

June 28, 2002  
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My thanks for making Alaska Airlines Birthday on May 15, 2002 a truly memorable day for me, and also for my family. As you can see I share the same 'Great Depression', election year, late 'Prohibition', early aviation year Birthday year with our favorite airline.

For many years my wife & I, our sons, daughter, & in-laws have flown on Alaska along our West Coast from Sea-Tac to San Jose, Oakland, S.F., John Wayne, San Diego, Reno, Las Vegas and Phoenix. We are excited about the new service to Denver because our youngest son & his family have just moved there. The new service to Boston is exciting too because it will take us to historical sites and great baseball destinations.

My wonderful May 15, 2002 day began with a very cordial breakfast with five former teaching colleagues, now retired. My wife was in Pleasanton, California helping our daughter with her new son Dante (born May 13, 2002) while I stayed home.

About forty-five minutes past noon on this nice Western Washington day I began my errand run around Bellevue to get home before the late afternoon commuter rush. Fortunately my car radio was tuned to KIRO and the first news I heard was that a morning traveler had called the station to say that Alaska Airlines was celebrating its Birthday by awarding a roundtrip ticket to people born in 1932 who were on Alaska flights that day. After hearing my first errand stop quickly became the Alaska Airline ticket office on NE 8<sup>th</sup> in Bellevue, rather than Home Depot & Fred Meyer as planned.

When I reached the ticket office on NE 8<sup>th</sup> about 1pm I was surprised the usually crowded ticket center virtually empty with no customers in sight. I stepped up to the four Alaska representatives, without taking a number as usual, and spoke loudly enough to be heard by all. "I was born in 1932," I stated, "How can you help me?" I questioned.

The four courteous and helpful ladies all responded to me quickly. They had just been informed of the promotion by previous

customer and now all four were eager to help me. They all thought I should fly on Alaska that day, and quickly checked the Portland flights which were filling quickly. "How about Spokane, my old Hometown?" I suggested.

I quickly learned I could fly to Spokane and back for \$106; leaving Sea-Tac at 4 pm & returning on the 7 pm flight. I quickly purchased round-trip ticket and change by errand course to the Sea-Tac parking garage. I arrived at the departure gate just as the boarding began and was soon comfortably seated on the 4 pm Spokane flight. My seat-mate was a baseball player returning from Taiwan to play in the Texas Ranger organization, or the Mexican League. Our conversation was continuous until I reached the small bar and restaurant in the Spokane International Airport.

My day of unexpected fun continued as I watched a John Olerud's homerun spark the Mariners on to another win. Also watching the televised game was a young businessman on his way back to Seattle. He was originally

from the Moscow Pullman area where I have spent seven years. I soon learned that his family in the Palouse has many dealings with my father. After much pleasant conversation we went off to board our flights; he to Horizon and me to Alaska.

The Horizon flight was canceled, and my flight departure was delayed to 7:30 pm. and when I took my seat in row 16, I was surprised to find my new airport friend sitting across from me in the same row. The conversation continued all the way to level 7 of the Sea-Tac parking garage where we were both parked, and now we are planning to attend a Mariners game together in August.

I hardly realized I had traveled that day as I headed for home and planned to do my errands the next day. All of this was certainly the result of my joining the Alaska Airlines Birthday party. May 15, 2002 was a memorable Birthday for me . . . never to be forgotten.

My wife and I have decided to take our winter trip in early 2003 to Cancun

and hope my memorable story and two May 15 flights on Alaska could qualify us for two roundtrips to Cancun in January 2003. If this could happen, my wife and I could afford two tickets on Alaska to Boston in 2003 to see the Mariners play at Fenway Park, Yankee Stadium and make a dream trip to Coopers-town.

Thank-you so much for making my May 15, 2002 one of the most memorable travel days I've ever had, and now a dream trip to Cancun possible.

Very truly yours,

Howard E. Schmidt