

Hello Tigers,

I sincerely hope you are healthy and safe during these challenging times. This particular edition of the quarterly newsletter would normally have been full of stories and pictures from the recent reunion. After we made the hard call to cancel the reunion I received the wonderfully inspirational artwork shown above from Deborah Paul. It immediately lifted me as appropriate to use during a somewhat low point in our group's history. Sunshine, rivers, rainbows and Tigers - Thanks Deb!

My additional thanks to Leigh-lu for stepping in for me last month and authoring the May Bulletin while I tended to some family matters. Her suggestion for everyone to call a favorite Tiger in lieu of our cancelled reunion was brilliant and timely, the beginning of May Day tradition I hope. You can expect more bulletins to come from her in the future.

Save the dates May 3rd to May 7th, 2021. I am very excited to officially announce that Sandy White is back in the saddle and has negotiated amendments which I recently signed allowing for our San Antonio reunion at the Westin Riverwalk to be postponed to next year. The hotel location, agenda and theme will remain the same, except that I promise we'll throw a party that will far exceed what was planned for this year! From feedback I received (*actually it was downright grumbling by most*), the format for the western-themed dinner and dance will be Texas BBQ buffet rather than formal plated meals. More information regarding hotel reservations and reunion registration will come in August.

Our San Diego reunion has been postponed to 2022 and Sandy is working on amended dates and a probable move to another hotel closer to downtown and the more exciting seaport areas. The Crowne Plaza Hotel has served us very well the past three times that we've visited the city. Unfortunately there is every indication that the hotel has seen it's day and might be repurposed. The hunt for a better venue would be prudent.

My best to all of you,

John Dickson, President
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Cockpit Crew Members of the Flying Tiger Line



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](#)

From The Vice-President – Wayne Lane

Hello Fellow Tigers

As the interim Vice President of the FTLPA I wanted to introduce myself to those who may have never met me. First, I would like to thank Scott Mergele and his wife Donna for their service. I hope to build on Scott's work.

Originally from Cleveland, OH, I had my eyes set on one day taking the Cleveland Indians to a victory in the World Series.



Alas, there is a moment I'll never forget, sitting on the bench with my baseball coach after a game. Coach had played in the big leagues and his advice was like hearing from a divine being. He put his arm around my shoulder and began, "son," actually, coach called all of us on the team "son." Speaking in a fatherly voice, he suggested I begin working on a Plan B.

Well, Plan B involved attending Emory-Riddle in Daytona Beach, Florida. After a typical general aviation career advancement path of flight instructing and flying charters, I got my dream job with Flying Tigers. The first day at the High Tiger was memorable for many reasons. I met my classmates who have become lifelong friends and the young woman who would become my wife.

My reason for accepting this position is to say thank you to all of you who stepped up in the past to keep our association growing. The friends and fellow employees I met at FTL have been a major part of my life. I always look forward to seeing them at our annual reunions. Working with the other officers, John, Ray and Leigh-Lu has been very educational. Their dedication to the organization is infectious.

May 1st, I called several people from our group who I had not spoken to in years. We spoke about the past and the present. Family, health issues, current events and others we had worked with. It was a very good day. I plan to not just wait until May 2021 until I do that again. Don't be surprised to see a call from area code 740 someday.

Cheers,

Wayne

From The Treasurer – Ray McKenzie

I want to thank the vast majority of you who cashed their SAT refund checks very quickly. That helped tremendously with my bookkeeping and was very much appreciated. The Association finances are on solid ground.

Occasionally members send a check to FTLPA, presumably for dues, but with no form or supporting cover letter. I would appreciate either the form printed out from the Tiger website or a hand written note explaining what the check is covering. Please visit [Membership Forms](#).

I will add my thanks to Scott and Donna Mergele for the time and effort donated to the FTLPA. Also to welcome Wayne and Karen Lane to their new posts as Vice President and Life Member Representative.

Hats off to John Dickson, Sandy White and Madame Secretary Leigh-lu for managing this fiasco caused by the pandemic in order to secure our member's physical health and our association's financial future.

Ray McKenzie / Treasurer

From The Secretary – Leigh-lu Prasse

On our first annual Call-A-Tiger Day May 1, I had the great pleasure of speaking with Captain Hank Germain who began with Flying Tigers in 1953. He also served as our Associations VP in the years 93 and 94 when they were held San Diego and Reno. He was a little down that day because the Reunion had been canceled but then quickly cheered when we talked about the dance we shared last year at Long Beach Reunion. (His son Steve advised when we headed out to the dance floor to "Don't break my Dad!") Steve has said he talked about that dance all year.

I told Hank he was my number one dance partner and that next year he would lead the dancing in the room with the first dance of the night. He became gaily heartened with that thought. I was so glad I called him as his exhilaration made my day. It would be just a week later that he would pass away.

I spoke with Steve at length about his Dad, the incredible loving heart he had. Hank always made those of us who were Steve's friends feel like part of the family and I thanked Steve for sharing his Dad with all of us. I marveled at the incredible environment Steve and his siblings were brought up in the Flying Tiger Family. Hank Germain never failed to include his family on his trips when he could, throwing them all on the plane. The first was a trip to New York on the



Captain Hank Germain with sons Paul and Steve. (Yes, that's a FDX B777 model mounted on their back fence)!

Tiger CL-44 when Steve was just in the 3rd grade. What a great privilege back in the day!

And Hank loved the reunions taking great pride in having attended the very first one held at Dick Rossi's house in 1974 and most of them ever since. For many years Hank always helped at the reunions and gave himself the title Vice President of the Bar! At 92 years old this year, Hank loved the camaraderie of his fellow Tigers to the end.

Cheers,

Leigh-lu a.k.a. Madam Secretary

Note: Steve Germain is a Senior Aircraft Dispatcher and Paul Germain a Senior Aircraft Mechanic, both at FTL/FDX. Paul was honored by Airlines for America or A4A in 2017 as the top AMT from FDX. More about Paul's achievement can be found by clicking [HERE](#).

From The Historian – George Gewehr

Most of our friends know who I am by now. I won't bore you with a lot of my story. What I will say is when I took over from John Ristaino replacing him as President of the Association I didn't think it would last for so long. Just about 15 years. I had a lot of help from Sandy White and Peter Okicich. Peter wasn't on the job when I started, it was Gene Martin who replaced Frank Therian as well. Gene died of cancer a couple of years later and we needed a new secretary and thankfully Peter stepped up to the plate.



Bob with Retired Pilots Association officers, l-r, Bob Conrath, H.J. Wall and Dick Rossi at a banquet where he was presented a life membership scroll.

[History of the FTLPA](#)

In the ensuing years we had a couple of changes from what it was when the association was first formed (click on link above). The biggest change was the start of our web site. This was because of Joe Delazerda's insistence of asking me and telling me we needed one. I told him I would start one but I had no idea how. It took some work but we got it going with the help of an unknown Tiger relative of Bill McCune's.

Continued on next page

What I want to talk more about is the folks who have stepped up to be counted and volunteered to serve. Leigh Prasse, Ray McKenzie and Lydia Rossi. I want to make a special thanks to Wayne and Karen Lane. I have known the other folks much longer than Wayne and Karen which I haven't known for long. As you all know to get folks to volunteer their time, especially when they are retired is very difficult. I was impressed with the Lane's willingness to volunteer. I know John is pleased as well. I also want to thank Scott and Donna Mergele for their great efforts to fill the void when it was needed. What we have is a legacy of a great Company and a great airline.

In its early days it didn't look like it would survive but some how it did. A lot of the successes of the company can be attributed to its employees, who were dedicated to making it a success. I feel this same Tiger spirit is still with us.

Thank you so very much all of you.

George

From The Flight Attendant Rep – Joyce Danielsen Dalbey

This whole year has been one for the books. After several health issues last year we were really looking forward to 2020 and more adventures. Well, that didn't pan out very well. Less than 24 hours of a cruise to the Mexican Riviera, the cruise line cancelled! And then our much looked forward to reunion in San Antonio was cancelled also due to the virus pandemic. Holy crap! But we will survive and get through this. Just another blip on the horizon for us life veterans.

Being bored, like many of you, I've been staying home and catching up on projects that have long eluded me. One of them has been going through boxes of pictures from times of the past.



*San Antonio 1999
First Flight Attendant Recognition Reunion*

I came across pictures of our 1999 reunion in San Antonio. So if you haven't already checked the Facebook Flight Attendant page, I've posted some of my pictures. I encourage others to post past reunion pictures so we can relive our reunions through you. I also found pictures from trips circa 1971. Enjoy, and please take care of yourself and we'll see you in San Antonio next year.

Joyce Danielsen Dalbey

From The Life Member Rep – Karen Lane

Hello!

My name is Karen Ramsey Lane and I am very honored to be a part of this wonderful group of fellow Tigers as the Life Member Representative for the Flying Tiger Line Pilots Association.

Many of you may know me by my maiden name, Karen Ramsey, after graduating from college at UC San Diego. After a stint in the Training Center before being transferred to Flight Operations in the Training Center before being fortunate to work alongside with and meet lots of wonderful people and friendships with, and continue to cherish to this day. One of those ended up being my soulmate almost 39 years ago.

While working at Tigers, I became fascinated with flying after



my first ride on a DC-8. I pursued that passion with the help of Wayne who, as a new hire, still wanted to keep his hand in flying single engine airplanes and still had his CFI. *And* he offered to be my flight instructor (for free!)

I have so much respect for what you all have done and continue to do. Your passion, quick wit, countless stories, talent, and respect for each other, are just a few of the many reasons I am looking forward to serving as the Life Member Rep for this organization.

Karen Lane

From the AVG Rep

Like so many, the AVGFTA had to cancel its annual reunion this year. Our president, Michelle Clouthier, is a nurse in the largest hospital in Nevada, and has seen the worst of the pandemic. Hopefully all will be back to normal by next year and can continue enjoying our lives as usual.

We still plan to have the reunion in 2021 in Las Vegas. Dates will be October 20-24 and you are all invited to attend, so please mark your calendars. Please let me know if you would like to receive the signup information.

The AVG lost their last surviving member this year. Frank Losonsky, was 99 years old and was a great man, business leader, father, grandfather and friend. Frank was a Crew Chief in the 3rd Squadron, Hell's Angels.

Looking forward to seeing you all next year!

Lydia Rossi, AVG Representative



Col. Walt Jackim, 45th Space Wing vice commander, receives a coin from Frank Losonsky, the sole remaining member of the American Volunteer Group Flying Tigers at the time during a visit to Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla. on Sept. 21, 2017.

Retired FTL Pilot Life Insurance Benefit

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 if the career continued with FedEx after T-Day. The covered pilot must have fully retired before August, 1989 and *flown west* since then.

For more information, or to see if your situation qualifies, email Patricia Bell, FedEx Benefits Administration Services, at patricia.bell@fedex.com or call her at (901) 263-5553

Flown West



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

Author unknown

The following former Flying Tigers have made their final flight since our last 2019 reunion in Long Beach. More information can be found in the ***Flown West Memoriam*** section of our website.

Steve Hendry – 7/26/2016
Al 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
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
* Jerry Jones (Ops) – 3/28/2020
* Angie Regina – 3/31/2020
* Paul Fox – 4/7/2020
* Hank Germain – 5/7/2020

*Added since last newsletter # Former SWA

Future Reunions



The Alamo

2021
47th Anniversary Reunion
Westin Riverwalk Hotel
420 W. Market Street
San Antonio, TX 78205

May 3rd to May 7th, 2021
Group Rate of \$189/\$209 per night

Registration and details coming this summer



The Riverwalk

Our reunion planned for San Diego next year has been postponed to 2022 and a change in venue is in the works to a hotel closer to downtown and seaport areas.

The list of possible cities to host our 2023 reunion include Savannah, Boise, New Orleans, San Francisco and possibly even Honolulu. More details will be made available at the business meeting next year in San Antonio and members present will be polled for their opinions.

For 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>

Joe Crecca in the News

There is no doubt, being told to stay home for months has many of us feeling stressed, anxious, and incredibly isolated. Our friend, fellow member and former POW, Joe Crecca, likely knows more about social isolation than any of us. He was recently interviewed in Seattle by Q13 Fox News anchor, Matt Lorch.

"I couldn't talk to anybody for eight months," he says about his solitary confinement. To view the interview yourself click on **[Former POW who spent years in captivity offers valuable lessons on overcoming isolation](#)**



FTL Captain Joe Crecca

Suggested Reading

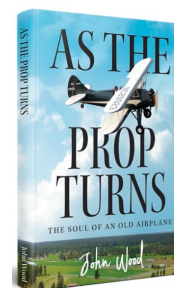
We were recently contacted by aviation author, John Wood, the owner of an antique aircraft unique to the history of a former FTL pilot. His Waco UPF-7 is a lucky airplane for several reasons. Many airplanes born in 1940 no longer enjoy the euphoria of flight. Having been badly damaged in multiple accidents over the years, his Waco somehow always ended up with someone who was willing to invest the time, money, and effort in returning her to the sky. It was originally used for the basic flight training of former Flying Tiger pilot, Rudolph J. Libra, seen at right next to the plane on May 1942 in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Hired in 1950, Libra unfortunately died September 9, 1958 as the co-pilot aboard the fatal crash of a Flying Tiger Super Constellation on approach to Tachikawa, Japan from Wake Island. A recent book review is below:

Many airplanes spend their lives in complete anonymity. They fly, they haul, they dust, they leave the earth, they come back. It's all in a day's work. Or play. NC 29923 is fortunate in that she is having her story told. She is particularly lucky to have it told by John Wood.

John's abiding affection for this airplane is evident on every page of his utterly compelling and obviously painstakingly researched book "As The Prop Turns: The Soul of an Old Airplane." Filled with scores of anecdotes about the people who have flown---frequently successfully---the airplane and punctuated throughout with photo after photo, the book is captivating.

The author's contact information is listed below. Contact Mr. Wood directly for more information about how to purchase this book.

John Wood
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Concord, MA 01742
+1-617-733-3859
k1zy@icloud.com



Libra in basic flight training



Boarding an FTL Connie

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 Flight Path Museum and Learning Center at the Los Angeles International Airport.

It was established to provide funds for the preservation and display of the Clubs' extensive collection of historical material, documents, photos and other memorabilia. 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

Continued on next page

There are currently over 60 names on the Board that acknowledge and honor members of our Tiger family. 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.

Say Again?

My soul is in the sky.

William Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Act V. Scene I.

Contact Us

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