ICAO Document 10117) which gives information on how civil and administrative fines and penalties can be used to supplement criminal prosecutions.

In addition to strengthening jurisdiction and enforcement, airlines are working on a range of measures to help prevent incidents and manage them more effectively when they do happen. These include enhanced crew training and raising awareness with passengers of the potential consequences of unruly behavior on board.

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## Aviation Safety Network: 2019 relatively safe, despite rise in accidents

### Aviation Safety Network

The Aviation Safety Network released the 2019 airliner accident statistics showing a total of 20 fatal airliner accidents, resulting in 283 fatalities.

Despite the high-profile Boeing 737 MAX accident, the year 2019 was one of the safest years ever for commercial aviation, Aviation Safety Network data show. Yet, while the number of fatalities has decreased, the number of accidents has increased to a level above the five-year average.

Over the year 2019, the Aviation Safety Network recorded a total of 20 fatal airliner accidents, resulting in 283 (occupant) fatalities. This makes 2019 the seventh safest year ever by the number of fatal accidents and the third safest in terms of fatalities. The safest year in aviation history was 2017 with 10 accidents and 44 lives lost.

Looking at that five-year average of 14 accidents and 480 fatalities, the past year showed a markedly higher number of accidents.

Thirteen accidents involved passenger flights, six were cargo flights. One out of 20 accident airplanes were operated by airlines on the E.U. blacklist, down by two compared to 2018.

Surprisingly more than half of the accidents (11) occurred in North America (compared to just one in 2018 and three in 2017). Five accidents occurred in remote or rugged parts of Canada and Alaska. Despite progress made through various safety initiatives by Canadian and U.S. regulators, this still is an area of concern.

Given the estimated worldwide air traffic of about 39,000,000 flights, the accident rate is one fatal accident per almost two million flights.

Reflecting on this accident rate, Aviation Safety Network's CEO Harro Ranter stated that the level of safety has increased significantly: "If the accident rate had remained the same as ten years ago, there would have been 34 fatal accidents last year. At the accident rate of the year 2000, there would have been even 65 fatal accidents. This shows the enormous progress in terms of safety in the past two decades."

Reflecting on the 737 MAX grounding, Ranter states 2020 should be a decisive year on how the international aviation industry will handle aircraft design, flight crew procedures and certification in the wake of the 4th longest airliner grounding.

Statistics are based on all worldwide fatal commercial aircraft accidents (passenger and cargo flights) involving civil aircraft of which the basic model has been certified for carrying 14 or more passengers.

The Aviation Safety Network is an independent organization located in the Netherlands. Founded in 1996. It has the aim to provide everyone with a (professional) interest in aviation with up-to-date, complete and reliable authoritative information on airliner accidents and safety issues. ASN is an exclusive service of the Flight Safety Foundation (FSF). The figures have been compiled using the airliner accident database of the Aviation Safety Network, the Internet leader in aviation safety information. The Aviation Safety Network uses information from authoritative and official sources.

What airlines think  
humans look like:



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## Boeing 2019 aircraft delivery numbers lowest since 2008



Boeing lost 87 orders for commercial planes last year, meaning cancellations outnumbered new purchases in 2019. It delivered just 79 commercial jets, including nine Boeing 737 planes, in the fourth quarter of last year.

US aerospace giant reported that it delivered a total of 380 commercial airplanes in 2019, its lowest number since 2008. Its total deliveries in 2019 fell by 53 percent compared with the previous year, when the company delivered 806 jets to its customers around the world.

The company's poor sales record has been attributed mainly to the Boeing 737 MAX crisis, after two MAX jets were involved in two fatal crashes in October 2018 and March 2019. The two crashes killed a total of 346 people in Indonesia and Ethiopia.

All MAX aircraft have been grounded globally since March 2019, with their return to service delayed several times after Boeing failed to obtain certified approval from U.S. federal regulators.

Boeing produced about 400 MAX airplanes throughout 2019, though they were not delivered to customers and remain sitting idle in the company's storage facilities.

Last December, Boeing decided to temporarily halt production of the 737 MAX, partly as federal regulators extended the certification process of the troubled jets into 2020.

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## Airbus: 863 commercial aircraft delivered to 99 customers in 2019



Airbus SE announced that it delivered 863 commercial aircraft to 99 customers in 2019, outpacing its previous output record set in 2018 by eight percent. In the 17th yearly production increase in a row, Airbus progressed on the transition to all NEO variants and by year end Airbus had delivered 173 wide-body aircraft, its highest number in a single year.

### In 2019, deliveries comprised:

A220 Family: 48 v 20 in 2018 (since the A220 became part of the Airbus Family: 1 July 2018)

A320 Family: 642 v 626 in 2018. Of these, 551 were NEO Family v 386 in 2018

A330 Family: 53 v 49 in 2018. Of these, 41 were NEO Family v 3 in 2018

A350 Family: 112 v 93 in 2018. Of these, 25 were A350-1000 v 14 in 2018

A380: 8 v 12 in 2018

Airbus had a strong year of sales with a total of 1,131 new orders. Net orders reached 768, compared to 747 in 2018, underlining customer endorsements in all market segments and taking Airbus' overall historical cumulative net orders over the 20,000 mark.

The A220 achieved 63 net orders, confirming it as the leading aircraft in its category. The A320 Family continued its success with 654 net orders including an outstanding market response for the new A321XLR. At year end, the current Airbus wide-body offering comprised sales and repeat orders of 32 A350 Family and 89 A330 Family aircraft. Cancellations of 363 reflect specific airline situations in 2019 as well as the decision to end A380 production. At the turn of the year, Airbus' backlog stood at 7,482 aircraft.

"I am happy to see our commercial aircraft order and delivery numbers reflecting the continuous efforts to better serve our customers and bring our competitive products and services to the market", said Guillaume Faury, Airbus Chief Executive Officer. "I sincerely thank our customers for their loyalty and the Airbus teams and our industry partners who made it possible."



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## FAA's \$5.4M Boeing fine dwarfed by fired CEO's \$62M in 'benefits'



US Federal Aviation Administration said in a statement that Boeing had “failed to adequately oversee its suppliers to ensure they complied with the company’s quality assurance system.” According to US federal regulator, the plane-maker had “knowingly submitted aircraft for final FAA airworthiness certification after determining that the parts could not be used due to a failed strength test.”

The FAA has signaled that it will seek to fine Boeing around \$5.4 million, accusing the multi-billion-dollar company of wittingly installing defective parts on its ill-fated 737 MAX jets.

The aviation regulator announced in June that over 300 Boeing aircraft might contain faulty components which could injure passengers or prevent planes from landing safely and said it would require the company to replace the parts.

While the company has taken a serious hit in quarterly earnings over the last year after a series of fatal crashes involving the 737 MAX – which has been grounded worldwide since last March – each year Boeing counts its profits in the billions, making the proposed fine a barely perceptible slap on the wrist.

Boeing’s recently ousted CEO Dennis Muilenburg, who was fired in December as the company struggled in the aftermath of the MAX crashes, was given \$62 million in benefits as he departed the firm – a sum dwarfing the FAA’s latest fine. He was slated to receive a “severance” package and stocks worth millions more but forfeited the offer.

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## Boeing internal message: 737 MAX jet ‘designed by clowns’



Boeing has released another cache of internal company messages that suggest the US aerospace giant lied to regulators about the problems with 737 MAX aircraft. In a statement issued along with the documents, the plane-maker apologized “to the FAA, Congress, our airline customers, and to the flying public” for the “content of these communications,” adding it would pursue “disciplinary or other personnel action, once the necessary reviews are completed.”

Newly-released Boeing internal company messages show fierce criticism from an unnamed employee who said the crash-prone 737 MAX aircraft was “designed by clowns.” In its release of the redacted communications on Thursday following an internal probe, Boeing acknowledged some of the messages were “completely unacceptable” and contained “provocative language.” In one missive sent in 2017, an employee castigated the 737 MAX – which was grounded globally last March after a series of fatal crashes – slamming both its designers and ‘supervisors,’ apparently referring to federal regulators.

The employee has not been named, and it is not clear what problems he had identified with the MAX at the time.

Another damning message sent in 2018 shows an employee grappling with ethical concerns, telling a colleague “I still haven’t been forgiven by God for the covering up I did last year,” another apparent reference to the company’s interactions with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

In addition to the faulty flight control system thought to have caused the two MAX crashes, the aircraft’s flight simulators also came under fire by employees in the internal messages.

“Would you put your family on a Max simulator trained aircraft? I wouldn’t,” one employee asked a coworker, who simply replied: “No.”

An FAA spokesman, however, noted the documents do not reveal any new safety risks with the 737 MAX’s simulators, despite the potentially incriminating communiques indicating employees concealed problems from the agency.

**Have you ever visited our RUPA Website?**

**[www.rupa.org](http://www.rupa.org)**

**there is a lot of good information on it**

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# Boeing's Push to Make Training Profitable May Have Left 737 Max Pilots Unprepared

By Peter Robison and Julie Johnsson/Bloomberg Businessweek

An emphasis on the bottom-line disrupted decades of productive communication between pilots, engineers, and designers.

On an overcast Friday in January 2016, thousands of employees gathered outside the 737 jetliner factory in a Seattle suburb for the first flight of the Max, the newest version of Boeing Co.'s 50-year-old workhorse. Thousands more watched a live feed at their desks. Two of Boeing's ace test pilots sat at the controls, one an ex-U.S. Air Force fighter jock, the other a Navy veteran who'd also flown experimental planes for NASA. As the pilots fired up the first engine, the hulking plane rolled forward several feet—they'd forgotten to set the parking brake. Inside the fraternity of Boeing pilots, it was an eyebrow-raising moment that later, after the uneventful flight landed to cheers, led to some teasing of the crack duo, Ed Wilson and Craig Bomben, for missing one of the steps in the preflight checklist.

More than an ironic footnote in the Max saga, the incident is a window into the prideful culture that led to two crashes and 346 deaths, a worldwide grounding of Boeing's marquee jet, and unprecedented scrutiny of the storied planemaker's processes. Aviation authorities have weighed in on how Boeing engineers failed to anticipate pilots' reactions to a cacophony of alerts from misfiring flight control software, how managers pressured engineers to speed the completion of their designs, and how an acquiescent Federal Aviation Administration missed the deadly risk from software changes made late in testing.

But the most fundamental breakdown at Boeing may have been a lack of appreciation of how humans respond under stress—both in the machine it was designing and in its own organization. On aircraft like the Boeing 777, a cadre of pilots had worked closely with engineers to solve problems. By the time the Max entered development, Boeing was pushing hard to turn the unglamorous but all-important business of customer training into a profit center of its own. Many pilots were distracted by a dispute with Boeing over the hiring of outside contractors. They contended the quality of training was slipping.

In 2013, a year after a vote that more than doubled the number of unionized pilots, the company announced that it was moving its Seattle-area flight simulators to Miami. There and in cities such as Singapore and London, amid an historic wave of orders, it relied on hired help known as "purchased service pilots," or PSPs. Boeing's longtime trainers had another abbreviation for them: DBCs, or "dirtbag contractors." In practice, according to interviews with more than a dozen pilots and engineers who participated in the Max's development, the turmoil left the aircraft's cockpit designers with a lack of input from the instructors who regularly saw how the typical airline pilot responded to unusual situations. Even among the pilots, there were communications breakdowns, partly caused by disagreements over unionization. At times conversations were civil but terse.

Boeing's fight with the pilots came at the same time as layoffs among the engineers and was part of a drive, these people say, to lessen the clout of Seattle-area unions. Company reassignments placed thousands of miles between designers honing flight-deck concepts in Seattle, trainers working with airline pilots in Miami, and a team in California that provides day-to-day support of airplanes in the field. "The driving factor was monetary," says Mike Coker, Boeing's former chief training pilot. "Those relationships between the various professional organizations that for decades resulted in a good product, an improved product—they weren't taken into consideration as much as the bottom line."

In an email, a Boeing spokesman said that "training requirements are mandated by global regulators and implemented by airline customers. Boeing continues to invest in dedicated capability and resources to assist our customers in training." He added that Boeing has 41 full flight simulators in nine locations across four continents.

Three former senior Boeing executives, however, say privately that they regret the profit-driven imperatives imposed on the training process and see it as critical to understanding how a company renowned for meticulous engineering missed the mark so badly with the Max. For century-old Boeing, whose name is nearly synonymous with flight, the crisis isn't only a human tragedy but a deep embarrassment and a financial disaster costing billions of dollars. And it's made Chief Executive Officer Dennis Muilenburg, who's taken heat from congressional leaders and crash victims' families in tense hearings, the technocratic face of a deadly corporate blunder.

The financial pressure is only mounting after the FAA pushed back on the timeline to get the Max back in the air, prompting Boeing to announce on Dec. 16 that it will suspend production of its biggest cash generator starting in January. The company already has almost 400 newly built aircraft languishing in storage because of a global flying ban that began nine months ago. “This pause may indicate that the reentry into service of the 737 Max is not just around the corner, as bullish investors may have been anticipating,” Ron Epstein, an analyst at Bank of America Corp., wrote in a note to clients.

It wasn't supposed to happen this way. In late 2010, Airbus SE surprised Boeing by offering airlines an update of the 737's chief competitor, the A320. The new version would have more powerful engines to save on fuel but few other changes, allowing customers to keep down the costs of training pilots to fly it. Boeing responded by announcing a similar plan to modernize the 737, a plane designed in the 1960s that had already been updated twice.

After a design meeting, Pete Parsons, an executive in the commercial airplanes unit with a mouthful of a title (director of program management best practices and program management functional excellence), declared the plans “the best I've seen.” He told Boeing's internal newsletter that he was especially impressed with the “clear communications” and “high level of collaboration.” As Jim Albaugh, then Boeing's chief of commercial airplanes, laid out the marching orders for the Max in the December 2011 newsletter: “We're going to make this the simplest re-engine possible. We're only going to touch the part of the airplane impacted by the engine and a couple of other improvements.”

The industry was in the midst of the greatest boom of the jet age, as the combination of millions of newly mobile middle-class travelers in Asia and low interest rates prompted airlines to order planes at a frantic pace. In the past decade, carriers have taken delivery of single-aisle jets worth \$442.2 billion—36% of all such planes manufactured in the previous half-century, according to the aerospace consulting firm Teal Group. It stretched their ability to train and recruit pilots.

Boeing had long prided itself on the quality of its training, dating to the College of Jet Knowledge it established during the development of the first successful commercial jet transport, the 707 in the 1950s. That plane was put through its paces by the most famous of Boeing's test pilots, Alvin “Tex” Johnston, who wore specially made boots for each new model and gleefully courted risk. In 1955 he stunned Boeing executives by executing a barrel roll in a 707 prototype over a crowd of onlookers at a Seattle festival. Decades later, the Boeing pilots are a tamer bunch, though some are said to still be members of the Quiet Birdmen, an aviators' club dating to World War I. They're also more specialized. In addition to the Boeing pilots who test new models, there are others who train airline crews or write manuals.

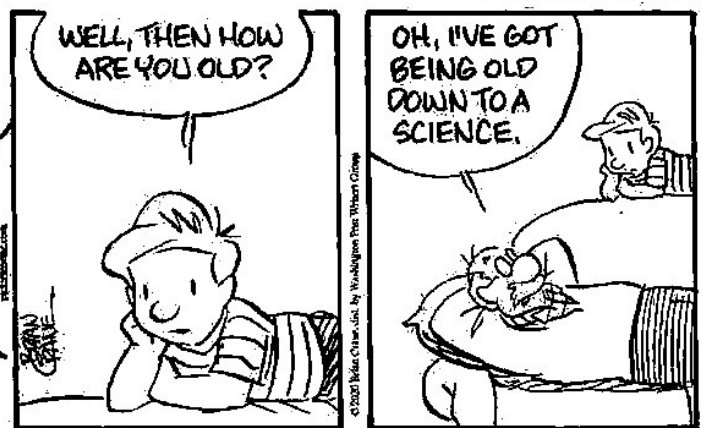
But the company has been trying for years to capture more of the commercial pilot training market, forming a joint venture with a Warren Buffett-owned company in 1997 that ended in 2002 and, in 2003, creating a subsidiary known as Alton, renamed Boeing Training & Flight Services in 2009. The moves prompted instructor pilots to form a union they called the Lazy B Pilots Association, rankling management and some of the test pilots, who weren't unionized.

The training unit introduced a points-based system for its airline customers akin to the airlines' frequent-flyer programs. Instead of providing expensive simulator time—which can cost hundreds of dollars per hour—for a set number of crews as it previously had, Boeing offered points that could be used for a

## Pickles



## Brian Crane



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combination of training for pilots, maintenance technicians, or flight attendants. “It’s like swapping fries for boiled potatoes,” Alteon’s chief, Sherry Carbary, told the trade publication FlightGlobal in 2007.

Carbary, now president of Boeing China, warned of a training reckoning for the industry amid the wave of new pilots and said it demanded a single-minded response. “We must, as an industry, find a way to lower the costs,” she said at a convention in Orlando in 2007.

The effort didn’t sit well with some of Boeing’s instructors. “We felt like shortcuts were being taken and that the quality of training was being sacrificed,” says Charlie Clayton, a former Boeing instructor. The airlines, too, had “a vested interest in getting pilots out and flying as quickly as they can, as cheaply as they can.”

Tensions boiled over with a plan to use contractors, often retired airline pilots, to fly with crews for initial training. In 2012 the trainers and manual writers voted 4 to 1 to join Boeing’s engineers’ union, the Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace. Managers made it known that the vote wouldn’t help their chances at promotion, four former workers say. The next year, in the middle of negotiations for a new contract for several dozen pilots, managers delivered a bombshell: They were moving the simulators to Miami, where Boeing had a training center that had been part of the by-then-shuttered joint venture with the Buffett company. Boeing said it was what customers wanted.

As the Max was in development, Boeing squeezed the union in other ways, too, shipping more than 3,900 jobs out of the Seattle area. Among the first to leave Boeing as job insecurity grew were experts in so-called human factors, scientists and psychologists steeped in research of how people interact with machines. Without their input, says Rick Ludtke, a former cockpit designer, “it was easier for the program leaders to drive their wishes into the design teams. They just didn’t have people who understood that you need to say no.”

The beefed-up Miami center wasn’t popular with all customers, says Coker, the former chief training pilot. Some objected to instruction from contractors instead of full-fledged Boeing pilots. Other former instructors say the Miami building was shopworn.

But there was a more worrisome consequence: The move disrupted the informal relationships among engineers and trainers in the Seattle area who could easily convene at one of the simulators to talk over designs. (Another type of simulator known as an E-cab did remain in Seattle, employees say, but it was harder to schedule because of the increased demand for it.) “When the simulators were downstairs, there was an extreme amount of crosstalk,” Coker says. “We could do a walk-through or a rehearsal of a proposed procedure and see where the flaws were—much harder when you have to go to Miami or tell somebody over the phone.”

It was from a hotel room in Miami that former Boeing pilot Mark Forkner—one of the manual-writing pilots—sent frustrated instant messages in November 2016 about a Max simulator that wasn’t working, according to a former colleague. When congressional investigators released those messages this October, they caused an outcry because they seemed to suggest Boeing knew of issues long before the Max was flying. What they may show instead is a lousy information loop at the company.

Early in 2016 test pilots and engineers had expanded the authority of a software system that had the ability to point the Max’s nose down. It was meant to address a limited stall condition most pilots would never see. But Forkner and others working on the simulator hadn’t been alerted about the change or that FAA staff had already observed it activate during test flights. “Why are we just now hearing about this?” Forkner wrote. His lawyer didn’t respond to emailed questions.

Problems with the system have been tied to a single point of failure—a vane that measures the angle of the plane’s nose against the oncoming wind. When it malfunctions, the measure trips a bewildering array of cockpit warnings including a thumping alert known as a stick-shaker that indicates a plane is in danger of stalling.

Boeing never tested how pilots would respond to such a failure, which later occurred in the accidents. “When they look back, the failure to adequately test this in the sim was Problem One,” says Chris Hart, former chairman of the U.S. National Transportation Safety Board, who led a panel of aviation authorities examining the Max’s shortcomings. “Fragmentation played a big role in it, the failure to communicate.”

Boeing has vowed a massive pilot training initiative, part of a broader effort to reinforce safety. Pilots say it’s recently advertised jobs for more in-house trainers. Muilenburg says Boeing has already begun rethinking the design of its flight decks to ensure human responses are adequately considered. But no reexamination can reverse the human toll suffered before the Max’s initial design and training flaws were discovered. Boeing delivered the first Max jets to a Lion Air subsidiary in mid-2017. Just 15 months later, the carrier’s pilots on successive flights were forced to troubleshoot the design problem that Boeing had



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missed.

Taking the Max through a preflight checklist in Jakarta in October 2018, Lion Air Captain Bhavye Suneja typified the new generation of pilots across Asia. At 31, he'd amassed 6,000 hours of flying time, mostly on the 737. He didn't know that one of the tiny vanes that measures the angle of the plane's nose was broken and would set off a terrifying fight for control of the plane. On a previous flight of the same aircraft, a pilot in the jump seat had suggested flipping two switches to cut power to the stabilizer pushing the nose down but had left no mention of it in their logbooks. So Suneja lacked a crucial piece of information that might have avoided tragedy. As a result, horrified crewmen watched from an oil platform as the almost brand-new \$120 million plane plunged into the Java Sea, killing all 189 aboard. Days later, Boeing issued a checklist reminding pilots they can flip the switches to disable the stabilizer. It also began work on a software update to keep a broken vane from triggering the system.

In March, Ethiopian Airlines Flight 302 took off from Addis Ababa and dropped out of the sky six minutes later. Captain Yared Getachew, 29, and his co-pilot quickly recognized that the rogue software behind the Lion Air crash had kicked in. They hit the cutout switches, but amid the confusion left the jet's engines gunning at full takeoff throttle, making it difficult to control. They flipped the switches back on, and the plane dove. An additional 157 people were dead. "We cry every day," says Michael Stumo, father of Samya Stumo, 24, one of the victims.

**BOTTOM LINE** - Boeing's efforts to turn pilot training into a profitable business may have hindered staff cooperation that could have detected the 737 Max's design flaws before it entered service.

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## Reports Say Boeing 777X Test 'Tore Plane's Skin Open'



According to the latest media reports, the damage sustained by Boeing's top of the line 777X prototype aircraft during September stress test was actually much worse than it was reported by the plane maker.

The most recent test – meant to bring Boeing's new 777X airframe to its limits – left the plane's skin torn open beneath a wing and a passenger door blown off its hinges just before the trial reached the supposed stress target, according to the Seattle Times. The outlet published a photo of what it said was the aftermath, claiming the obtained picture proves the extent of the failure is greater than originally thought.

Back in September, Boeing indeed admitted "an issue" that led to a test with 777X being halted. It gave no details of the damage, saying merely that the test involved "bending the wings of the airplane up to a level far beyond anything expected in commercial service." The company also said that no major changes to the design of the aircraft would be likely.

Early media reports also claimed that it was a cargo door that blew out, but the Seattle Times now says it was actually a passenger one, adding that the ruptured fuselage made a noise so powerful that workers in the next bay reported hearing a "loud boom" and felt the ground shake.

Boeing Communications Director Charles Bickers confirmed in an email statement to that the ST report was "correct – no concerns here."

Because the problem occurred at 99 percent of what regulators refer to as "ultimate load" – 1.5 times the maximum forces the plane will have to withstand during normal flight – the Federal Aviation Administration may allow the company to merely reinforce the body where the rupture happened, the newspaper wrote. Meanwhile, Boeing was already forced to replace its factory's vaunted specialized assembly robots, designed to put together two sections of the 777X's fuselage, with human workers earlier in the month when the bots proved incapable of doing the job properly.

Boeing is already in the hot seat, facing declining market share and plummeting stock prices after two 737 MAX planes crashed within six months of each other, killing more than 300 people in total, due to a known issue with the plane's flight-control computer system.

The company was aware of the problem and had crafted fixes for it – but only installed them as "extras" on the aircraft. Hundreds of 737 MAX planes were grounded worldwide earlier this year as government agencies and congressional committees launched a probe into how Boeing was allowed to largely conduct its safety certifications itself.

Even before the real results of September's 777X stress test emerged, Boeing was being accused of "a pattern of deliberate concealment" by the US Senate; this latest development is unlikely to help its case. Boeing stock plunged over 5 points as markets opened on Wednesday.

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## Airbus A350 with touchscreen cockpit: How it works?



The A350 is a pioneer. It's the first aircraft with a touchscreen cockpit display. Specially developed for the A350 together with Thales, they will confer enhanced operational efficiencies, greater crew interaction, cockpit symmetry, and smoother information management.

China Eastern Airlines took delivery in Toulouse of the first A350 equipped with the new devices. To date, around 20 airlines have selected the option for their new A350s.

Of the A350 cockpit's six large screens, three can now become touch-capable: the two outer displays plus the lower-center display. These displays now offer touchscreen capability for the pilots when presenting Electronic Flight Bag (EFB) applications. This new method of input complements the existing physical keyboard integrated into the retractable table in front of each pilot and also the keyboard & trackball "keyboard-cursor control unit" (KCCU) located on the center console.

The new technology, which was recently certified for the A350 by EASA in November, facilitates 'pinch-zooming' and panning gestures and will facilitate more flexibility and better interaction between both pilots, particularly during these scenarios: (a) before take-off (for computing take-off performance while entering data into the flight management system "FMS"); (b) in-flight/cruise (for accessing en-route navigation charts); and (c) during approach preparation (for consulting the terminal charts before entering FMS data). Moreover, during high workload phases of flight, the touchscreen capability reduces the need for pilots to make multiple cursor inputs and avoids them having to flip between different displays when using the EFB applications collaboratively on the lower center display.

Patrick Piedrafita, Head of Airbus' A350 XWB Programme said: "Airbus continues to set the industry trends in aircraft cockpit design with these new interactive touchscreen displays in the A350. With our partner Thales we are very proud to bring this technology to our customers, to enhance their aircrews' operations."

The A350 XWB features the latest aerodynamic design, a carbon fiber fuselage, and wings, plus new fuel-efficient Rolls-Royce engines. Together, these features translate into unrivaled levels of operational efficiency with a 25 percent reduction in fuel burn and emissions. By the end of November, the A350 XWB Family had received 959 firm orders from 51 customers

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## Airbus demonstrates first fully automatic vision-based take-off



Airbus has successfully performed the first fully automatic vision-based take-off using an Airbus Family test aircraft at Toulouse-Blagnac airport. The test crew comprising of two pilots, two flight test engineers and a test flight engineer took off initially at around 10h15 on 18 December and conducted a total of 8 take-offs over a period of four and a half hours.

"The aircraft performed as expected during these milestone tests. While completing alignment on the runway, waiting for clearance from air traffic control, we engaged the auto-pilot," said Airbus Test Pilot Captain Yann Beaufils. "We moved the throttle levers to the take-off setting and we monitored the aircraft. It started to move and accelerate

automatically maintaining the runway center line, at the exact rotation speed as entered in the system. The nose of the aircraft began to lift up automatically to take the expected take-off pitch value and a few seconds later we were airborne."

Rather than relying on an Instrument Landing System (ILS), the existing ground equipment technology currently used by in-service passenger aircraft in airports around the world where the technology is present, this automatic take-off was enabled by image recognition technology installed directly on the aircraft.

Automatic take-off is an important milestone in Airbus' Autonomous Taxi, Take-Off & Landing (ATTOL) project. Launched in June 2018, ATTOL is one of the technological flight demonstrators being tested by Airbus in order to understand the impact of autonomy on aircraft. The next steps in the project will see

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automatic vision-based taxi and landing sequences taking place by mid-2020.

Airbus' mission is not to move ahead with autonomy as a target in itself, but instead to explore autonomous technologies alongside other innovations in areas such as materials, electrification and connectivity. By doing so, Airbus is able to analyse the potential of these technologies in addressing the key industrial challenges of tomorrow, including improving air traffic management, addressing pilot shortages and enhancing future operations. At the same time Airbus is leveraging these opportunities to further improve aircraft safety while ensuring today's unprecedented levels are maintained.

For autonomous technologies to improve flight operations and overall aircraft performance, pilots will remain at the heart of operations. Autonomous technologies are paramount to supporting pilots, enabling them to focus less on aircraft operation and more on strategic decision-making and mission management.

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## **New transport ecosystem' created at Amsterdam Drone Week**



Just like the drone industry itself, the Amsterdam Drone Week is rapidly outgrowing its infancy. Together with the High Level Conference on Drones, co-organized by the European Aviation Authority EASA, the second edition of the event made Amsterdam the epicenter of the global drone industry. In addition, important milestones were achieved in the adoption of European legislation and regulations concerning U-space.

“We are at the dawn of a new social and industrial revolution”, said Philip Butterworth-Hayes at the opening of the Amsterdam Drone Week. “Humans, robots and automated systems are going to work together. We

are creating a new transport ecosystem and we are learning right now here in Amsterdam how this will work.

”Filip Cornelis, Director for Aviation (DG MOVE Directorate) in the European Commission, added the important role of cities in reshaping the future of mobility: “Cities will have to manage the 3rd dimension: the skies over the cities where the bulk of drones are expected to fly.”

U-space: Amsterdam Drone Week drew 3,100 decision makers and more than 200 speakers from no less than 70 countries to Amsterdam. RAI Amsterdam held high-level discussions for three days on new European legislation and regulations in the field of unmanned air mobility and U-space. More than 900 people attending the conference discussed the European rules and regulations announced in June. It sets Europe on the forefront of the worldwide drone community. It was the first time anywhere in the world that regulation on U-space/Unmanned Traffic Management (UTM) is being drafted and implemented, according to EASA Executive Director Patrick Ky. This regulation is prepared as a follow-up to the European drone regulations that were published last summer and that will come into force in June 2020. “This second edition of the Amsterdam Drone Week was a special edition”, said Ky. “The first one was a discovery of what could be done, this edition shows an increase in the number of visitors coming to the conference and the exhibition.”

Collaboration is key: Simon Hocquard, Director General of CANSO was very pleased with the second edition of the Amsterdam Drone Week. “It was great to see so many key players from across the UTM and ATM spectrum in one room. What this said to me is that the drone industry is no longer an emerging market, it's a critical part of our aviation ecosystem and it's taken a strong foothold. In order for aviation to continue to be the safest form of transport, it's important that we all work together to achieve our goals. I commend RAI and EASA for taking it on this year and I'm very much looking forward to the 2020 event!”

Paul Riemens, CEO of RAI Amsterdam, is looking forward to next year's edition. “We then work together with Commercial UAV Expo and that means that an extra hall will be added. Moreover, we invite all cities that are experimenting with urban air mobility and they will be asked to share their experience here in Amsterdam. The drone industry is developing at lightning speed and here we are sketching the future of a safe and efficient airspace.”



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# The F.A.A. Wants to Start Tracking Drones' Locations

By Heather Murphy/The New York Times



The Federal Aviation Administration proposed wide-sweeping regulations that would require that all but the tiniest drones incorporate technology that would enable them to be tracked at all times while flying in United States airspace. “Remote ID technologies will enhance safety and security by allowing the F.A.A., law enforcement and federal security agencies to identify drones flying in their jurisdiction,” the federal transportation secretary, Elaine L. Chao, said in a statement. As drone operators, manufacturers and others involved in the rapidly expanding drone industry began sifting through the 319-page proposal, responses varied wildly. While

some applauded the F.A.A. for finally creating a system to rapidly identify owners of rogue — potentially deadly — drones, others declared that this was going to drastically hinder drone efficiency and cost effectiveness.

Since 2015, operators of all drones that weigh more than half a pound have been required to register their devices, by submitting their names along with their email and home addresses to the F.A.A. Some federal facilities — prisons, for example — are authorized to use systems to detect the presence of drones, said Reggie Govan, a former chief counsel to the F.A.A. who now teaches at the University of Pennsylvania Law School. But at the moment, officials do not have a quick way to identify the owner of a given drone or to track the location of drones that have been registered by a particular person. Even airports and power plants currently lack the legal authority to track drones, Mr. Govan said.

At the simplest level the proposed regulation requires all drones over 0.55 pound to emit a very particular kind of signal. “Once you have drones that are emitting an identifier then you can have a system that can track all drones,” Mr. Govan said, adding that he applauded the regulations.

Brendan Schulman, vice president for policy and legal affairs at DJI, a Chinese company that is one of the leading manufacturers of small consumer drones, said that for the past several years, industry leaders and government stakeholders had been trying to figure out how to create a sort of drone “license plate system.” He said that the proposed system could make sense. His primary concern is that the cost and burden to drone pilots and operators remain low — something he is still evaluating. (DJI was embroiled in another government drone matter, with mounting security concerns that the cameras and other technology on its drones could send surveillance data back to China.)

But for Paul Aitken, a founder of DroneU, a drone pilot training company in New Mexico, the costs immediately struck him as excessive. The new regulations require all registered drones within 36 months to begin carrying a specific type of remote identification system that broadcasts over the internet. Often finding an internet connection is not feasible in the locations where drone operators fly, Mr. Aitken said. According to his reading of the rules, if you don’t have cellular service or another way to connect to the internet, operators will have to limit flights to 400 feet laterally, which is roughly to the end of a block — and back.

Search and rescue missions often require going at least four times that distance, he said. “People will literally die from these rules,” he said, adding that other “industries that are thriving with drones like utility inspection, precision agriculture, land surveying, ranch management and even some construction management would suffer greatly” given that the rules undermine efficiency, which for many is part of the appeal of drones. He is also concerned that drone pilots will have to publicly disclose their locations. “Pilots need privacy to protect them from fear-based citizens who think that drones are spying on them,” he said.

A New York City councilman, Justin Brannan, said he thought this was a step in the right direction, however. It is currently illegal to fly a drone in most of New York City. “We need to create a framework for drones to legally and safely operate here in New York City because I do believe the benefits will outweigh the risks,” he said.

The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, as the proposed legislation is called, will be open for a 60-day comment period. At that point the regulations become law.

Jonathan Rupprecht, a Florida-based lawyer who specializes in drones, was left with many questions as to how this would be enforced. He pointed out that the F.A.A. had rarely prosecuted violations of drone regulations — such as flying in a careless manner or flying an unregistered aircraft — over the last decade.

“They should refrain from biting off more than they can chew,” he said. Mr. Rupperecht said that focusing on locations that need protecting, instead of creating an unwieldy tracking system for the entire United States, would be more realistic.

## FAA Takes Over All New MAX Airworthiness Certifications

By Kate O'Connor/November 29, 2019



The FAA will now be the sole issuer of airworthiness certificates for all newly manufactured Boeing 737 MAX aircraft, the agency said in a letter to Boeing. Citing “public interest and safety in air commerce,” the FAA stated that it would retain that authority—which was previously delegated to Boeing through the organization designation authorization (ODA) program—until it believes the manufacturer has “fully functional quality control and verification processes in place; delivery processes are similarly functional and stable; and Boeing’s 737 MAX compliance, design, and production processes meet all regulatory standards and conditions for delegation and ensure the safety of the public.”

The MAX was grounded last March following the fatal crashes of Lion Air Flight 610 on Oct. 29, 2018, and Ethiopian Airlines Flight 302 on March 10, 2019, both 737 MAX 8 aircraft. As previously reported by AVweb, Boeing was hopeful that the aircraft could be ungrounded as early as December and airlines including Southwest and American are currently planning to begin using their MAX fleets again in March. The FAA and Administrator Stephen Dickson have repeatedly stated that the agency will not be following a prescribed timeline for returning the 737 MAX to service and will do so only once it has been determined the model is safe.

## FAA sued by FlyersRights over Boeing 737 MAX



Supporting a lawsuit filed by FlyersRights against the FAA are 7 aviation experts who declared that they need the Federal Aviation Administration to release technical details to them and other independent experts in order to be able to evaluate whether the 737 MAX is safe to fly.

FlyersRights.org filed the lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C. (1:19-cv-03749-CKK) seeking release of the Boeing Corporation’s proposed changes to the 737 MAX submitted to the FAA.

The organization previously submitted a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for the records on November 1 seeking expedited treatment, but the FAA failed to respond.

Paul Hudson, President of FlyersRights.org and member of the FAA’s Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee since 1993, explained: “Trust in the FAA and Boeing has been shattered due to astounding revelations of misfeasance and incompetence in originally certifying the 737 MAX aircraft as safe. Accordingly, to regain public confidence, the flying public needs and deserves independent expert evaluations of the changes that Boeing and FAA may deem sufficient to unground the aircraft.”

**THEN & NOW**  
by Captain Mike Ray

OH! How our hearts ached and our pulse quickened when we looked up and saw those intrepid aviators flying overhead in their amazing, wonderful airborne chariots. In those old days, the skies were populated with P-51s and B-29s. The passing parade of DC-3s and sleek Convair Mainliner 320s was a sight to behold that thrilled my heart and filled me with the desire to fly.

**THEN...**

HEY GUYS - LOOKIT! AN AIRPLANE! GOSH... I SURE WISH I WERE UP THERE!

OLD SWIMMIN' HOLE

REMEMBER THOSE IDYLIC DAYS OF LONGING TO BE AIRBORNE. YOU WERE EAGER TO LEAVE THE QUIET MOMENTS OF YOUTH ANXIOUS TO CONQUER!

Now that we have become firmly entrenched in the realities of the aviation paradigm, and have become familiar with the many attributes and challenges ... there is a certain level of accommodation with the complexity and mystery that creeps upon you. There are moments, however, when you remember that yearning to fly that brings a sense of nostalgia. Life was so much simpler then ... and the unknown was only an intriguing possibility. The magic has been exposed.

**NOW**

LOOKING DOWN AT THE OL' SWIMMIN' HOLE FROM 35 THOU AND 35 YEARS...

HEY GUYS... LOOK... IT'S MY OLD SWIMMIN' HOLE! GOSH... SURE WISH I WERE DOWN THERE.

LIFE IS NOT A PRACTICE RUN! THESE ARE THE GOOD OLD DAYS!

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## How the US Government is spying on International Travelers?



Homeland Security in the United States wants to make airport facial recognition scans mandatory for all US citizens and legal US permanent residents, moving to close an existing loophole that allows Americans to opt-out.

US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is lobbying for a change to the current rules covering all Americans entering or leaving the United States, in order to “provide that all travelers, including US citizens, may be required to be photographed upon entry and/or departure” from the US, citing the need to identify criminals or “suspected terrorists.”

DHS wants to make airport facial recognition scans mandatory for all US citizens and legal US permanent residents, moving to close an existing loophole that allows Americans to opt out. While not yet implemented, the rule change is in the “final stages of clearance,” a DHS official said.

Under the existing guidelines, US citizens and other lawful residents have the ability to avoid airport biometric scans and identify themselves by other means. While some travelers have found it difficult to opt out given opaque or inconsistent guidelines from airport to airport, the DHS would apparently like to cut down on the confusion by doing away with the exemption altogether.

The new rule was rejected by civil liberties groups and privacy advocates, who said it would only further erode Americans’ privacy and subject them to yet another layer of intrusive government surveillance.

The DHS is currently set to outfit 20 of America’s largest airports with biometric scanners by 2021, despite a flurry of privacy issues and ongoing technical problems. Last year, an internal watchdog report found that the department’s facial recognition tech was not performing up to snuff and “may be unable to meet expectations” by its deadline. The DHS also piqued security concerns last year when it announced it would partner with Amazon for its all-seeing HART system, which will pass highly detailed information on 250 million people to the tech giant for storage.

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## Do you speak the secret language of the cruise industry?



Every industry has its own special vocabulary, and cruising is no different, say the cruise travel experts. This cruising-specific lingo defines the ships, their amenities and itineraries, plus a variety of cruise-related activities. It’s important to understand these terms so you can weigh your options and make the best choice for your next cruise vacation!

Following is a list of 10 cruise industry terms. How many do you recognize?

**Bespoke** – Another word for “custom.” This is a type of travel experience in which a trip is designed specifically for a client with a focus on unique, highly

local experiences.

**Cay** – Pronounced “key.” A small sandy island on the surface of a coral reef, usually referring to islets in the Caribbean. Several cruise lines offer shore excursions at private cays (i.e., “private islands.”).

**Cruise to nowhere** – A short sailing in which a ship will cruise in open waters for one or more days without reaching a destination. Usually fairly short, guests get the chance to experience the amenities of the ship.

**French balcony** – A glass door or wall-to-wall window that opens to give you fresh air and the feel of a veranda, minus the veranda, tables and chairs. Often a feature of cabins on river cruise ships.

**Holiday market** – During the holidays, river cruise lines offer itineraries of holiday or Christmas markets that feature town squares festooned with the traditional sights, smells and tastes of Christmas and holidays.

**Loyalty program** – A program offering rewards to repeat cruisers, with benefits that increase with frequency or spending. Perks might include shipboard credit, free wi-fi, exclusive get-togethers, etc.

**Promenade** – Refers to a deck on a ship that has open decking allowing one to walk all the way around the vessel (though there are ships with decks called “Promenade” that do not allow circumnavigation of the ship.) On some ships the promenade serves as a jogging path, while on others it serves as a public space where you might encounter shops and restaurants.

**Segments** – Portions of a long cruise itinerary. Breaking a long cruise into segments allows passengers to select which sections of the journey to travel, letting them join or leave the voyage at ports of their choosing.

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These options are seen often on World cruise itineraries.

Shoulder season – A travel period between peak season and low/off-peak season. When this occurs depends on the destination.

Wave season – January through March time period during which cruise lines and travel agents book a disproportionately large number of cruises with promotional deals.

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## SpaceX Starship Explosion Puts Brakes on Space Tourism



The Mark I prototype of SpaceX's Starship launch vehicle exploded during a test on November 20. The explosion blew off part of the bulkhead.

In what the company claims is "not a serious setback," the Mark I blew its lid during cryogenic testing, to determine whether a craft can withstand extreme cold like that found in the void of space.

The explosion occurred at SpaceX's test site in Boca Chica, Texas, at approximately 4:30pm Eastern Time. Apart from the ruptured bulkhead, the full extent of the damage is unknown, but it is likely the company will scrap the vehicle.

"The purpose of the test was to pressurize systems to the max, so the outcome was not completely unexpected. There were no injuries, nor is this a serious setback," the company said in a statement. Instead, the company has already shifted focus to the Mark III which is estimated to be completed in three months. Meanwhile, the Mark II vehicle is being developed by a separate SpaceX team based in Florida.

Musk nonchalantly dismissed the Mark I as a "manufacturing pathfinder," and confirmed that the company will be moving ahead with the other craft.

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## Russia announces plans for Moon base



Executive Director for Science and Long-Term Programs of Russian space agency Roscosmos, Alexander Bloshenko, announced that Russia is planning to establish a base on the Moon that can be used to monitor comets and asteroids and serve as an intermediate station for flights to other planets.

Roscosmos plans to present to the Russian government a program for the study and exploration of the Moon with detailed plan for the base to be implemented after 2025, agency's official said.

According to Bloshenko, equipment for the study of outer space and special telescopes for tracking asteroids and comets posing a threat to the Earth are expected to be placed at the lunar base in the south pole of the Moon.

Roscosmos also plans to create a testing ground there for technologies that will be needed to fly further into space, the official said.

He said that robotic systems will deal with the base's infrastructure maintenance, while humans will make periodic visits for solving tasks that robots are unable to perform.

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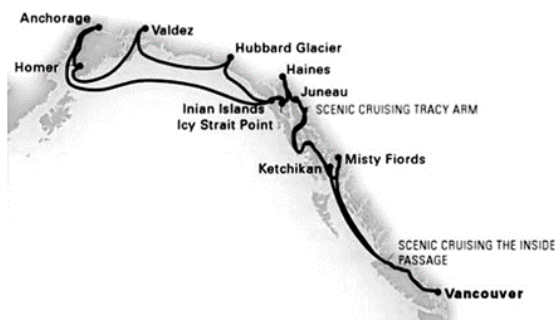
## Latte, Becomes a Therapy Dog

Bob Engelman, our former RUPA President, and his dog, Latte, was just recently evaluated to be a therapy dog. Bob was also evaluated and now they are a therapy dog team.

Bob and Latte visit hospitals, schools, veterans' societies, rehab centers and the like to brighten the day for people. This is quite admirable that Bob is doing this for society. It is people like Bob and, of course, Latte that make the world a better place. Good on you Bob.



## 2020 RUPA Cruise



The next RUPA cruise will be the 14 Day Great Alaskan Explorer departing from Vancouver Canada on June 29, 2020. Discover the ‘Great Land’ by sea – from the Inside Passage to deep-blue Hubbard Glacier to the rustic ports of Homer and Ketchikan.

Day 2 finds us sailing Alaska’s Inside Passage, one of the greatest cruising routes in the world, it offers opportunities to spot some of Alaska’s most iconic wildlife, humpback whales and orca plying the bountiful waters, bald eagles soaring overhead and brown bears lumbering on the shoreline.

Day 3 will find us in Ketchikan which has long been an important hub of the salmon-fishing and -packing industries. Here you can savor the fresh seafood at one of the local restaurants. It is also one of the best spots along the Inside Passage to explore the rich cultural sights of Native Alaskan nations like the Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian. You can see intricately carved totem poles at the Totem Heritage Center and Totem Bight State Park.

Day 4 will find us cruising Tracy Arm with steep cliffs and glacier-covered mountains flanking the fjord, while the twin Sawyer Glaciers flow from the peaks down to the sea, sloughing off stories-high chunks of water frozen decades or even centuries before. Even more glorious than nearby Glacier Bay, Tracy Arm is part of the 5.7 million acres of pure wilderness sheltered by the Tongass National Forest (America’s biggest). Visitors often see bears, whales and mountain goats roaming across various corners of this pristine area—not to mention chubby baby seals resting on the ice floes.

Day 5 will find us at Haines, known as the adventure capital of Alaska. It is a hotspot for rafting and hiking, salmon- halibut- and trout-fishing in the Chilkat River or kayaking on Chilkoot Lake. During the late fall and early winter, thousands of bald eagles migrate through this area to feed on the salmon, an event celebrated by the Alaska Bald Eagle Festival in November.

Day 6 will find us at Icy Strait Point a former fish cannery. Canneries didn’t survive the advent of refrigeration; most were taken back by the forest or simply left to rot. With one exception, Icy Strait Point, beautifully- restored, now offers a museum and a cannery demo. It gives us a chance to look into history to see where Alaska’s money came from, all in a ghost town of millions of fish. Later in the day we will pass by the Inian Islands located at the northernmost point where the Gulf of Alaska enters the Inside Passage, the Inian Islands are prime feeding waters for a wide array of creatures, including sea lions, humpback whales and sea otters. This is Alaska at its most pristine and wild.

Day 7 is a day at sea.

Day 8 will find us at Anchorage. Alaskans love their summers and the residents of Anchorage are no exception. The city plants thousands of flowers to celebrate the arrival of warmer months and days that last as long as 19 hours from dawn to dusk. Approximately 40 percent of Alaska’s population lives in Anchorage. This diverse city of 300,000 includes a large military population, Native Alaskans, individuals who work for the oil industry and adventure-seeking types who want to get away from “the Lower 48.” While some cities have deer, Anchorage has lots of moose, known for being a bit rambunctious (and should be steered clear of if seen wandering down a street).

Day 9 will find us at Homer; the rich fishing grounds here attracted Native Alaskans centuries before Captain James Cook claimed the Kenai Peninsula for Britain in 1778. After some Russian tyranny—fur traders forced Native Alaskans to hunt sea-otter pelts for them—Homer got a proper start as an English-settled coal-mining town in the 1890s. Today the area’s known as the Halibut Fishing Capital of the World.

Day 10 will find us in Valdez, another fishing paradise. If you haven’t satisfied your craving for fish by now, you will have another opportunity to do so here.

Day 11 will find us at Hubbard Glacier. The glacier is up to 213 feet wide at its face and 164 feet tall, but that’s only the tiniest piece of the ice: The main channel of this frozen river begins 76 miles back, pouring down from around the 11,100-foot mark off the shoulder of Mt. Walsh.

Day 12 will find us in Juneau, the capital of Alaska. It is an unusual capital city in that no roads connect it to the rest of the state.

Day 13 will find us at Misty Fjords, sculpted by glaciers over millions of years, Misty Fjords’ u-shaped



“canals” wind through steep canyons of granite, shrouded in western hemlock, Sitka spruce and western red cedar. Misty Fjords is a part of Tongass National Forest and home to grizzlies, salmon, whales, mountain goats and deer.

Day 14 will find us sailing the inside passage on our way back to Vancouver. Summer temperatures average 35 to 60 degrees Fahrenheit so pack warm clothing. And don't forget waterproof gear, even when traveling by cruise ship: More than a meter and a half of rain falls here each year! We also recommend a water bottle, thermos or reusable coffee cup: On scenic cruising days, cruise ships ban paper and disposable plastic products that could litter this unsullied environment.

To view this cruise on the Holland website, go to [www.hollandamerican.com](http://www.hollandamerican.com). On the first page select Alaska & Yukon in the 'sail to box', select Jun 2020 in the departure date box, for duration select 9-16 days, select Vancouver for the Departure city and click on the search button. This trip will be on the bottom of page 9.

### **Note: New lower prices for this cruise**

\$1,699 for an inside cabin    \$1,876 for an outside cabin    \$3,999 for a Verandah suite  
\$7,399 for a Neptune Suite    Port charges and Taxes are \$360 pp.

Once again, we are working with Jerry Poulin at Jerry's Travel Service. If you have questions, please call him at 1-800-309-2023 access code 33, or 508-829-3068, or [gpsp@aol.com](mailto:gpsp@aol.com) for the latest prices and information. When you book with Jerry, he will give you a discount of \$100 to \$300 per cabin based upon the Category booked. You will also receive Complimentary Sparkling wine and chocolate covered strawberries at embarkation, as well as a complimentary Pinnacle Grill Dinner.

He will also give all in the group 2 cocktail parties.

If lower prices become available, you will be rebooked at the lower rate. Prices are subject to availability and subject to change until booked. The new lower prices have just come through and Jerry has rebooked everyone previously booked at the lower prices. Submitted by, *Rich Bouska*

## **Sun n Fun RUPA Day**



**Thursday 2 April 2020**

**Lakeland Linder Regional Airport Lakeland, FL**

**Location:** OX-5 Club House made available through the hospitality of the Mid West Florida Wing of the OX-5 Club; located on the airfield next to the OBs club on Clubhouse Path (very close to the large Food Court)

**What you get at the Club House:** Coffee, snacks, rest rooms (2), porch, gathering place and central location to static displays, food court and flight line.

**Transport from handicap parking:** Call the Club House at 803-992-5839 (cell) and the club will send their golf cart to pick you up.

**Cost to use the Club House:** none, however, donations gladly accepted to maintain the club at the sign-in table, nominal charge for hot dog lunch (\$5)

RUPA group photo: in front of the club house at 1:00 pm.

Air Force Thunderbirds and F-35A Lightning on the schedule this year.

**Contact:** Dot Prose - phone (941) 966-4539 (landline) or (941) 350-3343 (cell) Email: [proседа@yahoo.com](mailto:proседа@yahoo.com)

**Web site for Sun-n-Fun:** [flynfnf.org](http://flynfnf.org)



# United Airlines Historical Foundation

"Preserve the Past, Inspire the Future"

## Around the World Flights

1924 - 175 Days - Douglas DWC - Two planes - "Chicago" & "New Orleans" - Pilots: U.S. Army Air

1929 - 20 Days 4 Hours - Zeppelin LZ-127 - "Graf Zeppelin" - Pilot: Dr. H. Eckener

1931 - 8 Days 16 Hours - Lockheed Vega - "Winnie Mae" - Pilots: Wilie Post & Gatty

1933 - 7 Days - Lockheed Vega - "Winnie Mae" - Wilie Post (solo)

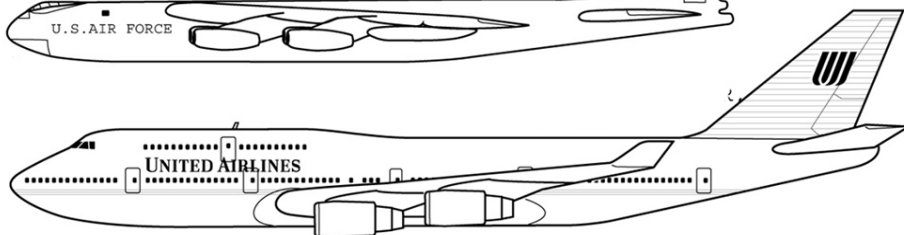
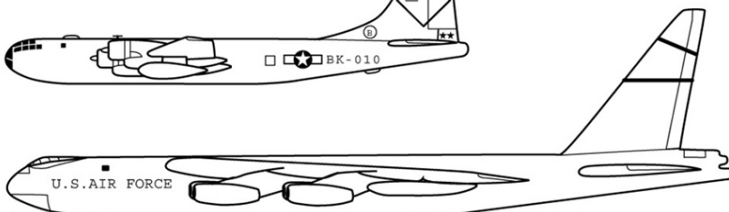
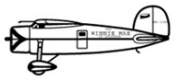
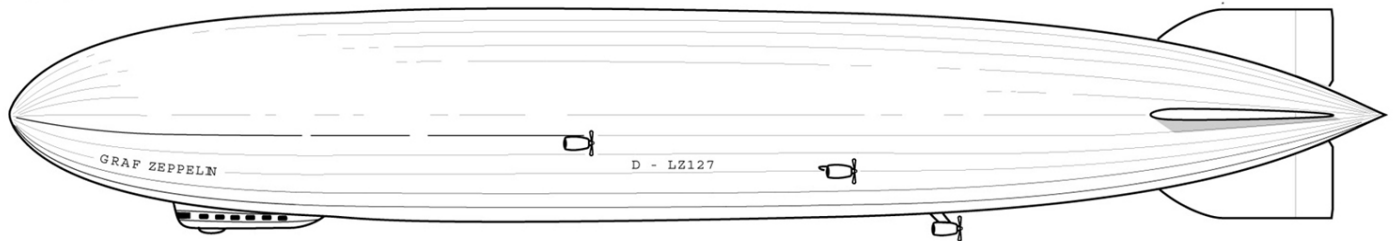
1938 - 91 Hours - Lockheed 14 - Pilot: Howard Hughes

1949 - 94 Hours (non-stop) - Boeing B-50 - "Lucky Lady II" - Pilots: USAF

1957 - 45 Hours (non-stop) - Boeing B-52 - Three Planes - Pilots: USA

1995 - 48 Hours 27 Minutes - Boeing 757, 767-300ER, 747-400 & 777

United Airlines - United Flt # 2 - Newark, London, Delhi, Hong Kong, Los Angeles, Chicago



## Other Notable Records

1519 - 1,083 Days - Magellan's "Victoria"

1580 - 1052 Days - Sir Francis Drake's "Golden Hind"

1889 - 72 Days - "Nellie Bly"

1913 - 35 Days - Steamer, Yachts & Train - John Mears

1926 - 28 Days - Pilots: Evans & Wells

1928 - 23 Days - Fairchild FC-2W - Pilots: Mears & Collyer

1933 - Trans Pacific - 41 Hours 13 Minutes - Bellanca - Pilots: Pangborn & Herndon

By *Marvin Berryman DENTK Retired.* - UAHF Will continue accepting your tax-deductible monetary (\$) contributions which can be mailed to: UAHF, Tom Goodyear, 7401 Martin Luther King Blvd., Denver, CO 80207. Visit our website at [www.UAHF.com](http://www.UAHF.com)

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# RUPA Pass Travel Report February 2020

Captain Pat Palazzolo  
rupapasstravel@rupa.org

Employee Travel Center (ETC)  
+1 (877) 825-3729  
[etc@united.com](mailto:etc@united.com)  
or **Help Hub** or Flying Together

## Tahiti

Hello fellow aviators,

One of our newer destinations is Papeete, Tahiti. It's a relatively short 7 1/2 hours daytime flight out of SFO and a red eye coming home. A visa is not required for US passport holders.

Check the US State Department app "Smart Traveler" or the State Department web site for more details.

Loads usually tend to be on the full side and United operates only three days a week. But there are a number of backups.

If you plan a trip to Tahiti and it doesn't involve a cruise, consider choosing your flights and hotels when you are closer in to get a better feel for the loads.

Another option is to buy a myUA discount ticket if you absolutely have to be there on a certain date.

In addition to United's three days a week flights, the following airlines have flights to and from Papeete:

Air Tahiti Nui to and from Los Angeles has either one or two flights per day.

Air France, to and from Los Angeles has flights three days a week.

Hawaiian to and from Honolulu has a flight only one day per week.

The hotels range in price but can be relatively expensive in Tahiti (similar to London or Tokyo). But check TripAdvisor for accurate prices and quality of the properties.

Papeete is on the main island of Tahiti Nui, but many travelers go to the other popular islands including Moorea and Bora Bora. Inter-island air service is available. And a 30-minute ferry ride is available to Moorea.

You may want to weigh the cost of hotels vs. a cruise. Cruises normally take you to a number of the islands.

On Moorea, right across the street from the ferry dock you can rent a motor scooter (a motorcycle license is not required) for \$55 for the day. (See photo) But keep in mind that even though it includes insurance, there is a \$1,200 deductible. So ride carefully!



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## To Avoid Dementia, Exercise Better

By Gretchen Reynolds/The New York Times

Being physically fit may sharpen the memory and lower our risk of dementia, even if we do not start exercising until we are middle-aged or older, according to two stirring new studies of the interplay between exercise, aging, aerobic fitness and forgetting. But both studies, while underscoring the importance of activity for brain health, also suggest that some types of exercise may be better than others at safeguarding and even enhancing our memory.

The scientific evidence linking exercise, fitness and brain health is already hefty and growing. Multiple studies have found that people with relatively high levels of endurance, whatever their age, tend to perform better on tests of thinking and memory than people who are out of shape. Other studies associate better fitness with less risk for developing Alzheimer's disease. But many of these studies have been one-time snapshots of people's lives and did not delve into whether and how changing fitness over time might alter people's memory skills or dementia risk. They did not, in other words, tell us whether, by midlife or retirement age, it might be too late to improve our brain health with exercise.

So, for the first of the new studies, which was published in The Lancet Public Health, researchers at the

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Norwegian University of Science and Technology in Trondheim, Norway, helpfully decided to look into that very issue, taking advantage of the reams of health data available on average Norwegians.

They began by turning to records from a large-scale health study that had enrolled almost every adult resident in the region around Trondheim beginning in the 1980s. The participants completed health and medical testing twice, about 10 years apart, that included estimates of their aerobic fitness.

The researchers pulled records now for more than 30,000 of these middle-aged participants and categorized them by their fitness and how it changed over the decade. Some had started and stayed out of shape; they remained in the lowest 20 percent of aerobic fitness for the whole 10 years. Others moved into or out of that group. And the fittest few began outside of the bottom 20 percent and remained outside that group for all 10 years.

The researchers then checked records from nursing homes and specialized memory clinics to see which participants developed dementia during a 20-year follow-up period and if fitness affected their risk for the disease.

They found that it did. People who were fit throughout the study period proved to be almost 50 percent less likely to develop dementia than the least-fit men and women. Perhaps more encouraging, those men and women who had entered middle age out of shape but then gained fitness showed the same substantial reduction in their subsequent risk for dementia.

“We expected some effect” on brain health from having or adding fitness, says Ulrik Wisloff, the director of the Cardiac Exercise Research Group at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology and senior author of the new study. “But the effect was larger than we thought.” (For those wondering about their current state of fitness, the university offers a free, online fitness calculator, available at <https://www.ntnu.edu/cerg/vo2max>.)

His group’s study did not examine, though, how those men and women who raised their fitness managed that feat. Which makes the other new study about exercise and memory a valuable complement.

In that experiment, which was published recently in *Applied Physiology, Nutrition, and Metabolism*, researchers at McMaster University in Ontario, Canada, tested what types of exercise might be most effective at increasing both aerobic fitness and memory performance in healthy, older adults.

They began by recruiting 64 sedentary men and women aged 60 or older and measuring their fitness and thinking skills. The researchers focused, in particular, on the participants’ ability to differentiate similar memories, such as where in the same parking lot someone left his or her car yesterday versus today. This kind of recall often declines with age, and a poor performance can mark the start of mild cognitive impairment and, in some cases, dementia.

After testing, the researchers randomly assigned the volunteers to visit the lab and stretch, as a control group, or start exercising. One of the exercise groups walked moderately and steadily on treadmills three times a week for about 50 minutes. The others began interval walking, during which their treadmills’ incline was cranked high for four minutes so that their heart rates rose to about 90 percent of each person’s maximum, followed by three minutes of easy walking, and three more rounds of the incline intervals.

After 12 weeks, the volunteers repeated their fitness and cognitive tests, with striking results. Only the interval walkers now showed significant improvements in both physical endurance and memory performance, and their gains were linked. The more fit someone became, the more his or her memory sharpened.

In essence, the findings suggest that “it is not too late” for middle-aged or older people to start exercising and protect their memories, says Jennifer Heisz, an associate professor at McMaster University who oversaw the new study.

But the exercise probably needs to be at least somewhat intense, so that it raises heart rates and gooses fitness. “I tell people to add in some hills when they go for a walk,” she says, “or pick up the pace between street lamps.”

Dr. Wisloff would agree. For endurance and brain health, he says, try regularly to “exercise with an intensity so that you get out of breath.”

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*Medical articles are published for informational purposes only. You are advised to consult your personal physician before following any advice contained in these articles. Ed*

# LETTERS

**GERALD E. “GERRY” BALDWIN**—Hilo, HI  
Aloha Cleve, My wife, Joan, and I continue to enjoy our little piece of paradise on Hilo Bay. I could relate the good times had with family and friends over the last year; but readers seem to enjoy anecdotes and tales of yesteryear, so here goes:

After the pilot strike of 1985 ended, United’s flight operations management had a great idea, “Let’s have a fuel use monitoring program.” Their scheme was to utilize ACARS (an acronym for Aircraft Communications Addressing and Reporting System) data to track and correlate fuel consumption for every captain on the system. With that in hand, they would counsel the bottom ten percent, i.e. those with the greatest fuel use.

ALPA’s MEC, the pilots’ union representatives, of whom I was one at the time, agreed with a fuel use education program. We did not, however, agree with their modus operandi of counseling the bottom ten percent, as there is always a bottom ten percent. Management flippantly said, “No, we like our way.”

As a DC-10 second officer, I was one of the keepers of the ACARS. As a union representative, I came up with a scheme of my own. My idea was this:



1. If you are flying with a good guy, defined as one who joined us on the picket line during the strike, then:

- a. At the start of each segment,
  - i. Add up the fuel in each tank (most airplanes at that time had round dials),
  - ii. Subtract 500 pounds,
  - iii. Enter that number into ACARS
- b. At the end of the segment,
  - i. Add up the fuel in each tank,
  - ii. Add 500 pounds,
  - iii. Enter that number into ACARS

2. If you are flying with others,

- a. At the start of each segment,
  - i. Add up the fuel in each tank,
  - ii. Add 500 pounds,
  - iii. Enter that number into ACARS
- b. At the end of the segment,
  - i. Add up the fuel in each tank,
  - ii. Subtract 500 pounds,
  - iii. Enter that number into ACARS

With multiple tanks, gauge error, and tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of pounds of fuel, no one could readily see this variance. It was, though, a 2,000-pound difference per segment per captain between “good captains and bad captains.”

I shared this scheme with other keepers of ACARS, and only with keepers of ACARS. I asked them to share the idea with other keepers, etc. Further, I admonished them to never let anyone other than “good guy” keepers of ACARS in on the scheme. To give them plausible deniability, we judiciously avoided letting senior members of the MEC know. Within only about two weeks, miraculously, no good guys were in the ten percent of excess fuel users.

I had a test case. An eagle-eyed, training center instructor (hired during the strike, and flying as a DC-10 captain well out of seniority) was my captain on a trip from Seattle to Hong Kong. Before we started our cockpit setup, he instructed me to put no fuel numbers in ACARS till he approved. I changed nothing, adding 500 pounds at the start, subtracting 500 pounds at the end; and he agreed that my numbers were correct.

At an MEC meeting shortly thereafter, I happened to be the proverbial fly on the wall. Our MEC chairman, Captain Rick Dubinsky, was talking to a captain’s representative near my seat. Dubinsky had been talking with Paul George, a company manager, in the preceding week. He said that George had said, “I don’t know what you’re doing or how you’re doing it; but I want it stopped.” The captain’s rep. said, “What did you tell him?” Dubinsky

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replied, "I told him the truth. I said, 'I don't know what the f\*#k you're talking about.'"

Shortly thereafter, company flight operations management did the only thing they could do. They declared victory, threw a party with cake and punch in every flight operations space on the system, and shut down the fuel use monitoring program.

**Gerry** TXI/CAL (6 yrs.): IAH, DEN; UAL (27.5 yrs.): ORD, SEA, JFK, SFO

**RICH BOUSKA**—Livermore, CA

Just rolled over to 84 - never been 84 before, hope everything goes well this year.

This time last year we were up at our house in the mountains skiing enjoying a heavy snow fall. This year the snow was a little late but is building up nicely, however don't think I'll be skiing as the family thinks I may be getting a little too old. It's hard to get up off the snow once I fall.

I've been busy volunteering for the local police department, helped start a K-9 foundation for the police, helped set-up the RUPA reunion in Dayton and attend several luncheon groups. I still dabble with wood working and have several projects in the works. And yes, I'm the guy who sets up the annual cruise for RUPA. We had a great cruise this year through the Mediterranean, the weather could have been better, it was unusually hot, but the itinerary was great and we had a good turnout. This year the cruise is to Alaska, (see the details elsewhere in this issue) the itinerary is unusual in that the ship takes you there and back without having to fly back to the lower forty eight. This cruise would be great for an anniversary, birthday, or even a Christmas gift.

Holland comes out with a different special every few weeks so if you are interested call Jerry Poulin, his information is in the cruise article. I'm open to where you would like to cruise in 2021, river or ocean. Give me some of your desires.

In closing, I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. *Rich*

**JERRY BRADLEY**—St. Augustine, FL

Pat and I are doing well and enjoying our second year in St. Augustine. After living in South Florida and Southern California for over 50 years, the weather here is not entirely to my liking but from someone who considers 70 degrees a bit chilly I guess I will get by. On the other hand, my wife loves it.

We enjoyed the RUPA cruise and all our friends last summer. We are going on Oceania for the first time in February. We heard it was very nice.

Everyone will be out celebrating my 82<sup>nd</sup> birthday on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December. I'll be fast asleep, but I hope you enjoy it.

In the meantime, best to all and stay well. *Jerry*

**BOB CAREY**—Cairo, NY

First letter to RUPA in almost 30 years.

In mid-July of 1959 I drove out to Idlewild Airport to apply for a job with UAL. A short time later at the old hanger #8 I was introduced to six or eight old-time dispatchers who used to mail bricks back and forth to each other in the Varney Air Lines days.

After having tons of fun at IDL/JFK for 25 years, the company thought I could use a little more fun at ORDFO. That fun lasted until I hit 55 years of age, then I took the early out option and bade farewell to the Windy City in Feb. 1991.

So now, on January 10, 2020, good lord willing, I'll have hit the age of 4 score plus 4. I can't decide whether to call it my second anniversary of my 42<sup>nd</sup> b/d or my fourth anniversary of my 21<sup>st</sup> b/d. In any case, besides the normal aches and pains, I'm in pretty good shape for the shape I'm in and looking forward to the next NY Skyscrapers in New Joisey. Best regards to all, **Bob** IDL/JFK/ORD

**LOWELL JOHNSTON**—Port Orange, FL

Cleve, A quiet year for Anne and me coming up on 26 years of retirement in December.

A few trips on the airline using miles or cash. No passes. In fact, have only used one or two passes in the last 15 years.

Florida living still good at the Spruce Creek Fly-In. A pilot's dream place to be sure.

Health good for the both of us. Anne is coming up on four and one half years surviving from cancer and feeling good. Doctors are very happy as are we. Can't say enough good things about Mayo Clinic.

Thanks to all the RUPA Volunteers for keeping us informed with the update. Online renewal is working great for us and very easy and convenient.

*Lowell*

**DOUG HORNE**—Marietta, GA

Hello Anyone. It's been a while since I last wrote and because of personal difficulties and distractions, I'm behind in my dues, but just sent off a check to John Rains to make amends.

I believe I read a while ago, someplace, that the JFK/LGA flight office has been shut down and is now a satellite function or something like that. So,

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I've spent some time thinking about my years there and how special it was compared to others I spent time in: ORD, DCA, TK. Maybe, because it was relatively small, the pilots had a little extra panache, and most of the flight managers were great to work for; treating us as responsible, mature adults. It was the only place where we had nicknames for some of the more notorious trips. Like the EWR/TOL turn known as the Toledo Torpedo. Then there was the three-day trip that started out in a stretch 727 early in the morning around 6:30 from JFK to ABE. You were lucky to have two or three passengers, but a full load ABE to ORD. Three days later it ended up a full load ORD/ABE in the evening, then a virtually empty plane to JFK landing around midnight. The first leg was known as the Allentown Rocket, the last leg, The Retro Rocket. And then my favorite, and this takes some concentration to follow. Drive to LGA, take a crew bus to the terminal, pick up your flight bags at dispatch, schlep them out to the curb, take a shuttle bus over to the Eastern terminal, dead head to BOS with bags crammed into the overhead and under the seat along with day trippers and businessmen. Out to the curb, take a shuttle bus over to United's terminal, plan the beginning of a three-day ID in a DC8. Then three days later back to BOS, later in the day and do everything in reverse. Busses, deadhead, more busses, dispatch in LGA and another bus out to employee parking. I believe it was Al Mitchel who named it the "Boston Strangler." I loved it though. Living in western Mass I'd drive directly to BOS and wait for the other two guys to arrive. And, if everything went perfectly, on arrival back in BOS I'd be home having a drink while the other two were someplace on a plane or bus.

It's still hard to explain why everyone at LGA/JFK was so special. I guess the late, great, George Hazlet said it best. (George and I grew up in adjacent towns on the east bank of the Hudson River). He said: "Doug, you gotta remember Everything West of the Hudson is Campin' Out.". I guess now that I've offended most of you, it's time to quit and think up some more trouble for next year's letter.

*Doug*

**TIM JOSLIN SR.**—Des Moines, WA

It has been a couple of years since I reported in. As a member of the silent generation, actions usually speak louder than words.

In my 78<sup>th</sup> year, as I look back, things have gone pretty darn good. Within several years, before retiring, I met a wonderful woman and we have been happily married for 27+ years. We both had chil-

dren from a previous marriage. Those children produced four granddaughters and a grandson for me and two granddaughters and two grandsons for Cheril. Since Cheril was married right out of high school, her grandchildren range in ages from 24 to 29, whereas mine are 11 to 23. Another plus is I get along with all of Cheril's relatives, and they have accepted me as part of their clan. My current wife and I are products of small-town America. I grew up in Howard City, MI, (population 2,000) until my family moved to Seattle after WWII. Cheril grew up around the Ferndale, WA area. Her Dad was a potato farmer. Potatoes have always been one of my favorite foods. Both of our Dads were born in 1912. We both had great respect for the hard work they put in over the years in raising their families. You can't plan for this stuff, I just got extremely lucky to find someone like Cheril. I believe we have both adapted well into retirement. Cheril loves to read (books with paper pages) and I do my thing on the golf course, not very well, but just count it as a good walk spoiled. I also try to run about 4 to 5 days a week and participate in 5k runs, year-round. In the Summer, I compete in local all comers track meets, running in events from 400 meters to 3,000 meters. Needless to say, I am usually the last finisher, but it is still fun to run with the younger generations.

Fall months are busy for us. We hold season football tickets to both the Washington Huskies (grad. Class of '62) and the Seattle Seahawks. Some weekends we attend home games on Saturday and Sunday. I have held Seahawks tickets since their beginning (1976). Divorce agreement from my first marriage included sharing the season tickets for a few years.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all the crew members (pilots and flight attendants) who kept me on the straight and narrow throughout my 35+ years of flying. United was a great company to work for, in spite of a few hiccups (1985!!).

From our home on Redondo Beach in Des Moines, Washington, God Bless and may the wind always be at your back!!

1965-2001 Regards, *Tim & Cheril*

**STEPHEN MODDLE**—Daytona Beach, FL

I haven't written in a few years so it's about time I "check " in.

My wife, Lil & I are both blessed with good health, just the normal aches and pains of old age. We do have more pills then we like to take but must help the economy to thrive. We haven't taken a cruise in a few years just traveling to visit our kids, our son

just outside Chattanooga TN who flies the Airbus 330 for Delta. Our daughter lives just north of Charlotte NC. This summer we took our Dog and left her with our daughter and traveled to Lockhaven PA to visit "my" J3 cub that I donated to the Piper Aviation Museum in 2005. Was good to see "her" again in good shape just as I left it. Total time on the airframe was over 22,000 hours. I had finally passed it in time just before I retired with about 24,500 hours. From Lockhaven we traveled to New Jersey for the JFK RUPA lunch meeting. Enjoyed seeing everyone who I had not seen in years. From there we turned south and went to the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Museum outside of Dulles. Enjoy looking and finding all the names on the RUPA Foils along the side of the entrance. The museum itself was great, many aircraft to see, really enjoyed it. Picked up our dog and returned home.

Next trip we flew to Wichita to the BAVA reunion, (Berlin Airlift Veterans Association) reunion. I was not old enough to fly then but I got involved with them when UAL Capt. Dave Bishop, who did fly 121 missions on the airlift, asked me to accompany him on a reunion a few years ago, so I joined the association. Had a GREAT time, but the membership is getting very small as most have passed on and the remaining are well into their 90s, but still fun to be with. In Oct. we went to Seattle WA to visit 7301 the first B727 built. They did a GREAT job in restoring it, one error, the nose gear number showed 7001 not the UAL number that we knew. Attended a presentation given by Bob Bogash who was the person who refurbished the plane to airworthy condition to fly it from Paine field to Boeing Field, what an interesting speech. I was happy to meet him and also shake the hand of the pilot who flew it that short flight to Boeing. Wish all my landings were as good as his. He flew it with Flaps at 15, wheels down and 160 knots max, said he was able to make one landing in the Sim as practice. Had a very memorable day.

The end of Oct. we visited our son and he took me in his VW GTI for a ride doing the "Tail of the Dragon", a road with 318 turns in 11 miles in the TN, NC hills, very exciting. Hoping 2020 will treat us well.

**RICK SABER**—Novato, CA

As I pen this, I recall the grueling drive over the Sierra yesterday; seven hours to cover 51 miles and stopped for hours by CALTRANS awaiting removal of many who slip-slid off highway 80 in the snow and ice. Not being in control is the new norm. Out here on the "Left Coast", we are acclimating to rag-

ing fires, floods, quakes, power shut offs and way too much traffic. So, now our four seasons are Fires, Floods, Quakes and Anarchy... Plus being deluged by the daily dose of political chaos, ad nauseam.

Never expected to come to this, but I'm now so old (81), losing comrades and friends on a regular basis that I'm actually getting good at delivering eulogies. So far, haven't seen my obit. Decent good health smiled at us and allowed me to see small but great opportunities which constantly pop up unexpectedly, so the sparkle of adventure is still on our horizon.

At my age, I recently fell in love with a lovely young girl while traveling to Guatemala with the worldwide group "Unbound". Her name? Irene, who lives with her family in San Antonio, a tiny dirt-poor community mostly involved in agriculture. She is three years old, her mom sews clothing, her dad works in the fields. I was immediately smitten when her mother handed her to me. Out of the blue, she put her arms around my neck and planted a kiss on my right cheek. This makes two children we are caring for through this exceptional organization. I was on a seven-day visit to this Central American country with main mission to finally meet Santiago Jesus Vicente Atitlan, a fourteen year old boy living outside Guatemala City. This Org. helps support educational needs of over 300,000 children in 18 countries, is extremely efficient in the flow of money through a remarkable model directly benefitting communities and helping make them more self-sufficient.

Returning to eulogies, I was tasked to oversee, as Minister, the formal military Memorial Ser-





vice for a WWII Army Corps LT who volunteered for an OSS secret Mission at end of the war.. Harry Hicks was the last surviving “Brodie Pilot”. Their mission was flying a small biplane off a 300’ cable tethered off the port side of an LST, head to the Japanese homeland shore and I.D. bunkers for destruction by the big boys (battleships and cruisers) lurking offshore. If you didn’t crash during launch or recovery, enemy or friendly fire was sure to shorten your life, their life span estimated at seven minutes. He lived another 76 yrs due to scrub of his mission due to the Nagasaki “A” bomb which ended the war one day prior to his mission. I’d never been to a formal military memorial service so getting it together was an uphill challenge, yet all worked out AOK including flag folders, trumpet salute, honors firing squad, bagpiper and even a flyover at 200’ by a USCG helo. For any former serviceman, most of this is readily available for your final hurrah and flight West.

Aldeana and I are still able to ably get around so do so regularly. We will again board Amtrak and cozy up in our tiny, shared roomette Berkeley to Denver

**Take the**  
**"OLDER THAN DIRT"**  
**Quiz**  
**Do You Remember?**

1. BlackJack Chewing Gum
2. Wax coke-shaped bottle with colored sugar water
3. Butch Wax
4. Candy Cigarettes
5. Soda Pop machines with Glass bottles
6. Howdy Doody
7. Restaurants with tableside JukeBoxes
8. Home milk delivery in glass bottles
9. Party Telephone Lines
10. NewsReels before the movies
11. 45 RPM records
12. P.F.Flyers
13. Carrying a Metal Lunchbox
14. Drive in Movie Theatres
15. Telephone numbers with word prefix (Olive-6971)
16. The Andy Griffith Show
17. Soda Fountains
18. Roller Skate Keys
19. S+H Green Stamps
20. Blue Flashbulbs

If you remember 0 to 5 - You're a WhipperSnapper  
 If you remember 6 to 15 - You're Gettin' There  
 If you remember 16 to 20 - You're

**"OLDER THAN DIRT"**

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(32 hours +/-) in early Dec.

Next month, we'll travel SFO-HND on the 787, (our 1<sup>st</sup> on this), stay in Yokohama a few days, then board the Diamond Princess for 15 day cruise to HKG which may be interesting, 2 stops in Vietnam (not my haunts when a Navy pilot fifty yrs ago) and other stops....booked through PERX at a good price, check out their good deals!

Finally finishing two years of major upgrades and rebuild to our home of 3 years in Novato, CA, came out great....and open for visits!

Our ongoing kudos to the RUPA staff for such dedication and meaningful shared info. Lastly, our warmest Holiday wishes to all who may remember this ole coot.

*Rick and Aldeana* ricksaber1@gmail.com

**RICH & ANN SELPH**—San Francisco, CA Haven't updated on the kids for several years, so, by popular request.... Elizabeth has gone back to school for another post graduate degree, this one in counseling, and just bought her own condo in Chicago's historic Printers' Row neighborhood.

Brac is busy with his busy private practice in psychology and is also teaching as a Professor at USF.

Catherine's new title, VP Regulatory & Medical Affairs, at Canadian cannabis company Tilray, means more international travel, advocating for CBD testing and quality control and advising governments on laws and policies.

David endures a grueling commute from Darien, CT, to Manhattan as Executive Director, Digital Robotics & Intelligence at JP Morgan. Not sure what he actually does...

Ah.... Grandparenting!! Brac and Daina's Braeden, 13 (with newly deep voice), and Van, 10 (growing his hair to try for a 'man bun') treated us to some fun football experiences, many games coached by their dad and "Team Mother"ed by mom. Catherine and Aaron's Chloe, 12 (with developing fashion sense) entertained us in jumping competitions on her horse, Tina, while Precious Ben was our inspiring companion most Sundays for hugging, laughing, and exploring. We are blessed to have them close by, just over the bridge in Mill Valley.

A memorable week in Darien was when we arrived to babysit Lucas, 8, Amelia, 6, and Isabelle Ann, 3, while D & C flew off to Como to celebrate their 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Other grandparents, Ed & Judy, came to help out. What we found was that there were 3 au pairs in residence!! The one from last year, her

newly arrived replacement, and a previous one who has become a family friend. Lucas & his sisters joked that they each had their own au pair!! (Actually, there were 7 of us to take care of the three of them!!) We managed.

(Space constraints spare you the creative and extravagant superlatives with which we would describe each of these “above average” little darlings.....)

Another year, another performance review from Ann. Happily, she will keep me as her ‘service husband’. Glad to report that I avoided ‘Honorary Degrees’ this year. Such a hassle. The homeless are now “unhoused;” ergo, that makes me “unlean.” Vignette!! Old man drops car with Buckeye Roadhouse valet - who says, “I heard your car beep, are your keys in your pocket?”.... Then, “I notice your cell phone holster is empty.....”. (Sharp guy! (The valet, not the old man..)) A bit later, old woman asks valet about car, “It’s the Mitsubish,.” (while pointing at our Nissan...). Senility has been an easy transition,,,

The national media has been adequately describing San Francisco’s challenges, so I will take a break this year, except to announce that it has passed the “Parody Inversion Point.”

We add our appreciation for the *RUPANEWS*, always a cover to cover read for both of us.

*Rich and Ann*, SFO 86-01 (FOPA)



## IN MEMORIAM

### GARY HARDCASTLE JOHNSON

Gary Hardcastle Johnson, age 84, passed away on November 9<sup>th</sup> at his home in Fallbrook, CA with family at his side after a long battle with pancreatic cancer.

He was born in Denver, CO. At age ten, he moved to Fullerton, CA and attended elementary, high school and one year at Fullerton Junior College. Gary then attended the University of Idaho in Moscow on a football scholarship earning a degree in Mechanical Engineering with a minor in physical education in 1958. He and his high school classmate, Patti Quist, married in 1955 and both graduated from the University of Idaho. He was affiliated with the ATO fraternity.

Gary applied and was accepted into the Naval Flight Training program. He served 5 ½ years with Helicopter Squadron Four aboard USS Yorktown in the Pacific and was deployed on two eight-month cruises doing anti-submarine warfare.

He joined United Airlines in 1964 and had a thirty-one-year career flying the DC-6, DC-8, 727 and retired in 1995 on the 747-400 flying his last trip to Sydney, Australia.

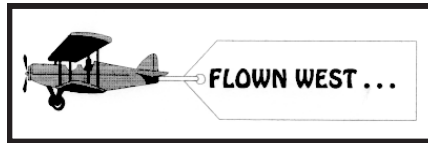
After retirement he devoted himself to his avocados and lemons on their ranch in Fallbrook, CA. He liked calling himself “an avocado dirt farmer.” He took good care of their Fallbrook property as well as their beach place in Oceanside. He was a resident of Fallbrook since 1972.

He and Patti traveled extensively in those years and he filled most of the places on his “bucket list”. He enjoyed playing golf and tennis as well as skiing.

Gary was a devoted husband and father - always up for a challenge. He was outgoing, fun loving, and always put a positive spin on things. He kept in contact over the years with high school and college classmates, buddies and airline friends. He had a wide circle of friends here in Fallbrook, CA and will be missed by all who knew him.

He is survived by his wife, Patti, of 64 years, their three children and three granddaughters.

The family asks, that in lieu of flowers, you make a donation in his name to the Fallbrook Land Conservancy, 1815 South Stage Coach Lane, Fallbrook, CA 92028 or the Fallbrook Art Center, 103 South Main Avenue, Fallbrook, CA 92028.



James W. Adams	Nov. 19, 2019
George F. Benkendorf	Dec. 01, 2019
*Ray Brendle	Nov. 17, 2019
*Jefferson T. Burke	Dec. 2019
Jack D. Burns	Nov. 09, 2019
*Eugene Chancy	Nov. 14, 2019
*Raymond S. Cicola	Nov. 28, 2019
L. Barry Dixon	Dec. 05, 2019
*Chester K. James	Dec. 11, 2019
Gary H. Johnson	Nov. 09, 2019
Robert S. Kallestad	Jan. 02, 2020
Kenneth L. Killmon	Dec. 19, 2019
Robert E. Mosher	Dec. 13, 2019
Ned W. Rankin, Jr.	Jan. 05, 2020
Harold F. Schoenborn	Nov. 14, 2019
Billy D. Wellborn	Dec. 27, 2019

*\*denotes RUPA non-member*



### 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. Hovering 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 Pilots Retirement Foundation**

Send memorial and other donations to: Capt. Thomas Workinger, Treasurer  
5614 Prairie Ridge Road, Crystal Lake, IL 60014 (Website: [uaprf.com](http://uaprf.com))

February, 2020 Edition

**From:**

RUPA  
P.O. Box 757  
Stowe, VT 05672-0757



\$25 Subscription—**Check Renewal Date on Label**

**To:**

**RUPANEWS Deadline: 15th of Each Month**

**RUPA's Monthly Social Calendar**

**Arizona**

Phoenix Roadrunners (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday)—*Bobby Q Restaurant*—623-566-8188  
Tucson Toros (Dates vary) Contact Randy Ryan for Info—520-797-3912—randyryan40@msn.com

**California**

Dana Point CA (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday)—*Wind & Sea Restaurant*—949-496-2691  
Los Angeles South Bay (2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday, even months) - Location TBA — 310-378-6855  
Monterey Peninsula (2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday)—*Edgar's at Quail Lodge*—Please RSVP—831-622-7747  
SAC Valley Gold Wings (1st Monday, 12:00)—*Cliff House of Folsom, Folsom, CA*—916-941-0615  
San Diego Co. (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday)—*San Marcos CC*—858-449-5285  
San Francisco Bay-Siders (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, 11:00 AM)—*Harry's Hofbrau*, Redwood City, CA—650-349-6590  
San Francisco East Bay Ruparians (2<sup>nd</sup> Wed. 1:00 PM)—*Primavera Restaurant, San Ramon, CA*—925-735-1946  
San Francisco North Bay (1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday)—*Petaluma Sheraton*  
The FAT Flyers (2nd Friday, 0730) *Yosemite Falls Café, Clovis, CA*  
Thousand Oaks (2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday on odd months)—*Sunset Terrace, Janns Mall, Thousand Oaks, CA*—805-497-4847

**Colorado**

Denver Good Ol' Boys (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday 11:30AM)—*The Tin Cup Bar & Grill, Aurora, CO*—Tom Johnston 303-979-7272

**Florida**

N.E. Florida (3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday, Feb, Apr, Jun, Oct, Dec)—*Spruce Creek CC*—386-760-9736  
Sarasota Sunsetters (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, Jan, Mar, May, Sep, Nov)—*Geckos Bar & Grill*—941-807-6727  
S.E. Florida Treasure Coast Sunbirds (2<sup>nd</sup> Tue.)—*Shrimper's restaurant, Stuart, FL*—561-756-4829  
The Ham Wilson S.E. Florida Gold Coast (2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday)—*Galuppi's Restaurant & Patio Bar*  
S.W. Florida (2<sup>nd</sup> Monday, Nov, Jan, Feb, Mar)—*Olive Garden, Ft. Myers*—239-540-9112  
Tampa, Florida Sundowners (3<sup>rd</sup> 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 (3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday 11:30AM)—*The Fish Hopper, Kailua-Kona*—808-315-7912 or 808-334-1883

**Illinois**

Greater Chicago Area Group (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, March, July and November)  
(*Nick's Pizza and Pub, 856 Pyott Rd, Crystal Lake, IL*)  
The Joe Carnes RUPA Group (2nd Tuesday, January, May and September)  
(*The Golf Club of Illinois, 1575 Edgewood Dr., Algonquin, IL*)

**Nevada**

Las Vegas High Rollers (3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday)—*Memphis Barbecue*—702-558-9422 or 702-565-7175  
Reno's Biggest Little Group (4<sup>th</sup> 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 & October)—*Rock Spring Golf Club, West Orange, NJ*—psofman@gmail.com

**Ohio**

Cleveland Crazies (3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday)—*TJ's Wooster* (Always coed.)—330-653-8919

**Oregon**

Oregon Coasters (1st Wednesday, 12:00)—Call for monthly restaurant in Florence, Larry 541-999-1979  
The Columbia River Geezers (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday 11:00)—*California Pizza Kitchen, Clackamas Town Center*  
The Intrepid Aviators of Southern Oregon (3rd Thursday)—*Pony Express, Jacksonville*—541-245-6896

**Washington**

PNW Flyers (To be announced) 916-335-5269  
Seattle Gooney Birds (2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday 11:00AM)—*Airport Marriott*—360-825-1016

**Washington D.C.**

Washington D.C. Area (3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday, Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct)—*J.R.'s Stockyard Inn, McLean, VA*—540-338-4574  
Williamsburg, VA (2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday 11:30)—*Victoria's Restaurant, VA* 757-585-2815