

## Time to eat the donuts

Tim Borges, center, recently brought in a selection of the Portuguese fried pastries *filhoz* (or *malasadas*) for his teammates. Enjoying them, from left, are Narea Wilson, Cynthia Portillo, Shardae Clark and Emi Aiko.

photo by Elmer Tosta



## SFO welcomes four more new teammates

BY STEVE FREITAG

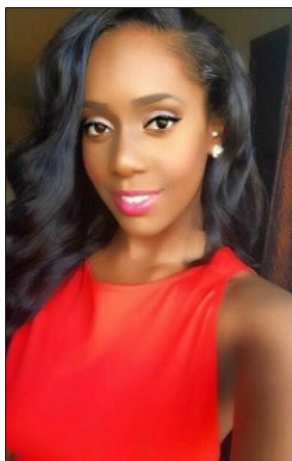
Four new teammates are joining the SFO station this week, shoring up the ranks in wake of recent transfers by some longtime Virgins to other stations.

Crystal Obazuaye came to Virgin America because it is, in her words, "an awesome airline."

"I remember my first flight with Virgin. I was going to Vegas and just the atmosphere on the aircraft excited me. It felt like a nightclub in the sky. So when it came time to choosing an airline to work for, Virgin was at the top of my mind."

Before coming to VX, Crystal worked as a brand ambassador for an event marketing company. She also recently graduated from San Jose State.

Training (at LaGuardia this time, after the last class trained in Dallas) was a good chance to get to know her future



**Crystal Obazuaye**

teammates, as well as Virgin teammates who will be working at other stations, she said.

In her spare time, Crystal likes editing photos, beauty blogging, sleeping, and attempting to cook. Her favorite travel destinations are Las Vegas, Los



**Rahel Bahlibi**

Angeles "and now New York, since that's where my training was."

To her future teammates, Crystal says she can't wait to meet them. "It's going to be a blast working together."

Rahel Bahlibi always wanted to be in the airline industry and loved the culture of Virgin America, "so I jumped at the opportunity when I saw an opening."

Before Virgin, Rahel worked as a beauty rep for Target. She found training to be thorough and yet fun.

"Got to meet some amazing people from all over the nation and was lucky enough to spend three weeks in New York." She also lauds her instructors – Daniel, Sean and Glenda – for making training a great experience.

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Attending training in New York are Jessica Ternullo-Lupis, Crystal Obazuaye, trainers Glenda Aparicio and, Sean Jaochico, Rahel Bahlibi and Analise Duenas.

## 4 additional GSTs join the SFO crew

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In her free time, Rahel likes to spend time with her nephew, and when she's not doing that, she likes to cook, curl up with a good book, work out and travel as much as possible. Her favorite travel destinations are Miami and Las Vegas, and she adds that she looks forward to meeting and working with her future teammates.

Jessica Ternullo-Lupis of Redwood Shores said that "Once I flew Virgin America ... that was it!" She has four children, and traveled a lot between SFO and NYC. "Once VX started service I was hooked! We all were! My kids even refuse to fly another airline!"

She says she loved how the Virgin experience was always great, from start to finish. "This was a company I wanted to be a part of," she added. Before Virgin, Jessica worked at the "Town" restaurant in San Carlos, running private parties, which she continues to do.

In her spare time, she enjoys time with her family. "There are always some sports or kids activities to be done," she said. "We like to take a lot of vacations together, and the kids have already started making their lists of places they would like to go, so I guess it's up to them now that VX has given me the opportunity to visit some great places!"

To her new Virgin teammates, Jessica says, "I am super excited to make new friends and have a lot of fun! Woo hooo!"

Our fourth new teammate, Analise Duenas, did not provide any information in time for publication, so she will be included in the next issue.



**Jessica Ternullo-Lupis**



### **Black-and-orange is the new black**

Showing off their San Francisco Giants colors recently at the gates are Cynthia Portillo, Denise Goode and George Maseda. **See more photos of teammates wearing Giants jerseys on page 8.**

# WOW! BQ

The annual station picnic, the WOWBQ (or perhaps the WOWBBQ), was held in early October at a Foster City park. In addition food and games, raffle prizes were awarded, with the grand prize (a big screen television) going to Claudio Brescia. Other teammates won cameras, gift cards, and other prizes.

## *photos by Yoni Godefa*

*Station chief Daryl Elsberg and GST Carolyn Giusti watch Peishou Liu set up a game of Jenga at the WOWBQ in early October, below. At right, Virginia Harte holds the chocolate-with-raspberry-filling Virgin cake she brought to celebrate the occasion.*

*Jenga photo below by Brad Fowler*





Attending the WOWBQ, clockwise from top left, are (among unidentified others) Peishou Liu and Carolyn Giusti; Chris Ewa and Ryan Barrick; Ian Lordi and Frank Rodriguez; Denise Goode, Erica Straub, Joey Morales, Virginia Harte; Maggie Curry, Carolyn Giusti, Peishou Liu and Ian Lordi; Ian Lordi and Carolyn Giusti; Carolyn Giusti and ex-GST Kim Roth; Linda Yan, Virginia Harte, Maggie Curry, Yoni Godefa, Jackie White-Leung and Edna McInerney; and Lisa Padian and Tim Horn.



Attending the WOWBQ, clockwise from top left, are (among unidentified others) Peishou Liu and Carolyn Giusti; Brad Fowler; Ray Wong and Chris Ewa; Grenna Tupas, Carol Carpinelli and Kim Roth; Maggie and Jamie Curry; and Jackie White-Leung and Kim Roth.





## ***FOD Walk 2014 aimed to take out the trash***

The yearly FOD Walk took place in early October, with Virgin teammates and other airport staffers taking to the fields and areas around the airport terminals to pick up FOD – or Foreign Object Debris, which is defined as any object that when run over, ingested or hit by an aircraft can cause damage to that aircraft. FOD, which can include aircraft rivets, nuts, bolts, wires, luggage hardware (such as locks, keys and wheels), parts of airport vehicles, pavement material, rocks, concrete, asphalt, construction material (such as wood and nails), as well as birds and other wildlife, costs the airport industry an estimated \$13 billion per year in delays, aircraft changes, fuels costs and unscheduled maintenance.

*Attending the 2014 FOD Walk are, above left, in center, Molly Lynn, Anu Kishnani, Elmer Tosta and Maritza Parra. Molly Lynn, above right, picks up some debris near the runways. Below, Molly, Maritza and Anu show off their work, and Anu and Maritza pick up debris off the ground. Below, the FOD walkers spread out to cover a wide area.*





## ***SFO proves it has ‘the eye of the tiger’***

Resident GST filmmaker Claudio Brescia recently shot a video of SFO teammates lip-syncing to the popular song, “Eye of The Tiger,” by the group Survivor. The song was prominently featured as the theme song for the 1982 movie *Rocky III*.

“It was just something I did for fun on my downtime,” said Claudio. “It’s a good song – it gets everyone pumped up.”

The four-minute video (which can be viewed at <http://vimeo.com/107755554> ) features dozens of teammates, both GSTs and leadership, as they go about their airport duties with swagger and confidence (and occasionally boxing and doing push-ups, paying homage to the song’s *Rocky* origins), lip-syncing such lyrics as:

*“It’s the eye of the tiger, it’s the thrill of the fight  
 Risin’ up to the challenge of our rivals  
 And as the last known survivor stalks his prey in the night  
 And he’s watchin’ us all with the EYYYYYYYE ... of the tiger.”*

The video also looks like it was a lot of fun to create, as when Willie Suenaga is leading a group in pumping their fists, or when Patrice Lawrence is whipping her hair around in time to the music and the hair hits Monica Valiente right in the face, causing Monica to break character and start laughing.

Claudio says he’d like to make another video soon, possibly with another high-energy ‘80s-style power ballad, by a band like Journey (“Don’t Stop Believing,” “Lights”), Queen (“We Are The Champions,” “We Will Rock You”) or Bon Jovi (“Livin’ On A Prayer,” “Wanted Dead Or Alive”).

“The things you can do with downtime!” Claudio said.



## Goodbye to Nikki

SFO teammates recently gathered at the Standby bar in South San Francisco for a going-away party for Nikki Fitzpatrick, who is heading to Dallas to work at Virgin's Love Field station. Nikki, in center at right, is surrounded by Michelle Talford, Courtney Whitfield and Stefani Lewis. Below, even more teammates gather round Nikki to wish her well at her new location.



photos contributed by Lora Reichhold

## YES, WE ARE GIANTS FANS



It's not just our planes that show support for our hometown baseball team, but also teammates Wendy Caponi, Aracely Sandoval and Cristin Cornewell, above; and Cynthia Portillo and Joanie Raffo, at left, with some small Giants fans and their Giants-loving Mom.

plane photo by Yoni Godefau



Some more interesting tidbits and factoids from Elmer's recent VXcellence newsletters ...

LEOs help with a situation on board an aircraft? Or medical personnel help out? Don't give any compensation to them, due to legal reasons. For the latter, giving compensation could jeopardize the "Good Samaritan provisions" of the law, which protects them from lawsuits for helping out in good faith.

Traveling to Mexico with an animal? Whether it's service or emotional support or just a plain old pet, it needs to have medical certificates with them, dated within 15 days of departure.

Cleaners need to stay out of the way while the plane is deboarding. No more than two cleaners (or "cabin grooming teammates") onboard while there are still guests onboard.

Members of the press are allowed to check in more than ten pieces of baggage at standard baggage fees.

A "gate return" is when the aircraft pushes out, receives an actual "out" time, and then, for whatever reason, has to return to the gate. Whether the tow bar was disconnected, how far the aircraft went – all of that is irrelevant. If there is an "out" time, then it's an official gate return, and OCC must be notified.

This should go without saying, but always document a PNR if there's anything out of the ordinary, such as when a guest is connecting and they might not make the connection. If the guest insists on trying to make the connection, document the PNR and inform the guest that fees associated with the misconnection are the guest's responsibility.



**FORE!** – Daryl Elsberg, Suzette Rabano and Tim Horn attend the Sixth Annual Virgin America Golf Tournament recently.

Can a guest carry medical marijuana on board? No. Allowing it to be carried could jeopardize our Air Carrier Operating Certificate. Remember, authorizing marijuana for medical use is something that states do, not the federal government.

Leadership has noticed that there are too many large bags finding their way to the gates – bags that should have been checked at in at the ticket counter. These oversized carry-on bags cause extra work for the gate team, of course, so what can you do? Be alert in the lobby and at check-in, and urge guests with oversized bags to check them in. Use the bag sizer to show them that their luggage is too large. As Elmer says, "Remember that our bag numbers are the best in the business and time to claim is quite short at our stations" during boarding time.

Ebola is in the news lately, but what you need to know regarding Virgin procedures is that we have to deny boarding to guests who appear to have serious health conditions that would make flying unsafe for them or for other guests on board. Also, in addition to a medical emergency kit, all our aircraft are equipped with alcohol-based hand wipes and antibacterial products as well as protective masks and latex gloves in the event that concerns arise during flight.

We now have web check-in for non-revs, but from what I've seen, there's still a few bugs in the system. Give it a little time before it works perfectly, as usual. Still, this is something we've been clamoring for, for a long time. It's daunting to arrive at the airport for your non-rev flight and be forced to wait in a line, when other travelers have the option to check in on the web.

Calling the gate to let them know a late-runner is on his or her way? One way you can help out the gates is to let them know if the late-runner has a carry-on bag, so they can be ready to take appropriate action if there is no more bin space. And if the late-runner has no bag, the gate team will know they can just shoo them onto the plane without any worries.

Gate checking a bag? Remember these questions:

1. Is this your final destination?
2. Do you have everything you need for your flight?
3. Do you have ID, keys, medicine, etc.?

And remember, tag the bag (at the ticket counter) when the guest is there in front of you. If the guest is already on the way to security, there's no one to "tell" in the "ask, tag and tell."



**FIELD THE LOVE** – Sir Richard Branson (center) welcomes Virgin teammates and the public to the opening of the Dallas Love Field station last week. Patrice Lawrence (seventh from the right) was there to enjoy the festivities, as was recently-transferred GST Virginia Balan (fourth from the right).

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Halloween is coming! One of the holidays that is the most fun at the airport, as we're allowed to dress up in costumes and stuff ourselves with candy, although who are we kidding, we'd stuff ourselves with candy every workday if we could. Just remember that your costume shouldn't cover up your face, for security reasons – you need to be the identifiable person pictured on your SIDA badge. Also, your footwear needs to be appropriate for work – not that it has to be work shoes, but it has to be enclosed, for safety reasons, and it shouldn't be slippery or prevent you from walking anywhere you need to walk, like on the jetbridge or outside. Other than that, have fun and use your imagination. In the past few years, I've seen teammates dress up as pharaohs, Bat-Girl, chefs, aerobics instructors (perfect for when you want to wear your most comfortable sweats and sneakers to work), Rastafarians, M&Ms, etc. One of my favorite costumes was the hippy one (seen there at the right) that I wore for Halloween 2012. (I missed Halloween at the station last year, darn it.)



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Just a reminder: This newsletter is by and for SFO GSTs, but we'd love to have more GST participation, especially with articles. Go somewhere? You could write an article about it. Or just share your photos and write captions. Have a passion or do something interesting? Write about it. At the very least, you'll have something to be proud of (or something for your resume) ... and you might get a lunch voucher out of it. And everyone who contributes to this newsletter is entered in a raffle for a prize at the end of the year.

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And speaking of which, I want to make sure that everyone who has donated photos and stories to this newsletter is entered in the year-end raffle. I'm keeping a running list of names, but I'm only human, and there might be someone whose name I forget or leave off, so next issue I'm going to print the list of contributors to the newsletter for this year. If you've contributed to the newsletter and your name isn't on there, let me know!

This 19th edition of **THE VIRGIN VILLAGER** was edited by Steve Freitag, with assistance from Elmer Tosta, and Supervisor Maritza Parra as our head honcho. This is YOUR newsletter, so why not contribute to our next issue, which should be out around Thanksgiving? Send your contributions (photos, stories) to [stephen.freitag@virginamerica.com](mailto:stephen.freitag@virginamerica.com) and you too can get your name in print! And maybe even win a lunch voucher, like Katie Ryan and Megan Apellanes did for our last issue!

And if you contribute to the **Virgin Villager**, you get entered into our big year-end raffle drawing!

*(If you ever buy state lottery tickets, remember . . .  
your odds of winning are much better here!)*

plus, we don't cost a dollar