

Aerie News

The Eagles Aerie News of the **USAir**

Fourth Quarter 2024

Soaring Eagles

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Secretary

Judi Todd

Past President

Joe Kernan

Advisors to the Board – Bill Leefe, Butch Schofield, Ron Natalie

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

410-991-6070

Captain Dave Pfaff

pflyer34@gmail.com

Another year has passed. The board wishes you a healthy and prosperous new year. I was elected to replace Joe Kernan as president. Note, no one can replace Joe. This coming year nothing much will change. We still have an incredible group of friends and “family” who we endeavor to serve. This coming year we’ll host the convention, continuing at the Tampa Marriott. They cater to our every need, and more. We’re so welcome as the Soaring Eagles. Late in October is the venue, which the particulars will be announced shortly, so please mark it on your calendar. Bring USAir friends. It’s a grand three day party where old memories come to life. Come to think of it, some stories are very old. Thanks for being party to a great organization. We had 80 people show last year, and we had a blast. Respectfully, Dave

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(724) 378-7025

Flight Attendant Judy Schmidt

schonewalds64@aol.com

Colbath

Happy New Year Everyone Hopefully the New Year will be Happy and Healthy The Reunion was a sure good time, all of the work that was put into making it so, sure paid off Once again I’m asking you to try to get 2 Friends to join our group, I plan to have the person who brings in the most new members rewarded. Please all try to Compete! Judy PS, Thanks for your support.

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

stevav8or@aol.com

Dear Members,

Not too much to report on the Second Vice President's side. In the New Year we will be focused on growing the membership and improving the overall Association.

I hope everyone enjoyed the trivia game. Having learned a good lesson on the number of questions answered correctly, we will change course to make them more user friendly and still retain the fun factor. We don't want to make the ground school too hard.

Also welcome to the new President Dave Pfaff. I hope we can all support him as the Association continues.

Happy 2025 to All,

Steve Flom

Second Vice President

SECRETARY'S MESSAGE
Flight Attendant Judi Todd

(619) 417-7274

judiwtodd@gmail.com

Again I am sitting here with my two kitties on my lap wondering how it got to be 2025 already. A new year, a new republican President and a new Soaring Eagles president. Lots of new "stuff" for 2025. I'm really looking forward to each and every day and especially the October Reunion/ convention this year. We are making a lot of changes that you all will be excited to know and do. (Hint)

Plan on attending the Soaring Eagles 2025 reunion/ convention and see for yourselves. See you all soon. Judi

WEBMASTER'S MESSAGE
Captain Paul Sturpe

(828) 478-1133

sturpe@gmail.com

I don't have a lot to say this time, but I would be remiss if I didn't remind you to pay your dues by February 28. Remember the current treasurer is:

Andrew Skiba

6761 Circle Drive
Fort Myers, FL 33902

Send your dues to Andy, but make the check out to Soaring Eagles.

We will be updating our Soaring Eagles database soon. If you haven't paid dues for the last three years you will be taken off the database and will no longer receive our emails.

Let me know if there is anything new that you would like to see on our website. Also let me know if you see any errors.

So long until next quarter.

Paul Sturpe, Webmaster

webmaster@usairsoaringeagles.org

TREASURER'S MESSAGE

(239) 693-9285

Captain Andy Skiba

aeskiba@cs.com

Another year is almost in the history books. We made it through another conference and reunion

Good Friends and new friends were met and good times were shared. Joe Kernan is now our past president and Dave Pfaff has taken the helm as our new president.

As treasurer I will be closing the finances for this year and looking forward to starting the New Year by reminding all our members that dues are due by the end of February 2025.

As the keeper of the membership database Please forward any changes you might have such as email address, phone numbers, etc.

Talk to you next year. Keep the blue side up.

Andy Skiba

Treasurer Soaring Eagles

PAST PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(276) 632-9941

Captain Joe Kernan

Joekernandc9@yahoo.com

Fellow & Gal Soaring Eagles,

If I could have chosen a convention/reunion, where I would pass the gavel to a new Soaring Eagles President the most recent 47th convention/reunion would have been my choice. When I left for Tampa from my home in Virginia, it had been my intention to announce that failing anyone offering themselves as a candidate for President this year, that I would serve one more term, and definitely not be a candidate after 2025. To my pleasant surprise, circumstances presented themselves which solved the problem for me. For some time, I had been urging my two Vice Presidents to consider stepping into the President's position, both declined, preferring to remain in their respective positions. If anyone was reading my earlier articles, you may recall that I had begun to suggest a leadership change that was necessary to infuse the organization with some younger folks with fresh ideas. In my view you can't build or sustain an organization with older members, but rather need to know when to pass the baton (gavel) to those who can continue and keep the enterprise going.

During the 46th annual Soaring Eagles convention/reunion I met and became friends with Dave Pfaff. Those of you that attended the auction that year will recall that Dave was the high bidder on the beautiful DC 9 – 30 model that had been donated by Doug Stansbury. During most of 2024 I was in contact with

Dave off and on and suggested several times that he consider offering himself as a candidate for President of The Soaring Eagles. I knew that Dave was dedicated to the Soaring Eagles, as he was personally responsible for at least five new members that joined in 2024.

My wife Donna was not up to the road trip to Tampa this year due to some medical issues, I made arrangements for our youngest daughter to stay with her, while I attended the convention/reunion, The board always shows up a day early to put the final touches on the convention/ reunion plans and has dinner that night. Dave Pfaff arrived that same Thursday and was helping me decorate the hospitality suite with various airline posters along with Tom Creamer and Flying Brian Lindsay. Since Donna was not with me, I invited Dave Pfaff to be my guest at dinner, and also asked Brian to come along.

During dinner I advised the board that my intention was to announce to the body on Sunday during the elections that, failing someone else making themselves available, I would serve one more year but would not be a candidate for 2026. Since Dave was there as my guest, he took part in our roundtable discussion on the matter. This was not a formal meeting of the board, and I'm pleased that Dave had the opportunity to participate. Both Judy Colbath, and Judi Todd were not happy with my decision, and I appreciate their loyalty, and expressions of support, but I think my decision was the correct one for Donna and me, and the correct one for the organization. During the informal discussion Dave Pfaff made a statement that not only impressed me but has stuck with me since that time. After Dave said, "I love this organization", I said,

“If that’s the case, why don’t you run for President, and I will support you in any way that I can”.

Friday night the “Recurrent Training” in the hospitality suite was a tremendous success Steve and Karen Flom along with Eric Litt did a great job in conducting an airline trivia contest. Kudos to Karen Flom for her painstaking attention to detail in hand painting over eighty oyster shells, and decorating them with insignias of the airline of origin of each recipient. Of course, Judi Todd had the hospitality suite humming along like a well-oiled machine, no surprise there. Judy Schmidt Colbath was responsible for the main provisions for the evening, and she knocked it out of the park. Judy Colbath, Steve Flom, and Paul Sturpe did the usual fine job of shopping for all the other items necessary for a good party. The genuine feeling of camaraderie was palpable.

The Saturday cruise on Tampa Bay was another success, and the buffet serving turned out to be a pretty big hit with only one person out of eighty who would have preferred to be served at the table.

On Sunday morning during the election process, I had the honor of nominating my friend Dave Pfaff for President of The Soaring Eagles, and he was elected along with the rest of the board by acclamation.

- President - Dave Pfaff
- First Vice President - Judy Schmidt
- Second Vice President - Steve Flom
- Secretary - Judi Todd (Two year term)
- Treasurer - Andy Skiba (up for election 2025)
- Webmaster - Paul Sturpe (up for election 2025)
- Immediate Past President - Joe Kernan
- Advisors - Bill Leefe, Butch Schofield, Counsel- Ron Natalie

Sunday evening, we were entertained by a comedic magician Geoff Williams thanks to the efforts of Irvina & John Flood who helped line him up. The food was good, and before dinner I spoke about our breast cancer patients and survivors. I sent out a Monday Morning Story on the subject since then and will not repeat it here. Our Band cancelled on Thursday afternoon, and after some scrambling and help from Ralph Alderman hotel Director of Sales we were able to replace them with a disc jockey Benny Maldonano who along with his wife Judy supplied music for dancing after dinner.

I hope that each Soaring Eagles member will give Dave Pfaff and the entire board your unwavering support, as you have given to me over the last thirteen years. If you do that, Dave and the board's success will be assured

Since I made my decision to step away from the Presidency, I have received many expressions of thanks, and I truly appreciate those expressions of thanks, and support. I have always considered it a singular honor and privilege to serve The Soaring Eagles who I consider my family. I want to thank each member who served on the boards with me over the years and want to take this opportunity to single out a few of them. Normally singling out a few can be a mistake, but when I've named them, I think you'll understand. Gerry Milburn who succeeded me in 2017. It was during Gerry's tenure that we admitted the Flight Attendants into our family. The Office of Treasurer is probably the most important board position, and I was blessed with outstanding treasurers. First was Bill Leefe who had served for eight years after serving two non-consecutive terms as President. Next Ed Dingivan served under Gerry Milburn and me, and was

instrumental in the change to the dues structure which helped keep us solvent. Ed was followed by Paul Sturpe who continued not only to take good care of our financial health, but Paul was a valuable asset to me not only as a board member, but he always was able to help me with computer issues, which were more often than I would have preferred. Rounding out the group is our current Treasurer Andy Skiba who just completed the first year of his two-year term, and I thank him for stepping up when Paul transitioned to webmaster. The task of keeping track of convention/reunion fees is a daunting task. Thanks Andy

Since I have just listed the Treasurers, and one of their most important functions is the annual collection of dues, it gives me the opportunity to ask each of you to pay your dues when they're due.

SECTION 3. Annual Membership and service fees are due and payable by February 28th of each year.

So, any time between now and February 28, 2025, you can send your dues payment to Andy Skiba at the address provided below.

Soaring Eagles Treasurer

Captain Andrew Skiba

6761 Circle Dr.

Fort Myers, FL 33905

Dues are: \$40.00 If you were 79 or younger on January 1, 2024

\$25.00 If you were 80 or older on January 1, 2024.

Paying dues on time is not the only way to support Dave and the board, but it's a good one. Another way to show your support is to sign up early for the 48th convention/reunion and the Cruise which has become an integral part of the convention/reunion weekend. As soon as the reservation link is available Dave will notify you.

Finally, I apologize for the length of this article, but I wanted to make sure that I covered all of the bases. If you read this far, I applaud you.

Thanks for your support over the years,

Joe

“SOARING EAGLES WRITE”

In 2001 my dad suffered an accident working for Habitat for Humanity that reduced him to a 2-3 year old for the last 5 years of his life. I was not in a good place. The man was brilliant, and I was angry that the lord took that from him. I realize that it was reflected in my work. He was a disciplinarian who loved us, but his yearn to teach us about life overshadowed his love for us. At my age, I have forgiven him, as he tried hard to prepare us for life. I ask that those I offended in my job forgive me if I was overbearing.

Here is a story written by Henry Van Dyke that I recently came by that sums up my feelings, especially in the light of the recent election, where this country seems to be consumed by hate.

There is a better thing than the observance of Christmas Day, and that is, keeping Christmas.

ARE YOU WILLING...

to forget what you have done for other people, and to remember what other people have done for you; to ignore what the world owes you, and to think what you owe the world;

to put your rights in the background, and your duties in the middle distance, and your chances to do a little more than your duty in the foreground;

to see that men and women are just as real as you are, and try to look behind their faces to their hearts, hungry for joy;

to own up to the fact that probably the only good reason for your existence is not what you're going to

get out of life, but what you're going to give to life;

to close your book of complaints against the management of the universe, and look around you for a place where you can sow a few seeds of happiness.

Are you willing to do these things even for a day? Then you can keep Christmas.

ARE YOU WILLING...

to stoop down and consider the needs and desires of little children;

to remember the weakness and loneliness of people growing old;

to stop asking how much your friends love you, and ask yourself whether you love them enough; to bear in mind the things that other people have to bear in their hearts;

to try and understand what those who live in the same home with you really want, without waiting for them to tell you;

to trim your lamp so that it will give more light and less smoke, and to carry it in front so that your shadow will fall behind you;

to make a grave for your ugly thoughts, and a garden for your kindly feelings, with the gate open- Are you willing to do these things, even for a day? Then you can keep Christmas.

ARE YOU WILLING...

to believe that love is the strongest thing in the world-

Sent by the new president Dave Pfaff