

## My Potpourri of Travel Tragedies

By Emma G. Jackson

I have not experienced a vacation that would be descriptive of "Vacation from Hell." However, there are tragic experiences during my travels that caused me physical and emotional anguish.

### The Lost Ticket:

This tragedy happened in the early 1970s during one of my first air travel experiences and ended in agonizing trembling, fear and tears! The trip was to Alabama to see my sick mom. Had to change flights at O'Hare International in Chicago, one of the busiest airports in America, before continuing on to Huntsville, Alabama, my destination, located 12 miles west of Decatur, Alabama, where mother lived. During my layover at O'Hare, I decided to get a snack. During the process of getting the snack, somehow my ticket and boarding pass were lost! Inexperienced, afraid and filled with not knowing what to do, I went to the ticket counter and explained. In the early seventies technology was not what it is today. No ticket, no boarding pass and a flight that is leaving soon, I ended up buying another ticket!

### The Overtaken Car and the Drunken Driver:

It was on another trip from Denver via Huntsville International Airport to Decatur, Alabama, my destination. Driving my rental car heading west on a four-lane thorough fare with a median separating west and east drivers a surprise of my life happened. A car pulled out from a gas station just ahead and turned into my westbound lane instead of crossing to turn into eastbound traffic. My rental car flipped, landing on its top with me inside and upside-down with seatbelt still on. The driver smelled of alcohol. His car remained upright. I walked away with minor scratches on the forehead and one knee. The other driver was not insured. My greatest shaking fear was related to what *could* have happened! Amazingly, a paramedic, registered nurse and fireman going east stopped, checked me out called the patrolman and my brother. Can you imagine, at that time, location, and those professionals on the same road as me when this accident happened. I proceeded to be taken to a Decatur hospital by family and examined further. The rental car was insured and nothing came out of my pocket. I really don't know what happened to the driver other than a ticket.

### The Nigeria Trip That Almost Wasn't:

This happened while boarding a DIA Flight to Minneapolis-St Paul for a connecting flight to Amsterdam for Abuja, Nigeria. This mission trip was with the Colorado Nurses' Christian Fellowship. I would meet in Abuja with other Denver nurses and others from around the world. While boarding the plane, the attendant said there was no space for the carry-on holding medications and other items and it could be shipped later or a later flight could be taken. I repeatedly explained that I had to make connections getting me to Africa at a specific time to meet a group. I was literally in tears! What am I going to do? How am I going to meet the group for travel to our outlying area? Then, one kind lady close by heard me. She said, "I can go on later flight." I am forever grateful!