



# Flying Tiger Line Pilots Association

*Pilots and employees of the Flying Tiger Line, dedicated to preserving the memory of a great airline and those who served in China and in World War II*

**Special Post Reunion Issue  
Summer 2016**

Hello Tigers,

All who attended our **42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Reunion** last month were in agreement that another successful event was created in the beautiful wine country of Napa Valley. Close to 340 members and guests gathered for their yearly dose of *Tiger Spirit*. As hurdle after hurdle was thrown at us by the hotel a *Can Do* attitude was quickly required and was gratefully appreciated by those of us responsible for the event's success. On behalf of my fellow officers I want to personally thank you for your patience and understanding as we all worked together, like a crew, through the various problems we encountered. It was like the good old days – **it was absolutely perfect!**

However, I want to stress to everyone how disastrous this would have all been had it not been for the expertise and dedication of our group's planner, Sandy White. Besides all of the duties she is normally tasked with, Sandy was instrumental in creating, and then successfully clearing, a Wait List for those who made room reservations too late, helping with individual room requests, setting up a group balloon ride, and then holding the hotel management's proverbial feet to the major fires that kept igniting. She saved us all a lot of money and put the icing on the cake. Thank You Sandy!

It was wonderful having some of our more senior members attend whom we haven't seen in awhile like the Cottings, Germaines, Bob Gilbert and Gretchen Auerbach. At 94 years old, even Starr jumped into his car and made the

10-hour solo drive up Interstate 5. After overshooting his destination, and with the help of a DF steer by a very nice local couple, he safely limped into town on Thursday. I was extremely relieved and am happy to report that he made it safely back to base on the return trip home. He told me it was the best reunion he's ever attended.

I was especially happy to see some first timers (*Tiger Cubs*) like Rick and Nancy Toms, as well as a larger than normal representation by our Life Members who came in place of their husbands who have Flown West. We even had Ray Rignel's grand baby in our Hospitality Suite at one point. As we all know, there isn't a legacy airline around that gets together and has as much fun as we do. You all deserve a hand for showing up and making it happen year after year! Spread the word, talk a Tiger into coming next year, and let's keep it rolling!



Bob Gilbert, Hank Germain, Bob Stickler,  
Sandy White, and Peter Okicich

Next month I'm meeting Sandy in Portland to make sure all is in order for our reunion next May at the Red Lion Hotel – Janzten Beach. You can expect the next newsletter in September with specific details on making reservations and submitting your Registration Form.

Until then I hope that you all have a great summer!

John Dickson  
President - FTLPA

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## Napa Reunion Recap



*Hospitality Suite on Friday Night*

Except for a little rain on Friday, the weather was perfect throughout our weekend together, and the mood was just right for everyone to spread out on day tours and enjoy all that the wine country had to offer us. Hotel renovation and relocation issues disappeared thanks to the magic that is Napa, California.

Like clockwork, our group assembled each evening in the Hospitality Suite to share their experiences of the day and embellish on stories heard numerous times over the years. It's what we do best.

Beginning on Thursday, golfers from our group met at the Chardonnay Golf Club for a round of play. Team Roeder/Okicich won with the lowest team score. Roger Adams had the longest drive and Anek Smith won the prize for closest to the hole. Any numbers beyond that got a little fuzzy after the 19<sup>th</sup> hole.

On both Thursday and Friday, smaller groups took advantage of tours especially designed for our group by Platypus Tours, with visits to smaller boutique wineries and the opportunity to hear more intimate explanations of how wine is made at each of them. It was very educational for those who took advantage of the opportunity.



*Paul Rebscher, John Montmorency,  
Chuck Alonso, and Bob Stickler*

If there was a highlight to our reunion it would have to be the lunch on Friday that approximately 172 Tigers and their guests enjoyed in dedicated "Tiger Cars" while aboard the Wine Train's *Gourmet Express*. Although it rained on and off during the trip, everyone was in agreement that the experience was much better during the day when the vineyards could be seen as the group lumbered down the track.



*Sharon Sowell, Freida Erickson,  
Ernie & Bette Belanger*



*Houston Wray, Jeri Lange, Kathy Spillane,  
and Debbie Rickman*



*George, Julie, & Geoff Gewehr*

On Friday night our Hospitality Suite was filled with enough capacity to get a 747 to Kadena and back. Old friends were reunited, new friendships were born, and we celebrated our good fortune in being together again.



*Joe & Joan Crecca with  
Jeff & Maggie Seidman*



*Bob Gilbert, Starr Thompson, Gretchen Auerbach,  
and the young guy, Peter Okicich*



*Bill Cheney & Bill Lawbaugh*





Georganne Seavey belting out our National Anthem

On Saturday morning (to more than a couple grumblings about a 9AM start time), the Business Meeting was called to order by FTLPA President, John Dickson, followed by another wonderful rendition of our National Anthem by Georganne Seavey. After a moment of silence for those members who had *flown west* since our last meeting, a grateful applause was given to those members attending in place of their husbands who have already pushed back on their final flight. There is no doubt that these Life Members embody the term *Tiger Spirit*. The men that we shared such a camaraderie and fellowship with are surely reunited with us by the presence of these wonderful ladies.



JoNell Kocisko

The following Agenda Items were then discussed:

- The 2017 Reunion will be held in Portland from May 17<sup>th</sup> to May 20<sup>th</sup> at the Red Lion Hotel-Janzten Beach. Side activities will include dinner at the Evergreen Air & Space Museum on Friday night, a golf and tennis tournament, and a possible contest involving those wishing to bring their pets. Stay tuned for more details.
- The 2018 Reunion will be held from May 2<sup>nd</sup> to May 5<sup>th</sup> at the Renaissance Hotel in Palm Springs. Side activities will include dinner at the Palm Springs Air Museum on Friday night. This year will be our Flight Attendant Recognition Banquet to honor all of our former cabin crews.
- For the 2019 Reunion decision, a long discussion began regarding input for a choice between Dayton, Ohio and the Los Angeles area. Many quality points were made and after careful consideration the Executive Board later decided among themselves that the group would be best served if we held our 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion in the Los Angeles or Long Beach area. Side trips will involve the Los Angeles Flight Path Museum and a visit to the space shuttle Endeavour at the California Science Museum. We hope to give Dayton, where the U.S. Air Force Museum is located, another shot for 2020.
- A proposal was made by Phil John to change the current FTLPA Bylaws to allow more than one qualified person to be accepted as an Honorary Tiger in the future. After much discussion, it was put to vote and the current Bylaws will remain unchanged to allow multiple nominations for consideration, but only one final Honorary Tiger to be voted on and accepted by the membership.
- Explanation of the \$31,000 ALPA Fund and recognition of the two that made it possible - former ALPA Merger Committee Chairman, Bill Mayfield who was in attendance and Mike Arcumuzzi for follow up as active ALPA representative. Ideas discussed for the use of this fund were museum donations, web site modernization, student education grants, and A/V equipment for slideshow and video presentations in our hospitality suite.
- Outgoing Flight Attendant Representative, Robin Pestarino, was recognized for her hard work on behalf of the F/A group over the past 10 years. Former FTL Flight Attendant, Joyce Daniels, has stepped in to fill her shoes.
- In what has to be described as a very bizarre ceremony, FedEx Captain Bob Cecchi was nominated and confirmed as an Honorary Tiger within our association. Click on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VzgTnMKDeZ0> for the You Tube video of the presentation *Being Made as a Flying Tiger*.



Business Meeting



Bill and Agnes Mayfield  
Former FTLPA Vice President and  
ALPA Merger Committee Chairman



Joyce and George Gewehr  
with Robin Pestarino



Honorary Tiger  
Bob Cecchi

- Plaques for our old DC8 simulator, made possible by membership donations from “passing the hat” at the business meeting in New Orleans, was presented to Charles Kennedy and Guy Van Herbruggen. Former head of DC8 training, Dave Morris, was instrumental in finding the plaques in the back of the beverage cart rolled in by Rudi Kohlbacher. See below for more details.



The meeting was followed by an excellent presentation from Charles and Guy regarding their future project – a book dedicated to the former FTL/SWA/FDX Boeing 747s that we all flew. These gentlemen collected stories, photographs, and articles for two days. However, they are still in need of unique material. Please see more below on how you can help contribute to this project.

After taking a break from a formal banquet last at last year's reunion, it was really enjoyable to get together once again as a group in the Grand Ballroom of the



*John and Rudi presenting the plaques*



*Bill & Agnes Mayfield with Gael Okichich*

Napa Marriott. While we gathered for reception cocktails, Eliot set up for studio photographs using our large Flying Tiger flag and the plaque given to Guy & Charles to dedicate our airline's founder, Bob Prescott.

As the dessert was being served, John asked for everyone's attention as Robin Pestarino's birthday and service to FTPLA as our F/A Representative was acknowledged. Diana Cisek spearheaded an effort to create a nice photo album and purchase a wonderful globe with the following inscription – *Your Tiger Family Thanks You For A World Of Memories.*



*The King and Queen of the Ball  
Starr Thompson and Ann (Pierce) Royall*



*Susan Skinner with the John Skinner Band*



***Thanks Robin!***

*Diana Cisek, Robin, Josie Gibson,  
Leslie Pfeifer, and Joyce Daniels*



*Robert (John) Dixon at the beach  
after winning the TigerShark Cruiser.*

Later that evening, while taking a break from dancing to the wonderful sounds of the John Skinner Band, raffle tickets were drawn for the door prizes. Georganne Seavey and Jim Stenger both won \$400 each in the 50/50 game, and Robert (John) Dixon won the Electra Tiger Shark bike.



*New F/A Representative, Joyce Daniels  
receiving flowers from President, John  
Dickson*





## Napa Reunion Photos

During the New Orleans Reunion, a hat was passed for donations to the ongoing efforts by Mr. Charles Kennedy, Mr. Guy Van Herbruggen, and others to relocate and restore our former FTL DC8 simulator to an aviation museum in Belgium. Using the \$1,100 generously collected from the members in attendance, a special caste iron plaque recognizing our former company and founder, Robert Prescott, was especially designed and created by Rudi Kohlbacher who spearheaded the effort. This tribute to our heritage will be permanently affixed to simulator for all to see for years to come, a testimony to the our motto, *The Tiger Spirit Lives On!*



Charles Kennedy, Rudi Kohlbacher, Guy Van Herbruggen, and John Dickson.



A second bronzed plaque positioned below it reads:

*The members of the Flying Tiger Line Pilots Association  
Hereby dedicates this plaque to honor Airline founder Robert W. Prescott,  
The men and women of the World's Largest All Cargo Airline  
To generations of airline flight crews whom trained in our "Mighty-Eight"  
Wish to thank the individuals, donors and museum staff  
To all those responsible in its rescue, restoration and preservation  
The long journey from FTL headquarters Flight Training Center in LAX  
To its current home in Mons - St. Ghislain, Belgium  
The members of FTLPA share in gratitude to the efforts of*

*Charles Kenney  
Peter Kirschen  
Guy Van Herbruggen  
Eric Verlie*

*For their courage, vision and tenacity to begin this historical project*

The following is a copy of an email received from them after the reunion.

*The Tiger Spirit Live On...*

*We would like to thank you the FTLPA and the Tigers' family for their hospitality, time and support to our next 2017 book project : Tiger 747. During our 2 days in Napa, we managed to meet and talk with close to 20 former 747 crew members who will contribute with a story / memories on their days with the seven four. We have gathered several interesting documents already including the attached picture of a group picture of the last Federal Express 747 passenger flight and great articles from Tigerview. And ... we are on the look-out for more material in particular log book extracts, pictures, slides, safety cards in Laotian/Cambodian & Vietnamese used on the 747 refugee flights, .... in short: Anything from Anyone from your days on the Jumbo from Anytime, and Anywhere inc. SWA, FTL and FDX. Also - if anyone has or knows someone who has pdf scanned the Tigerview past issues - that would be fantastic ...."*

You may reach us at:

*"Guy Van Herbruggen" <[gvanherbruggen@hotmail.com](mailto:gvanherbruggen@hotmail.com)>  
and/or  
"Charles Kennedy" <[astralhorizon@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:astralhorizon@hotmail.co.uk)>*

*Once copied and documented, any material will be promptly returned by FedEx (who else?)*

*Kind Regards,*

*Charles Kennedy & Guy Van  
Herbruggen*



## Napa Reunion Photos

The NAPA photos are out ! Come check it out at <https://ftlpa.shutterfly.com>. Click on this link for the Tiger reunion photo display at Shutterfly to gain access. When you get there, click on either the **Reunion 2016 Napa** or **Rudis 2016 Napa photos** album, then find the tiny "ALL" icon to view all thumbnails at the same time on the same page.

You can enlarge any thumbnail photo by clicking on it. When you put the mouse on the enlargement, you will see a menu that includes "download". If you wish to download the picture to your computer, click on "download" and it will take you to a sign in page. This process will download the full resolution photo to the location on your computer of your choice. You can order prints from Shutterfly which works well, or download it and print it yourself. (Unfortunately, Shutterfly makes us sign up to download a photo to your computer. That will be fixed on our new web site.)

Enjoy!

Eliot



**Eliot Shulman**  
*Our Pilot Paparazzi*

## A New Website is Coming

An effort began months ago by John & Peter to find a web design company to modernize our current site. A good majority of the work has been accomplished and, gratefully, Eliot Shulman has recently stepped up at our request to help finalize the project and take over official duties as our Webmaster. He brings with him an expertise about modern technologies that guarantees a successful outcome. The existing site was created by Mike Howe over two decades ago and has served it's purpose very well. However, it's upgrade is long overdue and the Executive Board voted unanimously to use monies from the ALPA Fund to accomplish this. The goal is to have the new site up and running by the time the next newsletter comes out in September.

A screenshot of the Flying Tiger Line Pilots Association website. The header features the FTLPA logo and the text "Flying Tiger Line Pilots Association". The main content area includes a "WELCOME TO FTLPA" message, an "ABOUT US" section with a "MORE" button, a "Next Reunion" announcement, and a "Current Newsletter" section. A sidebar on the left lists various links like "HOME", "FTL HISTORY", "AIRCRAFT HISTORY", etc. A "Useful Links" section on the right lists "Aviation Links", "Employees Locator", "FTL Employees Facebook", and "Fleet's Restaurant".

### New Features

- Crisper appearance
- Quick and easy navigation between pages
- Dedicated Picture Gallery (no more passwords)
- Secure Membership Roster with a Search Feature

### Future Possibilities

- Embedded Discussion Forum
- Online Reunion Registration & Payment

## Flight Attendant Corner

The group was well represented by former FTL Cabin Crews from the 50's to the 80's who did not disappoint in livening things up by their attendance. Georganne Seavey won one of the 50/50 raffles for \$400 and Robert (John) Dixon took home the specially designed Electra TigerShark Beach Cruiser. We missed two of our most beautiful and senior ladies, Treso Koken and Pat Parlette, both of whom just couldn't make it this year. We're happy to report that they are well and plan to attend the reunion in Portland next year.



Outgoing F/A Representative, Robin Pestarino, formally handed over the reigns to Joyce Danielsen at the Saturday morning business meeting, after which she received a surprise birthday party and hugs of gratitude by those that she represented the past 10 years. Below is a nice note from her.



Robin Pestarino  
FTLPA F/A Representative, 2006 to 2016

*My dear friends,*

*You gave me the best retirement/birthday party ever! I will cherish my banner from the membership and the gifts from the flight attendant group, they are in a place of honor. You are very special to me - where else can you find a crazy group of people who can joke and argue and tell you all of the embarrassing things you did and said with such clear recall that you are embarrassed all over again? And then close ranks and watch your back...you're wonderful.*

*It's been a pleasure working and relaxing with you, see you next year!*

*Luv ya,*

*Robin*

## Flown West



Hal in his C46 (Beech 18)

We've lost a friend and a great aviator with the passing of Captain Hal Ewing on April 25<sup>th</sup>. The following comes to us from his daughter.

*To all who were fellow friends and coworkers of my dad:*

*We have decided to have a large celebration of life for my dad at Sumter airport. The date will be June 11, 2016. My father loved everyone and was so VERY blessed to have such a large following of friends. We will have food, drinks, cigars of course, planes and a missing man fly over. We ask everyone to please drive or fly in to join in a day of celebration of life.. and to bring everyone together for great stories and friendship. Just as he would have wished.*

*We will have the definitive time schedule within the next week or so and I will help assist with questions and RSVP. Thank you! Touched by and love you all.*

*-Ashley Ewing*

If we receive more details regarding his memorial it will be posted in the Discussion Forum. Other pictures and tributes to Hal can be found on a dedicated Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/harold.ewing.5?fref=ts>

The following Flying Tigers have also made their final flight since our last reunion in New Orleans. More information might be found in the Memoriam Section of our website or in the FTLPA Discussion Forum if details were sent to us. If you are aware of the passing of any others within our Tiger family, then please bring it to our attention so that we can post it below.



\*Hal Ewing – April 25, 2016

\*Greg Beckman– May 9, 2016

\* Added since last newsletter      (#) Former SWA at T-Day



J. A. Zehnbauer, President of Jantzen Knitting Mills, Inc., Portland, says...



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A WONDERFUL NEW SERVICE—  
THE *Flying Tigers***



**In New York—**

RUTH, THOSE  
SWIM SUITS MUST  
BE HERE TOMORROW—  
TRY THE TIGERS!



**In Portland—**

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IMMEDIATELY!



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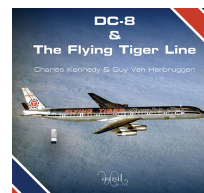
Newsweek Magazine, June 9, 1952

## Greg Beckman

The following was sent in by Barney Szymaniak

*Greg Beckman passed away peacefully on May 9th. He loved being a Flying Tiger. As per his wishes there will be no memorial. I will miss fishing with him on the Kenai. He was 64*

## DC-8 & The Flying Tiger Line



You can buy your own copy using one of the links below:

<http://the-airline-boutique.myshopify.com/products/dc-8-and-the-flying-tiger-line>

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/0993260403/ref=cm\\_sw\\_r\\_cp\\_awd\\_0iZjxb415EAXP](https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/0993260403/ref=cm_sw_r_cp_awd_0iZjxb415EAXP)

## Got News?

In future newsletters this section will be dedicated to anything in particular that members would like to bring to the attention of the group. If you would like to submit something then please email John Dickson at:

[Fr8rcap@gmail.com](mailto:Fr8rcap@gmail.com)



## Post Flight

The following was published a few years ago but is worthy of posting again.  
Our congratulations to all members who have recently retired. This is for you.

### *To All Fellow Aviators*



*Once the wings go on, they never come off ~ whether they can be seen or not.  
It fuses to the soul through adversity, fear, and adrenaline, and no one who has ever worn them with  
pride, integrity and guts can ever sleep through the 'call of the wild' that wafts through bedroom  
windows in the deep of the night. When a good pilot or aircrew leaves the 'job' and retires, many are  
jealous, some are pleased and yet others, who may have already retired, wonder.*

*We wonder if he knows what he is leaving behind, because we already know.  
We know, for example, that after a lifetime of camaraderie that few experience, it will remain as a  
longing for those past times. We know in the world of flying, there is a fellowship which lasts long after  
the flight suits are hung up in the back of the closet. We know even if he throws them away, they will be  
on him with every step and breath that remains in his life. We also know how the very bearing of the  
man speaks of what he was and in his heart still is.  
Because we flew, we envy no man on earth.*

*-Author Unknown*

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