

Flying

*By Hap Hansen*

I do not like to fly. Never have. Never will. Many years ago, the corporation for which I worked served parts of eight states. We owned three twin-engine prop airplanes and I was usually on one of them, going somewhere. Going through some of my papers for possible discard, I found this memo I wrote to our pilots in 1974 somewhat 'tongue-in-cheek.'

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

It has come to my attention that many corporate executives have requested that they not be scheduled on the same airplane I happen to be on. Rumors that I'm a jinx are completely unfounded. Rumors that bad things happen whenever I'm aboard are also unfounded. Rumors that Frontier, United and American airlines have banned me from their flights are also unfounded. Only Frontier has initiated that action. Company rumors that something happens to airplanes when I am aboard are also untrue. I have taken 114 flights on company aircraft. Three of those flights have been absolutely uneventful. The fact that engines fail, fuel pumps quit working and landing gear refuses to drop are merely mechanical problems and are not my fault. Just because they happen to me with amazing regularity is no reason to refuse to fly with me.

However, in the interest of scheduling expediency, it is suggested the following be observed by others accompanying me on future flights:

Please make room reservations at several locations along our route, because we won't know where we are going to come down.

Please don't make definite appointments at our destination. You will be three to twenty-four hours late, depending upon the availability of alternate aircraft.

Do not ask me what our time of arrival is. I don't know, because I've never made it.

When airborne, do not ask me to observe the view. I haven't opened my eyes on an airplane since 1946.

Do not comment about how tight I wear my seatbelt. Just because I no longer have circulation in my legs is my problem, not yours.

Do not ask me about my tight grip on the arm rests. My white knuckles are the result of insufficient sunshine.

Sincerely,

Hap Hansen

As many of us know, flying is nothing more than hours and hours of almost total boredom, interspersed with moments of sheer terror.