

Why do I fly red-eyes?

I was definitely more sensible when younger. There wouldn't have been a chance in the world you could put me onto a red-eye flight. But these last few years, something's changed, for the worse. I now look at a red-eye as an opportunity to get an extra day in, since my traveling is being done at night. What's left out of this equation is the fact that sleeping is generally done at night as well, and I don't sleep well on planes, so add it all up and you have me here in Washington DC, with my daughter, and it's 10:33pm here (7:33pm back home) and I really haven't slept since 7:45am yesterday. Dozed off slightly here & there during the movie on the plane ("Conviction" which actually looks worth watching under better conditions).

Presently, there are four of us here in DC, for the National Bicycle Summit (which I mentioned in a post a couple days ago). Steven and his wife Teri did the sensible thing, flying in today on a plane that left San Francisco at the remarkably-civil hour of 10am and arrived here at 6:30pm. Becky and I, on the other hand, boarded a plane last night at 10:30pm. Sort of. Well we did get on it, and then an hour later got back off, because of some sort of mechanical issue with the cockpit door, forcing us to switch to another plane. Eventually, just past midnight, we're in the air, touching down at JFK (yes, you're right, that's in New York, not DC) at about 8:15am. Why.



Becky atop the Empire State Building, with Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty as a backdrop

Why indeed. Well, I've never been to New York before, and I've always wanted to go to the top of the Empire State Building, or at least I have ever since first seeing the movie "Sleepless in Seattle." OK, those who really know me understand that probably my all-time favorite movie is "Robocop" which seems just a bit different. Don't ask, because I really can't tell you why movies like Robocop and V for Vendetta are my favorite genre but then have a weakness for certain "chick flicks." Meg Ryan may have something to do with it.

I did resist leaving a teddy bear on the observation platform, and, by the way, it's seriously crowded, not at all like in the movie. But it does have views to die for, and between that, Times Square, 30 Rock, seeing the ice skating rink that features prominently in so many (er, chick flick) films, visiting a friend's shop, and seeing "Hello Delli" of David Letterman fame, it was a fun time. We did the subway thing, then did the train thing from Penn Station in New York to Union Station in DC. By the way, do not buy the "business class" seats on the regional Amtrak train. I did so, believing from their literature that that was the only way I was going to get electrical power so I could get work done on my laptop. Er, no. Upon exiting the train I checked out a "coach" car, and they get power too. And there's virtually zero difference in seat comfort. And and and... ok, not done with this yet... it's a lot more difficult using a laptop on a train than a plane because a train isn't nearly as smooth, at least not what passes for trains in this country.