

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

Spring 2012 Newsletter

A Happy Leap Day To All!

Our 46th Annual Reunion in the Alamo City is only two months away now. I'm so excited about this particular one that I wish it were next week! New and important developments can be found in the following pages for those planning to attend.

You'll read below that Scott will be stepping down as our Vice President after this reunion. He has been a valued Executive Officer of FTLPA during the past two years. Because of his experience with other groups and associations, his advice and direction has been invaluable to us when making decisions regarding the future of FTLPA. Likewise, Donna has done an equally great job in her capacity as the Life Member Representative. Please join me now, and more importantly at the reunion, in saying thank you to both of them for their commitment.

Captain Wayne Lane (FTL/FDX, Ret.) has raised his hand for consideration as our next Vice President. However, the position is open to any other Regular Member who might want to apply. If you have a desire to help keep this association strong for many years to come then contact Scott or myself before the business meeting in San Antonio.

We've had quite a few new members join FTLPA since the last newsletter. Please welcome Nicole Cott Ross, a former flight planner and scheduler from 1982 to 1987. Former pilots, Mark Anton, Alan Cheak, Davey Jones, and Craig Laurie represent the all important members of the 1987-1989 seniority group. Lastly, we have connected with Mr. Marshall Meyers, an attorney for FTL in the early 60's who comes to us with a wealth of stories and archived documentation. Marshall's father, Norman Meyers, served as General Counsel for Sam Mosher and Bob Prescott in the creation of National Skyways Freight in 1945. Eight years old back then, Marshall followed in his father's footsteps and is still active as an attorney in the aviation community. Please join me in welcoming these wonderful Tigers into our group.

John Dickson, President president@flyingtigerline.org (208) 699-5909

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IMPORTANT LINKS

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An new online compilation of names and data of over 1,700 pilots, co-pilots, flight engineers, navigators, and radio operators from 1946 to 1989

CLICK HERE TO VIEW

Important Reunion Updates

The following are important updates for those planning to attend this year. Specific details about hotel reservations, registration procedures, planned, and suggested events are found on the *Next Reunion* page of our website.

Westin Hotel Rooms – Good News! We've been able to add more group rate rooms to our block. If the announcement that group rate rooms were full last month was keeping you from registering then please reconsider and make your reservation today. Click **HERE** to use our custom reservation link and book online. If you have problems then please <u>Contact John Dickson</u>

NEW Saturday/Sunday Night Movies – This year represents the 50th anniversary of the release of the movie **Airport**, and the 40th for the release of the hilarious movie **Airplane!**. In another attempt at something different we will plan to show these movies in the hospitality suite on Saturday and Sunday nights at 9pm. One of seven Boeing 707's operated by FTL (N324F) was used for the outdoor scenes in the movie. As the character Joe Petroni exclaimed in the movie, "This plane is built to withstand anything, except a bad pilot!"





NEW Poker Pub Crawl 2PM – 5PM \$10 – A fun activity has been planned for Sunday afternoon. Those interested should be in the hospitality suite by 2pm to pay their ante for the 5-card poker game, receive their scorecard, and draw the first of five playing cards. You'll receive your other three cards at pubs nearby, and the fifth card when returning to the hotel by 5pm. The winning hand will take 100% of the accumulated pot. More details will be posted to the reunion page and provided when checking in.

Group Bicycle Ride? - Unfortunately Not – The concept of a large group bicycle ride is just not possible this year. The most convenient bicycle rental shop only allows for rentals of 20 at a time. Although only 1.5 miles away, we could not find a company willing to provide transportation without outrageous minimum fees. All is not lost and this might even be for the better.

Anyone interested in a bike ride is encouraged to make their own arrangements with <u>Blue Star Bike Shop</u>, (210) 858-0331, open every day at 9am. Their rental fee is only \$20 for a half day, which is more than enough time to ride the <u>Mission Trails Hike and Bike Trail</u>. This wonderful trail system starts right outside their bike shop. No reservations are necessary, they know we're coming. Just mention that you're with the Flying Tigers and they should give you priority attention. A map and more details will be provided when checking in.

Attention Flight Attendants – Debbie Martinez and Annette Lusk have planned a gathering of all former FA's in attendance on **Monday at 11am**. Meet at Casa Rio's at 11am, a 5 minute walk from the Westin. This leaves plenty of time for margaritas and a some a la carte lunch before returning in time for the 5pm river shuttles to the Pearl.





The Pearl — We're suggesting that everyone visit <u>The Pearl</u> on Monday night for dinner and drinks. A culinary mecca, the area is a renovated and repurposed brewery with the 5-star <u>Hotel Emma</u> as it's centerpiece. All of the district's restaurants have been notified that a significant number of our attendees might descend upon the area and discounts are being arranged where possible. Everyone is responsible for making their own transportation arrangements (see next page) and dining reservations. Click <u>HERE</u> for a listing of the fabulous restaurants available and make your reservations soon.

River Shuttles to The Pearl - 5PM – You can get to and from The Pearl for about a \$15 Uber ride. For the fun of it (but again, not required), four river shuttles by Go Rio have been chartered to take a maximum of 140 of us on a leisurely 55-minute ride up the San Antonio River. There are about 30 seats still available and the ticket price is \$24 per person. To purchase you tickets click here **HERE** Contact John Dickson for help and more information if required. They will go fast!

Tuesday Dinner/Dance Table Requests – Procedures for selecting your seat or reserving your own table for a group of either 8 or 10 will be released with the April 1st bulletin. Like the past two years, a ballroom layout will be provided and a form will be used to submit your choices. Be sure to check your email when you wake up on April Fools day as this process is a first come-first serve basis. Registration for the reunion is required to select a seat for yourself or another in your group.

Dress Theme for Dinner – Denim and Diamonds! The suggestion to dress Texas Casual is just that, a suggestion. Dress comfortably, just don't dress like a city slicker!

Everyone is encouraged to attended the line dance instruction at 2PM on Tuesday and "cowboy up" for the dinner/dance later that night.



MOKARA SPA BODY TREATMENTS



Need Time From The Reunion? Take Time To Relax - Imagine indulging in a luxurious spa experience devoted to enhancing over-all well being created through a variety of professional services that encourage the renewal of mind body and spirit. That's exactly what Reyné O'Shaughnessy and Maureen Adams would like to help arrange for those who are interested. From massages to manicures, the Mokara Spa is located only steps away from the Westin Riverwalk Hotel and discounts for our group are in the works.

Please let them know if you would be interested in such an event - both men and women are welcome! They want to hear from you. Email Reyné O'Shaughnessy at <u>reyneog@gmail.com</u> (FDX pilot) or Maureen Adams at <u>dabblinin@aol.com</u> (wife of FDX pilot, Bob Adams).

Cancellation Policy – Because of the significant loss we incurred from last minute cancellations last year we've had to institute a policy that better protects the association. After April 5th, 30 days prior to our dinner, your reunion costs (fees, dinner, etc.) will be forfeited if you cancel. Situations involving extenuating circumstances or emergencies will, of course, be considered as required.

From The Vice-President – Scott Mergele

I hope everyone had a pleasant holiday season. We're looking forward to another Tiger reunion in May.

Just wanted to give you a heads up about some small changes. There will be no raffle prizes after the dinner. A couple reasons for this. First, not everyone comes to the dinner so they miss a chance to win even if they purchased tickets. Second, we aren't getting many things to do it with.

The good news, there will still be the 50/50 drawing right after the dinner when the officers speak briefly.

More good news. We are expanding the silent auction items due to some very generous donations from members. This will give everyone a chance to get an item they want without having to hope they won a raffle prize. The silent auction bids will close at 4 PM before the dinner and winners announced at the dinner. Even if you're not at the dinner, you'll be notified that you won and can claim your item.

(continued on next page)

The next item is electing a new VP at the business meeting. I will be resigning as your Vice President effective at the end of the San Antonio reunion. It's been an honor and pleasure to serve our association for the past 2 years. John has someone interested but if you would like to be a candidate please let John know.

See you at the reunion.

Scott

From The Treasurer – Ray McKenzie

Thanks to all of you who have used PayPal to renew your membership and also to sign up for the San Antonio reunion. As a reminder you find the link to renew your membership by mail on the Home Page of FTLPA website under "Membership Forms". If you are unable to use PayPay and want to renew by mail, be sure to include the membership renewal form with your check. If sending a check for other reasons please include a letter detailing the reason for the check.

As some of you might have heard, late October I was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer with the tumor in the tail of the pancreas. I immediately went to MD Anderson in Houston for further testing. After being evaluated, they referred me to UCLA in Los Angeles. I started chemotherapy beginning the first week in December. I have treatment every other week at a facility in Irvine, CA near my home. The latest CT scan showed that the tumor has stabilized. Chemo therapy continues and my next scan is in three months.

I am still able to keep up my duties as treasurer and plan to continue as long as I am able to serve this group. I will be stepping down as Treasurer as my cancer progresses. Anyone who would like the position should make their wishes known to John.

The SAT reunion is shaping up to be one to remember. Lots of activities are organized and my thanks to the many people who have volunteered their time to make for another successful reunion.

Ray McKenzie

From The Secretary – Leigh-lu Prasse

Hi Everyone,

A big shout out for sending in your dues and registrations using our automated forms! They are working great! Some have loved using the forms so much that every time we mention the word dues in a bulletin, they have dutifully gone online again and sent in another payment! (We actually had to ask some to stop sending in dues!) A huge thank you to all for making our online payments successful and keeping the FTLPA Association going!

Just a few months to go before San Antonio! We are all excited about a reunion in such a historic setting. I greatly look forward to seeing you there!



One of the new events this year will be our 1st Annual Poker Pub Crawl! We will hold a 5-card Poker run beginning and ending in the Hospitality Suite with three great pubs in between. There will be fun clues to figure out the location of each bar. Best poker hand wins the entire cash pot! We expect a good-sized turnout so make sure to be in the Hospitality Suite by 2pm on Sunday May 3. Good Luck!

(continued on next page)

So why the picture of Aviation's most revered movie? This Spring happens to be the 40th Anniversary of *Airplane!* Showing in Theaters May 17 & 20 only, you will be able to see the movie back on the big screen and laugh at all the happenings on one crazy flight to Chicago! Here's a scene: Elaine relaying that Capt. Ovur and crew are incapacitated, "There's no reason to become alarmed, and we hope you'll enjoy the rest of your flight. By the way, is there anyone on board who knows how to fly a plane?" Great memories, eh?



Cheers,

Leigh-lu a.k.a. Madam Secretary

From The Historian – George Gewehr

Remembering Bob

This piece is from the March 1979 issue of Tigereview. An article within titled Remembering Bob was about our President and founder Robert W. Prescott. He had passed the year before in 1978 and this edition of the monthly magazine commemorated the anniversary of his passing. The eulogy to him then was a short one. The two pages of pictures of Bob during his life told his story. I'll repeat it again as I feel it is appropriate now as it was in March of 1979.

Flags at the airline's world headquarters were flown at half staff in memory of Bob and the vision and enterprise of this extraordinary man who, in his own words, said shortly before he died: "It is difficult for me to express the pride I feel at what has happened to a struggling idea I had so many years ago." These pages with some memory photos from Bob's life and his passion that the Flying Tiger Line, should serve to remind us not only of Bob, but of the dream he had and our determination to keep making that dream come true.





Click on images above for a full PDF view of this article

From The Flight Attendant Rep – Joyce Danielsen Dalbey

Only two short months to go until our 46th reunion in San Antonio, Texas. It has been several years since we had our last reunion in this historic beautiful city. There are so many things to see and do in San Antonio. Other than a river shuttle boat ride and golf tournament, there are no pre-planned activities, just suggestion on what would make your visit more enjoyable.

Debbie Rickman Martinez and Annette Lusk have taken the opportunity to have an impromptu flight attendant get together, no reservations margaritas and a bite to eat on the patio of Casa Rio's, a 5 minute walk from the Westin. Plan on gathering at the Casa Rio on Monday the 4 about 11am for a la carte lunch and some cold ones (See Page 2).

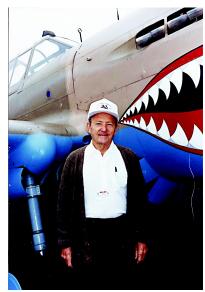
The Hangar this year will have shorter open times, allowing everyone to enjoy more free time exploring San Antonio. So please stop by to see what we have to offer this year. And maybe volunteer an hour of your time?

Whether you're traveling by air or car, please be safe. This year my husband and I are traveling by rail! We are taking the Amtrak train from Yuma to San Antonio, a 28 hr trip. Besides a dome viewing car, we will have a roomette for the night and 3 meals in a sit-down diner car. An adventure to be sure!

Looking forward to seeing everyone.

Joyce Danielsen Dalbey, Flight Attendant Representative

From Your AVG Representative – Lydia Rossi



Losonsky in 1995

Frank Losonsky

The Last of the Legendary AVG October 18, 1920 – February 6, 2020

We are sad to report the loss of the last surviving member of the American Volunteer Group Flying Tigers, Frank Losonsky who passed away on February 6th at the age of 99.

Frank entered the U.S. Army Air Corps in 1939. While stationed at Selfridge Field, in May of 1941, he was intrigued by the opportunity for adventure that was offered by the AVG recruiters and soon found himself on a ship headed for Burma and China.

Losonsky was assigned as a Crew Chief in the "Hell's Angels" squadron where he generally was responsible for three to four aircraft at a time. In addition to these duties, he also was called upon to carry out memorable tasks such as delivering bombs via

truck from Kunming to Paoshan, and salvaging parts from ill-fated P-40's. On one such occasion, Losonsky was part of a salvage crew sent out to recover four wrecked Tomahawks. All four of the planes, led by Gregory "Pappy" Boyington, had made forced landings near the Indochina border.

Honorably discharged from the AVG, Frank returned home, married, and then returned to the Far East as a mechanic with Chinese National Aviation Corporation (CNAC). Later, he returned stateside and assisted in building B-24 Liberators. Leaving the Air Corps, Losonsky took a civil service job at Clark Field in the Philippines.

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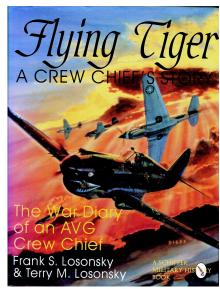
Losonsky soon found himself on the ground floor of the new TransAsiatic Airlines which flew the Manila, Hong Kong, Bangkok, Rangoon route. He attained one of his earliest goals and became a commercial pilot. In 1950, he left TAA and joined the Allison Division of General Motors as a jet engine service engineer. He spent the next 30 years with GM, traveling all over the world as Allison's service representative. After retiring from GM, Frank joined his son's Columbus, Georgia, restaurant conglomeration as an Executive Officer. Their many restaurants feature lithographs and memorabilia of the AVG Flying Tigers.

His book, *Flying Tiger, A Crew Chief's Story*, is a must read for anyone interested in his legacy.

The following link is a CNN News Story from 2016

https://www.cnn.com/2016/09/23/us/flying-tigers-reunion-world-war-ii-p-40-warhawk-fighter-planes/index.html

Lydia Rossi AVG Representative – FTLPA Executive Secretary, Flying Tigers Association



Available Online at Amazon.com

Future Reunions



Crowne Plaza Hotel San Diego, CA

2021 47-Year Reunion Crowne Plaza Hotel 2270 Hotel Circle North San Diego, CA 92108

May 12th to May 16th, 2021 Group Rate of \$134 per night



2022 and 2023?

Possible cities to host our future reunions include Savannah, Boise, New Orleans, San Fransisco and possibly even Honolulu. More details will be made available at the business meeting in San Antonio and members present will be polled for their opinions.

2024

It's our goal to have our 50th Anniversary Reunion in Fort Worth, TX, the birthplace of Robert W. Prescott during the next total eclipse of the sun on April 8, 2024. The Line Of Totality will run very close to downtown and should be very symbolic for all attending. For more information about the eclipse event visit

https://www.greatamericaneclipse.com/april-8-2024

Flown West

We've lost some wonderful Tigers since the last newsletter. Some are better known to us than others but nevertheless, have had have a place in the history of our airline and will be missed. Click on the links associated with their names to visit In Memoriam pages created to honor them.



Alex Bangert III



Starr Thompson



Rich Fraser



Bill Callanan



Joe Healy



Dave Buckner

The following former Flying Tigers have also made their final flight since our last 2019 reunion in Long Beach. More information might be found in the *Flown West*



Terry Ermert



Linc Dexter



To fly west, my friend, is a flight we all must take for a final check

Author unknown

* Steve Hendry – 7/26/2016 AI Kressel – 3/24/2019 Jay Cotting – 5/6/2019 Gene Snow – 5/9/2019 Ken Conrad – 7/11/2019 Rich Redditt – 7/25/2019 Jim Ossello – 8/2/2019 Bob Wake – 8/11/2019 Doug Balfour – 8/12/2019 Fran Drew Whitesides – 8/24/2019 Jay Lehman – 8/27/2019 Leon Lowery – 9/1/2019

section of our website.

Rich Dwyer – 9/27/2019 Paul Weiss – 10/27/2019 George Rimmer – 11/4/2019 Pat Parlette – 11/6/2019

- * Alex Bangert 12/10/2019
- * Rich Fraser 12/11/2019
- * Joe Healy 12/28/2019
- * Terry Ermert 12/30/2019
- * Starr Thompson 1/17/2020
- *# Bill Callanan 1/26/2020
- * Dave Buckner 1/26/2020
- *# Lincoln "Linc" Dexter 2/2/2020

*Added since last newsletter # Former SWA

IMPORTANT! Possible Life Insurance Benefits for Retired FTL Pilots

Are you the widow or survivor of a retired Tiger pilot who passed away on or after the merger date with FedEx. Do you know such a person?

Under the terms of the ALPA contract in place prior to the merger with FedEx, a life insurance benefit of \$25,000 is payable to survivors upon the death of such pilot. Please note that this benefit does not exist for you or a survivor one if the career continued with FedEx after T-Day.

We have learned that some survivors did not receive the benefit. Some may not have been aware of the contractual benefit. We will make FedEx aware of your situation.

If you think you are affected, or know of someone who may have missed this benefit, please contact John Dickson at president@flyingtigerline.org to provide appropriate information. A process is underway to remedy this matter. John will add your name and contact info to the list of possible survivors and will keep you in the loop as further details emerge.

Member News, Sightings & Other Interesting Stuff



Former Tiger Captain Dick Bassett, whom we lost in 2009, had a huge Circle T sign installed on his 100-acre ranch in Heber City, Utah where he and his wife, Karen, raised beefalo. Still a good friend of Lydia Rossi, Karen recently had the sign refurbished for all on the plains of Utah to see.



Karen and her new husband, John, spend their winters in Palm Springs and can be seen at right in a recent picture with Lydia and Jerry this year at the San Diego Safari Park.



Click on image above to view video

General Claire Chennault, the AVG Flying Tigers, and the iconic P40 were featured in the 2020 Rose Parade this year on a float entered by the Chinese American Heritage Foundation. The entry, awarded the Extraordinaire Trophy, celebrates the 75th year since America's victory in World War II and salutes all of the American heroes of that war. Click on the image at left to view the video of this wonderful float.

Board of Recognition at the Flight Path Museum

The Flying Tigers Club Board of Recognition, more formally known as *The 500 Club*, is a center piece in the Flying Tiger room at <u>Flight Path Museum and Learning Center</u> at the Los Angeles International Airport.

The Board of Recognition was established to provide funds for the preservation and display of the Clubs' extensive collection of historical material, documents, photos and other memorabilia; and maintenance of the collection at the Flying Tigers Museum. A donation of \$500, or more, provides a permanent plaque on the Board of Recognition. The plaque may be requested by a former Tiger in his or her name to support the Museum; or by family or friends in recognition or remembrance of their dedication to Flying Tigers.



The "500 Club" Board



Recognition for Ciganko and Lynch

There are currently about 60 names on the Board that acknowledge and honor members of our Tiger family. A good many of these are current FTLPA members. To see a list of those currently honored click HERE.

To request a plaque and make a tax deductible donation to the Club, send an email to Margi Falk, TRC Secretary at traveler@strangeworld.com, or call Margi at 310 694-4654 to request an application form.

Other Relevant Associations

The associations below are worth looking at for membership and/or donations







Flying Tigers Club

AVG Flying Tigers Association **Gray Falcons Association**

https://www.flyingtigersclub.org

https://flyingtigersavg.com

https://grayfalcons.com

Say Again?

The fascination of flight can't be expressed with words. But it really lies beyond the capabilities of human endeavor. Once you've experienced it, you'll never be able to forget it.

Friedrich Obleser, Luftwaffe fighter pilot

Contact Us

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Flying Tiger Line Pilots Association P.O. Box 12409 Westminster, CA 92685–2409.

Email Address

email@flyingtigerline.org

Website

www.flyingtigerline.org

FTLPA Officers

John Dickson
President
Email

Leigh-lu Prasse Secretary Email

Lydia Rossi AVG Representative Email Scott Mergele Vice-President Email

George Gewehr

Historian

Email

Donna MergeleLife Member Representative
Email

Ray McKenzie
Treasurer
Email

Joyce Danielsen
Flight Attendant Representative
Email

Sandra White Event Planner Email

2020 San Antonio Reunion **Registration Form**

Book Online Instead Click HERE

May 2 to May 6, 2020

Sat afternoon thru Wed morning

The Westin **Riverwalk Hotel**

420 Market Street San Antonio, TX 78205 (210) 224-6500

Group Hotel Reservations

(18.25% hotel tax will be added)

Traditional City Side Room \$189 per night

Deluxe River Side Room \$209 per night (based on availability at time of booking)

Book Online

or

Call Marriot Reservations at 1-888-236-2427

Request group rate for the Flying Tiger Line Pilots Association 2020 Reunion

Hotel cutoff date is April 10, 2020

Reunion Agenda

For updated agenda and more details visit <u>Next Reunion</u>

Saturday, May 2nd

3pm- Reunion begins in the Hospitality

Sunday, May 3rd

2pm – Poker Pub Crawl 7:30pm – San Antonio, The Saga

Monday, May 4th

8am – Golf Tournament

11am – Flight Attendant Gathering 5pm – River Shuttles to The Pearl

Tuesday, May 5th

10am- Business Meeting (3rd floor)

2pm - Line Dance Instruction

3pm - Open Mic in the Hospitality Suite 6pm - Cocktail Reception (3rd floor)

7pm - Dinner (3rd floor)

8pm - Entertainment and Dance

Wednesday, May 6th

am Hangar is open one last time for 1 hour

Questions?

Email@flyingtigerline.org

Member Name:		
Spouse/Guest: _		
Other Guest(s):		
Address:		
mailPhone:		
	Not Required i	nbership Dues If 2020 paid for in advance. abers are not required to pay dues
My Annual Dues	s for 2020 are includ	ded (\$20) \$
An additional	years are inclu	ded(x \$20=) \$
The Me	embership Roster will be	changed to reflect the year paid to in advance
	Re	eunion Fees
Registration Fe	e (\$35 per person <i>re</i>	equired) (x \$35=) \$
All din		inner Entree Options reens Salad and Churro Cheesecake for dessert
Lemon Garli Pan Seared Cl Citrus-Thym Roasted Vege	c Beurre Blanc, Whipped I hicken Breast (\$70 p e Sauce, Roasted Garlic M etable Napoleon (\$70	Potatoes, Asparagus and Heirloom Tomatoes per plate)(x \$70=) \$ fashed Potatoes, Asparagus, Heirloom Tomatoes O per plate)(x \$70=) \$ Basil, and Blistered Tomato Sauce
_	Write your names	Name Tags (\$7 each) s as you wish them to appear ed by April 15, 2019 to process name tag orders
	al Name Tags Ordere	ed (x \$7=) \$
To	otal Amount En	closed: \$
Mo	ail this completed form ar	nd your check made payable to FTLPA to:
		FTLPA .0. Box 12409 ster, CA 92685-12409
	Registratio	on Deadline is April 15, 2020
	Volur	nteers Needed
	Please indicate your	willingness to help with the following.
Setup Saturd Breakdown V	Wednesday AM	Check-In Desk Raffle Ticket Sales
	Adan	tional Activities

Please indicate your interest in the following activities possibly planned __ Golf __ Group Bicycle Ride __ Group Visit to Pearl Brewery District __ Line Dance Instruction