

**PRESIDENT**

STU ARCHER
7340 SW 132 ST
MIAMI, FL 33156-6804
(305) 238-0911

VICE PRESIDENT

CG "DINO" VLAHAKIS
54 WESTVIEW LN
LEBANON NH 03766-2016
(603) 448-3729

TREASURER / EDITOR

JERRY HOLMES
5354 ANTIGUA CIRCLE
VERO BEACH, FL 32967
(772) 205-2561

Volcanoes in Central America

-continued from previous issue

by Bill Nash

Another unplanned landing was made on the Mexican Yucatan peninsula a few years later. Captain Don McLennan took off from Merida, Mexico, for New Orleans with a gross load of bananas. At about 700 feet one propellor flew off, went chop chop under the belly of the Curtis Commando C 46 and knocked off the other propellor. The engines raced and roared as Don chopped both throttles, shoved the nose down, and belled into one of the many small sisal fields, separated by stone walls in the area - without hitting a stone wall -. That airplane also was restored to fly again. Captain Vic Wright, our Cargo chief pilot liked to brag that his flight crew had sold all of the bananas to the natives by the time the rescue crew had arrived. Captain McLennan immediately put in a request for a transfer to New York.

Personally, having flown Pan Am's C-46 cargo planes for 3 ½ years, I liked the big fat bird. Forty-five thousand pounds was the gross weight they had been built for, but by some sleight of hand, our operations department had gotten the F.A.A. to approve 48,000 pounds. A lost engine at 48,000 pounds on take-off meant a pilot had to do a lot of things in a hurry to fly on the hairy edge with the remaining engine.

Mexico City was always a nice layover. We stayed in a popular hotel and dined in a beautiful dining room, often a few tables away from Mexican and U.S. movie stars. There was good entertainment and great Mariachi bands. One member of each Mariachi band was the accountant. He would keep a record of each request and eventually present a bill to each "requester" at a certain quantity of pesos per song.

We were cautioned to not enter parts of the city, such as Tepito - "thieves" Market, which is an infamous

~ continued on next page

No Password Needed for Members Only Section of the Website

Please note - we have changed the access to the online newsletters so that you will no longer need a password to access them. GO TO OUR WEBSITE AT: www.clipperpioneers.com. To request a current membership list, email sue@clipperpioneers.com with your request. Click on the "Members Only" button on the righthand side to access the current and previous newsletters.

Volcanoes in Central America

~ continued from previous page

zone, where thieves sell on Saturday and Sunday what they had stolen during the previous week. They would lay their loot out in the street on cardboard or blankets. Though there are iron bars on the windows of many homes, thieves easily lifted those off with automobile hydraulic jacks. People hustle over to Tepito to buy back their stolen possessions at reasonable prices. I once watched a young man sitting on his bicycle haggling over the price of a bike claxon horn while a boy was busy stealing a red reflector from his rear fender.

Today, Tepito is also heavy in drug trafficking. The Mexican government still allows the area to survive, perhaps for the same reasons red light districts are tolerated; they know where they are.

It is suggested that one does not go there without a trustworthy knowledgeable local person. Taxis will not wait there. Many will not go there. Even if they stop for a traffic light, they could lose their hub-caps or tail-lights.

Even though rules for pilots required eight hours from bottle to throttle, it pays to imbibe little in Mexico City. At 7,342 feet of altitude, one bottle of powerful three X's Orizaba beer can send one early to bed.

To leave the subject of Central America for a moment - one night in Miami, as a copilot with Vic Wright on a C-46 trip, I was doing the walk-around and noticed that the tail wheel tire looked partly flat. I checked the tire pressure and it was correct at 70 pounds. That meant to me that the airplane was overloaded. I informed Capt. Wright, and he frowned and said, "We've got to make this cargo operation go. Let's go!" So we went, destination Caracas, Venezuela, with a cargo of cigarettes.

Our take-off was a real ground-hugger. Our climb was long. We had a stop at Jamaica. After our take-off there the tower called and asked, "are both engines working, Captain? You seem quite low!"

We landed at Maiquetia airport on Venezuela's coast and went to the hotel. We were awakened at 7 AM by some Venezuelan official to inform Vic Wright that Pan Am was being fined \$ 5,000 for having 5,000 pounds of unmanifested cargo on board. The loading supervisor in Miami had severely miscalculated. Had we lost an engine en-route, we would surely have been in the drink.

As a C-46 captain, I and my copilot were sent to Tapachula, Mexico, on the Pacific coast to pick up a load of bananas to take to New Orleans. This was the most accurately weighed cargo load that I ever carried: The Mexican loading boss at Tapachula sent runners into the fields and jungle to call for loaders. When they straggled in, he lined them up near our cargo door. On a large sheet of lined paper on a table, the very corpulent loading boss wrote their names when they called them out. He weighed them on a large cargo scale by sliding the weights, and wrote each man's weight beside the name. Then the loading began. Each

~ continued on next page

We'd like to have more stories to share! If you have a story you'd like to send, please send it in sooner rather than later! We appreciate you and the interesting stories you send in for all to enjoy! Email to: sue@clipperpioneers.com.

Don't forget to check out our website at: www.clipperpioneers.com

Volcanoes in Central America

~ continued from previous page

man carrying a large stem of bananas would step on the scale with his bananas and call out “Jose”, “Miguel”, etc., and the boss would weigh him with the bananas and mark the combined weight beside the loader’s name. When all cargo was loaded, each man’s weight times the number of trips he made was totaled and subtracted from the total trip weight of loader plus bananas. - Simple, but exact.

I remember on that flight that the copilot suddenly jumped over to my side of the cockpit and yelled, “look”! On his side window sill was an ugly big black spider as big as a fist. It was difficult to remember that these Tarantulas are not deadly poisonous. We shooed the spider back with the bananas where he’d come from.

During much of my Central American flying, Brownsville, Texas, was my base. We served every nation, from the USA to Colombia.

Also, out of the Miami base, we flew a V-trip - Miami to Panama, and Panama through the nations to New Orleans. We used the Douglas DC-4’s for the V-trip.

No matter what airplane we flew, Central America was a fascinating, challenging, and enjoyable area to experience.

Keep Your Body Healthy - A Healthy Diet

Your diet is one of the most important parts of having a healthy body. As we get older, our bodies aren’t able to take the abuse it used to when we were younger. Our metabolism and digestion slow down and we begin to feel the ill-effects of certain food choices.

Where do we start and what determines a healthy diet?

Eating a variety of fruits and vegetables along with enough proteins and whole grains is the key to a healthy diet. As we age, we need to get more fiber, calcium, essential fats, and vitamins to maintain our heart, brain, and immunity and enhance our longevity.

Try and reduce sweets and eat smaller more frequent meals during your day to keep your energy up. Smoothies which are easy to make and digest are a wonderful way to get your vitamins, minerals, fiber, and protein all in one.

One more important thing to remember is to drink enough water (6–8 glasses a day). Seniors are more prone to dehydration as they have reduced thirst sensation and this can lead to serious health risks.

Common sense is the rule during the COVID-19 “flu” season, so please stay safe, wash hands for 20 seconds, keep your distance from other folks when/if you go out (6 feet is recommended), and if you are feeling ill at all, don’t go out, and see a doctor if necessary.

Pan Am Historical Society has a Facebook page. You can view it here:
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Pan-Am-Historical-Foundation/226994925218>

Airline Pilot's Bad Dream

From Theodore Osinski

I had a bad dream last night.

In it was the FAA, crew scheduling, bad schedules, bad management, self-serving union, unserviceable aircraft equipment, changing weather, no extra holding fuel, ever-changing procedures, endless flight manual revisions, dead heading in the middle seat, broken luggage, lost luggage, nasty passenger agents, crabby OLD 190 lb. flight attendants that were axe-handle wide, all-nighters, foreign countries, sleep deprivation, mergers, seniority squabbles, company threats, food poisoning, no food, bad coffee, bidding, pulled away from my family for weeks at a time, fleabag hotels, late cabs and maniac cab drivers, bidding vacation, waiting for gates, weather, low visibility approaches, aircraft de-icing, PCs, Gestapo check airman, medicals, commuting to and from work in unspeakable weather, the parking lot from Hell, parking lot buses, inter-terminal buses, spring break, Christmas rush, Thanksgiving rush, PA announcements, insurance, drug and alcohol testing, noise violations, customs lineups, dry cleaning, terrorism, security passes, TSA rude airport nonsensical security personnel, high gas/oil prices, pay cuts, rush hour traffic, that infernal alarm clock, crash pads, catching cold away from home, lackadaisical crew members, sexual harassment threats, flight attendants and co-pilots implying that they are a gift to aviation after being there three years, back biting, gossip, cell phones, aircraft cram courses, plus laying my job on the line several times a year with simulators, endless procedural memorization and Annual Recurrent Training days.

Then I woke up and joyously found myself still retired!

Treasurer's Report

The current bank balance as of March 31, 2020 is \$15,448.21.

If you haven't sent in your check, your name has been dropped from the mailing list as of this issue. For any information, please contact Stu Archer.

Thanks for your support of this newsletter and the website!

You are a part of this wonderful Pan Am "family". Are there memories you've written down that you'd like to share with us in this newsletter? We've gotten some great response, and there will continue to be interesting stories coming in the upcoming months. Please share yours with us, as well! Please send them to Sue by email to: sue@clipperpioneers.com.

PAN AM CLIPPER - MEMORABLE MOMENTS

By Larry Black

The approach into Rio's Galeao International Airport was a very demanding, steep descent. I had been into Rio many times as the engineer and knew what the pilots were up against. On this particular approach, the pilot was a little high on the approach. When we broke out of the overcast, we were high. He called out, "I can make it." I, in turn, called out, "Yes, you can make it but you're going to scare the s___ out of me and the passengers." He made a descending 360-degree turn and a safe landing.

One of my early flights as a DC-8 flight engineer was to Trinidad where we stayed at the Piarco Guesthouse. The place was adequate, but the walls between rooms were very thin. Need I say more? One evening after our flight, the crew met at the lounge for a nightcap. As we all assembled, the Captain, whose name I won't mention, looked down and saw his fly was open. He quickly zipped up, and said, "Don't worry. Dead birds don't fall out of old nests." We all laughed.

Staying awake on the long oceanic crossings was a problem for many of us. On one particular flight, I left the cockpit to make a head call. I asked a stewardess how she stayed awake on these long flights. Her response was memorable. She said, "Some times I go in the cockpit and pray for a pinch."

It's a good thing that sexual harassment wasn't such a touchy subject during our time with Pan Am.

Let us not forget Roberts Field – the cookouts, the beaches and the African Queens. No further comment.

(Do you have "memorable moments" you'd like to submit? We encourage you to do so! Email them to sue@clipperpioneers.com or mail to: Clipper Pioneers, P. O. Box 3457, Sequim, WA 98382.)

Please update your email address and phone number if it's been changed!

Email or write to:

Clipper Pioneers, c/o Sue Forde, P. O. Box 3457, Sequim WA 98382

or email to: sue@clipperpioneers.com

Check out the website - www.clipperpioneers.com - for more detailed information about the ports of call - where you can go and what you can see!

Don't miss out - come and join us on this fun cruise with your fellow PanAmer's!

Thanks to those of you who have sent us stories! Keep 'em coming!

Pan Am Philadelphia Area Pilots (PAPAP)

We meet the second Tuesday of every quarter at the Continental Inn in Yardley, PA at 1200 for a bit of BS before going to our private conference room upstairs for lunch.

Been going on since 1992 and it's a great way to stay together. Contact: Chris Blaydon [215 757 6229](tel:2157576229) or cblayd@aol.com

Come Join the Santa Rosa Breakfast Group!

The Santa Rosa Breakfast group meets about every six weeks. They have 17 pilots, FA's and FEO's that get together to discuss the old days. Anyone in the Sonoma, Napa, and Marin county areas north of San Francisco who would like to join them should email Dave Criley at davecriley@comcast.net, and send your email contact. They started out with 5 and have grown to 17. ~from Dave Criley

Flying Boat Reunion clip now available for viewing

A 15-minute special that aired April 27, 2016 on Ireland's popular RTE TV show "Nationwide" is now available for viewing. China Clipper First Officer Robert Hicks (94); Merry Barton, daughter of Folger Athearn (Pan Am's station manager in Noumea, New Caledonia in 1941); Director of the Foynes Flying Boat Museum Margaret O'Shaughnessy; Ed Trippe and Mary Lou Bigelow were interviewed during the Foynes Flying Boat reunion. <http://www.rte.ie/player/us/show/nationwide-21/10566026/>

Layovers for Pan Am

Check out Pan American layovers at www.paacrewlayover.com, where some 81 cities and over 161 hotels are shown in photos.

Check Out the Lockerbie Website

A website has been created for Lockerbie. It can be viewed at www.lockerbie103.com. It might be a worthwhile site to check out, especially for those who plan on visiting Lockerbie. Be sure to enter the web address in the browser (not Google Search, etc.) with the www. Otherwise, they will get hundreds of Lockerbies and 103s and may not find the web site after 15 pages. ~Claude Hudspeth

Pan Am -- Personal Tributes to A Global Aviation Pioneer

The Pan Am Historical Foundation recently published the highly acclaimed *Pan Am – Personal Tributes to a Global Aviation Pioneer*, a book that caught the attention of Pan Amers and aviation enthusiasts around the world. Visit <https://www.panam.org/shop/669-panam90-book> to order.

Thank You for the Stories You're Sending In! Keep 'em coming!!

We've been getting some good stories about memories of your times with Pan Am, and we want you to know we appreciate it! Keep them coming, and you will see them in the upcoming issues! Are there memories you've written down that you'd like to share with us in this newsletter - short or long? Have you come across an interesting article that you'd like to share with us? Would you share pieces from a book you've written? Send them to sue@clipperpioneers.com.

*...and God will lift you up on Eagle's Wings, bear you on the breath of dawn,
make you to shine like the sun and hold you in the palm of His hand.*

IN MEMORIAM

Charles (Charlie/Chuck) Ross passed away at his home in Mill Valley, California on December 24, 2019 after a long and brave battle with cancer. He was born in 1926. He is survived by his wife of 70 years, Barbara, and his daughter, Leslie. After graduation from high school in Medfield, Massachusetts, and following his studies at Norwich University in New Hampshire, Charlie joined the army paratroops and made many a jump. He was stationed in Japan during the concluding years of World War II.

From start to his retirement finish, his career with Pam Am was fully dedicated to not only the glories of "travel" in general but also to the importance of global communication/exploration. He visited so many world regions during his career with Pan Am – and he always returned home with fascinating stories and enthusiasm for his world travels. He was a consummate professional and loved his work. His perspective and experiences are cherished!

Angelo Piraneo, 97, passed away from the effects of Alzheimer's on October 3, 2019. He was surrounded by his family at Legacy Heights Memory Care Unit in Charlotte, NC.

Angelo was born on January 2, 1922 in Manhattan, NY to the late Salvatore and Concetta Piraneo who immigrated through Ellis Island to the United States coming from Castrolibero, a commune in the Province of Agrigento in the Italian region of Sicily.

Mr. Piraneo was very proud to be a WWII Veteran and while in the memory care unit, you would see him wearing his special WWII hat each day. Angelo served in the US Army Air Corps as a Staff Sergeant-Airplane Electrical Specialist in the 792 Bombardment Squadron. During the war, he was stationed in Tinian and was part of Air Offensive Japan, Central Burma, China, Eastern Mandates, India Burma, Air Combat. He received a Good Conduct Medal, and American Service Medal, an Asian-Pacific Services Medal, and a Distinguished Unit Badge.

Upon returning home, Angelo attended Casey Jones Aeronautics School. Mr. Piraneo starting working for Pan American Airways in 1948 and worked up to the position of Flight Engineer, based in New York, where he manned the third position in the cockpit for over 30 years, moving from flying prop planes up to the Boeing 747's. He thoroughly enjoyed flying around the world with his Pan Am Crew Members and all the wonderful places he visited.

Capt. Chuck Spencer passed away after a lengthy illness in Tucson, AZ.

For more information and full obituaries about each of these friends who will be missed, click on "In Memory Of..." at our website: www.clipperpioneers.com. Know of someone from Pan Am who has passed? Email the obit to Sue Forde at sue@clipperpioneers.com, or mail to: Sue Forde, P. O. Box 3457, Sequim, WA 98382

Coronavirus stimulus payment scams: What you need to know

We know there's been a flood of information and updates about the government's economic impact payments, or so-called stimulus checks, lately. But quickly and safely moving massive amounts of money into the hands of those who need it is a big job with a lot of moving parts. We also know that the more you know about the process, the less likely you're going to be tripped up by calls, text messages, or emails from scammers trying to steal your money or personal information.

Here's what you need to know about the stimulus payments and how to avoid scams related to these payments.

Who will get money?

- Adult U.S. residents that meet established income limits are eligible to receive money from the government. This includes:
 - Taxpayers – people who filed a federal tax return for 2018 or 2019.
 - Retirees – people who get Social Security, Railroad, or other retirement benefits.
 - Beneficiaries – people who get public benefits like SSDI, disability, or veterans' benefits.
 - Non-filers – people who do not have to file a federal tax return, including people who made no income or made less than \$12,200 (or \$24,400 for married couples).

If you get Social Security or Railroad Retirement benefits, have a qualifying child, and didn't file a return in 2018 or 2019, you have to take action by noon ET on Wednesday, April 22 to add the \$500 per eligible child to your payment. See details from the IRS.

What to do

Most people don't have to do anything to get their money because the IRS will use the same payment method – direct deposit, Direct Express debit card, or paper check – used to send you your tax refund, Social Security, retirement, or other government benefits money. If the IRS doesn't have your direct deposit information, you can go to the "Get My Payment" feature at irs.gov/coronavirus and let them know where to send your direct deposit.

If you don't usually file a tax return, go to irs.gov/coronavirus to access the "Non-filer" portal and to figure out what, if anything, you have to do to claim your money.

To check on the status of your payment, you can now use the "Get My Payment" feature at irs.gov/coronavirus.
Avoiding Coronavirus stimulus payment scams

Scammers are using these stimulus payments to try to rip people off. They might try to get you to pay a fee to get your stimulus payment. Or they might try to convince you to give them your Social Security number, bank account, or government benefits debit card account number.

4 tips for avoiding a Coronavirus stimulus payment scam

Only use irs.gov/coronavirus to submit information to the IRS – and never in response to a call, text, or email. The IRS won't contact you by phone, email, text message, or social media with information about your stimulus payment, or to ask you for your Social Security number, bank account, or government benefits debit card account number. Anyone who does is a scammer phishing for your information.

You don't have to pay to get your stimulus money.

The IRS won't tell you to deposit your stimulus check then send them money back because they paid you more than they owed you. That's a fake check scam. Report scams to the Federal Trade Commission at ftc.gov/complaint. (from <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/2020/04/coronavirus-stimulus-payment-scams-what-you-need-know>)