

Mile-high excitement as VX launches service to Denver



Virgin America's several-times-daily service to Denver started March 15 with the usual celebration at both San Francisco and the destination city of Denver, complete with decorations, refreshments, souvenir swag, and, of course, Virgin founder Sir Richard Branson.

More photos on pages 8-9.

Dominique O'Neil, supervisor Miguel Diaz and Candice Benabou work the gate for the first Denver flight, at left, as Sir Richard makes a speech. At right, Dominique models a new piece of swag, a Virgin America ushanka (trooper hat).



Six new GSTs arrive at SFO

Six more new teammates just graduating from training and will be arriving at SFO as new GSTs this week.

Raneeta Ram, a native of South San Francisco, came to Virgin America because of her interest in traveling and turning that interest into a career. Before this, she was the front desk manager at Equinox Pine Street spa in San Francisco.

Raneeta's favorite travel destinations include "anywhere foreign/ international," and for hobbies, she likes traveling, reading, hiking, going on bike rides, and like many of her new teammates, days at the beach.

To her new colleagues, Raneeta would like to
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Raneeta Ram

... as Tim Horn departs

SFO's guest services manager Tim Horn announced recently that he will be leaving his position soon for a new one at HQ, as head of Virgin America's Policies and Procedures department.

Tim, a nine-year veteran of VX's guest services, said it was time for a change.

"I want each of you to know that I consider you all the greatest collection of team members ever," he wrote to the station. "Together we have taken SFO to tremendous heights and I have no doubts you all will continue to soar to even greater heights."

6 new GSTs

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say, “I’m very excited to be joining the VX team, as I was an SA3 for 4 years myself. Can’t wait to be a part of all the fun and wonderful stories I’ve always heard about!!



Raneeta Ram goes offroading in Pismo Beach, at right, has fun aboard a Virgin flight, and rides bikes in Barcelona with friends, including former GST Gabby Aramburo and Alice from tech ops.



Louisse Geronimo was born in Asia, but currently is living in South San Francisco. She says, “I’ve wanted to work for Virgin America since their first launch. I was a teenager at the time. I’ve felt a gravitational pull towards the ideals that the company holds about their passion for serving people and their love for travel and diversity the company upholds.” *(continued on next page)*



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Louise pursued a theater career before coming to Virgin, and also was a sandwich maker for a mom and pop place, which unfortunately closed down. Her favorite travel destinations are in southeast Asia, saying, “There are a lot of developing countries that won’t look the same in the near future and I want to be able to see them before their westernization.”

A self-professed foodie, she likes to try eating different foods, and also likes to hike on fun trails. She also says, “I’m very excited to get to know all of my AWESOME teammates and I hope that we we meet, we can share a laugh or two or three!” She also notes that she has a pretty good Christina Aguilera impersonation.



Michael Kang is originally from New York (and was born and raised in Queens) but has lived in San Francisco for the past ten years. He came to Virgin America because of “my fascination with air travel and aircrafts, and my love of working with people.”

“Also, knowing that Virgin America is such an innovative company that takes good care of

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their teammates attracted me to apply.”

Before coming to Virgin, Michael (also known as “Mick”) was a freelance make-up artist, and still likes playing with makeup and giving makeovers. .

His favorite places to travel include Provincetown, on Cape Cod, Minneapolis and Seoul, Korea.

To his new teammates, Michael would like to say, “Hellooooo teammates!,” adding that he is “super excited to be on board and looking forward to meeting you all and working together.”

And if you want to know a secret about Michael, it’s this: “I can wiggle my ears.”



Raychal Gomez is from Dallas and has lived in Texas for her entire life before moving to the bay area. She has been married for 32 years and is the mother of three and grandmother of four, and is “finally!” an empty nester.

She came to Virgin because her husband works in Tech Ops, and as a newcomer to the area (since January, she says they are looking for new friendships and getting acclimatized.

Raychal has been a hairstylist for twenty years, and she would love to go to Europe, “mostly Spain and Italy.”

“People and family are the things I enjoy, she says, as well as volunteering in her church. And in addition to people and laughter, she also loves the Texas Rangers.



To her new teammates, Raychal asks, “Please feel free to come up and give me a great big hug. I’m a long way from home.”



Raychal with a fellow Texas Rangers fan and her husband.



Ian Kai is from Hilo on the big Island of Hawaii but currently lives in San Francisco. He applied to Virgin America because “I wanted to work for a cool, fun and hip company and I think that Virgin America embodies all of that. The travel benefits are a definite plus!”

Ian currently works at a hotel downtown in Union Square, but prior to that he worked at Duke's Waikiki and went to the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

His favorite travel destinations are anywhere in Hawaii. In his free time he likes to make music or hang out with his friends and watch basketball.

To his new teammates, he'd like to say, “I'm excited to start and meet everyone!”



Aside from this shot of Ryan Barrick welcoming

Rajan

Nanavati at graduation, we know little of this mystery man! He's a riddle wrapped in a puzzle, wrapped in an enigma!

We hope to learn more about this mysterious Rajan in the next edition of this newsletter!

That is ... *if he really exists!*



New supervisor Bob Mullen, at left, with instructor Ryan Barrick, top center, welcomes the new SFO GST team: Ian Kai and the mysterious Rajan Nanavati at back; Michael Kang, Raychal Gomez and Raneeta Ram at center, and Lousse Geronimo in front.

Michael Kang delivers the valedictorian address, below. At right, the graduating class ... including GSTs in new Hawaiian uniforms!





Another green world

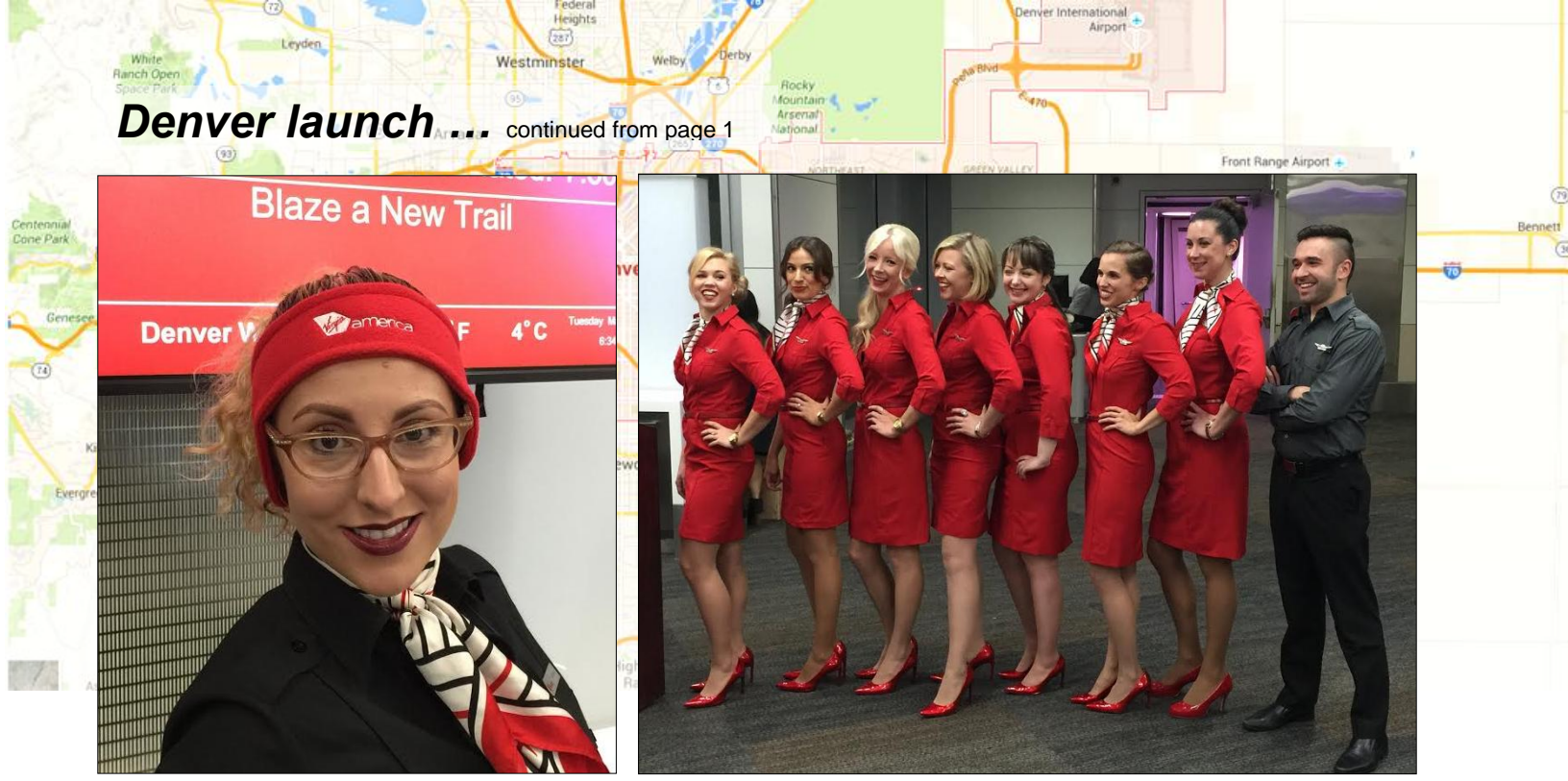


St. Patrick's Day is a holiday in commemoration of the patron saint of Ireland, but it's also a good time to break out the green.

Wearing green, from top left, Karen Funk; Nate Dizona and Suzette Rabano; Lisa Olson and Frank Rodriguez; and Frank, Cristina Ramos and Kaitlyn Davis.



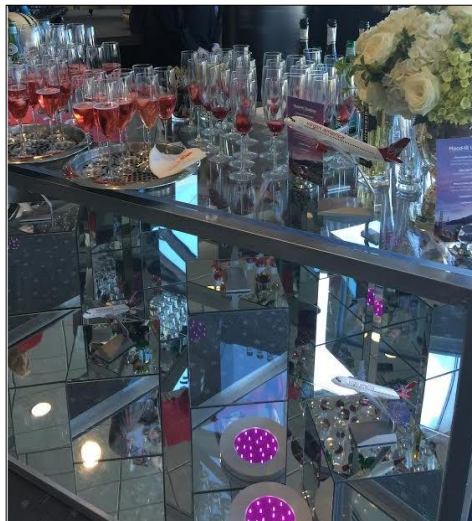
Denver launch ... continued from page 1



Clockwise from top left: Dominique O'Neil models a Virgin headband; the Denver promotional team lines up; Suzette Rabano blazes a new trail; a souvenir Denver pin; the Virgin America logo in Denver, Dominique and Candice Benabou show off new swag at the inaugural Denver flight; and Sir Richard Branson speaks to the crowd before the flight.



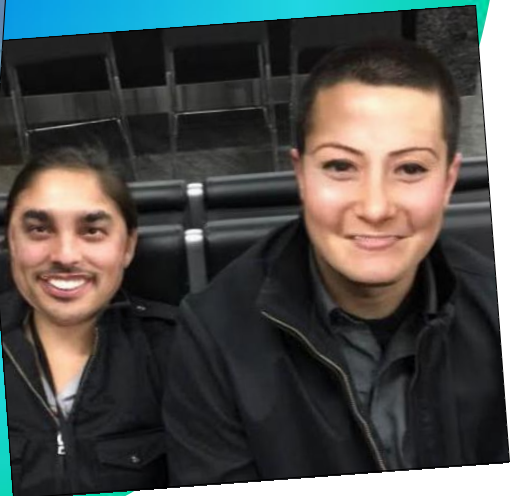
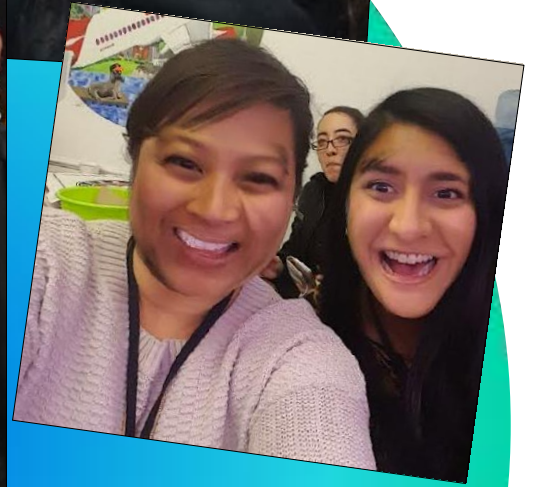
News photographers and the public crowd around to get information about the inaugural flight to Denver, above, as Denver Mayor Michael Hancock speaks. At right and below, a lounge in the Denver airport, with glittering refreshments and the Denver GST crew.



photos by Elmer Tosta, Ray Wong, Tim Valdivia and Sean Joachico

snapCHAT faceSWAP

This app has been causing a lot of hilarity around the station. Can you tell which teammate has which other teammate's face?



Photos by
Domenica Tonzillo,
Maritza Parra and
Marilyn Moore



Puppy power, once again

A regular tradition with Virgin America is “Operation Chihuahua,” in which the tiny dogs are flown by volunteers from Chihuahua-rich West Coast to the Chihuahua-deprived East Coast. Six of the dogs recently traveled on Virgin to JFK airport, accompanied by handlers. In a release, Virgin officials said “Virgin America first teamed up with the SF ACC to fly needy pups to new homes on the East Coast in 2010 to help address the influx of dogs at shelters on the West Coast. The overpopulation issue has only escalated since the original 2010 airlift, and as part of its long-standing partnership with and commitment to SF ACC, Virgin America is undertaking its sixth such airlift flight.”

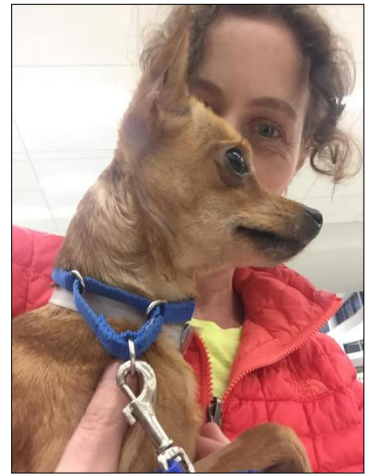


photo by Miguel Diaz

Creating WOW for a special team

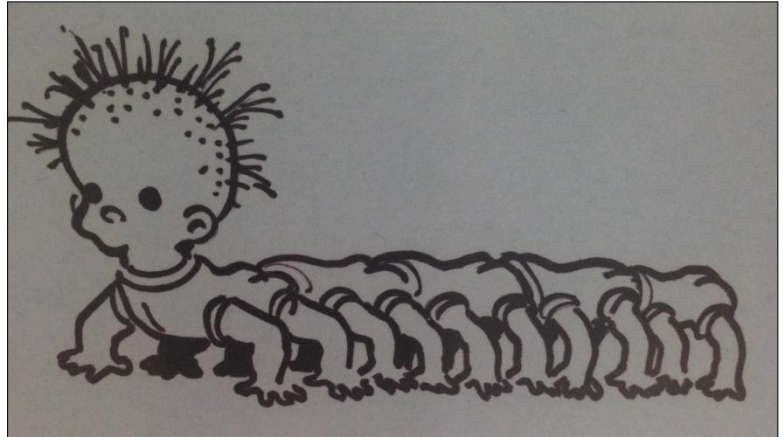
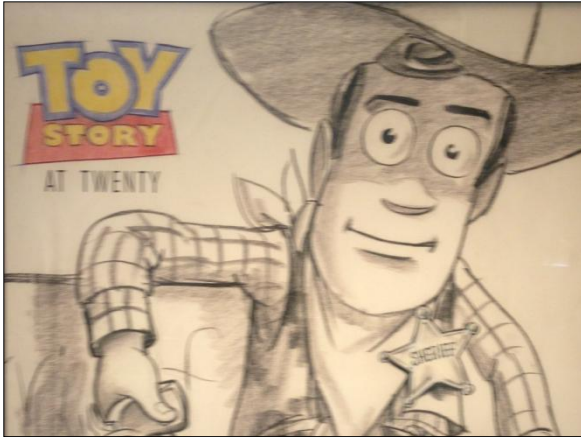
Elevate Gold member Lisa Nolan wrote to Virgin America in February asking for recognition for a team of boys who traveled last week (some by airplane for the first time) who were members of Frog Sports, the U12 AYSO soccer team for Redwood City, who were traveling to Arizona (via Las Vegas) for AYSO Western States Tournament.

As Nolan explained, AYSO is community-based soccer program -- no one is turned away because of ability or for economic reasons. Frog Sports is a team of 10-, 11- and 12-year-old boys at all skill levels who were selected based on a draw system that does not result in teams heavily favored based on player skill.

Frog Sports started its regular soccer season last October, and won every regular season, playoff, and tournament game -- 27 straight wins. “On most days the news is full of life’s disappointments and tragedies. These boys are the exception, they came together to play soccer and ended up making strong friendships, learning about the value of sportsmanship, and experience the thrill of being the best team on game day. These memories won’t leave them after the tournament,” Nolan wrote.

To celebrate the team’s accomplishments, supervisor Miguel Diaz set up a mock soccer field at the gate and had the team shoot goals, using a nerf soccer ball. Lourdes Pedemonte also made an announcement about the team and their accomplishments this season, Miguel said.

Toy Story's 20th celebrated at international terminal



If you're a '90s kid (or even if you're not) Pixar's original *Toy Story* probably brings back good memories. To mark the 20th anniversary of the trailblazing computer-animated movie, an exhibit in the international terminal looks at preliminary designs and sketches for the film.

KNOW YOUR AIRPORT

VIDEO KILLED THE BILLBOARDS – Where once were static billboards advertising incomprehensible business solutions, now are giant video screens, high on the wall between the ticket counter and the ATO, and also on the wall above Starbucks. The screens will probably soon be showing commercials again, but for now, enjoy commercial-free scenes of San Francisco.



SFO IN 1959 – Construction in terminal 1 is currently hidden from the public by temporary walls adorned with historic photos of SFO, including this shot of how the approach to the airport looked in 1959. (It's grown a little since then.)

VIRGIN TERRITORY

Our last newsletter only came out two weeks ago, so this one was thrown together rather quickly. Just enough time and space to mention a few items: **Tom MacVicar** returns to SFO this week as the new station director, as mentioned in our last newsletter ... an appreciation cookout will take place on the ramp Tuesday from 1100 to 1800 ... **Enrique Calvo** is returning as a GST ... and Tim Horn (who will be here for a little while longer) also announced that we'll be welcoming four more new teammates in April and six more in May. All good news!

– Steve Freitag

This 31st 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, out very soon? Send your contributions (photos, stories, recipes, cash) to stephen.freitag@virginamerica.com and you too can get your name in print!

THINGS WE HEAR TOO OFTEN



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