

NEXT UP



Grover: What I Believe, Part 3

I believe that puppies and rainbows are overrated.



Skipper: It's no Air Force One but it's a good deal

John Skipper Updated Sep 10, 2016 □ 1

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John Skipper

Buy Now

Silly me.

I'm going to take you for a ride today, but stay with me.

Let me start by saying every seat is a window seat on Air Choice One.


That's one of the first things I noticed when I took my first flight recently from Mason City to Chicago on the cozy little airline.

I had heard a lot about it — enough to know it was Air Choice One and not Air Force One.

The plane has eight seats, four rows of two — with windows on each side. Hence, every seat being a window seat.

You have to duck when you get on the plane — duck quite a bit if you're 6 feet or taller, because the ceiling is low.

And the flight personnel might ask you how much you weigh because they might make you switch seats with someone to



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redistribute the weight on the plane.

All of that stuff was minor, hardly even an inconvenience.

On the trip to Chicago, the first two seats were directly behind the cockpit and the last two seats were at the back of the plane, which seemed about 10 feet away.

The four seats in between faced each other. I was in one of those seats (after being redistributed). And that made a delightful flight even more delightful. The close proximity allowed for great conversation among strangers who, for 90 minutes, chatted as if we were old friends.

It was like being at the SuzieQ except we were up in the air and there was no food. But in either setting, strangers aren't strangers for too long.

As it happened, Derek Jacobson, the longtime director of Youth for Christ in Mason City, was sitting next to me. Facing us were a middle-aged, rosy cheeked farmer from Fort Dodge who had interesting observations on just about everything, and a prim, bespectacled woman who was a lawyer for child welfare cases for the state of Illinois.

We learned from the farmer that part of his business plan is to hire part-timers and people on Medicare to avoid having to pay health insurance benefits. As he looked out the window of the plane, down on the greens and yellows of Iowa farmland, he provided tips on the proper way to tend to the crops.

The child welfare lawyer talked about the rigors of her job and the plight of so many children in desperate need of guidance. There is an incredible need for more foster parents, she said.

I digress from telling you about the flight, but if you are forced to sit face-to-face with people you don't know, it's fun to get

acquainted, even if for just a few minutes.

The flight was smooth and the altitude was low enough that the eight passengers could see the landscape below for the entire flight.

The greens and yellows of Iowa disappeared soon after we crossed the Mississippi River, replaced by the gray masses of buildings and highways of urban areas as the plane approached the Chicago area.

When you arrive at O'Hare Field, you don't go to a baggage claim area. You pick up your luggage when you leave the plane. An attendant is there to walk you through the hallways that lead to the main concourse.

If you are staying in Chicago, you have arrived. If you are catching a connecting flight, you'll have to check your luggage again with the next airline — but there are plenty of people around to get you headed in the right direction.

Since I was staying for a few days in a Chicago suburb, I was a little concerned about where I should be dropped off for my return trip to Mason City — because O'Hare Field is huge and can be a little intimidating.

No problem. The people at Air Choice One told me to go to Terminal 3 — and Terminal 3 was clearly marked and easy to spot when we arrived. A sign there indicated this was the place to be for Air Choice One.

Two other things I need to tell you. The round-trip fare was \$167 — and there is no baggage fee. And, as always, no charge for airport parking.

Why did I wait so long to try this?

Silly me.



Tags

Air Choice One

Return Trip

Baggage

Derek Jacobson

Seat

Flight

Lawyer

Fee

John Skipper



 (1) comment



Scotsman Sep 11, 2016 6:45pm

I've flown AC1 about 4 -5 times and am grateful that we have this air service available to us. Chicago typically is my final destination, but I have also used it to connect to another flight onward to my final destination. That's what I like about O'Hare - from there, you can get to the rest of the world. It's inexpensive enough that you can take a day trip to Chicago - see some things, meet some friends, have a great meal and then fly back to M.C.

Skipper didn't mention that there (obviously) is no lavatory on board so lay off the liquids a few hours before your flight (unless you have a bladder the size of a football).

Welcome to the discussion.

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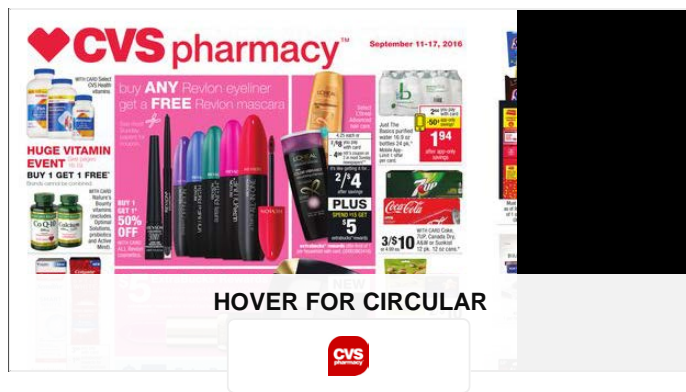


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Latest e-Edition



Mercy Medical Center North tower photographed from the Mercy Air Med helicopter.

Mercy notes 100 years as part of Mason City

Hospital started with request to run with health care calling

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MASON CITY — Mercy Medical Center North tower was founded 100 years ago after an order of mass responded to a request from Mason City residents and the medical community for a large, modern hospital.

The hospital has grown tremendously over the past century, but one thing has remained the same, according to CEO Dan Vermeas.

based organization," he said. "We are honored to carry on the legacy of the Sisters of Mercy." In 1915 Mason City Mayor Truman Addison Porter traveled to the mother house for the Sisters of Mercy in Dubuque, an order devoted to caring for the sick, to make the request for a hospital in his community.

Members of the order go wherever "There are needs to be met," said Sister Corita Reed, who served as CEO of Mercy in Mason City from 1977 to 2001.

Photo by MRCN, Page 10



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Current Mercy Medical Center North tower CEO Dan Vermeas (left) with Sister Corita Reed, who served as CEO at Mercy in Mason City from 1977

may look elsewhere

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CEO: MORGES — Voters in large numbers do not appear on the presidential candidates presented to them by the Democratic and Republican political parties.

That has given third-party candidates an opportunity to make more of an impact on this election than any since the 1960s.

Republican Donald Trump and Democrat Hillary Clinton are viewed less favorably by voters than any third-party presidential candidate since politics first asked the question in the 1960s.

In a recent NBC News poll, Trump was viewed favorably by 36 percent of voters and unfavorably by 61 percent, and Clinton was viewed favorably by 31 percent and unfavorably by 60 percent.

That appears to have created



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Sunday, September 11, 2016

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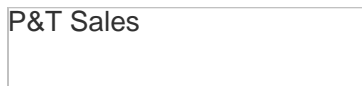
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Today's top pics: Rescue in the Alps and more

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Patriots win short-handed, Cardinals lament slow start

Motorcycle crash survivor beats challenges, walks again

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Video: North Korea conducts 5th nuclear test

[Image]

NEWS FOR MASON CITY AND NORTH IOWA

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