



Newsletter 2020-6 From Hawaii



Warmest Aloha's to our dedicated group of newsletter-readers !

Happy Cinco de Mayo! I need to check into it, but I don't think that this is a big deal in Hawaii. This is especially true since the bars and restaurants are closed (take-out only). Perhaps this is an appropriate time to give you details on the Franzia Wine Challenge (see photo in the photo album). Nancy, who is the ultimate shopper, told me to stock up on wine. The photo will give you an idea about how the purchasing went. We now plan to leave Hawaii on June 4th. We had to make a decision about whether we would have to buy any more wine before we depart. I did a scientific study on this topic. The results indicated that if each of us drank 1.63 glasses of wine each day, we would be OK. We thought that this was a realistic goal. Heaven forbid if we had to leave a partially full wine cask for the next renters of our apartment. To some, purchasing this amount of wine might be considered hoarding. We would never want to be accused of hoarding.

Our apartment is very well equipped. This is especially true in the amount of books, audio equipment, and DVDs. I was rummaging through the DVD library and saw one that was about surfing. The title was "One Winter Story". This is a story about Sarah Gerhardt who was the first woman surfer to surf the monster waves at California's "Maverick's". After viewing the video, I happened to glance at the name of the producer of the video. The information on the cover said Sally Lundburg. I said "wait a minute that name sounds familiar". Indeed the name was familiar. Sally is the daughter of our landlady. Sally lives in a house about 75 feet away from us. We bought a copy of the DVD and had Sally autograph it. What a coincidence!

Nancy continues to stockpile fabric procured from local sources. I have picked up a small woodworking project and continue to delight in doing crossword puzzles in my "101 Crossword Puzzles For Aviation Enthusiasts" book. This keeps my mind more active and reduces the amount of cobwebs in my brain. I am even able to recall some of the terms that I learned as a pilot and aircraft mechanic. We are looking forward to departing here on June 4th. This assumes that Alaska Airlines can still get us to Florida. We plan to wear our masks, rubber gloves, and use lots of hand sanitizer. We are uncertain how the airline will comply with the social-distancing requirements.

We have heard the phrase "The Great Pause" used to describe our current cultural/lifestyle situation. This seems like a very apt term. We are taking a lot of time to reflect on the blessings that we have, our current health status, and to think about the way forward. This is also a good time to think about other folks. How are they doing and what can we do for our community? I limit my TV news program viewing to one half hour in the evening. I don't think that I need any more than that. We hope that you all are safe and well. Let's hope that it stays that way.

We are happy to report that our stimulus checks have been deposited in our bank in Florida. As difficult as the IRS website was, we finally got a confirmation about the direct deposit. I have a lot of sympathy for the poor souls who are computer-challenged and do not have much patience with government websites. Hopefully, everyone can put this money to good use. One of our daughters said "it is not free money, we are only getting back money that we paid the government in the first place". What a wise young woman.

Happy Pentecost (May 31) Aloha to everyone. I realize that I have fallen behind on my journaling and getting a newsletter out on time. Not a whole lot has happened since my last entries. We have been doing a lot of Zooming and other types of virtual activities. Due to the magic of Zoom, we are ? going to a virtual study group. What's so special about that you may ask? Well, the leader of the study group is speaking to us from Paris. France, that is. She gets up at 6a.m. so that we can chat with her at 6p.m. Hawaiian time. Thank you, Al Gore for the internet!

We were originally scheduled to leave the Big Island on May 4th. With the escalation of the virus, we pondered staying another 30 days. Hawaii seems like such a beautiful and safe place. Landy was not so sure about this plan, but finally convinced himself that this is the way it will be. Landy's big thing is to keep busy. He created a woodworking project for the apartment. The landlady agreed and she said that she could provide some power tools. Landy set up shop in the lanai. It is a covered space and it proved to be a terrific temporary shop. The resident cat, Hinahina, made himself at home and quickly became the "shop cat". The project involved building two sets of stairs. These stairs would help the ergonomics of navigating the split levels of our apartment. You will find before and after photos in the photo album.

A few days ago, we got a travel alert from Alaska Airlines. They informed us that they would no longer be providing service out of Kona. This means that we have to take Hawaiian Airlines from Kona to Honolulu. We can then get Alaska to Seattle and then on to Tampa (not in the same day, however). The really bad part about this arrangement is that we will have an eleven hour layover in Seattle. Nancy has convinced me that we should NOT rent a motel room, but spend the night in the airport terminal. We have done this kind of thing before, so I am sure that it will work out ok.

We have not done much real socializing while under the restrictions of the virus. A few nights ago, we had a little social get-together with the other folks in our little apartment complex (3 apartments). Each of us was supposed to bring some food to share. We were just getting started, when our upstairs apartment dweller showed up with this magnificent spread of fruit, cheese, Prosecco, and pastries. This lady (Alena St. Louis) is from Jamaica and is a pastry chef at the Waikoloa Hilton. The pastry was another of those giant ladybug items which was pictured in a previous photo album. Yummm. It is nice to have well qualified and gracious neighbors.

June 1, 2020 – Today is packing day for us. We leave Hawaii at 10:22a.m. tomorrow morning. Leaving here is quite a bittersweet experience. We have enjoyed ourselves, but we really miss being closer to our daughters and our cat, Bob. Sarah, our youngest daughter, lives in Tallahassee. We will have a brief stopover there and then head back to Indian Pass. We plan to self-isolate for 2 weeks just to be on the safe side.

June 2 – We had to fly to Honolulu, via Hawaiian Airlines, in order to connect with our Alaska Airlines flight to Seattle. Due to some scheduling changes, we had an eleven hour layover in Seattle. We were not looking forward to this situation, but we would muddle through. We got to Sea-Tac airport around midnight (Pacific Time) and found a fairly nice area in the central terminal where there were couches and benches. We tried to sleep, but were not too successful. Around five o'clock a.m. we decided to go to the gate area where our outbound flight was supposed to depart. There were not many folks hanging out in the gate area and there were no food vendors open, just vending machines. We wiled away the hours napping, pacing about, and playing dominoes. The flight was to depart at 10:22 a.m. Around 9a.m. there were some Alaska Airlines personnel at their Customer Care Desk. We had a chat with them and were informed that there had been a gate change. This could have been a minor item, no such luck for us! The new gate was all the way on the other side of the airport terminal. We pleaded with the Alaska Airlines folks and they said that they would bring down a wheelchair for Nancy and the wheelchair driver would take us to the new gate. The wheelchair finally arrived and the nice man escorted us to the new gate. We arrived there 30 minutes prior to boarding the plane. Phew! Everyone on the plane had on facemasks and the center seats in each row of seats was vacant. It almost made us feel like we were in First Class. There was no food or beverage service, other than they did hand out bottled water. It was a good thing that Nancy had brought along some snacks. We arrived in Tampa safely and then we had to get our luggage and pick up the rental car. There is not enough space in this newsletter to fully describe what we had to do to get out of the airport. There were not many people around the terminal at 8:15p.m. but Landy had to do a LOT of walking to get the luggage and get to the Rental Car Center. All of these facilities are miles away from the terminal, and

you have to take two shuttle trains to get there. We finally got all of the chores finished and drove away from the airport. It was around 9:30p.m. but our motel was not too far from the airport. On the way to the motel, Landy spotted an establishment called World Of Beer. The travel gods had smiled upon us. We immediately made a hard right hand turn into their parking lot and went inside to get some "real food/beverage". We ordered up some craft beers (delicious) and terrific food. What a great way to end over 10 hours of flying and an 11 hour layover! Next morning, we departed Tampa and headed to Tallahassee. We spent the night with our daughter, Sarah. We picked up some more personal items and our cat (Bob) and headed to Indian Pass. We are currently self-quarantining and slowly recovering from our recent travels. We actually had a good time in Hawaii (considering the consequences of Covid-19) and will continue to Zoom with friends and church friends on the Big Island.

Thanks for hanging in there with us during our latest travel adventure. We are hoping that everyone is healthy and safe. Let's all hope that we can stay this way and hope that the vaccine will come soon and that we can get back to the "new normal".