



The *SENIOR PATTERN ASSOCIATION*

Official S I G (Special Interest Group) of AMA

**Dedicated to the Building, Flying and Competition
of Vintage Pattern Model Aircraft**

SPA NEWSLETTER www.seniorpattern.com JAN-FEB 2020

VINTAGE PATTERN FLYING FOR ALL AGES!

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OFFICERS

PRESIDENT-

Jeff Owens

VICE PRESIDENT-

Frank Cox

PAST PRESIDENTS-

Mickey Walker

Bruce Underwood

WEBMASTER/

SEC/TREASURER-

Jim Johns

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Jamie Strong

APPOINTED-At large

Phil Spelt/Keith Watson

ELECTED-

Scott Anderson-East

Pat Ensign -West

EDITOR-

Duane Wilson

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Join our Discussion list from within the webpage or inform any officer and we'll "sign you up". It's like a gigantic Mailing-list, but at NO CHARGE. A service to membership and potentials from SPA.



**Jim John's New Bridi UFO on the SPA tables
at this year's Perry show/swapmeet**



**Bruce & Jane
Underwood**

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FROM THE PRESIDENT – Jeff Owens

I have just returned from the annual Board of Directors meeting in Dalton, Georgia and it was quite an enjoyable and productive affair. The minutes of the meeting are contained elsewhere in this issue, so I won't give a summary here. Rather, I would like to discuss my view of the status of our type of Pattern flying. Whether you call it Senior Pattern, Classic Pattern, Vintage Pattern, or something else, the core of all of these is the concept of the "single maneuver per pass" style of pattern flying that was prevalent from the 60s up to the advent of the "turnaround" style that is embodied in F3A and IMAC competition. There are several organizations that provide sets of rules by which clubs or groups can hold competition events. Obviously, SPA is one such group that we are familiar with, but there have been and are others. One was the Classic Pattern Association that grew out of the Ballistic Pattern Association. Restrictions on the types of models

flown were minimal and tuned pipes and retracts were prevalent. The rules adopted were basically those of AMA Pattern in the late 70s and early 80s. That made things simple, since copies of the old rulebooks are available from various online sources, including AMA. Initially, there was some interest in the Southeast, the West, and elsewhere and a few contests were held. However, for whatever reason a critical mass of club-sponsored events did not materialize. There is still some CPA-based activity in California, but elsewhere it has died out.

A recent development is an international group of interested pilots who have put together a set of rules for Classic Pattern Competition. You can find these at the web site f3a.com.au – go to the Competition menu and find the link Classic Pattern Rules – V1.0 at the bottom. Basically, the rules stipulate any pattern plane design from 1983 or earlier with engine displacement limitations similar to those used by SPA. A sequence has been designed, but there is no class structure – everyone flies the same sequence. This set of rules provides an excellent guide for a local club or interested group of pilots to hold an event designed to replicate those that many of us participated in back in the 70s and 80s.

Most anyone who has participated in any aspect of pattern flying has realized that the level of participation is decreasing. Average contest sizes are smaller than they were 10 or 20 years ago. Many reasons have been proposed, but it is safe to say that no one has found a magic solution. But the interest is there! One has only to look at Facebook to see this. The Senior Pattern Association group has 732 members, the Radio Control Pattern Planes of All Eras group has 5,184 members, and the RC Pattern Planes/buy and sell group has 2,109 members. Clearly it is easier to join a group than it is to build a plane for competition and practice with it, but these numbers show that the interest is there.

So, the question remains of how to generate interest in competitive flying events? They say that all politics is local and I think that the same applies here. I am often asked when SPA is going to put on a contest "in my area." The answer is that SPA doesn't put on contests – clubs do! We – and other organizations – provide sets of rules that can be used by clubs. There is even significant leeway for Contest Directors to set the rules for their contest (see more about this below.) So what is required is for a group (perhaps even one or two) of members of a club to generate some interest in having that club sponsor a pattern contest? This need not be an elaborate affair – many contests are just one day events which cuts down on travel and motel expenses for the contestants. That is how SPA activity started in the Texas and Oklahoma area and now we have a full-fledged West Division that has nearly as many members as the original East Division. So, if you are interested in having a pattern contest in an area where none currently exist, start by generating interest for it in your home club.

So, you want to put on a pattern contest. What rules will you choose? The different sets of rules were basically drawn up for very different reasons. When Mickey Walker founded SPA back in 1992, he was looking for a simple and inexpensive way to have a contest based on the one pass per maneuver concept. He wanted as many pilots as possible to participate using simple and popular designs like the Kaos. It is no accident that the SPA logo features a Kaos! In order to reduce cost and complexity it was decided to not allow the use of retracts, tuned pipes, or supercharging. This philosophy remains at the core of SPA competition. But many pilots fondly remember competing with their retract and pipe equipped models and want to recreate that type of competition. That is why the CPA was formed and why the new Classic Pattern Rules discussed above have been created. As President, I routinely have to answer questions like "Why can't I fly my xxx in your SPA event?" where xxx is some combination of "my favorite model", my retracts, or my pipe. And the answer is always the same – SPA was designed to foster fun pattern competition using simple cost-effective aircraft.

But times have changed and the number of modelers interested in pattern flying (of all types) appears to be decreasing. Organizations such as SPA need to do something to attract new members. Several attempts in this direction have been made in recent years. The West Division of SPA has tried opening up the rules as to the type of plane that can compete. Basically, if it looks like a classic pattern plane, then it will be allowed. This opens up the possibility to use some modern ARFs that look like a classic pattern plane, but don't replicate any particular design. Initial reports after the 2019 season indicate that this did not attract any new competitors. Another attempt that has been tried at several East Division contests is the use of an "Unlimited" class designation, initially limited to the Expert class. An Unlimited airplane would be one with a pipe and/or retracts. Expert and Unlimited contestants would fly together in front of the same judges, but the scores would be separated into two groups at the time of awarding trophies. So, the Unlimited category would not affect the results for the regular SPA Expert class. There have only been one or two new contestants gained using this, perhaps because the existence of the Unlimited category has not been widely publicized. It has been proposed that this year the use of the Unlimited concept be extended to all classes above Novice. So, if you have a classic pattern plane with a pipe and retracts, then you can compete in those SPA contest that feature the Unlimited category – just check the contest announcement to see. Both of these ideas to open up the standard SPA rules are examples of what I will call CD discretion. Basically, the Contest Director specifies the rules for the contest and has broad leeway to allow models such as those described above. It is hoped that some of these ideas may increase our contest participation.

Those who have read the Board of Directors minutes will see that there is another approach. Vice-President Frank Cox has proposed that the use of retracts be allowed in all classes above Novice. This proposal will be discussed through the newsletter and the discussion list and eventually voted on by the SPA membership (Life members and current 2020 members) in June 2020.

So what is my view on the status of single maneuver per pass pattern flying? I see it as undergoing a series of experiments designed to increase the level of participation and to generate new members and contestants. But above all, we are having fun and I hope that we can attract more competitors to share the fun and camaraderie that we all enjoy!

Until next time, Jeff

2020 Board of Directors Meeting, Dalton, Georgia

Well, the first official SPA event of 2020, the annual Board of Directors (BOD), meeting took place on January 25th in the central location of Dalton, Georgia. It was held at the very nice (and somewhat pricey), Hilton Garden Inn there in Dalton. Keith Watson made the arrangements which provided for a (private and quiet) meeting room. In the past we conducted our meetings in a diner over the roar of breakfast being prepared, delivered and eaten, (BTW-people don't eat breakfast in a restaurant in silence), and with pots and pans rattling it wasn't easy to conduct a meeting. We had to nearly shout at each other to be heard even though we were only a few feet apart, so the official quietness there was nice, but at a cost. More about that later.



Above: Bad glare lighting doesn't present the BOD members as handsomely as they really are in person. (this is a joke.) BOD members (L-R) Duane Wilson, Keith Watson, Phil Spelt, Jim Johns, (who now assumes Treasurer duties, former SPA president Bruce Underwood, and current president Jeff Owens. (Note: Jim has written a little article summarizing the revision of the Treasurer duties.

This year we had three BOD members attend via Skype, (last year only the West representatives used it.) Thinking about this, we tentatively came to the conclusion that in an effort to avoid costly outlays for a venue plus the expense and time involved in traveling, we might very well attempt our first "all Skype" meeting next year. That said, the downside however would be that visitors would not be able to attend as they have in the past, but attendance this year by non BOD members was down, so it may not be a significant factor. We will see what happens. Any opinions?



The Skype screen was divided into three sections with Frank Cox and Pat Ensign representing SPA West and Scott Anderson from Knoxville, Tn. on the lower right. For a number of reasons it might be best to conduct future BOD meetings totally on Skype.

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

...by Jeff Owens

The Board of Directors Meeting was called to order at 9:30 AM on January 25, 2020 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Dalton, GA by President Jeff Owens. Members of the Board present included Jeff Owens, Jim Johns, Duane Wilson, Phil Spelt, Bruce Underwood, Keith Watson, Jamie Strong, and, via Skype, Scott Anderson, Frank Cox, and Pat Ensign. SPA members in attendance included Dave Phillips, Ray Kunert, Bob Wilkes, and Jim Oliver.

Treasurer's Report – Keith Watson has a full plate of activities to attend to outside of SPA. Jim Johns has agreed to take over the duties of the Treasurer's position effective immediately. Once the outstanding 2019 checks have cleared and the remaining payments to host clubs have been made, Jim will produce a complete record of income and expenditures. Of particular interest is the dues income since we have a large number of lifetime members and a correspondingly reduced number of annual dues paying members. Scott Anderson reported that he is donating \$5 from each sale of the "Make Pattern Great Again" cups. 24 have been sold, so Scott will be donating \$120 to SPA. Much appreciated, Scott!

Memorial Fly-off Procedures - for two years in a row a member has been eligible for the fly-off at the Masters, but the other eligible member(s) have elected not to fly or were not able to attend the Masters contest. The trophy was not awarded for 2018-19. It was unanimously decided that if a member is present at the Masters and is eligible for the fly-off and no other eligible members are present or choose not to fly, then the Memorial Trophy will be awarded to that contestant without the requisite fly-off. The reasoning is that said contestant earned the eligibility by competing throughout the year and has therefore earned the right to receive the trophy, even if others chose not to fly. This has happened to Dave Phillips for the 2018-19 seasons. It was decided that, following this procedure, Dave will be awarded the trophy for those two years. A brass plate will be engraved and added to the trophy. The trophy will be presented to Dave at the next possible opportunity.

West Division Memorial Trophy – The Memorial Trophy which is awarded each year as a result of a fly-off amongst the top two eligible Senior Expert contestants in the East Division is intended to honor SPA members Curtis Motes, Dick Austin, R.E. Walker, Jim Jones, and Ben Oliver. These members were influential in the early history of SPA and were all from what is now the East Division. It was pointed out that the West Division could create a similar trophy with its own set of rules for eligibility, including the idea of a fly-off.

Website hosting renewal – Jim Johns reported that the website hosting has been renewed with GoDaddy for another 5 years at a cost of \$539.40. The hosting charge is required if we are to have a website. A 2 year term of their Website Security product was purchased for \$414.46. The usefulness of this latter product will be evaluated after two years before renewing it.

Video Conferencing – three Board members used Skype to join the meeting due to the distance involved or time constraints. The members who were present had drives of lengths varying from 2 hours to 7 hours and some incurred the cost of an overnight stay and meals. Skype software is free and could be used to have a video conference meeting during the year should an issue arise that required discussion by the Board. One advantage of an in-person meeting is that other SPA members can attend. But the costs and time involved may necessitate future Board meetings be done via Skype. The Board agreed to consider this possibility for future meetings.

Southeastern Model Show - SMS (more popularly known as the Perry Swap Meet) will be on February 28-29, 2020. We have three tables reserved (K22, 23, 24) in the McGill Building. This is just one table over from where we were last year. We could use help from all SPA members with the SPA display and recruitment of new members. Models for display would also be appreciated.

Contest Calendar – the tentative contest calendar has been posted on the web site, but some changes are in order. Due to schedule conflicts the East Masters will not be held at Toone in October. Instead, it is likely that there will be an August contest in Toone and the East Masters will be in October at Prattville. The web site will be updated as soon as things have been finalized. In addition, Jamie Strong emphasized that he will include "Unlimited" classes at all levels above Novice for those events he CDs. Dave Phillips agreed for his contest, as well. The term "Unlimited" means that pipes and retracts can be used. Contestant in a regular SPA and an Unlimited class fly together as a single class, but trophies are awarded separately to regular SPA and Unlimited contestants. This is a way to accommodate those who wish to compete using models with pipes and retracts instead of SPA-legal aircraft. Note that contestants in the Unlimited classes would not earn points towards the annual SPA Championships, as this is reserved for contestants whose models comply with the current SPA rules.

Retract proposal - Vice-President Frank Cox put forth a proposal to allow the use of retracts in all SPA classes above Novice. This proposal would remove the "no retract" restriction except in the Novice class. If approved, models with retracts that meet the other SPA requirements would be eligible for SPA Championship points. This is a distinction from the proposed Unlimited classes. The rule prohibiting the use of retracts has been a source of controversy over the years and removing it would be a significant departure from the original SPA concept of competition with simple, inexpensive models. Experience has shown that models without retracts are just as competitive as those with them – it is really the pilot that determines the difference. Yet many RC modelers have an emotional attachment to seeing a plane with retracts and over the years we have received many requests to allow them. It is hoped that relaxing this rule will bring new members into SPA. The Board felt that it was not appropriate for us to make such a decision without member input. Accordingly, this proposal will be put up for a vote by the membership, the latter being defined as all Life Members and all members who are current with 2020 dues. The vote will be done electronically in June, allowing plenty of time for discussion via the Newsletter, the discussion list, and at contests.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 AM.

Treasurer Announcement

By Jim Johns

SPA has a New Secretary Treasurer

Keith Watson has a full plate of activities to attend to outside of SPA and is no longer able to fulfill his duties as SPA Secretary treasurer. Therefore I have taken over those duties effective at the SPA Board of Director's meeting, January 25, 2020.

Since I took over the position, I've done the following:

- Consolidated all SPA funds in a new bank account.
- Opened a new PayPal account and connected it to the bank account.
- Disbursed all necessary payments, and processed all new dues payments (including 3 renewals received at the Perry Show).
- All members are being emailed to confirm that their dues have been posted.
- The website has been modified to reflect the change of address for dues payment, including a new paper membership form with my address and a new multi-select PayPal Buy Now button for electronic dues payment. You'll also find a large "Renew your membership or Join SPA" button on the home page of the website. The new information is also on the back cover of this newsletter and on the website - <https://seniorpattern.com/pdf/Membership/SPAMemAppRev6.pdf>.
- As of today, March 2nd, 2020 we have 98 paid members - 52 annual and 46 Life members.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Jim Johns Secretary Treasurer and Webmaster

tr20pd@gmail.com

SPA East Schedule

Date	Event & Contest Director	Location
April 4-5	Prattville SPA Jamie Strong & Larry Hill CDs	Prattville, AL
May 16-17	Ben Oliver Memorial Jimmy Russell CD	Knoxville, TN
June 27-28	Alabaster SPA Dave Phillips CD	Alabaster, AL
Aug 15-16	2020 East-West Shootout Scott Anderson CD	Toone, TN
Sept 19-20	CMJ Roberta SPA Greg Hoke CD	Roberta, GA
Oct 17-18	2020 East Masters Jamie Strong CD	Prattville, AL

SPA West Schedule

Date	Event & Contest Director	Location
April 18	Season Opener at Golden Triangle Frank Cox CD	Grand Prairie, TX
May 16	Buzzardaire at Texas Wings Pat Ensign CD	Newark, TX
June 13	Greater Southwest Aero Modelers Wayne Galligan & Paul Mayhan CDs	Ft Worth, TX
June 27	Spring Make-Up Day	
Aug 15-16	East-West Shootout Scott Anderson CD	Toone, TN
Sept 12	Wichita Falls R/C Club Tony Breyen/Pat Ensign CDs	Wichita Falls, TX
Oct 3	Waco Area SPA Todd Blose CD	Valley Mills, TX
Oct 24-25	West Championships Thunderbird FieldKen Knotts CD	Benbrook, TX

By Duane Wilson



Perry 2020 Show/Swap Meet

The south's biggest modeling exposition and swap meet is a yearly Pilgrimage for many of us in SPA. This is your chance to sell (or resell) all those great building projects that you had all the best intentions of starting, but never got around to. Over the years I acquired several

planes that I was so excited to find at Perry because they held a Personal nostalgic appeal. I genuinely wanted to build them, but other more important projects always took precedence. After all, there is a limited amount of building time. After a few years it dawns on you that you'd have to live to be 120 to have enough time to build every "great find" you acquire over the years. In short, my "building eyes" were bigger than my "building stomach" so to speak.

Part of the Perry SPA display that extended on both sides of our banner. To the left is the pride of Joe Bridi—his UFO design displayed by Jim Johns, and to the right is President Jeff Owen's new Daddy Rabbit with a functional but very attractive color scheme. Both are great planes!!



In short, Perry is a great place to “thin the herd” of all those “I meant to build it” projects, and to get some cold hard cash to buy other things you might be drawn to. Although the cash you receive is often modest, that’s not always the case. This year Ken Vandenbosch brought and sold a couple *thousand dollars* worth of excess plane related stuff (merchandise). Ken used that to buy a really cool prefab kit that we’ll discuss a little later.



Florida’s Ken Vandenbosch was the envy of SPA being the first one to net this very sleek looking Kosmo kit. Rather than fiberglass, it’s a prefab wood kit, with many preformed and sanded pieces. Perfect for SPA—can’t wait to see it.

The art of buying and selling is fun for many of us—you know the “flea market” back and forth that somehow results in both sides thinking they negotiated a good deal. I know of one SPA brother who negotiated while selling a plane to within \$50 of making the deal on a plane that cost hundreds, but neither side would budge further. Win a few, lose a few!

Looking for that “gem” in what seems to be a wasteland of “rubble” is perhaps the most fun in going to Perry. You really never know just what treasure you’ll find hidden amid all the junk gathered from who knows how many estate sales. There are boxes and boxes of what I would call “worthless junk”—some of it has a layer of dust on top of it from being stored, (like forever), in the basement or garage. People haul it up, transport it in their vehicles, put it out on the tables to see if, just maybe, somebody might desperately need that 20 year-old 3 ounce fuel tank, or equally ancient plane wheels ten inches high in a box. There are half-built projects with obviously aged balsa, incomplete kits, and a lot of old, used radio gear, not to mention hundreds of used engines waiting for someone to take a chance on. No, I would buy a twenty year-old radio or beat-up engine either, and I don’t know if someone eventually buys these old transmitters and servos, but

there’s always the chance someone will. At the end of the event, these folks gather what is left and return it to the basement to await the next swap meet, or next year’s Perry event.

The dust layer gets just a little bit thicker.

So far I haven’t painted a very rosy picture or made a decent argument for why you or *anyone else* would ever want to go to Perry in the first place. I’m about to. The fascinating thing about swap meets such as Perry, (the thing that draws everyone there), is looking for that nugget of gold in the gravel. Invariably, there are marvelous finds, but like any other treasure hunt, you have to be the first one to spot the gold. There are people who buy RC gear, planes, engines, kits,—you name it and put them in storage until needed, and in many cases they are never used or built, (sound familiar)? There are kits that possibly were discontinued 25-30 years ago, and are no longer available—kits that you wish you would have bought at the time but missed out on the opportunity. I saw a VK Cherokee kit a year or two ago. This was a plane I built as a teen-ager, boy it sure was great to see it again. Maybe I should build another for old times sake. I’ve seen formerly famous and classic kits like the Aeromaster (Biplane), vintage kits of all kinds. Once Jeff Owens spotted a Miss Norway kit that was the subject of two newsletter articles; this was the plane featured in the old **RCM Flight Training Course II** book that many of us learned to fly aerobatics with. A few years ago I found a Prather Panther shoulder wing kit that I always admired the looks of, but over time, other projects were more important. There are new in box (NIB) engines at discounted prices and many other discontinued or rare models or kits available. Maybe they might appear on EBay, but usually not for a bargain.

One man’s “stuff” he’s trying to sell off could be another man’s treasure; it all depends on the person and their individual interests. The three buildings at Perry are full of such treasures just waiting to be discovered. Most people’s strategy is to get there early, make a sweep of the buildings, jump on the best bargains, and negotiate for anything else that interests them.

Perry is a game, a way to pick up a few hundred bucks by selling things you know you’ll never use, while seeking out bargains. It’s a great place to socialize with your friends you haven’t seen since the fall of last year. Held in early March each year, it’s often a traditional season-opening event, and after a hard day on the trading floor, we go out to dinner and brag about our finds or how much money we made. If you haven’t tried it out, make sure you go to see what it’s like. Lots of your friends will be there.



A closer shot of Ken’s Italian “Kosmo” pattern ship kit from 1974. Kit was produced in “West Germany” and has a wingspan of about 66”

New Arrivals: Keep 'em Coming



Jeff Owen's New Daddy Rabbit

SPA President Jeff Owens bought this Daddy Rabbit once belonging to Mike Robinson, and refinished it very nicely in a simple, but attractive color scheme. Jeff reports "the plane had been crashed and repaired, but not recovered. I believe it is a Dennis Hunt Rabbit. Finish is Monokote. Engine is a pumped ABC OS 61 SF. I am now installing the radio and linkages and hope to test fly it soon."

Jim Johns Brand new UFO

Specifics on the UFO:

- Bridi fiberglass and foam kit
- Completed by Terry Boston
- KlassKote paint
- OS 65AX
- APC 12x6 prop
- It weighs 8# on the nose





Bruce Underwood's Famous Phantom



"Phantom City"-Phantoms Seen in East Tn.

The Phantom was designed by Bob Klineyoung in 1973, (see B/W insert above right). It was ahead of its time with mid-wing placement and a lot of side area that helps rolling maneuvers. It has been in and out of vogue within SPA over the years. It's a nice flyer with a unique appearance. For many years in the early 2000s, former SPA president Bruce Underwood dazzled everyone on the circuit with flight after near perfect flight with his beautiful orange, white, and blue Phantom, (pictured upper right.) The plane flew like Bruce had a micro-sized fighter pilot at the controls. The plane was never lost and he eventually gave it to a new SPA prospect, but during the many years he flew it, Bruce's Phantom was an inspiration for several others to build their own.

Recently, the guppy-shaped Phantom was reintroduced by Jerry Black, (upper left.) He's very happy with its performance and no doubt he's going to be impressing us with this plane this year, (as he does with every plane he flies), but it's the first time I've seen Jerry try this design.

The newest Phantom, (above still in the incubator), is being built by Vic Koenig who was inspired by Jerry's plane. They both fly out of the same club in east Tennessee, and tend to adapt each other's ideas over time. This second Phantom from Johnson City is just the latest example. Looking forward to seeing them both this coming season.



Bruce brings his Phantom in right on the centerline to complete yet another near perfect flight when flying his Phantom



Me posing with Scott Sappington's nicely finished Phantom a few years ago



Norm in May 2019
at Knoxville

Norm Bonnette more than anyone I know has really caught the “SPA fever”. He’s come a long way in a short time. At his first contest, Jamie took off and landed his older Aeromaster for him. In no time he was on his own making steady progress. Although he lost planes, that didn’t deter him. Now look at Norm as he expands his fleet for the 2020 season! He has graduated to the high-performance birds, and will be a contender soon. Way to go Norman!



The Phoenix 8 is an Aero Composites Kit. Fiberglass fuselage, foam wing. Fluorescent orange, pink and yellow epoxy paint. OPS 60 Super engine. 8 lbs 3oz dry wt. I have five flights on it and it flies better than any plane I’ve flown.



This Kaos is a Jimmy Russell kit built as the Killer Kaos Monokote covered 3D look of the waving US flag. HP 61 Goldhead. It weighs 5 lb 13 oz dry. Ready to fly when the weather breaks. *Be careful!!*

The Colonoscopy :

_Written by a magazine humorist needing a colonoscopy—every word is true...

I called a friend of mine, who is a gastroenterologist, to make an appointment for a colonoscopy.

A few days later, in his office, he showed me a color diagram of the colon, a lengthy organ that appears to go all over the place, at one point passing briefly through Minneapolis. Then he explained the colonoscopy procedure to me in a thorough, reassuring and patient manner. I nodded thoughtfully, but I didn't really hear anything he said, because my brain was shrieking, "HE'S GOING TO STICK A TUBE 17,000 FEET UP YOUR BEHIND!"

I left the office with some written instructions, and a prescription for a product called "MoviPrep," which comes in a box large enough to hold a microwave oven. I will discuss MoviPrep in detail later; **for now suffice it to say that we must never allow it to fall into the hands of America's enemies.** I spent the next several days productively sitting around being nervous.

Then, on the day before my colonoscopy, I began my preparation. In accordance with my instructions, I didn't eat any solid food that day; all I had was chicken broth, which is basically water, only with less flavor. Then, in the evening, I took the MoviPrep. You mix two packets of powder together in a one-liter plastic jug, and then you fill it with lukewarm water. (For those unfamiliar with the metric system, a liter is about 32 gallons). Then you have to drink the whole jug. This takes about an hour, because MoviPrep tastes (and here I am being kind), like a mixture of goat spit and urinal cleanser, with just a hint of lemon.

The instructions for MoviPrep, clearly written by somebody with a great sense of humor, state that after you drink it, "A loose, water-bowel movement may result." This is kind of like saying that after you jump off your roof, you may experience contact with the ground. MoviPrep is a nuclear laxative. I don't want to be too graphic, here, but, have you ever seen a space-shuttle launch? This is pretty much the MoviPrep experience, with you as the shuttle. There are times when you wish the commode had a seat belt. You spend several hours pretty much confined to the bathroom, spurting violently. You eliminate everything. And then, when you figure you must be totally empty, you have to drink another liter of MoviPrep, at which point, as far as I can tell, your bowels travel into the future and start eliminating food that you have not even eaten yet. After an action-packed evening, I finally got to sleep.

The next morning my wife drove me to the clinic. I was very nervous. Not only was I worried about the procedure, but I had been experiencing occasional return bouts of MoviPrep spurtage. I was thinking, "What if I spurt on the Doctor?" How do you apologize for something like that? Flowers would not be enough. At the clinic I had to sign many forms acknowledging that I understood and totally agreed with whatever the heck the forms said. Then they led me to a room full of other colonoscopy people, where I went inside a little curtained space and took off my clothes and put on one of those hospital garments designed by sadist perverts, the kind that, when you put it on, makes you feel even more naked than when you are actually naked.

Then a nurse put a little needle in a vein in my left hand. Ordinarily I would have fainted, but she was very good, and I was already lying down. Also, she told me that some people put vodka in their MoviPrep. At first I was ticked off that I hadn't thought of this, but then I pondered what would happen if you got yourself too tipsy to make it to the bathroom, so you were staggering around in full Fire Hose Mode. You would have no choice but to burn your house.

When everything was ready, she wheeled me into the procedure room, where the Doctor was waiting with a nurse and an anesthesiologist. I did not see the 17,000-foot tube, but I knew that had it hidden around there somewhere. I was seriously nervous at this point. The Doctor had me roll over on my left side, and the anesthesiologist began hooking something up to the needle in my hand. There was music playing in the room, and I realized that the song was "Dancing Queen" by ABBA. I remarked to Andy that, of all the songs that could be playing during this particular procedure, "Dancing Queen" had to be the least appropriate. "You want me to turn it up?" Someone said behind me. "Ha ha," I said.

And then it was time, the moment I had been dreading for more than a decade. If you are squeamish, prepare yourself, because I am going to tell you, in explicit detail, exactly what it was like. I have no idea. Really I don't. I slept through it. One moment, ABBA was yelling "Dancing Queen, feel the beat of the tambourine," and the next moment, I was back in the other room, waking up in a very mellow mood. The Doctor was looking down at me and asking me how I felt. I felt excellent. I felt even more excellent when Andy told me that it was all over, and that my colon had passed with flying colors. I have never been prouder of an internal organ.

On the subject of Colonoscopies:

-Colonoscopies are no joke, but these comments during the exam were quite humorous.

-A physician claimed that the following are actual comments made by his patients (predominately male) while he was performing their colonoscopies:

1. 'Take it easy, Doc. You're boldly going where no man has gone before!'
2. 'Find Amelia Earhart yet?'
3. 'Can you hear me NOW?'
4. 'Are we there yet? Are we there yet? Are we there yet?'
5. 'You know, in Arkansas, we're now legally married.'
6. 'Any sign of the trapped miners, Chief?'
7. 'You put your left hand in; you take your left hand out...'
8. 'Hey! Now I know how a Muppet feels!'
9. 'If your hand doesn't fit, you must quit!'
10. 'Hey Doc, let me know if you find my dignity.'
11. 'You used to be an executive at Enron, didn't you?'
12. 'God, now I know why I am not gay.'
13. I think you chipped my tooth!

And the best one of all:

14. 'Could you write a note for my wife saying that my head is not up there?'

Best Age-Related Humor

***An elderly couple had dinner at another couple's house, and after eating, the wives left the table and went into the kitchen.**

The two gentlemen were talking, and one said, 'Last night

“we went out to a new restaurant and it was really great I would recommend it very highly.”

The other man said, 'What is the name of the restaurant?'

The first man thought and thought and finally said, 'What's the name of that flower you give to someone you love? You know, the one that's red and has thorns.' 'Do you mean a rose?'

'Yes, that's the one,' replied the man. He then turned towards the kitchen and yelled, 'Rose, what's the name of that restaurant we went to last night?'

***A man was telling his neighbor, 'I just bought a new hearing aid. It cost me four thousand dollars, but it's state of the art. It's perfect.'**

'Really,' answered the neighbor. 'What kind is it?' 'Twelve thirty.'

***Morris, an 82 year-old man, went to the doctor to get a physical.**

A few days later, the doctor saw Morris walking down the street with a gorgeous young woman on his arm.

A couple of days later, the doctor spoke to Morris and said, 'You're really doing great, aren't you?'

Morris replied, 'Just doing what you said, Doc: 'Get a hot mamma and be cheerful.'"

The doctor said, 'I didn't say that.. I said, 'You've got a heart murmur; be careful.'¹²

Famous last words between guys:

**** It's probably just a rash.**

**** Are you sure the power is off?**

**** The odds of that happening have to be a million to one!**

**** Pull the pin and count to what?**

**** What does this button do?**

**** It's fireproof.**

**** He's probably hibernating.**

**** Which wire was I supposed to cut?**

**** I wonder where the mother bear is.**

**** I've seen this done on TV.**

**** These are the good kind of mushrooms.**

**** I'll hold it and you light the fuse.**

**** Let it down slowly.**

**** It's strong enough for both of us.**

**** This doesn't taste right.**

**** What's the worst that could happen?**

**** No sweat, I have it under control.**

**** And last but not least...**

**** Hold my Beer. Watch this...**

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