

PASSPORT UPDATES AND REAL ID'S DISCUSSION

- 1) It was 2007 that the government made the infamous rules that passports are needed for entering Mexico and Canada and for use on cruises.
- 2) This is 10 years later and there is expected to be a backlog of RENEWALS so plan on checking your expiration dates and get going on it if inside of 6 months before expiration.
- 3) You have an automatic **26 page Passport in an initial application** and a choice to also get the **Passport Card** (*unless you live in a border state to Mexico and Canada and travel it regularly and don't do other International travel - I personally think this is a waste of \$*) **AND If you have a passport why get also a passport card for the additional \$20<>?...OR** optionally you can order a **52 page Passport Book (no additional cost)**. [Ron and I always get the larger one] **Keep in mind, some countries REQUIRE blank pages i.e. Africa, some of their countries require a minimum of 2 consecutive blank pages**, and to add pages when you find you don't have enough blanks will costs the same as a full renewal, suggestion: go for the renewal and 52 pages. You will get another Passport Number. [Ron and I had to renew 4 years early because of this problem...so went for the larger BOOK]
- 4) Changes: NO GLASSES FOR PASSPORT PHOTOS. Used to be O.K. NOT NOW. If you do try to send your passport application or renewal in and your picture doesn't work, you WASTE A LOT OF TIME....cuz the passport office will return the paperwork to you and you'd have to resend it correctly. Pictures at SAMS and COSTCO are quick and inexpensive.
- 5) Youth Passports are only good for 5 years but now you must have notarized forms for parents and/or guardians for reissue. Renewals are not allowed for minors if the passports are expired or almost expired. You must prove your relationship to the child.
- 6) REAL ID'S will be required for most states after Jan. 2018. (was extended from Jan. 2017) However, a handful of states have extensions to 2020. However, I'll post on my site the list of states that have the various extensions...but the most important issue AND all travelers should just GET THE PASSPORT NEW OR RENEWED as it is the only valid form of citizenship.
- 7) All new passports issued in the US will have CHIPS in them with all of our personal information.