EMAIL CAN BE FRAGILE

If you are reading this, you likely received the latest FLYING CIRCUS Newsletter via email. The 380th Bomb Group Association is moving increasingly to using email rather than USPS mail (often called Snail Mail) to save money as postal mail costs continue to increase. Using this "free" service does come with some problems, however. Email can be fragile.

The first problem is that people can easily change their email address without changing their physical address. Changing email from @comcast.com to @gmail.com is fast and easy. If you do not tell us that you have changed your email address, we have no way of sending you email at the new address. We also see this as people changing their "name," for example, from xxx@gmail.com to xxx123@gmail.com. When you change your email or are informed that a fellow member is now using a different address, PLEASE let us know by sending information to 380th.ww2@gmail.com.

In addition to us sending to the wrong addresses because we don't have current email information, we continue to have problems with people not receiving email that we know was sent to the correct addresses. These are most often traced back to various email systems trying to eliminate "spam." This term is from a Monty Python sketch which used it to stand for something ubiquitous, unavoidable, and repetitive. The volume of spam email has grown steadily since the early 1990s. 2021 estimates say that 319 billion emails were sent daily worldwide and that 90.3% of US Internet users regularly use email. In December of 2021, spam accounted for 45% of all email traffic.

The amount of daily spam is decreasing because of aggressive efforts by email vendors. These efforts, however, sometimes come at a cost. For any given definition of spam, there are communications that might match that definition that are important to some. Early efforts tried to ban "dirty words." Not only do some words have multiple meanings, but these kinds of restrictions are also easily defeated by obvious spelling or punctuation changes.

Email providers started to deliver suspected messages to a "Junk Mail" or "SPAM" folder rather than to the standard "Inbox" but this also became ineffective. Currently, many email providers are simply not delivering suspected spam email at all. Current estimates are that 80% of all email is never actually delivered because of these restrictions. Our challenge is to be sure our email doesn't look like spam and we are working hard to achieve that.

Some email providers also use a "block list" of believed sources of spam email. All email from those listed sites is discarded as junk and not delivered.

As you can see, email can be fragile. The message here is that we need your help. **If email is not arriving for you or fellow members you know, please report that to 380th.ww2@gmail.com.** We cannot guarantee we can fix things beyond our control but we will certainly try.

Adapted from a "Tech Bytes" article by Scott Ksander, PURA newsletter, October 2022 (used with permission). Scott served as VP, Information Technology for Purdue Federal Credit Union and he also served as Executive Director for IT Networks and Security for Purdue University responsible for the data and voice networks and the information security functions for the central IT group (ITaP). Scott was also the University's Chief Information Security Officer and held an appointment as an Assistant Professor in the College of Technology where he was part of the Computer Forensic program. Scott is now an official Purdue retiree.