



Life in the FAST LANE

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TOPICS:

Fourth of July Edition

First Impressions of America

A Dozen Key Elements of the
Greatest Nation on Earth

TO: Our Fast Lane Travel Family in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Dubai, Ecuador, all of Europe, Iceland, Iceland, Japan, Kuwait, New Zealand, South Africa, and the USA!



Fourth of July Edition

Dear Friends and Family of Fast Lane Travel,

Ahh, it's your morning/afternoon/evening/late night brew friend, Christina. Here to narrate another exciting week for you.

As we head into the Fourth of July holiday, I thought I'd start with the question many of you have been asking: How is Peter doing?

I'm happy to report that Peter continues to make steady progress following his carpal tunnel revision surgery. Better yet, he seems to be getting along far more comfortably than after the first procedure.

While recovery always requires patience, a virtue Peter occasionally treats as more of a suggestion than a rule, he's been steadily returning to the keyboard, corresponding with friends, planning tours, and doing what he loves most: writing.

Anyone who knows Peter knows that writing isn't simply a task on his to-do list. It's how he connects, reflects, and shares the wonderful stories that seem to find him wherever he goes. So, seeing him back at the keyboard has been a very welcome sign.

With Independence Day upon us, Peter and I were recently talking about his first impressions of America.

First Impressions of America

Like many Europeans of his generation, Peter arrived with a collection of expectations shaped by books, films, and stories. Peter's friend Richard, who had spent a year in Chicago, painted a very exaggerated picture of America before Peter left Austria. When Peter asked what America was like, Richard told him that **everyone chewed gum, got all their food from tin cans, and carried a six-shooter (revolver)**. Those comments became Peter's main expectations of America and left him both excited and a little nervous about what he would find

He expected America to be big. It certainly was. He expected the cars to be larger. They were. He expected people to be friendly. They were. But what surprised him most wasn't anything physical, it was optimism.

America seemed to operate on the belief that tomorrow could be better than today.

That optimism is woven into the nation's history. In 1776, a group of determined and often imperfect founders set out to create something remarkably ambitious: a government based on the idea that power ultimately belongs to its people. The Constitution that followed established a framework unlike any the world had seen, and the amendments that came afterward demonstrated a willingness to evolve, improve, and expand the promise of liberty to more Americans across generations.

The genius of the American experiment is not that its founders got everything right from the beginning. It's that they built a system capable of growth and self-correction. The Constitution remains a living testament to the idea that freedom requires both rights and responsibilities, and that every generation has a role in preserving those principles.





Perhaps that's why the Fourth of July resonates so deeply. It's not just about fireworks, cookouts, flags, and sparklers—although we'll happily take all four. It's about celebrating the freedoms that allow us to gather with family and friends, express our opinions, pursue our dreams, and chart our own course through life.

Freedom, after all, is not just a historical concept. It's something we experience daily in the choices we make, the roads we travel, and the adventures we pursue.

On Thursday Peter departed Florida for his annual 4th of July trip to Ohio. Today was meaningful to him because it was 66 years ago he made his first trip into Steubenville.

That evening, however, Peter heard loud explosions and what sounded like gunfire outside. Remembering Richard's warning that everyone carried guns, he became frightened and thought people were "killing each other in the street." Having lived through wartime bombing as a child, the noises reminded him of the war. He later learned the sounds were simply Fourth of July fireworks, not gunfights.

This excerpt is from the book Peter is writing, and coming from the fresh perspective of a new place, we can appreciate all of our surroundings and what makes our country so great.

"Steubenville was paradise. It was a fabulous summer in 1960. I can't describe the feeling of elation I had every day that I woke up. The houses in "Country Club Estates" were all sitting on their own lots with trees, long driveways and their own garages. There were no fences. No walls. No moats . . . one lot flowed into the other. Dick and Toodie Vaughan did not have a garage. The lots of all the houses were interconnected it was like one big nicely groomed park. In front of each house stood a mail box. I

had seen mailboxes in the Donald Duck comic strips that I read as a kid in Austria. Every afternoon, even on Saturdays, a little Jeep-looking right-hand-drive vehicle came around the neighborhood with a postman delivering the mail. Each mail box featured a red metal "flag" on the side of it. If you put the red flag up, the mailman knew that you wanted mail picked up which you had deposited in the mail box. Milk in a bottle was delivered in the morning by a Spahn's Dairy truck by a man in a white uniform with a thin red bow tie and a policeman's white cap. Used bottles, diligently washed by Mrs. Vaughan, were put out on the front porch. Each morning a newspaper was also delivered by a kid who even put the paper between the screen and front door when it rained.



Screen doors were a totally new invention that I had never seen. They apparently were designed to keep bugs out of the house. They were spring loaded and closed noisily but automatically if you didn't hold them open. Likewise, windows also had screens outside the glass. Everything was new to me . . . everything was wonderful. I was in America, albeit on a visitor's visa, but I was here and relished every minute of it.

I particularly like the July mornings when the day wasn't hot yet, the grass still moist and, depending which way the breeze blew, I smelled clean crisp air or the pungent odor from the Coke mill across the Ohio River in Follansbee or the blast furnaces from Weirton Steel in West Virginia. “

Well said, Peter.

Here we would take a more than a moment to talk about our upcoming Dolomites Tour or the Tuscany Tour. Some would say it's an opportunity – maybe even a privilege to experience other parts of the world while appreciating our roots. But this week, we have set aside for a more renewed vibrance of appreciation and a few more words from the man, (the mystery, lately) himself!

Happy 250th Birthday America!

My Personal Dozen Key Elements of the Greatest Nation on Earth

1. People kid each other . . . reverse compliments are considered funny.
2. There are no fences in the neighborhoods, one-yard flows into another.
3. Mailboxes in front of our houses have no locks on them.
4. We actually know our neighbors' first names.
5. People greet each other or wave to each other when walking.
6. We assume responsibility, as we freely state when something is “my fault.”
7. We congratulate good fortune by saying “good for you” and do not know Schadenfreude.
8. We operate under the common law.
9. Americans have the protection of the Second Amendment.
10. America has enforced laws against discrimination.
11. Americans are, by far, the most generous people on earth.
12. Perhaps, I am the epitome of the American dream. I arrived with \$14.00 in my pocket in 1960. And 30 years later, with generous and supportive investors, plus amazing guidance, was able to build a \$2.4 billion travel corporation.

Thank you, **Fast Lane Founders:** Stephen A., Ralph M., Leslie and Barry M., John A., Hal R., Russell R., George S., Paul B., Eddy Y., and Eleanor S., who believed in me and my American Dream.

A huge thank you, Fast Lane rescuers, especially to my brother Dave H. and my good friends John H., Eddy Y., and Frank W., who supported us, and literally saved our company, as we stood at the edge of the Covid Abyss.



Plus, we owe immense gratitude to all of our **Fast Lane Travel Customers Family**, who have joined us on dozens, no hundreds, of Porsche trips.

Lastly, all of Fast Lane's Porsche happiness creation was only possible due to our remarkable **US Team:** Christina, Wendy, Cindy, Dana, Charles, Heather, Robert and Ayden; plus our awesome **European Team:** Volker, Thomas, Tilman, Johnny, Miro, Fabian, Stefan, Ralph, Gerald, Dawid, Fred, Hans, Ilse, Richard, Paul, Jr. and Paul Sr., Sissy, Christiane, Emma and Leonard.

Fast Lane, for the Past 50 years, has also been a key supporter, booster and cheerleader for the Porsche Company in Stuttgart and Leipzig, PCNA in ATL and PCNA in YYZ, who have shown their appreciation for our European Delivery Program and enjoyed the accolades from happy delivery customers.

Our 50 years of success is underscored by the wonderful support from Dr. Wolfgang Porsche, Bernd W., Mathias M., Dawid K., James S., Laura R., Joey B-R., Michael N., Markus N., Paul G., Harald K., Anja E., Marius L., Jochen B. and Roland C. Hundreds of new Porsches have been sold as a direct result, over that last 50 years due to Fast Lane's Porsche Tours, as appreciated by the executives in Germany.

See you soon in Stuttgart and Leipzig, your Festmeister, Peter Sontag: peter@fastlanetravel.com;

And signing off for now, and bidding you all a very safe, happy, festive and wonderful 4th of July.

Merrily holding down the fort,
(my brew is different this time!)

Christina Richardson







Please stay healthy and happy. I'm looking forward to the great times we will have together again with my Team on one of the fabulous tours we are planning for 2026. All the best to you, **Peter**

