

Frequent Flyer

By Tom Feller

July 18, 2000

I've had a lot of work this summer. We are changing out our electronic time clocks and are on track to finish by September 15. I had to work one weekend, so Anita went to Midwestcon without me. She said it was weird, because the last time one of us attended a con without the other was 1996.

For our third anniversary, Anita accompanied me to the King and Prince, our hotel on St. Simons Island. For those of you who attended DSC, this is the next island north from Jekyll. While I worked, she sat by the beach and swam in the pool. We arrived Tuesday night and visited a restaurant by St. Simons' marina. Anita keeps talking about buying or renting a boat, so she enjoyed looking at what she calls "toys". The next night, which was our anniversary, we ate at a restaurant called Blanche's where I chatted with the bartender who used to work at our hotel. (Sometimes we refer to it as the Kinky Prince.) After dinner we went to a commercial district called "The Village" where there is a pier and watched the water go by. Since we ate seafood two consecutive nights, we ate steak at a restaurant called The Red Barn and afterward visited a garden built in honor of John and Charles Wesley, founders of Methodism.

Actually I was also supposed to install the new clocks at the Hampton Club, a golf course we also operate on the island. However, the pc that polls the clocks was delayed in transit so we had to reschedule. Consequently, I was not as busy as I anticipated, and I was able to join Anita at the pool for swimming both afternoons. It rained on two nights, but held off until we were finished swimming.

Medical update—

The doctor changed my medication again, because my blood sugar readings have gotten progressively worse since the last change. I am now taking 2.5 milligrams of Glucotrol XL twice daily rather than just once.

Flying—

The June 26 issue of the USA Today had an article about near misses on the runways of airports. According to the article, "Near-collisions are up 72% since 1988. Five runway collisions since 1990 have killed a total of 59 people." And here I always felt safe until the plane got in the air.

Speaking of which, there is still no resolution of Egypt Air Flight 990, which crashed into the Atlantic Ocean on October 31. The National Transportation Safety Board believes that reserve co-pilot Gameel el Batouty intentionally shut off the fuel to both engines of the Boeing 767. Their reasoning is based on the cockpit voice recorder, the fact that the data recorder showed no mechanical problems, and the failure by Batouty to pull back on the control yoke after the engines shut down. One problem with their explanation is that no one has found a motive for him to commit suicide as well as murder the other people on the plane. Egyptian analysts, on the other hand, argue that an improbable series of events caused the crash.

Business in Space—

American On-Line has a feature called News Profiles. You select key words and will receive news stories from the Associated Press and Reuters that contain them. One of my key words is "restaurant", which I selected for work. My news profile sent me the following article a week ago:

AIKONUR, Kazakhstan, July 12 (Reuters) - U.S. restaurant chain Pizza Hut took two giant leaps on Wednesday -- one into the cosmos and one back onto the streets of Moscow.

The pizza chain daubed a giant logo onto the side of a Russian Proton rocket, successfully launched on Wednesday, which carried living quarters for the \$60 billion International Space Station (ISS) into orbit. ...

The space advertisement, a three-metre square image on the side of the 50-metre Proton rocket, blasted off along with the Zvezda ISS module from the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan, which Russia leases from the Central Asian state.

The advertisement was a sign of the times for Russia's cash-strapped space programme. The launch of Zvezda, the hub of the ISS, was delayed by two years.

It sounds like Heinlein's *The Man Who Sold the Moon*, doesn't it?

Concerts and Theme Parks

Nashville Shores—

Independence Day was on Tuesday this year so I took Monday as a vacation day. (Anita had to visit her mother so I did sneak some work in anyway.) That afternoon we paid our first visit to Nashville Shores, which is a water park on Percy Priest Lake (named after a former Tennessee governor). It was crowded, and we were unable to get on the paddle wheeler that toured the lake. However, we did find some reclining chairs by the pool and listened to a live rock and roll band. I swam in the pool, but Anita was content to read. I read, too, and almost finished a Hal Clement novel from the Fifties. At sunset, they had a good fireworks display.

Fourth of July—

As is our custom, we attended the free concert and fireworks show at Riverfront Park. This is the high point of the outdoor concert season. After a morning swim, we met Ray Jones, Debbie Hussey, and Nancy Holland at Anita's old office and rode in my car to the county courthouse where we paid to park the car. Then we ate at an open-air restaurant called Second and Goal, which has a view of the river. As we ate, we listened to several rock and roll groups play in the park. Trees, however, obscured our view of the stage. Since we got seats next to the window, we stayed there to watch the boat parade. Although the parade was not as good as previous years, we enjoyed it. Afterward we left to find a spot in the park to watch the fireworks and so that Ray could take photos of his favorite Nashville band, Bada Bing Bada Boom, which does swing and pop music.

The Nashville Symphony played as usual. They performed the standard classics such as the *1812 Overture* and *The Stars and Stripes Forever*. The evening climaxed with the fireworks. This is the best display I have ever seen, and it seems to get better each year. Afterward, Kenny and the Kadillacs played rock music.

If I Could Talk to the Animals—

The following Saturday we met Nancy and Debbie at Centennial Park for another outdoor performance by the Nashville Symphony. The first half was devoted to music about animals, including Rimsky-Korsakov's *Flight of the Bumble Bee* and other pieces that were familiar. The second half consisted of regular concert music such as Shostakovich's *Festive Overture* and Mendelssohn's *Symphony #5*. The crickets threatened to drown out the Mendelssohn work, but the Symphony played *The Stars and Stripes Forever* as an encore and finally won the battle.

Cats—

Emily's former suitors, Chester and the Grey Mouser, have disappeared. We don't know whether pest control caught them or they departed when Emily became unavailable. We've seen a couple of new cats, but don't know if they've settled near our place. Emily seems quite content.

Comments on #215

Toni Weisskopf—

When we have an SFPA web site, you can include a link to my personal page.

Jeff Copeland—

I've always thought that the position of Official Editor in any APA was misnamed. "Official Collator" would be a more accurate description of the function.

I doubt that the OE or anyone would ever have to worry about a financial judgment against them. The attorneys for a copyright owner would precede the initiation of a lawsuit with a Cease-and-Desist letter. My understanding is that it costs a minimum of \$10,000 to go to court and win these days for a civil trial.

Gary Brown—

The voters for baseball's hall of fame don't have the authority to vote in Pete Rose or Joe Jackson. The by-laws say that anyone banned from baseball for life is not eligible for inclusion.

My parents have lived in southern Wisconsin all their lives.

Gary Robe—

I've taken four personality tests in the 20 years I've been with MMI Hotel Group. The first two times the test showed my dominant personality trait to be steadiness, but the last two showed me shifting to being more control oriented.

One Shot—

I continued with the Harry Potter books and found they grew on me. I'm looking forward to the next installment.

I flew through Atlanta the Sunday night of DSC, and this time it was my turn to wait in the airport for a late flight.

Ned Brooks—

All the *Peanuts* reprints so far have been from 1974. I personally would have preferred that they had started from day one, so that we could see how the characters evolved. For instance, Snoopy didn't always sleep on top of his doghouse.

Strictly speaking, the movie Wizard of Oz didn't need to give the Scarecrow a brain, the Tinman a heart, or the Lion courage. Scarecrow was already smart, Tinman emotional, and Lion brave. They just didn't know it.

I hope you like that porn spam I forwarded to you. Brandi is very persistent. She sends me an e-mail about once a week and changes her address each time so my mail controls don't reject the message.

David Schlosser—

We just saw *Fantasia 2000* in a regular movie theater. Nashville didn't get its first Imax theater until last month, which was several months after Disney pulled it from its Imax release.

Article II, Section 1 of the Constitution of the United States says,

The Electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by Ballot for two Persons, of whom one at least shall not be an Inhabitant of the same State with themselves.

I learned of the rule that the President and Vice-President cannot reside in the same state from a James Reston column way back in 1968. He was arguing that New York mayor John Lindsay would make a good running mate for Richard Nixon! At the time, Nixon lived in New York so Reston mentioned the Constitutional issue.

By the way, my spell checker doesn't approve of "themselves", but if a spelling is good enough for the Founding Fathers, it's good enough for me.

Sheila Strickland—

I think your Phydeaux apazines qualified as zines. (For the rest of you, this was a little APA OEed by J. R. "Maddog" Madden.)

Strictly speaking, when I take Emily for a walk, I do the walking and she rides on my shoulder. I don't ask her if she wants to go.

The \$20 million figure I mentioned for a tourist visit to the Mir space station is what I read.

When I lived in Baton Rouge, I attended Mardi Gras in Mamou. I felt very comfortable, because it is about the same size as my hometown.

George Wells—

It was the geographical implausibilities in *Gladiator* that got my attention. The Russell Crowe character is present at the death of Marcus Aurelius, which took place at the present site of Vienna, Austria. He suffers a severe sword wound, but rides a horse all the way to his home to Spain and bleeds all the way. When he arrives at his family's estate, he loses consciousness. He wakes up in Morocco with the wound healed, but learns he has been sold into slavery.

I had read enough about *Boys Don't Cry* that there were no plot surprises. The surprise is how convincing Hilary Swank is as a male, at least on film.

Eve Ackerman—

Our contract food service division manages the food operation River Garden Hebrew Home in Jacksonville. I've visited there on two occasions.

By any chance is Cherokee a Boy Named "Sioux"?

Richard Dengrove—

George Bush was never a United States Senator. He ran for the Senate in 1970, but lost to Lloyd Bentsen. He did serve two terms in the House of Representatives.

I always liked *The Captain's Paradise* starring Alec Guinness. I found it interesting that the wife he married for domesticity left him because she was bored, and the wife he partied with wanted to settle down and have children. By the way, I just watched Yvonne De Carlo's (the party wife) biography on A&E. That movie was one of the highlights of her career.

You may have been thinking about the diet popularized by Dr. Nathan Pritikin, which was low on red meats and high in fruits and vegetables.

I have seen Gene Autry's *Phantom Empire* and Buster Crabbe's *Flash Gordon* serials since I've been an adult. They're fun if your expectations aren't high.

It may be that WE will never get used to e-books, but that doesn't mean that the next generation won't.

Irv Koch—

If you and Kay want to stay at the King and Prince sometime, just send me an e-mail. The worst that can happen is that I can't get you in. There are times when even I can't get a room, especially at a discount.

My technology fund has holdings in companies such as Cisco, Nokia, Microsoft, Apple, Dell, Hewlett-Packard, Sun, 3Com, Intel, Motorola, Texas Instruments, America Online, and Oracle. I read their web site and annual report, and they think the Nasdaq has bottomed. Their plan for the next 3-6 months is to invest in semi-conductor manufacturers, optical network providers, and wireless communication companies. They are especially bullish on a company called Applied Micro Circuits, because it "manufactures a variety of chips for optical networks", which covers two of those three sub-sectors. I decided to stick with it, especially since it's IRA money and I still have a ways to go before I turn 59.5 years old. I don't plan to put any new money in it, however.

I suppose the fund's position in Microsoft and Sun makes me a boss of Janice and Jeff, albeit many times removed.

Janice Gelb—

I still have my Day-Timer, but my challenge is to remember what city I'm supposed to be in on any given day. Otherwise, I rarely have more than one appointment or meeting a day.

Guy Lillian—

The screenplay for the movie *Spartacus* was written by Dalton Trumbo. He was still on Hollywood's blacklist, but when Stanley Kubrick tried to take credit for the screenplay, Kirk Douglas announced it was really Trumbo.

The 101ST Airborne, the Nashville restaurant, provides a standard American steak and seafood menu. On Sundays, they have a champagne brunch.

Curt Swan's *Superman* is the version I think of when I recall my childhood.