**CHAPTER TRAVEL FORUM UPDATE**

**By Dan Sockle and Terry Babin**

The Chapter’s second *Travel Forum* was held the evening of May 13th as a Zoom meeting. Nine members plus several spouses participated during the hour discussion.

Much of the second Forum continued the discussion about planning trips and traveling during the pandemic. Despite relaxing mask requirements and increasing vaccinations, travel restrictions and constraints mostly remain. The following advice from the first Forum remain applicable even though changes in guidance and rules are rapidly changing:

* Do your research for travel and destinations early before booking to determine testing requirements and timelines; then, frequently check for updates.
* Give yourself plenty of time to obtain the test, set up and do the test, and get the results back before commencing travel
* Airline and cruise websites are a good source of information about COVID-19 tests, and other requirements and restrictions.
* Many hotels and resorts can help arrange tests for the return trip to the U.S.A.—costs vary—but expect a $100 or more.
* Make sure you have a copy of all test results and other required COVID documentation on your cell phone as well as carrying printouts.

Other items of interest and discussion:

* Rental car prices are going up—significantly in some locations. Rental car companies reduced their fleet sizes. Now, demand is greatly exceeding supply. In several cases cited, prices have at least doubled in some places. Some recent post-forum sources have noted that prices in Europe are likewise ticking up. Costco was recommended as a source for finding the best rates.
* Some travel agents are continuing to report surging interest and reservations for tours and cruises for later this year and 2022. Key factor right now is “when” and “how” the European Union will reopen to tourism from the U.S.
* The following website was added to the recommended list of websites to research future travel: **vantagetravel.com.**
* Favorite travel destinations included in the discussion during the May 2021 Forum include:

\*\* Patagonia

\*\* Sacred Valley of Peru

\*\* Hawaii

\*\* Turkey

Next Forum Zoom meeting is 7:30 PM on Thursday, July 22nd.