

PCN Services – High Life *Newsletter, News, Events, Deaths, Illness Notices & PCN Ads & Calendar*. Note: Notices from major sections are distributed by separate email address to allow our subscribers the ability to customize and filter notices not desired.

Large web community for one of world's largest airlines

High Life

facebook

For all Delta people who have truly touched the High Life!

Above I shot in mid-altitudes of our 757 shadow/corona.

Dear PCN (of over 2500 subscribing members),

Group Section.....

Mark's Remarks:

PCN Theme Song:

Back in the High Life by Steve Winwood

The PCN theme song is Back in the High Life and thus our periodical's name The High Life. Why did I pick it? Well, I think most of us would consider that we have lived a very good life and for a good portion of it have been connected with the "high life." Flying and aviation is the high life. I like the song because it looks forward not backward. When one retires the decision is a passage and one of life's most important ones. It is irrevocable, but the high life isn't. Listen to Steve perform this and let the words encourage you who have experienced the "High Life" that there is still a lot of it to live. The lyrics pick me up every time.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=K82nMSy-IWQ

About Steve:

Stephen Lawrence "Steve" Winwood (born 12 May 1948) is an [English](#) international recording artist whose career spans nearly 50 years. He is a [songwriter](#) and a [musician](#) whose genres include [soul music](#) ([blue-eyed soul](#)), [R&B](#), [rock](#), [blues-rock](#), [pop-rock](#), and [jazz](#). Winwood is a [multi-instrumentalist](#)

who plays the [electric organ](#), [synthesizers](#), bass, drums, guitar, mandolin, violin and other stringed instruments. His trademark style is singing in a tenor voice and playing the Hammond organ. In addition to his solo career, he was a member of the bands [the Spencer Davis Group](#), [Traffic](#), [Blind Faith](#) and [Go](#). Winwood has won numerous [Grammy Awards](#) in the [United States of America](#).

In 2008, [Rolling Stone magazine](#) ranked Winwood #33 in its 100 Greatest Singers of All Time.^[1] In 2005, Winwood was honored as a [BMI](#) Icon at the annual BMI London Awards for his "enduring influence on generations of music makers."^[2]

During his teens, Winwood played [Hammond B-3 organ](#) and [guitar](#) in "pick-up" bands that backed up well-known US blues performers. He formed [Blind Faith](#) in 1969 with [Eric Clapton](#), [Ginger Baker](#) and [Ric Grech](#). His first solo [record album](#) was released in 1977. In 1986, Winwood went to the top of the [Billboard Hot 100](#) with his song [Higher Love](#), and with this earned the year's [Grammy Award for Record of the Year](#) and another Grammy for [Best Male Pop Vocal Performance](#). In 1994, [Jim Capaldi](#) and Winwood reunited the band Traffic for a new album, [Far From Home](#).

3 other Winwood greats:

Roll With it:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fWptXUblA4E&feature=related>

High Love:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oqlauwX_ums&feature=relmfu

In the Presence of the Lord (with Eric Clapton)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=98XqT4kBWT4>

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PCN Toolbar problems with IE9: Mike Harr recently wrote that he upgraded and lost the PCN toolbar. I also did on one computer. I re-installed the toolbar and majically it is now back. If this problem has happened to you and you lost it, try uninstall and re-installing. It may help.

<http://pcn.homestead.com/Toolbar.html>

Also, I have been informed about our calendar link that produces cryptic font. I think the issue is related to the google changing the view of all calendars. With my W7 it apparently has the correct font because it displays correctly. I will try to see if I can change the font to one that is widely accepted.

Broken links – please send in any info on broken or not working links and we will correct that.

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Periodic series: My Favorite Apps (For Droid and I-Phone Lovers)

As many of you might know I us a Motorola Droid and really like it. It is simply amazing what can now be done on a phone. This series will share some of my favorite apps for the Droid and many of them are either duplicated or something similar is available on the I-Phone.

First, about the Data Plan. Having a phone hooked up to the internet over the cell phone network can get expensive. I believe that the cheapest way to go is to buy an unlimited plan. Many plans like

that for the black berry or I-Phone are in the \$40-50/mo. range. With my corporate discount at Verizon, I pay just \$25/mo. for unlimited data. I get my monies worth, trust me.

Now a general word about Apps: There are multiple “links” to internet pages that I have and use and are very helpful. This won’t be a highlight on links, but rather on Apps (short for applications or programs). These small program Apps actually run on the phone and do something for you. Some of them are quite amazing. P.S. Chirp in here about your favorites and I will share them in this section periodically.

Here are 3 more: (when done I will compile the list and publish)

From: [Denny](#)

Date: 7/4/2011 10:23:15 AM

To: mark@pilotcommunication.net

Subject: Good App

1. Mark--I like www.scoutmob.com . It offers 50% discounts at restaurants, boutiques, hair salons, etc. Most of the discounts are at restaurants. They offer discounts in 13 cities and are adding 7 more cities. The great thing about **Scoutmob** is there are no coupons to buy or download--load the App to your phone (Android or Apple) and then search for a restaurant in your city (they add a new restaurant just about every day) and then when you get to the restaurant, just show the server your phone and they will give you a discount. There are menus and facts abut each restaurant to help you decide.

Denny Zollweg

Retired- Dec 2002

2. Navigator: Speak and it does it! Nice app for walking or driving to a favorite spot.

3. *Mapdroyd = Also on the map issue try downloading MapDroyd it uses free street maps downloaded to your SD card. Why is this important? Because sometimes you are not or don’t want to be on the network. This app works completely independent of the phone being in network. Here are all the maps available free <http://www.mapdroyd.com/map-android-more> and if you uncheck the update it removes old maps from your card and puts the selected ones in. Could update the card before each big trip for off network GPS map info. Cool.

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[PCN Ads](#) – *up and running!*

For all of you who have an item, service or offer to promote Ad packages as follows:

FREE listings - \$0 for 45 days.

Jobs offered, jobs wanted, Pets, items Wanted. Runs 45 days, includes images.

Basic Listing - \$5 for 60 days with multiple images.

Silver - \$10 for 120 days with multiple images.

Gold - \$25 for one year with multiple images.

Platinum - \$50 for 3 years with multiple images.

Every one submitting an Ad gets a private login and complete control over their ads. URL's and images are allowed and you will see it is a very nice format for entering online ads.

Check it out; just register and submit and get your item, thing wanted, service or house, posted. Its just that easy!

[PCN Ads](#)

Note: PCN Ads was developed to give our group and outlet to advertise in front of our exclusive and numerous members along with searchable on the www, and by so doing keeps our newsletter free from any profit or commercial link.

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Tools for our members:

PCN Main Website: <http://pcn.homestead.com/home01.html>

PCN Google Group archives: <http://groups.google.com/group/PilotCommunicationNet>

PCN Ads – <http://pilotcommunication.net/Ads/>

PCN Tool Bar (for IE browser) - <http://pcntools.ourtoolbar.com/>

PCN Calendar - <http://pcn.homestead.com/Calendar.html>

PCN specific emails: misc@pilotcommunication.net

pcn.calendar@gmail.com

signup@pilotcommunication.net

illness@pilotcommunication.net

death@pilotcommunication.net

ads@pilotcommunication.net

mark@pilotcommunication.net

News Section.....

Delta News (Recent stories of interest): [Yahoo](#), [AJC](#)

Five Georgia companies on Fortune Global 500

Atlanta Business Chronicle

Date: Thursday, July 7, 2011, 3:19pm EDT

Five Georgia companies made Fortune magazine's 2011 Global 500 list, with an Atlanta retailer leading the state pack.

Representing the Peach State in Fortune's annual ranking of the world's largest corporations ranked by revenue:

- **The Home Depot Inc.** (NYSE: HD) -- 30th in the United States and 101st in the world with \$68 billion in revenue
- **United Parcel Service Inc.** (NYSE: UPS) -- 49th in the United States and 166th in the world with \$49.5 billion in revenue
- **The Coca-Cola Co.** (NYSE: KO) -- 71st in the United States and 255th in the world with \$35.1 billion in revenue
- **Delta Air Lines Inc.** (NYSE: DAL) -- 89th in the United States and 301st in the world with \$31.8 billion in revenue
- **Aflac Inc.** (NYSE: AFL) -- 127th in the United States and 472nd in the world with \$20.7 billion in revenue

American companies made up the majority of this year's list, with 133 companies, followed by 68 Japanese companies and 61 Chinese companies.

The top 10 global companies:

1. Wal-Mart Stores (United States)
2. Royal Dutch Shell (Netherlands)
3. Exxon Mobil (United States)
4. BP (Britain)
5. Sinopec Group (China)
6. China National Petroleum (China)
7. State Grid (China)
8. Toyota Motor (Japan)
9. Japan Post Holdings (Japan)
10. Chevron (United States)

[Click here for the full list.](#)

Other Airline News (Recent stories of interest): [Yahoo](#), [AJC](#)

Can American Airlines Afford \$15 Billion Worth of New Planes?

By Shubh Datta | July 8, 2011

Top aircraft carriers in the US are looking to overhaul their fleets. In the face of high gas prices, these carriers are planning to replace their old fuel-guzzling planes with newer more fuel-efficient aircraft.

Not to be left behind, American Airlines parent **AMR** (NYSE: [AMR](#)) is planning to shell out close to \$15 billion to reinvigorate its fleet with narrow-bodied craft.

Re-fleeting the hangars

The nation's four largest carriers are all looking to add more aircraft to their hangars. Media reports quoting

sources said American is planning to buy close to 250 narrow-bodied planes, splitting the \$15 billion that it plans to spend between aircraft makers **Boeing** (NYSE: [BA](#)) and **Airbus**.

Even the world's largest aircraft carrier **Delta** (NYSE: [DAL](#)) is planning to add close to 200 new aircraft by the end of the year. To complete the list, **Southwest** (NYSE: [LUV](#)) and **United Continental Holdings** (NYSE: [UAL](#)) are also mulling over adding new planes to their fleet.

The airline industry in the US is currently coming out of a long year in which it has had to face the pressures of high gas prices, capacity cuts, and consolidation in the industry. These factors led to a drop in American's revenues and bottom line and weighed on its financial position.

Read more: <http://www.fool.com/investing/general/2011/07/08/can-american-airlines-afford-15-billion-worth-of-n.aspx>

Boeing vs. Airbus: The fight for flight intensifies

by Cyrus Sanati, contributor @[FortuneMagazine](#) July 5, 2011: 6:41 AM ET

FORTUNE -- The Paris Airshow last month was a clear win for Airbus, but don't count Boeing out just yet. The record number of orders for the Airbus A320neo aircraft at Le Bourget shows the European aircraft maker's success in bringing its current airline customers back on board. But while it was an impressive showing, Airbus failed to make any meaningful inroads into Boeing's core customer base, leaving in place a deadlock between the two aircraft makers in the heavily competitive and extremely profitable single-aisle jet market.

For now, it looks like Boeing's customers are waiting it out to see what the aircraft maker will do with its aging single-aisle workhorse, the Boeing 737. But Boeing shouldn't make them wait too long. Airbus, along with a new crop of foreign competitors, namely the Chinese, is aggressively pitching Boeing's anchor customers. Boeing may need to act fast or it could find that even its most loyal airline clients, like American Airlines and Europe's Ryan Air, sign big multi-billion dollar contracts with a competitor.

Read more:

http://money.cnn.com/2011/07/01/news/companies/boeing_airbus_aircraft.fortune/index.htm?source=yahoo_quote

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New air traffic control system at crossroads

Government efforts to modernize air traffic control system at crossroads, delays possible

Joan Lowy, Associated Press, On Tuesday July 5, 2011, 3:08 am EDT

WASHINGTON (AP) -- The Federal Aviation Administration is creating a new air traffic system that officials say will be as revolutionary for civil aviation as was the advent of radar six decades ago. But the program is at a crossroads.

It's getting harder to pry money out of Congress. The airline industry is hesitating over the cost of equipping its planes with new technology necessary to use the system. And some experts say the U.S. could lose its lead in the manufacture of high tech aviation equipment to European competitors because the FAA is moving too slowly.

Seventy-five years ago this week the federal government, spurred by the nascent airline industry, began tracking planes at the nation's first air traffic control centers in Newark, N.J., Chicago and Cleveland.

The original group of 15 controllers, relying on radioed position reports from pilots, plotted the progress of flights using blackboards, maps and boat-shaped weights. Air traffic control took a technological leap forward in the 1950s with the introduction of radar. That's still the basis of the technology used today by more than 15,000 controllers to guide 50,000 flights a day.

Read more: <http://finance.yahoo.com/news/New-air-traffic-control-apf-3056226463.html?x=0&.v=1>

Finance Section ((Claims, PBGC, HCTC, Insurance, Planning, Tax, Estate) - section containing items with financial consequence to our group)):

Thanks to Dick Deeds for sharing this interesting letter received by Capt. Marty Tynan from DAL legal concerning questions he asked about our claims and tax treatment.

http://pcn.homestead.com/files/Misc_Files/Tynan/DAL_to_Marty_Tynan_6-27-11.pdf

From: [Dick Deeds](#)
Date: 07/05/11 21:14:47
To: [pilots wallybird](#)
Subject: IRS REFUND

From the Wallybird

I just received a letter from the IRS Fresno office denying my refund claim. Interestingly, other have received a refund from the same office. I will appeal.

I think many of you are in the safe position. What I propose that will help us all is to have any of you that have filed send me an email stating:

1. Approval or denial - and in the case of approval, the amount..
2. The regional IRS office the denied or approved.

I'll put together a spreadsheet showing the amounts and the office BUT will leave names off the list.

Hopefully you will all reply.

Thanks,

Dick

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From: RetDalCapt@aol.com
Date: 7/4/2011 10:00:37 AM
To: mark@pilotcommunication.net
Subject: 2007 Ammended Tax..

Mark
I filed a 1040X and Form 843 thru my tax accountant locally (Illinois). They were mailed separately by certified mail on April 14,2011. On 6-15-11, I received a letter from IRS stating that they had not resolved the matter as they had not completed all the research necessary for a complete response and that I would hear from them within 45 days. On 6i-20-11, I received a second letter by certified mail, which said they could not allow my claim. The letter said "WHY WE CANNOT ALLOW YOUR CLAIM' We have disallowed your claim for refund of FICA taxes, Section 3121 (v) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code requires an employer withhold and pay FICA taxes on amounts deferred under nonqualified deferred compensation plans once the present value of the deferred benefit becomes reasonably ascertainable. In checking with the IRS, I found out that even though they did not clearly states it in my letter, they closed my case and also disallowed my refund of Federal Taxes. (Totally ignored the fact that I was asking for a reclassification from ordinary income to capital gains.)

Just wondering if anyone else has gotten this response.

Sincerely:
Richard Keltner

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From: Kenneth Thomas

Mark;
....."Delta Pilots Disability & Survivorship Plan" "Are the calculation that Delta provided in 2008 still valid for today and into the future"?

From: evan.gost
Date: 7/7/2011 2:32:32 AM
To: Mark Sztanyo
Subject: Answer to question about D&S Plan Survivor Benefit
Hi Mark-

Thank you for your committment and efforts in maintaining PCN.

Your latest high life edition included a questions from Ken Thomas about D&S Plan Survivor Benefits.

Question: Are the figures provided in 2008 valid today and into the future?

Answer: The only change in survivor's benefit would be related to changes in the variable portion of the benefit. The variable benefit unit value has declined since 2008; therefore, his survivor's benefit will be less than it was in 2008.

The Delta Disabled Pilots and Survivors Association (DDPSA) has an updated Survivor Benefit Worksheet posted on its website at www.ddpsa.org. If a pilot inputs his Final Average Earnings, Length of Delta Service, Age at retirement and the figures provided in the worksheet for the variable benefit unit value as of the date of retirement and the current year, the worksheet will calculate a survivor benefit. Calculations from the DDPSA Survivor Benefit Worksheet usually are within pennies of the figures provided by Delta.

The DDPSA website also has an updated article on D&S Plan Survivors' Benefits. An attachment to that article explains the variable portion of the benefit.

Mark, keep up the good work! In the next week or so, I'll send you an article that discusses the latest financial report on the D&S Plan.

Ev

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Remaining financial items for retirees to watch:

After Aug 2007 these are retirement items remaining with financial consequence.

1. ~~PBGC 2nd look re-calc at qualified annuity benefits~~ - completed 8/24/07
2. ~~PBGC make up lump payment for underpayments since termination:~~ most reported received 1/31/08
3. ~~Final claim distribution by DAL through BSI~~ – distributed at or around Mar 23, 2011.
4. ~~Class Action suit against DAL concerning 5-yr look-back worth in excess of \$100 million~~ - *withdrawn*
5. Final Benefit Determination Letters (BDL's) PBGC re-calc "determination" of qualified annuity (likely after claim stock sale) – *in process until end of year (only 45 days to appeal)*
Appeal extensions generally granted in Nov 2010 now extended by our law firm for all to: revised to Feb 18, 2011, ~~Now Mar 18, 2011, April 29, 2011, July 29, 2011,~~ **Aug 29, 2011**
6. Pension reinstatement/contribution request by DP3 representing the retired pilots. *very long shot....pending*
7. ~~Roth IRA creation as per Worker, Retiree, and Employer Recovery Act of 2008~~ – deadline June 22nd, 2009
8. Expiration of HCTC 80% premium subsidy will expire on December 31, 2010. ~~Action has continued 80% for Jan & Feb.~~ **Action expired and subsidy effective Mar 2011 is now back to 65%.**
9. Financial condition of the D&S Plan--a plan that pays benefits to eligible survivors of deceased pilots as well as to disabled pilots. A form 5500 for the D&S Plan is filed annually.
10. Formation of a VEBA Health Insurance plan by DP3 – VEBA has been created and in effect.

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Insurance (issues about health, life or disability that are of interest):

Pension:

As the PBGC appeals progresses the sensitivity of the information does as well. While the PCN has re-published many of DP3 general postings, we will refrain from re-publishing "private emails" in view of the nature of the process. So when there is a general update we will re-publish and when there is a private email we will help announce its existence.

To PCN subscribers these links are "hot" and will take you directly to the DP3 resource page or checklist for filing an appeal concerning your PBGC benefits.

Click for [PBGC Appeals Resource Page](#)

Or

[Appeal Checklist](#)

DP3 (login required)

Click to appeal your PBGC benefit

Call PBGC in DC- 1-800-400-7242

Link of explanation for BSW ([Benefit Statement Worksheet](#))

(Note: Must know your DP3 assigned passwords which cannot be shared in our newsletter!)

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Commercial Section.....

Investment (Legitimate firms that have helped our group are encouraged to contact PCN to add articles here):

Travel & Non-Revving (share a quick reco):

Life Section...

Illness Notice

From: [David L. Roberts](#)

Date: 7/9/2011 11:16:29 PM

To: illness@pilotcommunication.net

Cc: [Marvin Baker](#)

Subject: ACCIDENT - Retired Captain Lester M. Byrd

Thanks to retired Captain Marv Baker for sending the sad news about retired Captain Les Byrd's accident. Captain Byrd was hired by Delta on January 3, 1967, as were Marv and I, and spent most of his career at DFW. Expressions of concern may be sent to Les and his wife June at 5504 Pleasant Ridge Road, Arlington, TX 76016-4526, phone 817-467-6595 and email les@bhh.cc. I'll send more when I get more.

Dave

From: "Marvin Baker" mcbaker1@sbcglobal.net

To: "David L. Roberts" robertsdl@mindspring.com

Subject: **Les Byrd**

Date: Sat, 9 Jul 2011 12:43:34 -0500

Hi Dave,

Hope you are having a good summer!

Thought maybe you could put out the information on Les. I don't know the details on how it happened but he fell somehow Thursday afternoon up near Denton. He was taken to a hospital there and then

transported to **Arlington Memorial hospital in Arlington, TX**. I talked to him today and guess the break was in 2 or 3 places between the knee and hip. He sounded pretty good today but said he may be looking at up to 5 weeks with a walker.

Marv

Misc Posts:

Human Interest:

From: [Lane Browne](#)

Date: 7/1/2011 3:52:10 PM

Subject: A NICE STORY ABOUT MARTHA RAYE (A full "Bird" Colonel in the US Army Reserve)

Some of you remember Martha Raye very well. A comedian and singer, she, like Joe E. Louis had a large mouth and appeared with Bob Hope, and on other radio programs and usually played supportive roles in comedy films and musicals. She was also loved for the work she did entertaining troops in WWII and Korea.

Some things you probably did not know about
Martha Raye

Most of the old time entertainers were made out of a lot sterner stuff than today's crop of activists and whiners.

It was just before Thanksgiving '67 and we were ferrying dead & wounded from a large GRF west of Pleiku, Vietnam.

We had run out of body bags by noon, so the Hook (CH-47 CHINOOK) was pretty rough in the back. All of a sudden, we heard a 'take-charge' woman's voice in the rear.

There was the singer and actress, Martha Raye with a SF (Special Forces) beret and jungle fatigues, with subdued markings, helping the wounded into the Chinook, and carrying the dead aboard.

'Maggie' had been visiting her SF "heroes" out "west."

We took off, short of fuel, and headed to the USAF hospital pad at Pleiku.

As we all started unloading, our Captain said to Martha.

... Ms Ray, with all these dead and wounded to process, there would not be time for your show!

To all of our surprise, she pulled on her right collar and said.....Captain, see this eagle? I am a full 'Bird' Colonel in the US Army Reserve, and on this is a

'Caduse' which means I am a Nurse, with a surgical specialty....now, take me to your wounded.

He said, yes ma'am.... Follow me.

Several times at the Army Field Hospital in Pleiku, she would 'cover' a surgical shift, giving a nurse a well-deserved break.

Martha is the only woman buried in the SF (Special Forces) cemetery at Ft. Bragg .



Good Read (Good book recommendation & [Community Author's](#) blurbs):

Event Announcements (Click here for [Calendar](#)): to post pcn.calendar@gmail.com

This is the PCN Calendar designed for you to publish your 2011 event dates. Please send them in to Kim.

Click here for our PCN [Calendar](#).

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I am looking for....." (Share a post of who you are seeking, if one sought answers....wallah):

From: [Bill Robertson](#)

Date: 7/7/2011 9:19:20 PM

To: mark@pilotcommunication.net

Subject: Notice in Newsletter

Mark,

Thank you very much for including the notice for Kendall to contact Shanks.

I haven't yet heard from Shanks advising contact but I'm guessing if there is a way to do it, this is it.

Again, thanks!

Bill

Editor: No need to send thanks, this is our group's section that has proved very useful connecting long lost friends. Keep 'em coming!

Good Deal/Bad Deal (Share a quick good deal or bad deal you have found – no commercials here!)

If you have something you represent that has a commercial interest, place it in the new service of [PCN Ads](#). Designed especially for our group but available to the industry. Registration is free and so are some ads. The rest start as low as \$5. Enter you promo in [PCN Ads](#).

Hangar Flying (Share a bit of ole hangar flying with the net. Need a sim buddy? Use PCN for request) :

From: [Steve Rodmon](#)

Date: 7/5/2011 8:23:26 PM

Bcc: mark@pilotcommunication.net

Subject: Fwd: Fw: IT DOESN'T GET ANY BETTER THAN THIS FOR A PILOT.....



A quick "trip report" from the pilot of the 747 that flew the shuttle back to Florida after the Hubble repair flight. A humorous and interesting inside look at what it's like to fly two aircraft at once . . .

To all,

Well, it's been 48 hours since I landed the 747 with the shuttle Atlantis on top and I am still buzzing from the experience. I have to say that my whole mind, body and soul went into the professional mode just before engine start in Mississippi, and stayed there, where it all needed to be, until well after the flight...in fact, I am not sure if it is all back to normal as I type this email. The experience was surreal. Seeing that "thing" on top of an already overly huge aircraft boggles my mind. The whole mission from takeoff to engine shutdown was unlike anything I had ever done. It was like a dream... someone else's dream.

We took off from Columbus AFB on their 12,000 foot runway, of which I used 11,999 1/2 feet to get the wheels off the ground. We were at 3,500 feet left to go of the runway, throttles full power, nose wheels still hugging the ground, copilot calling out decision speeds, the weight of Atlantis now screaming through my fingers clinched tightly on the controls, tires heating up to their near maximum temperature from the speed and the weight, and not yet at rotation speed, the speed at which I would be pulling on the controls to get the nose to rise. I just could not wait, and I mean I COULD NOT WAIT, and started pulling early. If I had waited until rotation speed, we would not have rotated enough to get airborne by the end of the runway. So I pulled on the controls early and started our rotation to the takeoff attitude. The wheels finally lifted off as we passed over the stripe marking the end of the runway and my next hurdle (physically) was a line of trees 1,000 feet off the departure end of Runway 16. All I knew was we were flying and so I directed the gear to be retracted and the flaps to be moved from Flaps 20 to Flaps 10 as I pulled even harder on the controls. I must say, those trees were beginning to look a lot like those brushes in the drive through car washes so I pulled even harder yet! I think I saw a bird just fold its wings and fall out of a tree as if to say "Oh just take me". Okay, we cleared the trees, duh, but it was way too close for my laundry. As we started to actually climb, at only 100 feet per minute, I smelled something that reminded me of touring the Heineken Brewery in Europe ...I said "is that a skunk I smell?" and the veterans of shuttle carrying looked at me and smiled and said "Tires"! I said "TIRES??? OURS???" They smiled and shook their heads as if to call their Captain an amateur...okay, at that point I was. The tires were so hot you could smell them in the cockpit. My mind could not get over, from this point on, that this was something I had never experienced. Where's your mom when you REALLY need her?

The flight down to Florida was an eternity. We cruised at 250 knots indicated, giving us about 315 knots of ground speed at 15,000'. The miles didn't click by like I am use to them clicking by in a fighter jet at MACH .94. We were burning fuel at a rate of 40,000 pounds per hour or 130 pounds per mile, or one gallon every length of the fuselage. The vibration in the cockpit was mild, compared to down below and to the rear of the fuselage where it reminded me of that football game I had as a child where you turned it on and the players vibrated around the board. I felt like if I had plastic clips on my boots I could have vibrated to any spot in the fuselage I wanted to go without moving my legs...and the noise was deafening. The 747 flies with its nose 5 degrees up in the air to stay level, and when you bank, it feels like the shuttle is trying to say "Hey, let's roll completely over on our back!" - not a good thing, I kept telling myself. SO, I limited my bank angle to 15 degrees and even though a 180-degree course change took a full zip code to complete, it was the safe way to turn this monster.

Airliners and even a flight of two F-16s deviated from their flight plans to catch a glimpse of us along the way. We dodged what was in reality very few clouds and storms, despite what everyone thought, and arrived in Florida with 51,000 pounds of fuel too much to land with. We can't land heavier than 600,000 pounds total weight and so we had to do something with that fuel. I had an idea: Let's fly low and slow and show this beast off to all the taxpayers in Florida lucky enough to be outside on that

Tuesday afternoon. So at Ormond Beach we let down to 1,000 feet above the ground/water and flew just east of the beach out over the water. Then, once we reached the NASA airspace of the Kennedy Space Center , we cut over to the Banana/Indian Rivers and flew down the middle of them to show the people of Titusville , Port St.Johns, and Melbourne just what a 747 with a shuttle on it looked like. We stayed at 1,000 feet and since we were dragging our flaps at "Flaps 5", our speed was down to around 190 to 210 knots. We could see traffic stopping in the middle of roads to take a look. We heard later that a Little League Baseball game stopped to look and everyone cheered as we became their 7th inning stretch. Oh say can you see...

After reaching Vero Beach , we turned north to follow the coast line back up to the Shuttle Landing Facility (SLF). There was not one person laying on the beach...they were all standing and waving! "What a sight" I thought...and figured they were thinking the same thing. All this time I was bugging the engineers, all three of them, to re-compute our fuel and tell me when it was time to land. They kept saying "Not yet, Triple, keep showing this thing off," which was not a bad thing to be doing; however, all this time the thought that the landing, the muscling of this 600,000 pound beast, was getting closer and closer to my reality. I was pumped up! We got back to the SLF and were still 10,000 pounds too heavy to land so I said I was going to do a low approach over the SLF going the opposite direction of landing traffic that day. So at 300 feet, we flew down the runway, rocking our wings like a whale rolling on its side to say "hello" to the people looking on! One turn out of traffic and back to the runway to land...still 3,000 pounds over gross weight limit. But the engineers agreed that if the landing were smooth, there would be no problem. "Oh thanks guys, a little extra pressure is just what I needed!" So we landed at 603,000 pounds and very smoothly if I have to say so myself. The landing was so totally controlled and on speed, that it was fun. There were a few surprises that I dealt with, like the 747 falls like a rock with the orbiter on it if you pull the throttles off at the "normal" point in a landing and secondly, if you thought you could hold the nose off the ground after the mains touch down, think again...IT IS COMING DOWN!!! So I "flew it down" to the ground and saved what I have seen in videos of a nose slap after landing.

Then I turned on my phone after coming to a full stop only to find 50 bazillion emails and phone messages from all of you who were so super to be watching and cheering us on! What a treat! I can't thank y'all enough. For those who watched, you wondered why we sat there so long. Well, the shuttle had very hazardous chemicals on board and we had to be "sniffed" to determine if any had leaked or were leaking. They checked for Monomethylhydrazine (N2H4 for Charlie Hudson) and nitrogen tetroxide (N2O4). Even though we were "clean", it took way too long for them to tow us in to the mate-demate area. Sorry for those who stuck it out and even waited until we exited the jet.

I am sure I will wake up in the middle of the night here soon, screaming and standing straight up dripping wet with sweat from the realization of what had happened. It was a thrill of a lifetime. Again I want to thank everyone for your interest and support. It felt good to bring Atlantis home in one piece after she had worked so hard getting to the Hubble Space Telescope and back.

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From: [Steve Rodmon](#)
Date: 07/05/11 19:50:47

Subject: NAVY SEAL EXTRACTION (Read before viewing)

This has been around before, but certainly worth seeing again.
Subject: NAVY SEAL EXTRACTION (Read before viewing)

NAVY SEAL EXTRACTION

Attached is a rarely seen video of a U.S. Navy SEAL extraction filmed from inside an MH-47 Chinook helicopter. The pilot has lowered the ramp, dipped the tail end into the water to partially flood the compartment, (a maneuver that requires very precise flying) and awaits the Navy SEALs to board in their F-470 Zodiac.

You have just got to love the skill of our military.... very few pilots would attempt this. It's too easy to lose lift, and ditch the whole chopper. Click on the attachment.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wsq8o19XJPY>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42AxZsNsO9k>

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I thank Brian flying in Asia for sharing this story:

Please enjoy one pilot's ex-pat Japanese airline story below.....

Long before I came to Skymark, some clown ran off a runway doing tailwind landing. After a 1:15 flight, he tested positive for alcohol. Now, we all have to blow into a breathalyzer every day. No big deal, I guess. I hear it's pretty much universal now in Japan.

During ground school, the office staff saw that we finished our lessons and left, maybe at 3 or 4 o'clock. We would then go home to study (drink). I guess someone didn't like this, so they set up a time clock for everyone, including flight crew and trainees. We were then forced to stay until 18:15 every day (we started at 10) and self study. This was instituted in our second week. We still have to sign in and out every duty day. Our travel expense reports are predicated on this.

Speaking of travel, during the interview, we were told that taxis were provided to and from work. Cool. On April fool's day, 2009, this went away and all pilots had to take the train or pay for their own taxis. There is no place to park, so driving is nearly out of the question. Taxis are still provided for pilots over age 60 (all the Japanese captains).

Just before I started IOE, some other joker left his license at home (Hawaii), and got busted on a ramp check, after flying two legs. Now we all have to show our licenses every show up. Pain in the a\$\$ and an insult. Oh, well. I bought a novelty Alien E.T. UFO driver's license to show everyone. It gets laughs.

During IOE, one day we climbed to FL410, to try to see a solar eclipse. We still had clouds above, but I did get a look at my first FOQA letter(it's not de-identified here) for exceeding the aircraft limitation of 41000 feet(we went all the way to 41010). NOW we are only allowed to climb to FL400.

Last March, one of our Japanese F/Os had a lot of pictures posted on the equivalent of a Facebook page. These included F/As sitting in his seat, and captains looking back toward the camera (cockpit door) without oxygen masks on, in flight. The JCAB saw them, raised hell and 3 captains got suspended. The F/O got canned. Now, whenever one crewmember leaves the flight deck, the senior F/A has to fill in a form with names, altitude, mask wearing confirmation and some other bullshit. The pilot remaining on the flight deck has to sign it.

A few months ago, one western captain missed or was late for several flights, and blamed it on too many schedule changes. Now we all get an email with a link, to which we must respond for a schedule confirmation.

Morning flights get an email 12 hours before and all flights get one 90 minutes prior.

A few weeks ago, a Japanese captain took off with the x-feed valve open and got an imbalance, just getting it back to limits before landing. Now 5 minutes before every departure, we have to send an ACARS message "XFD CLSD", or they won't send our W&B load sheet. I sh#t you not.

I thought it couldn't get any more childish, when yesterday I was having a few brews with some other crews and was told of a new policy that no hot drinks (coffee, tea, etc) are allowed on the flight deck. Only drinks in PET containers, with closable lids. Unbelievable. I've cut way back on coffee, but once in a while, especially late nights, it's nice to get a jolt.

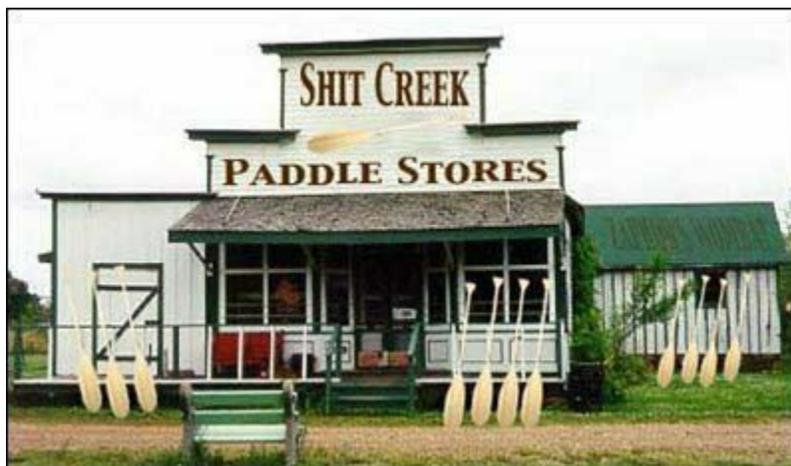
I think I'm done with this clown show. Just 6 months to go.

Political (food for thought):

Humor/Sobering or Fun (Share some humor with the net):

Thanks Denny.....I think!

Ever needed this store?



Mark

Mark Sztanyo (Stăn'yō), PCN Dir & HL Editor
[Pilot Communication Net](#) from Aug 2009
[Contact the Net](#)

Life on earth will soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last!

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