

SLEUTH TO SPEAK

Our local readers may be familiar with **Matt Levi** who is pictured below against a backdrop of Waikiki. Levi is a private investigator. He is scheduled to fill in some of the hidden gaps in major issues unknown to most of us. If you have not already signed up, please use the form on page 7.



PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR SCHEDULED TO SPEAK

Matt Levi is the host and executive producer of *Matt Levi Investigates*. He has over 4 decades of experience in journalism and private investigations. No one is better suited to delve into behind the scenes issues that make the news, bringing more information to Hawaii's television viewers. With his talented team, he regularly contributes specials to KGMB and KITV. His next production will be aired on KGMB on April 2nd at 6:30 PM. His subject: HPD Canine Unit.

Matt Levi is a graduate of University High School in Honolulu. He had worked for radio and television stations in Hawaii for nearly 20 years before opening a private detective agency. He has contributed television specials on a continuing basis since leaving full-time television. Levi also owns a security company and works for Juvenile Drug Court, which is part of Honolulu's Family Court. He is a martial arts instructor, working with at-risk kids in public housing. He is married with three daughters and one grandson.



A GRINCH GETS IN THE GEARS, RESULTING IN A GLITCH

Some members receive the newsletter by USPS rather than by email. While the family name was correct on the envelope containing the March issue, chances are a different first name appeared on yours. A computer did it!



Or maybe it was pilot error. The computer pilot was doing a *sort* in preparing the address list and accidentally left off the *field* containing all the first names. So the computer made the decision and randomly assigned first names. If you were lucky, you at least received a name matching your sex. Some members did not. Some of you sent messages or letters asking what happened. The funniest one was from Daniel Y. Taba, who used to work in Catering with the late Shiro Aoki. He wrote:

Sorry to bother you, but I did not have a sex change at 89½ years of age. Please revert me to my parent-given name though I've always admired the name of Charlotte. P.S. The postman asked me if I had gotten married!

A TEEN PROGRAM AND A FAMILY AVIATION STORY

There are big commercial planes and then there are smaller ones. This is a story of building little planes—but not model planes and not so little they cannot be flown. It is a story of teaching teenagers, from underprivileged neighborhoods, how to build an airplane. The program, a non-profit, was begun about 10 years ago, the brainchild of Richard “Dick” VanGrunsvan, owner of Van’s Aircraft. It is a STEM program, part of Airways Science for Kids. More on the teens later, but first a little about building those planes.

Whereas many a teen-ager gets interested in cars, Dick and his older brother, Jerry were drawn to airplanes back in the '50s when they were young. They went from building model planes to building much larger ones. Both wanted to become airline pilots. Jerry fulfilled his dream, first as a pilot for West Coast Airlines. He went through several buyouts, a familiar story to many airline people, eventually reaching retirement as a Northwest Airlines Captain. Dick, however, was unable to get certified because he is color blind. He became an engineer, but continued his hobby of flying sport planes. (A younger brother, Stan, was always interested in his brothers’ aviation endeavors but he had a queasy stomach and didn’t think he could ever fly a plane.)



Dick designed and built an airplane which became the model for the company he started in 1973, Van’s Aircraft. He and his employees manufactured kits of the planes Dick designed, to sell to aviation enthusiasts interested in building their own plane. The company is one of the largest kit plane manufacturers in the world. A kit contains the parts needed to build an airplane.

Some of our readers may be familiar with the RV series of home-built aircraft. The early ones were single seat (the RV-2), followed by a model with 2 side by side seats, the RV- 6A (shown at left), and the RV-12A which is a 4-seat model. I took

the photo in 2007 of my husband grinning from ear to ear while taxiing in after a flight in the RV-6A, piloted by Stan VanGrunsven. Stan is the brother who thought his squeamish stomach would prevent him from ever becoming a pilot. He is also my brother-in-law. He not only conquered that stomach problem, he built the plane with the help of my sister. Stan is now putting the finishing touches on his newest endeavor, the 4-seat RV-12A.

When Dick VanGrunsven started the Teen Flight program, he enlisted the help of his brothers and friends who have all built their own RVs. (Combined they have built 25 airplanes among them.) They mentor groups of teens throughout the long process of completing an RV-12A. As one of them said, "If these youngsters can build an airplane during their high school years, they can go on to do anything after graduation." They take the teens, as many as a dozen or so, who enter the program, through the process of learning all the skills needed to build the aircraft. The students start by making an aluminum name tag and then make their own tool kits, learning how to handle the tools and the metal while doing so. Then they take the first steps in building their plane. As they learn how to work with the tools and metals, they also learn self-discipline and teamwork.

The students come from the Portland, Oregon, area and the Airways Science facility where they work is located at the Hillsboro Airport, just west of the city. They do not pay for the class. Their only fee is commitment to the time involved which is a year and a half of long hours each Saturday, with a summer break. When the project is completed, each student gets to go for a ride in the completed project, something to which they all look forward as they help the plane take shape. The students and their mentors take the aircraft to the Experimental Aircraft Association's annual Fly-in Convention in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. There it will go on sale and the proceeds are used to finance the supplies needed for the next group of students. You may wonder who would want to buy an airplane built by kids. For one thing, one of their mentors is the man who designed the plane. For another, each home-built plane must pass the FAA airworthiness exam before it can be flown. The photo above was taken from a video produced by the Portland *Oregonian* for a local news program.



Some of the information above came from an article by Samantha Swindler in *The Oregonian*, Portland's most popular newspaper, on March 21st, 2019. The online version included a video filmed in the Airways Science facility. The time lapse segments were made available by Teen Flight. You can check it out at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z90JPi82Ctc>.

THE FUN OF GENERAL AVIATION

The *Oregonian* article referred to above, reminds me of the great fun of flying. If you have never been in a small plane, you can easily get a sample of a bird's-eye view of the terrain from watching a video made by a camera attached to a drone. The view is similar but it is not nearly as exciting as the adventure of being above the terrain yourself. Most people who are given rides in an RV arrive back at the starting point with a huge grin on their face. The RV people call it the "RV Grin".



As a shirttail relative of the VanGrunsven family, I have had several opportunities to go off into the wild blue yonder, most recently in October of 2015. My sister took the photo of her husband and me taxiing out to the runway at Hillsboro Airport. We were out to explore the area further west about 60 miles away. Note the Pan

Am cap, but even more interesting is the big "EXPERIMENTAL" spelled out behind us. All home built airplanes must have that word in large letters clearly visible to any person considering a flight in the aircraft. It didn't deter me! At right is a photo of Saddle Mountain in the Pacific Coast Mountain range. It is a favorite with hikers because it has a panoramic view from the Pacific Ocean a few miles to the west, to Mt. Hood in the Cascade Mountains approximately 130 miles to the east.



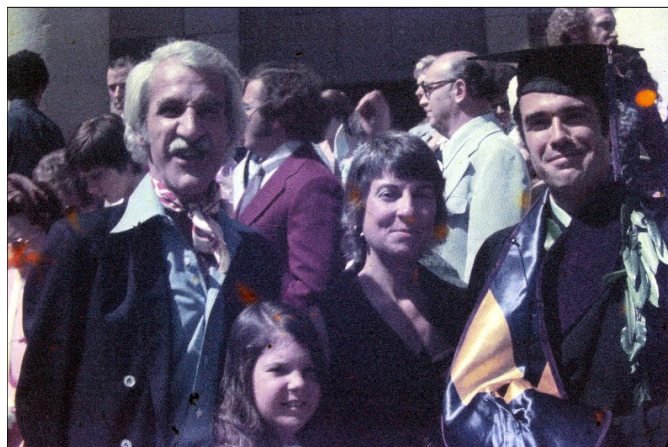
PAN AM PEOPLE AND EVENTS

A 2009 article on Pan Am's **Kelly Cusack** in *Forbes* magazine is making the rounds again. Several members sent it to me recently. Cusack is a collector of Pan Am memorabilia and runs the website *EverythingPanAm.com* (which can also be found at www.panam.org). From the time he was 5 years old and traveled with his parents, he collected things Pan Am. While others may collect model airplanes, Cusack would collect such things as the little bar of soap from the restroom, a plastic glass with the Pan Am logo and stir sticks from his parents' drinks. He never stopped loving the airline and when he got older, he interned with Pan Am for a couple of summers. He managed to turn that into a permanent position and was with Pan Am until the airline ceased operations. Even then he continued to collect memorabilia. When asked about his devotion to collecting from only one airline since today's airlines are mostly "interchangeable", Cusack told the reporter that it was mostly because airlines like Pan Am no longer exist. "I think that when employees joined Pan Am, they got the impression that they were part of something historic," he said. "It was a neat little fraternity. The only thing we didn't have was a secret handshake." . . . **Nikki Johnson**, who sent us Kathleen Clair's obituary on page 6, sends her Aloha to her Honolulu friends. At one time she worked in Personnel in Honolulu and then "on Ed Swofford's team downtown". Her husband, Thor Johnson, became Station Manager in Pago Pago about the time they married. From there, his career took them to New York where he became a V/P. She was asked to do relief secretarial work when they lived in Connecticut and she worked with Kathleen. They became good friends. Nikki and Thor now live in Great Falls, VA. . . .Welcome to new members **Fred Shigenaga, Joanne Lim** and



One of Cusack's rare items is this 1930s demitasse cup, used on the Flying Boats. He paid \$600 for it.

Diane Silvers. Fred is an Ohana member who traveled on Pan Am frequently. He was a Clipper Club member. He has many good friends who used to work for Pan Am and are members of our association. One of them, Harlow Urabe, sponsored his membership. Joanne Lim is also an Ohana member. She is the daughter of the late Sonja Lim who worked for Pan Am. Diane Silvers is a former stewardess and very active in World Wings. She was president of the Los Angeles Chapter for a time and also served on the World Wings International Board. . . **Tori Werner** has a new email address: panamtori@hotmail.com. She is a member of the L.A. World Wings Chapter and is a good friend of Diane Silver, mentioned above. . . Some employees will remember **Ray Gleba** who worked in Passenger Service. **Mike Lilly** came across the photo (right) of his graduation from McGeorge Law School of the University of the Pacific in June, 1974. Ray showed up for the event, as did Mike's sister, Maile, and her daughter, Karen. Ray had trained Mike in 1966 when Mike started in Passenger Service before going on to another career. . . **Terry Webber** wants to notify members outside the U.S. that they can order *Hunting the Wind* from Gazelle, the European book distributor for Schiffer Publishing. Their Internet address is: <https://www.gazellebookservices.co.uk/GazelleBooks/sresult.pgm>.



HOW ABOUT A PHOTO CONTEST?



The photo on the left appeared in the newsletter of the London Chapter of the Pan Am Association. It was one of three taken by one of their members, Captain Mike O'Brien. The photo was taken in Pashley Manor Gardens, Ticehurst, East Sussex in the UK. Mike's intention was to show how Pan Am got around.

I think many of our members have a Pan Am bag, either real, such as the one in Mike's photo, or a copy from Pan Am Brands, such as the one I used when I took the photo on the right. It was taken on Magic Island with Waikiki and Diamond Head in the background. Let's have a photo contest. Take a photo of your Pan Am bag in any unusual place. If you already have an old photo in which your Pan Am bag can be plainly seen, you may enter it, too. In fact, originals may be seen

as more deserving of the award by some panel members. Creativity in setting will get the highest rating. Just leave your Pan Am bag, or copy, in the trunk of your car so when you find yourself in an unusual location, take your bag and photograph it. All members are invited to participate. (Sorry, non-member readers. This contest is only open to members. However, if you send in a check and the completed application on page 8, your submitted photo will be considered along with those of current members.)

You may email your photos to me at alohadvz@gmail.com or mail them to me. Please note that my address is always on the last page, just under the list of the Board of Directors. I will be happy to return any mailed photos if the sender so desires. Be sure to make it clear you would like your photo returned.

And who might the panel be? The members of the board of directors sometimes need something on which to spend their time productively. I hereby volunteer their services. Hmmm! Contests require a prize. We have just received a donation of \$50 and that will be the prize. Contest ends July 31st. No photos will be accepted after that date. The winning photo and two or three "honorable mentions" will be printed in the newsletter.

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN . . .

Kathleen M. Clair died peacefully on January 26, 2019, after 100 years of engaging life on her own terms. Kathleen was the beloved daughter of Ted and Kit Clair and devoted sister of Phyllis and Donald (all deceased) and a much-loved cousin to generations of the Churchville family.

She graduated from St. Cecilia's High School in Englewood, NJ, in 1936 and from Katherine Gibbs School in 1937. She spent her 20s as a secretary in Manhattan before joining Pan Am in 1948, where she flourished for 32 years as the assistant to the founder, Juan Trippe.

Her Pan Am career gave Kathleen decades of opportunity to travel the world and make the acquaintance of some of the most important people of the day, including Charles Lindberg.

In retirement, Kathleen remained close to the Trippe family. She was a founding member and Director Emeritus of the Pan Am Historical Foundation and worked with Charlie and Ed Trippe to preserve Pan Am's historic contributions to the history of flight.

She wintered in Florida, with her younger brother Donald and relished the time she spent with the close-knit veteran's community near their home in Cocoa Beach.

Kathleen loved living in New York City, and remained there until she could no longer cross 1st Avenue in a single traffic light. In 2012, she moved to a retirement community in South Kingstown, RI, to be near family.

While she needed a little assistance now and then, she was nowhere near done wringing the most out of life. At 94 years old, she met Phil Benoit, whose energy and good humor she loved.

Kathleen will be missed by her large extended family, the Trippe family, colleagues from Pan Am and the Pan Am Historical Foundation, and friends from her long and well-lived life.

William G. "Burl" Burlingame, 66, author, historian and a feature writer for the former *Honolulu Star Bulletin*, passed away in his Kailua home in March. Burlingame was not an association member but he was quite a Pan Am fan. He quit his newspaper job to work at the Pacific Aviation Museum (now called the Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum) and was a staunch supporter of the late Edward Swofford when Ed was trying to ensure that Pan Am would be given a presence in the

museum. (At the time, many board members, most with military backgrounds, wanted the museum to feature only military exhibits.) Among Burlingame's many hobbies was building large airplane models, for which he won national acclaim. One of the models he made was of a Pan American Boeing 314 Clipper which hung from the ceiling in the lobby of the museum. Burlingame also spoke at our luncheons on two different occasions. He was an asset to the museum and to the community. He is survived by his wife and two daughters.

A SMILE A DAY . . .

Teacher: Why are you late. Student: Because class started before I got here.

Teacher: Glen, why do you always get so dirty? Student: I'm a lot closer to the ground than you are.

2019 Schedule

- **April 23**—General Member Meeting
- May 28—Board Meeting Only
- **June 25**—General Member Meeting
- July 23—Board Meeting Only
- **August 27**—General Member Meeting
- September 24—Board Meeting Only
- **October 22**—Annual Meeting
- November 26—Board Meeting Only
- **December 7**— **Annual Gala @ WCC**

Plan now to attend the Annual Gala on December 7th!

Teacher: Name one important thing we did not have ten years ago. Student: Me!



Luncheon Meeting Reservation

Next Meeting—April 23, 2019

Waialae Country Club

4997 Kahala Avenue

11:00 Social hour, 11:30 Lunch

\$30.00 per person (Includes tip and parking)

Please try to make your reservation no later than April 18*

Member Name _____ \$30.00

Guest Name _____ \$30.00

Total _____

Make check payable to PAA and send to:

Carol Suyderhoud, 7503 Maka'a Street, Honolulu, HI 96825-3127

*If you think your check may not arrive by Apr. 18th, please notify Carol at 396-5225 or contact her by e-mail at: carolws@hawaii.rr.com.

NOTE: If you received this newsletter electronically and would like to attend the meeting, print this page or enclose a note with your check, stating what and who the check is for.

PAA Hawaii Aloha Chapter Officers

Darlene Carver Laster	President & Chapter Chair	Darleelas@aol.com	394-8981
Ed Gencarelli	Vice President	edgen76@gmail.com	254-4576
John Medlock	Treasurer/Membership	johnmiii@earthlink.net	664-0586
Marie Jahnsen	Secretary	marie.jahnsen@gmail.com	832-752-4982
Al Chun	Annual Gala Coordinator	alhwchun@gmail.com	395-0525
Owen Oshima	Annual Gala Co-Chair	owenoshima007@aol.com	741-6936
Carol Weiss-Suyderhoud	Meetings Coordinator/Speaker Chair	carolws@hawaii.rr.com	396-5225
Diane VanderZanden	Editor, <i>Aloha Clipper</i>	alohadvz@gmail.com	396-5293
Ellen Shikuma	Director	EllenNOW@aol.com	734-5725
Clare Takayama	Director	TakaHale@aol.com	247-2004
Mae Takahashi	Director	takten@hawaii.rr.com	218-7773

(Note: area code for all phone numbers is 808 unless otherwise specified.)

Newsletter Items:

If you have any news item that would be of interest, please call Diane VanderZanden at 396-5293 or send mail to 500 Lunalilo Home Road, #26-D, Honolulu, HI 96825-1734 or by e-mail: alohadvz@gmail.com.

Members, we encourage you to print this page and give the application below to your Pan Am friends who are not members. If you are a former employee and not a member of the Aloha Chapter of the Pan Am Association, we encourage you to complete and submit the application below and help keep our association healthy. Thank you.

PAN AM ASSOCIATION—ALOHA CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please check all applicable boxes and complete all applicable lines.

- ☐ Renewal
☐ New Member
- ☐ Retiree—Pan Am retiree who received lump sum pension or is receiving PBGC checks.
 - ☐ Associate—All other former Pan Am employees
 - ☐ Ohana—Surviving spouse, child or relative of above; sponsored person with close connection to Pan Am (subject to BOD approval).

PRINT CLEARLY PLEASE

Date: _____

Name: _____ **Spouse:** _____

Last First

Address: _____

Street Apt # City State ZIP code

Home Phone: _____ **Cell phone:** _____ **E-mail:** _____

Would you like to receive the newsletter by e-mail, which is in color? Yes _____ No _____

Retiree/Associate: Dept: _____ **PAA Service:** _____ **Receiving Pension?** _____

of years worked Yes or No

Ohana: Pls. state category & PAA sponsor (See above): _____

The association directory is published every two years and is distributed to **MEMBERS ONLY**.

Do you wish to be listed in the directory? ☐ Yes ☐ No

May we publish your phone number/E-mail address? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Annual Membership: ☐ \$ 30 US Residents ☐ \$ 35 Overseas residents

Lifetime Membership: ☐ \$150 US Residents ☐ \$175 Overseas residents

Please make check payable to **PAA** (Pan Am Association) and send with this application to:

John Medlock, 411 Kaelepu Drive, APT F, Kailua, HI 96734-3309