

7/10/07

**“Checking Baggage”
by
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From talk I hear everyone I know seems to have gotten over their frustration about airport security checks. I guess, when considering the potential adverse alternatives, the inconvenience of having to: wait a little longer; not carry certain items on board; or walk around briefly with no shoes on, pales in significance. There is still one thing I don't understand and it really confuses me... how come when I'm traveling I'm limited to a maximum weight for my carry on bag and the bags I check?

I assumed that when they limited our luggage it was because the planes couldn't fly with all that excess weight... apparently I was so wrong. Did you see the picture in the paper recently of the space shuttle Discovery being piggy-backed to Kennedy Space Center on top of a 747 Airliner? Lord have mercy, that monster package weighs over 156,000 pounds, without fuel and passengers. I'm sure some of you will say aerodynamically it actually aids the flight because of its design, therefore its weight is inconsequential. Bah... Humbug! I'm still saying I should be able to take heavier bags with me on the plane.

Speaking of the shuttle being transported on the back of a 747... can you imagine the think tank huddling together trying to determine how to get Shuttles back to Kennedy in the event of a necessary West Coast landing? “Okay, let's toss out all the suggested ways to get it back... Bill, you suggested transported by ship... not a bad idea but somewhat time consuming wouldn't you think? Ted, you suggested bringing it home by truck... again... not a bad idea but can you imagine the traffic tie ups on the interstate and how're we going to get under those overpasses? Same goes for your idea Ralph to bring her home by train... just ain't goin' to happen.”

“Now Throckmorton, I've always appreciated your input on all we do here, but be serious for a minute... you actually think we could put a 75 ton space ship on top of another plane and fly it home... (chuckles all around...) you've been smoking a little too much of the wacky weed. (more chuckles.) Well, let's all get back to the drawing board on this, otherwise we're going to have a large parking lot of used Shuttles sitting over there at Edwards.”

When one looks at the picture one is reminded of a mother baboon with her baby clinging to her back as she runs up a tree, holding on for dear life. Nothing but dead weight, excuse me, except for its aerodynamic design. Go figure. Thankfully old Throckmorton was strong enough to insist they listen to his idea and we can get those shuttles home where they belong. Yea technology!

A group from our neighborhood in Winifred was out eating several weeks ago and when it came time to pay for our meal one of the guys handed his bill and a credit card to the waiter. The

waiter returned momentarily and said, "I'm sorry sir but we can't accept this for payment." Boy, was our friend embarrassed as he asked, "What's the problem, was it over the limit?" "No sir," said the waiter, "we just haven't started using these as credit cards yet." With that he handed our friend his Villages I.D. Card back. We all got a good laugh over the faux pas but later talked about the convenience of the idea. Right now none of us Village residents "ever leaves home without it" but wouldn't it be nice if that one card would take care of everything in which we're involved, including paying for our dinners out? Maybe not.

Speaking of cards (what a segue) ... I need someone to answer a question for me. It's another one of those "don't want to do the wrong thing" scenarios. My wife recently had a birthday and after searching far and wide for the perfect card I discovered one that fit the bill. No problem, right? Wrong! The card said everything I wanted to say but after purchasing it I had second thoughts because... now, please don't think badly of me... well, I was worried because it wasn't a Hallmark Card. I mean, if sending a Hallmark Card to someone truly means you "cared enough to send the very best," does giving them a non-Hallmark Card mean you don't care enough? What a conundrum!

See you next week.

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