American Airlines Newsroom

NEWS RELEASE

Tyler’s Mad Dog Days

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Like many American Airlines team members, Phoenix-based Flight Attendant Tyler Herrick has a special place in his heart for the McDonnell Douglas MD-80, aka the Super 80, aka Mad Dog. His memories span from childhood trips with his dad — a De-icing Manager for American in Chicago — to cleaning the aircraft and loading cargo to today serving as a flight attendant.

Take a walk down memory lane with Tyler as he reflects on the days with the Mad Dog.

My earliest memories of this bird are flying in it with my dad. I’ll miss the smell of Jet A fuel, the taste of orange juice and the hum of the bistro bag cart waiting for customers in the jetbridge on early morning flights to somewhere new.

The Mad Dog took me to see extended family in the summers and also on spontaneous day trips. One of my favorite trips as a kid was a surprise day trip to Washington, D.C.

My first job working with an MD-80 was dumping the lavs. I still remember thinking about how cool it was that my job was to care for the aircraft that took me so many places as a kid.

When it came to loading luggage, someone had to be in the bin. In the winter, that was a cozy place to be, but in summer, you’d probably wish you were back outside dumping the lavs.

In all the roles I’ve had over the years, I’ve learned the ins and outs of this bird. When I finally got my wings and became a crew member, I couldn’t wait to go back to the MD-80. It felt like home.

I'll miss some of the nuances of flying on the aircraft. The tail cone jumpseat came with the added perk of a free back massages (courtesy of those roaring JT8D engines) and drops of water on your head when it rained.

I'll miss seeing this friend in the sky. Before it retires, I hope I'll get one more chance to greet customers from the cabin.