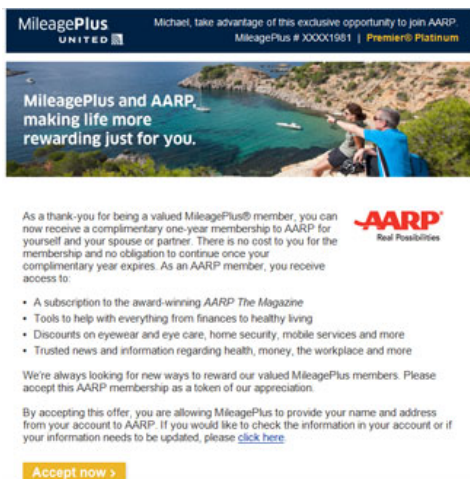


I'm not dead yet!



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This is what I get in my inbox. Absolutely no respect for me from United Airlines. Am I going to get a discount coupon for Skylawn Cemetery in tomorrow's emails? Maybe nursing home, er, I mean, "assisted living" brochures in the mail?

I used a blowtorch on the invitation the AARP sent me in the mail last year. I suppose they think sending an email means I'm less-likely to produce on-line vitriol again? They're wrong. 57 is just a number. 65 will be just a number. 70 will be... well, tell you the truth, 70 does scare me a bit. At some point I'll wonder if that last ride over Sonora Pass was the last ride over Sonora Pass I'd ever do. At some point I'll not be thinking about scaling back, but probably actually have to.

I'm not there yet, and I don't plan to be anytime soon. So don't talk to me about taking a vacation on a cruise ship (Little-known fact about cruise ships- they're actually run by aliens seeking to fatten you up for their dinner). Don't tell me that I've worked hard enough all my life that I've "earned" some nice quiet time doing nothing.



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Breaking news! This just arrived in my email box a day later. Again, I'M NOT DEAD YET!

How much time do I have? I don't know if I might get stricken some day with something like my father got (a rare blood-borne cancer), which took his strength and his life, 25 years ago. Younger than I am now. But what I do know is that each and every day is an opportunity to do something. Something real. Something more relevant, to me, than a "Senior Citizen" discount at the movies, or a great deal at the Scooter Store. My plan, and remember, there's always a plan, is to go down screaming and kicking. I literally pray to God that I can execute that plan. --Mike--