



www.flyingtigerline.org

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

Summer 2018

Hello Fellow Tigers,

By all accounts our **44th Annual Reunion and Flight Attendant Recognition Banquet** was a complete success. The attendance was in excess of 380 with some attendees claiming that it was the best reunion that they had ever attended. Former AVG ace, original FTL investor, and FTLRPA founder, Dick Rossi, would be very proud of the *Tiger Spirit* exhibited by our group. According to Lydia, the turnout for reunions in the 70's was considered big if attendance total approached 100.

My immediate reaction is to take this as a personal challenge and guarantee that our **45th Anniversary Reunion** next year in Long Beach will be even better! I can't do it without your help, however. I would like for everyone to make it their goal to get at least one new member to attend. Call them, write them, knock on their door, but rest assured in your promise to them that their attendance will be one of the highlights of their experience as a former Tiger. My fellow officers and I are planning on an attendance figure in excess of 400. Help us out and let's get it up to 450! Maybe 500?

Hotel Reservations can now be made for next year's event. To get the enthusiasm started early Sandy was able to persuade the Renaissance Long Beach Hotel to release our group rate rooms early. The precise agenda and cost details won't be out until the traditional September 1st registration date. But the format won't be any different than usual and is outlined below for your planning.

Wed May 1st – Reunion kicks off at 3pm in the Hospitality Suite
Thur May 2nd – Golf Tournament
Fri May 3rd – Day trip (via bus) to the Proud Bird restaurant and the Flight Path Museum at LAX
Sat May 4th – Business meeting/Banquet and Dance

Make your reservations for the 2019 Long Beach reunion at a group rate of \$189 per night by calling Renaissance Reservations at (800) 468-3571 and identifying yourself as an FTLPA member or by using the following link: <https://book.passkey.com/e/49694748> **Please do not procrastinate in making your lodging plans. Even though we've contracted for more rooms than we did for Palm Springs, there is always the probability that they will run out and we can give no guarantee of getting more added to our block.**

Based on your feedback, I've made two major decisions regarding the next banquet. First, there will be **NO** music during dinner, whether it's a band or a DJ. Zero! Second, we will no longer try to provide a steak dinner as an option. It's too hard for the hotels to get it right. It'll be fish, chicken, and a vegetarian plate. Please take the post reunion survey (click on the link in the grey box above) and help us make your reunion experience even better.

Hoping all of you have a great summer!

John & Jeanne Dickson
(208) 699-5909
president@flyingtigerline.org

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Please Help Us!

Your input is very important to us as we continue down this road together. Please click on the link below and take an anonymous 2-minute survey which will help us improve the planning for future reunions.

[Take The Survey](#)

New FTLPA Vice President – Scott Mergele

The position of FTLPA Vice President was filled in a very exuberant manner and by unanimous vote at the business meeting. Our new VP, at least for the next two years, is a very qualified Scott Mergele, who has held officer and staff positions in many associations and clubs, including ALPA. Below is his first communication to the membership.



A New V.P.'s Two Cents Worth

First, thank you for electing me to be your new Vice President. It will be my honor to serve this great group of Tigers. Also, a hearty thank you to Larry and Mary Weeks for their efforts over the last 7 years.

As I said in my short remarks after the election, I'm not here to take over when John decides to not do this in the future. Hopefully that will be years down the road.

Second, my two main goals as your V.P. are to;

- 1. Help John and Jeanne lighten their load somewhat so they stick around longer. They have been doing a lot of work and a great job over the past 7 years. John, Larry and Peter, along with the other Representatives, have been the glue that keeps this Association running smoothly.*
- 2. Help John recruit a couple of people from those hired in the time of 1987 until the merger. Let's face it, the rest of us are getting older. I used to affectionately call the later hires Tiger Cubs. I don't think that works now since they have all been with us for over 25 years.*

In regards to my first goal. I will try to take some of the email load off of John. What I am asking you to do is this. If you have questions you think only John can handle, please send them to him. Anything else, please send it to me at sdmergele@me.com. I'll do my best to take care of your issue. If I don't have the answer, I'll get John or Peter involved.

In regards to my second goal. I will be contacting friends in the 1987+ group to help me recruit those interested in keeping our association going in years to come. We want to help get you up to speed on the workings of how reunions and other association business are done so when the time comes, it is a smooth transition. A couple of people have already shown an interest. I just ask that you give ME some time to come up to speed also.

I hope everyone enjoyed Palm Springs and are looking forward to Long Beach. In closing, I promise my further articles will be much shorter.

Scott Mergele
Rookie V.P.

Palm Springs Reunion Recap

Who Showed Up? Over 380 members and guests were in attendance throughout the four-day event. The list of those who attended can be viewed by clicking [Who Came?](#)

Reunion Photos – Over 600 shots were taken by Eliot Shulman. Others also contributed to the photo gallery. These can be viewed in the [Reunion Photos](#) section of our website by clicking on the [2018 Palm Springs](#) link. Images have been reduced in size for faster viewing. However, if there are particular photos that you would like a full resolution copy of, please contact Eliot or John and they can arrange to get you the larger file.

Golf - Tom Constable teamed up with Robert and Jeanette Carona (*below*) to organize a great round of golf at the Escena Golf Club on Thursday.



The Flabob Express - In what can only be described as one of the most unique events ever organized for an FTLPA reunion, four flights of *The Flabob Express*, a vintage DC3 flown by Bob and John Tymczyszyn, were conducted over the scenic California desert. Former FTL flight attendants, Teri Lane and Debbie Paul, were absolutely elegant in their original Tiger uniforms while serving champagne to the passengers who were honored to hear the engines and experience the nostalgic trip back in time.

Pictured at Right - John Tymczyszyn, Corky Dever, Bob Tymczyszyn, Dwight Small, Bob and Margie Freeman, Larry Weeks, Peter Okicich, John Dickson, Teri Lane, Debbie Paul, George Gewehr, the Wights (Maralyse, Garret, and Joe), Robin and Randy Thompson.



Flight #1



The Flabob Express



Bob and John Tymczyszyn



Terri Lane and Debbie Paul



Happy Passengers



Dwight Small & Garrett Wight



Debbie serving champagne



Service with big smiles!



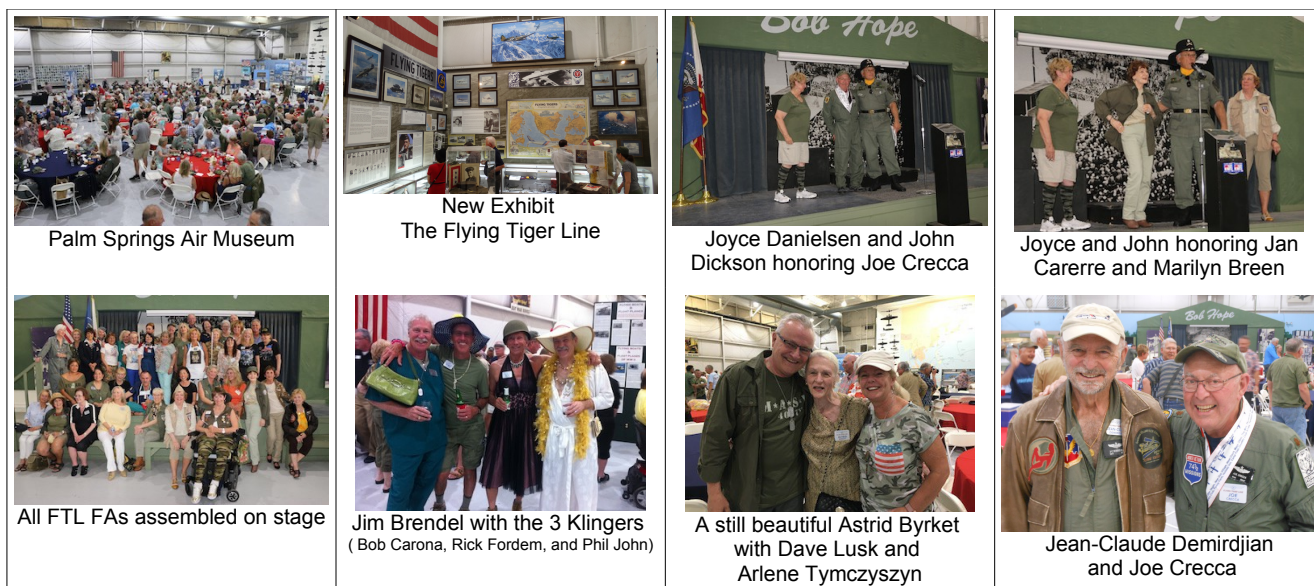
Article written by Debbie Paul
Click to enlarge and download

Palm Springs Air Museum - A costumed theme during our Friday night events has become a more common occurrence and our group showed all the enthusiasm possible this year. To honor our military and those wonderful Tiger flight attendants who transported them in times of conflict around the globe all attendees were asked to dress in some type of military attire. A new exhibit, showcasing the Flying Tiger Line was complete and our membership showed their Tiger Spirit by throwing a total of \$1,600 into the donation box by the time the night was done. Honorees on Friday included the following:

Marilyn Breen for her dedication to our brave soldiers who fought, died, and remain missing in Vietnam, and in particular the flight attendants who accompanied them over and returned them in operations referred to as *Freedom Bird* flights.

Jan Ross Carerre for her years as an FTL stewardess from 1952 to 1954 and her service in transporting troops during the Korean War.

Joe Crecca for his service to our country, specifically his years in captivity as a POW during Vietnam.



On a more solemn note, many took Friday night as an opportunity to visit and say goodbye to their good friend and fellow flight attendant, Becky Day, who unfortunately succumbed to her health issues three weeks later. (see *Flown West* section below)

Business Meeting – Peter Okicich kicked off the meeting this year by introducing his fellow officers and another beautiful rendition of our National Anthem by Georgeanne Seavey followed. There was actually quite a lot of business conducted during this particular meeting as outlined below:

- A moment of silence was observed for those who Flew West since the last reunion and the Life Members who attended this year were recognized. (*Marie Rowan, Jo Nell Kocisko, Gloria McComas, Dayna Dehertog, Patti Manley, Carol Beaudu, Carolyn Ristaino, and Kim Mathews*)
- A plaque created by Captain Al Lopez to honor the nine flight attendants who have perished in FTL accidents was presented to the membership. Al donated a second plaque to the Palm Springs Air Museum to add to our exhibit, and a third plaque was sent to Carol Gould Hanson, the lone flight attendant survivor aboard FTL 923 that ditched in the Atlantic in 1965. It was then announced to all the FA's in attendance that Al was buying them margaritas after the business meeting! The Tiger's Roar was deafening. Classy move Captain Lopez!
- It was announced that there are still 175 Tigers still flying at FedEx, with Erik Larson the most senior and Bruce Robinson still bringing up the tail of the Tiger as the last pilot hired. Bill Libby, also in the very last class hired came to the reunion for his first time and was introduced.
- Changes to the association bylaws were discussed and then subsequently amended. (see below for more details)
- Frank Maguire gave an excellent presentation to honor the members of the FTL/FDX Merger Committee for their hard work and efforts over 30 years ago.
- Joe Wight, son of Garrett and Maralyse, was nominated and successfully voted in as an Honorary Member of FTLPA.
- President, John Dickson, explained the need for more junior members of FTLPA to step up and consider future officer positions. Scott Mergele was nominated and confirmed to fill the VP position being vacated by Larry Weeks. One of Scott's first initiatives will be an effort to solicit new memberships and more involvement from the more junior contingent of the FTL seniority list. Sharon Sowell and Bill Libby have subsequently offered their assistance.
- Details of the next reunions in Long Beach (2019) and San Antonio (2020) were discussed and a quick poll of those in attendance was made for input into a city for 2021.

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- Book projects and sales were promoted by Debra Paul, Reyne O'Shaughnessy, and Leigh-lu Prasse.
- A more comprehensive presentation was made by Guy Van Herbruggen and Charles Kennedy for their next book project titled *Flying Tiger Memories* (see *News section below for more details*)
- Our Guest Speaker, Kristine Wood, capped off a very successful meeting with her presentation of the *Run For The Wall* motorcycle ride that is planned each year. This year represented the 30th consecutive year for the ride from Ontario, CA to Washington, DC to honor those KIA and MIA who can not. A book produced by Kristine was available for purchase. If you missed the opportunity to purchase it or would like more information about Run For The Wall, please email Kristine at kristine.wood@rftw.us



Georgeanne sings our National Anthem



A good turnout for our meeting this year.



Joe Wight becomes an Honorary Member of FTLPA



New FTLPA VP Scott Mergele

Hospitality Suite & Poolside – Our hospitality suite at the Renaissance Hotel this year was probably one of the better ones we've ever had. One of the surprises was the unexpected success of an "open microphone" period on Saturday afternoon which will surely be planned again for the next reunion.



The always colorful, Rudi Kohlbacher at poolside



Starr Thompson 96 Years young



Frank Campbell dropped in, here with Mory Burt



Open Mike was a big hit with everyone and will return

Flight Attendant Recognition Banquet – Our banquet began in traditional fashion with a cocktail reception outside of the ballroom. With the much appreciated assistance of Judi and Ray McKenzie, portrait photographs were taken by Eliot Shulman before the formal banquet kicked off. Scott was introduced as our association's new VP and many thanks were given to Larry and Mary Weeks for all of their efforts over the past seven years.

Many in attendance were singled out and honored:

- Crew schedulers and planners Arlene Tymczyszyn, Cheryl Hansen, Bonnie Eckert, Steve Germain, Leigh-lu Prasse, and Astrid Byrket (who attended the Friday night event only).
- Erik Krueck, who is about to retire in August of this year.
- Mark Hunt and his wife, Debbie, were introduced as our special guest by George Gewehr. Mark is the son of Thomas D. Hunt, who was the co-pilot on the ill fated Connie that crashed into the Colorado Rockies near Alamosa in 1965. Mark gave the crowd some perspective on what it's like being the son of one who has Flown West in such dramatic fashion and described his personal trek high into the hills one summer to retrieve small pieces of from the crash site.
- Carolyn Ristaino, widow of former FTL Captain and FTLPA president John Ristaino, was driven to Palm Springs by their son, Steve.

John was then joined by Flight Attendant Representative, Joyce Danielsen Dalbey who was accompanied to the floor by her newly wedded husband, Gene. The two most senior flight attendants attending were recognized as Jan Ross Carerre and Gretchen Auerbach. Annette Lusk was thanked for her contributions and assistance to our constantly evolving website. And the names of the nine flight attendants who have died as a result of Flying Tiger accidents were read from the plaque designed and created by Captain Al Lopez.

One flight attendant was singled out who Joyce and John thought best represented ALL of the eras involved in the history of Tiger passenger operations from the 40's to the late 80's. That person was Betty Carver who was presented with flowers and a vase personally made by Gael Okichich.

President John Dickson ended his banquet introduction with the following tribute to our flight attendants:

The Officers and Membership of the Flying Tiger Line Pilots Association wish to honor the service and the dedication that the Flight Tiger Line flight attendants have shown over the years to the company, the passengers, the crews, and to this association. Their contributions to the success of our former airline and the Tiger Spirit that is instilled in all of us will never be forgotten.



Flight Attendant
Group Photo



Special recognition
to Betty Carver



Ann Montgomery wins the \$750
50/50 Raffle



A near record 340+ attended the
Flight Attendant Recognition
Banquet on Saturday.

Hangar – Like our hospitality suite, the room used for the Hangar was one of the best ever. There was a real enthusiasm and appreciation for all of the new and different merchandise items offered thanks to FA Rep Joyce Danielsen Dalbey and our association's main vender, former FTL FA Andee Wright. A sun hat with artwork created earlier by the late Norah O'Neill was a hit, especially in Palm Springs. The \$156 dollar proceeds from the sale of her hats was donated by FTLPA to the [Raisbeck Aviation High School](#), a favorite charity of Norah's.

Cabin Crew Corner



Gene & Joyce Danielsen
Dalbey
Flight Attendant Representative

Wow, if you did not make the reunion in Palm Springs, you really missed a fantastic time. We had over 380 people attend, with over 100 flight attendants showing up. Our most senior flight attendant, Jan Ross Carerre flew troops to Korea in the early 50's.

The flight attendants were honored throughout the whole reunion. We had an open microphone session in the hospitality suite where anybody could get up and talk about their experiences and poems that had been shared and written, some over 50 years ago. It was a real success and everyone agreed something we should plan for next year.

The event at the Museum had most attendees wearing some type of military attire. Several of the men went as Klinger in drag! A contingency of flight attendants got up on the stage and did a pre-flight passenger briefing. It was hilarious!

At the dinner on Saturday evening, some of our outstanding flight attendants were honored, including Marilyn Breen and Betty Carver, for all of their contributions throughout the years to Flying Tigers.

We had several comments from attendees that this was their best reunion ever, and all were excited about the variety of items made available in the Hangar store.

Although unable to attend, Al Lopez honored the flight attendants by providing us free margaritas after the business meeting on Saturday! He created three beautiful plaques dedicated to the nine flight attendants killed in Flying Tiger aircraft accidents in our history. One was sent to Carol Gould Hanson, one given to the Palm Springs Air Museum for inclusion in our exhibit, and one for our group to display in our future hospitality suites.

So I am encouraging everyone, if you are able, to attend next year's reunion in Long Beach California. John and his fellow officers are pulling out all stops to make sure it is a fantastic reunion, with a post-reunion trip to Catalina. So start saving your pennies now for next year!

There are ups and downs with every event, and this year was no exception. Unfortunately, before Marsha Hay Merz was able to return home in Washington, her husband passed away. Tigers has always been known as a family that helps one another. And this year was no exception. Several of the flight attendants who live in Washington state, attended her husband's funeral.

We were also saddened to hear the news of Becky Day's passing shortly after our event. Becky and her husband, fellow FA Dan Day, who live in Palm Desert had invited all former FTL flight attendants to come visit and say goodbye to her on Friday night. A bittersweet moment for all I am sure.

So, I'm wishing everyone a happy, healthy and productive summer. We'll be back in the fall with more news on next year's reunion.

God bless you all,

Joyce Danielsen Dalbey
Joyce_Danielsen@yahoo.com
(509) 899-1731

Flown West

We have unfortunately lost two well loved members of FTLPA since the Palm Springs reunion.

Captain Bill "WP" Smith passed away the day after our reunion ended on Sunday night, May 6, 2018 at the Jefferson Healthcare Hospital in Port Townsend, WA. He is survived by his wife, Diona.

Funeral services will be held at [Tahoma National Cemetery](#) on Monday, June 18th at 11:30 am. A Celebration of Life, catered by McCormicks, will follow at the [Museum of Flight](#) in Seattle at 2 pm.

Per Bill's request, memorials should be sent to the Marine Corps Toys for Tots or the Hospice Foundation for Jefferson Healthcare, (hospicefoundationjhc.org) at 2500 W. Simms Way Suite 300, Port Townsend, WA 98368.



Bill "WP" Smith
1944 – 2018

[Flown West Page](#)

Flight Attendant Becky Day passed after a illness on May 24, 2018. She is survived by her husband Dan Day and their daughter Megan. In lieu of a service, the Day family will use her ashes to start a tree in Colorado.



[Flown West Page](#)

My wife Becky of 30 years and former Flying Tiger F/A passed away today. She has been going thru a lot of painful health issues and is now in a more peaceful place. I truly appreciate all of you who came to our recent party and went in to see her. It meant so much to her to see so many old friends and it meant a lot to me to see her so happy. If you want to do something for her just look toward your love ones who are in the house and give them a hug. Best to all.



Becky Day
1951 – 2018

Amended Bylaws

By a majority vote by the members attending the business meeting in Palm Springs, our association bylaws were amended as follows:

- Honorary Membership is no long limited to just one nomination per year. However, to be eligible for nomination all prospective Honorary Members must have attended at least three FTLPA reunions within the past five years, the present reunion included.
- A new position was officially created for a Life Member Representative to act as a liaison for those members left behind by the loss of their spouses who were Regular Members of FTLPA. Donna Mergele, who has been acting in this capacity in the interim, has been confirmed as our new representative.
- Attendance at all future FTLPA reunions are limited to members current in their dues or to their guests who must be listed on a member's registration form. Any and all guests, whether family members, friends, or former FTL employees attending for the first time, are always welcome and encouraged to attend - but must now be specifically listed on a their host's form.

The current bylaws, as amended on 5/5/2018 may be viewed or download from our website by clicking [HERE](#).

Future Reunions



Flying Tiger Line room
in the [Flight Path Museum](#)

2019
45-Year
Anniversary Reunion
Renaissance Long Beach Hotel
111 East Ocean Boulevard
Long Beach, CA 90802

May 1st to May 4th, 2019
Group Reservations (\$189 per night)
Call (800) 468-3571 or click link below
[Renaissance Hotel Reservation](#)



Newly renovated [Proud Bird Restaurant](#)
at LAX.

Details regarding the Long Beach reunion, including the registration form and pricing, will be included in the next newsletter due out on September 1st. A post-reunion trip to Catalina Island for a four day/three night stay is also in the works.



[The Westin Riverwalk](#)
San Antonio, TX

2020
46-Year Reunion
Westin Riverwalk Hotel
420 W. Market Street
San Antonio, TX 78205

May 2nd to May 5th, 2020
Group Rate of \$189 per night

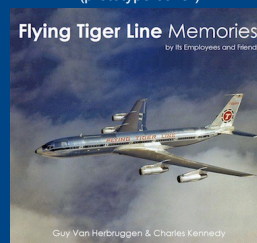


[National Museum of the Pacific War](#)
Fredericksburg, TX

Planning has been finalized for our 2020 reunion to be held at the Westin Riverwalk in San Antonio from May 2nd to May 5th, 2020. This venue offers us a perfect location to hold our reunion where our hospitality suite will be located right on the Riverwalk. Talks are continuing with new SPAR President, Dan Duffy, on the possibility of another joint FTLPA/SPAR Reunion this particular year. For those that have the available time, a post-reunion excursion will be planned for the 4-hour bus trip up to Fredericksburg, TX for a multi-day visit to experience the National Museum of the Pacific War, wineries, breweries, and other attractions that this charming little city has to offer. More details will be available next year. *Note: the reunion will take place from Sunday to Tuesday as opposed to traditional weekend days.*

Flying Tiger Line Memories

(prototype cover)



A new book project by
Guy Van Herbruggen and Charles Kennedy

After the success of "DC-8 & The Flying Tiger Line" and "Tiger 747", these authors are planning a third book centered around FTL. If you have a memory to share, or physical material such as photos, maps, brochures, etc. they would love to include some of it.

Email your written accounts and/or scans from your archives to gvanherbruggen@hotmail.com. Please include your name, phone number, and a brief description of the subject matter.

Books by Deborah Paul

A series of four adorable children's books for ages 3 to 13 have been written by former flight attendant, Deborah Paul, inspired by real people she has interviewed throughout her post-Tiger career as a newspaper reporter.



Click on image above
for even more information

To purchase your copies contact Deborah at
deborahpaul16@cox.net

China Pilot



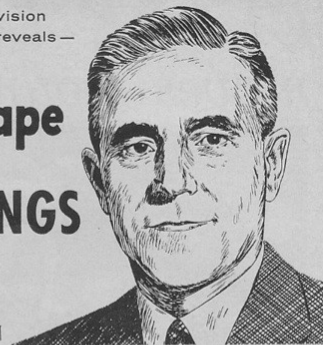
Click on image
above for the
book review

Those who missed out buying a signed copy of *China Pilot*, written by Felix Smith, and presented by Leigh-lu Prasse in Palm Springs, can get it directly from the author at his email address felixsmithcat505@gmail.com or by sending a \$33 check (includes shipping) directly to: Felix Smith
12600 W. Prospect Dr.
New Berlin, WI. 53151

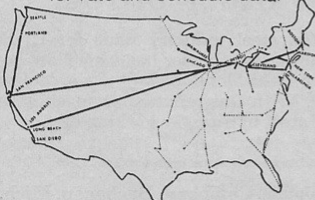
Please let Felix know if you want the book inscribed to someone or just signed. He and his wife are very good about getting the books in the mail. However, Leigh-lu suggests that you copy her on your email request so that she can follow up and ensure he received it. Her email address is leigh-lu@comcast.net

C. B. Sampair, Exec. Vice Pres., Tape Division
Minnesota Mining & Manufacturing Co., reveals —

WHY A
SCOTCH Brand Tape
SHOW GOT
FLYING TIGER WINGS



Offices in principal cities. Phone for rate and schedule data.



FLYING TIGER LINE



GENERAL OFFICES: LOCKHEED AIR TERMINAL, BURBANK, CALIF., CABLE: FLYTIGER

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Say Again?

When everything seems to be against you, remember that an airplane takes off against the wind, not with it.

- Henry Ford, founder of Ford Motor Company

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