



www.flyingtigerline.org

Merry Christmas

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*

Winter 2020 Newsletter

Hello Tigers,

Incredible we are already up to December - what a year! After much deliberation, I am sorry to report that we have no choice but to postpone the 2021 San Antonio Reunion scheduled for next May. The good news is we are making plans to reschedule it for October, a much safer bet.

The very purpose of our reunions, a warm and grateful embracement of the friendships that have resulted from our employment at Tigers, would be totally impossible under the restrictions that we most likely would still find ourselves in next May. Until a vaccine is distributed and accepted by the public with numbers of COVID cases significantly declining, there is no sense pretending that we could pull off a successful (and safe) reunion held just five months from now.

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I consulted with all former FTLPA officers and met with the Executive Board via Google Video Meet this last Saturday and the unanimous opinion of all was that the reunion should be postponed to October 2021 if at all possible.

Which brings us to present. I have directed Sandy White to work with the Westin Riverwalk Hotel in San Antonio and attempt to get the reunion date changed to the beginning of October 2021. We will let you know as quickly as possible once firm dates have been established. In the meantime, if you made group hotel reservations, used points, or obtained a better deal in some other method, **you are strongly encouraged to cancel those reservations as soon as possible by calling the number below. Do not wait.** The decision to cancel or postpone the reunion does not automatically cancel your group reservation and you will be charged if not canceled within three days prior to your first night.

CALL BONVOY RESERVATIONS NOW 1-888-236-2427

The quote used at the end of this Newsletter could not be more accurate in reflecting our frustration and our resolve to ensure this ship stays airborne and we are able to have a proper and successful reunion. We know we have your understanding - your *Can Do* spirit - and that collectively we'll eventually all get back together again. And that my friends is going to be one heck of a party!

Our Christmas wish to all of you for a safe and healthy holiday season this year.

John & Jeanne Dickson

From the Vice-President

There is no need to revisit how 2020 has affected our lives in so many ways. I thought when I retired a checklist would be something in the past. Hand Sanitizer...check Face mask... check disinfectant wipes....check. Well, we have all adjusted to the new normal by now. Hopefully 2021 will be a return to our more normal lives.

When I agreed to help John, Ray and Leigh-lu with the operations of FTLPA I was given a briefing of what was expected of my position. It wasn't a long list but it ended with TBD. Some of my duties have been very solemn letters. There is also a part of this position's responsibilities that really makes my decision to help a great one.

We recently received a letter requesting information about one of our members, Captain John Drake. His roommate from Viet Nam was trying to find him. Instead of trying to paraphrase or edit John's story, I thought it best to let John tell the story in his own words:

In the Fall of 1966, I graduated from USAF pilot training at Reese AFB in Texas. Nick Lembo graduated from pilot training the same day at Lorado AFB in Texas. We were both assigned to F-4 training in preparation for a one-year combat tour in Viet Nam which began in October of 1967. We met each other in stateside training at various U.S. bases in California, Florida, New Mexico and Washington. Next, we completed a jungle survival course together in the Philippines before joining the 558th Tactical Fighter Squadron in Cam Ranh Bay, South Viet Nam. We were roommates along with two other pilots in a small Quonset hut that housed about 20 other pilots from our squadron. For six months we flew missions over South Viet Nam, North Viet Nam and Laos.



Nick Lembo with John Drake
(hired at FTL 8/9/1971)

I think the low point of the year was flying on Christmas day and having to pack up one of our roommate's personal effects (including unopened presents from wife and daughter) because he was shot down on Christmas. These events created a bond between Nick and I that is almost unmatched in normal life.

In early 1968 the North Koreans captured the Pueblo, a Navy intel ship, and our squadron responded within hours to Kunsan AB in South Korea. Nick and I were again roommates but instead of hot and humid it was below zero outside. After the threat was over, our unit returned to Cam Ranh Bay and finished our tour in October of 1968. The highlight of the year was when the year was completed ! We both returned (without a scratch) to the U.S. as flight instructors but at different bases. Both of us chose to become civilians again, I as a Flying Tiger Pilot and Nick as a store manager in Boston. I was only to see Nick one more time in the next 50 + years. On a Tiger layover I visited him at his home and met his family.

Fast forward to about a month ago. Nick's daughter posted a picture of us on Facebook (my last mission in Viet Nam) with a question, "Anybody know this guy? Last seen at Flying Tigers." None of my friends do Facebook so that didn't work. Then Nick decided to contact Federal Express which led him to the Flying Tiger Line Pilots Association. He spoke with Wayne Lane (whom I haven't seen for over 20+ years) and Wayne completed the link (two reunions in one shot!!) First by email, then by phone, Nick and I reconnected. The reunion is still ongoing as we trade stories and pictures online. We are planning a live reunion as soon as possible (Covid 19 ??). My thank you to the Flying Tiger Line Pilots Association and Wayne for helping this all happen. I haven't been one to faithfully stay in touch with old friends but this has caused me to have second thoughts. Especially at the age of 77 !

Sincerely,

John Drake (retired in 2003)

From the Treasurer

I hope you all were able to make the best of your Thanksgiving. As I write this, my daughter-in-law is a week overdue on delivering our second granddaughter, so we're anxiously awaiting that special event. I think the decision to move the reunion back to October was a pretty easy one. By waiting just those five months, hopefully that will mean we'll all have the opportunity to get vaccinated, and we'll then be able to have a bonfire fueled by all the masks we've been wearing for the last year. In fact, I think I'm going to suggest we do that very thing. What better way to symbolically rid ourselves of the Covid crisis, and welcome in the good times ahead of us. Anyway, with having to cancel one reunion, and then having to delay the next, combine that absence with a great location in San Antonio, and I know we'll all be ready to make this reunion one for the ages. I think you're going to see big numbers at this reunion, and my goal starting after the holidays is to make sure you see a lot of new faces. I hope you all have a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Bill Libby, Treasurer

From the Secretary

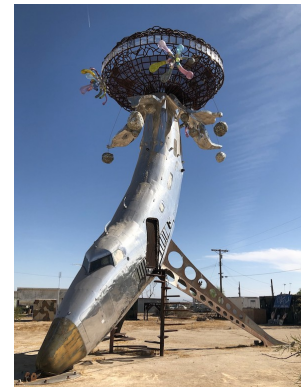
Season Greetings to All!

Recently I stumbled across this "yard art" in the little town of Bombay Beach (east side of the Salton Sea in Southern California) and thought it epitomized the upended year we've all had. What a crazy time for all! I believe when we finally do get together for a reunion, there will be all the more to celebrate that's for sure!

To date we have 555 Members with two new members just added in this last month. A big welcome to Lynn (Alexander) Rayner who was a flight attendant in 1968-69 and Lou Buonadonna who began as a F/E on the DC8 in 1987.

A happy Christmas Season to all with lots of Holiday Cheers!

As ever,
Leigh-lu, aka Madam Secretary



From the Flight Attendant Representative

Hindsight is 2020. The big question. If anyone knows the answer please let me know! One reunion cancelled and another one postponed. This has been a hard year for us all. Especially as we get older and our relationships deepen. Not only have we endured surgeries, hospital and rehab stays for ourselves, but for our friends and loved ones. It has been difficult even more so because of the pandemic. In many cases we have lacked the capacity to be with and console them. Sometimes just a hug can be the best medicine ever.

Since our last reunion in May of 2019, we have lost nine flight attendants. Although we have cried and mourned them in the privacy of our own hearts, we have not been able to say our goodbyes to them as a 'family'.

Hopefully, as a vaccine is on the horizon, I am encouraging everyone to keep your Tiger spirit alive and make plans to attend our 47th reunion next October. I know it's only San Antonio, but just maybe we can have a New Orleans send off for our flown west comrades.

Stay healthy, safe, and sane.....Joyce Daniels

The following is a very interesting story about one of our former Tiger flight attendants, June Morse, as highlighted in this article from the June 1980 Tigereview publication.

A Sight Seeing Trip

On November 16th 1979, Nevada Airlines flight 2504 crashed just after takeoff from Grand Canyon National Park Airport, Tusayan, Arizona. The passengers on the flight were a French tour group on a sight seeing tour of the canyon. All of the passengers survived the crash as well as the flight crew. There were some serious injuries but none were fatal. The tour group consisted of 41 French restaurant owners and guests. The flight attendant on board was Judy Morse who was hired by Flying Tigers in March of 1980. This is her story of that crash on a November day in 1979.

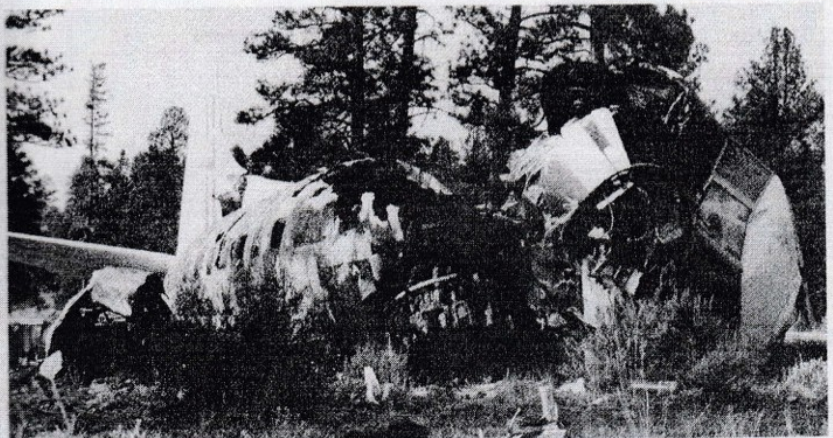
Judy was looking forward to flying back to Las Vegas and to do some needed shopping at home. Judy was the sole flight attendant on board on the 2 p.m. return flight. She had passed through the cabin checking the seat belts of her French passengers – restaurant owners were ready for take off. She went back to her seat and buckled herself into it at the rear of the plane. Lifting off the runway, the airplane was about 200 feet airborne when Judy sensed that something was wrong. “It was taking us too long to climb,” she recalled. Seconds later, she felt a sharp vibration. For a moment, there was dead silence. Then the floor came up under her. The “vibration” was the aircraft shearing off tree tops as it lost altitude after an engine failure. Chaos reigned as the aircraft absorbed the shock of impact with the ground.

Morse was virtually torn out of her seat and thrown forward into the cabin. Judy was trapped under two seats and the lavatory door. She could smell gas fumes and she started calling for help. Three passengers responded to her calls for help, pulling off the seats and door. A fire had started on the right side of the airplane. Judy jumped to her feet and opened one of the left window exits and motioned to a passenger to open the other. She then began pushing people – out of the plane. “If you can hear me, make a noise,” she remembers calling when the last visible passenger was outside. She jumped out after not hearing a response to her calls. The evacuation was completed in a orderly manner and time without panic. Judy didn't have any bullhorn nor any means to communicate with the passengers other than yelling.

Early reports of the crash indicated no survivors. “If you saw the plane, you wouldn't have thought anyone survived,” Judy said. Judy, a flight attendant for five years with Nevada Airlines and others, already had her application in at Flying Tigers when the accident occurred. When she was hired in March of 1980, her credentials spoke for themselves.



Judy Morse, **above left**, accepts award for heroism from Sen. Howard Cannon (D-Nev.), at ceremonies in Washington, D.C.



Wreckage of plane from which Flight Attendant Morse and more than 40 others escaped.

Tribute to Dizzy – Part 2

We lost one of our more iconic pilots on June 9, 2020, when Captain John Dziubala flew west. Dizzy regularly attended reunions with his son, Toby, who recently completed the second part of a wonderful video tribute to his father. We hope that you will take the time to view both videos and appreciate the expertise, time, and love that Toby must have put into these video projects. Click on the link for each Part below, sit back, and enjoy the wonderful story of a great Tiger.

PART 1 (23 minutes) Celebrating my dad and friend, Captain John Francis "Dizzy" Dziubala

PART 2 (90 minutes) – A personal account of the life of Captain John 'Dizzy' Dziubala, as told from the perspective of his Son. What started out as a small tribute video completely took a life of its own. I hope this brings you nostalgia, laughter, and above all, peace. It was quite the emotional ride to make... NOTE: Video contains a tiny amount of adult language.

Welcome New Members

We've had two new members join FTLPA this month.

Captain Lou Buonadonna (*pictured at right*) comes from an all civilian background, flying for Precision Airlines based at KMHT from 1984 until hired by Tigers on August 10, 1987. Lou retired from FedEx on December 28, 2015 as an A300 Captain and is enjoying retirement with his wife, Maryanne in Bedford, New Hampshire.

Former FTL stewardess Lynne Alexander Rayner flew with Tigers from 1968 to 1969.

Welcome Aboard to both of you! We hope to see you in San Antonio next year.



The Flying Tigers Club

We've brought the Flying Tigers Club to your attention a couple of times in the past. A link to their site (<https://www.flyingtigersclub.org>) is on our home page, as our link is on their theirs. Formerly called the Tiger Retirement Club, their mission and purpose is exactly the same as FTLPA's - to keep the *Tiger Spirit* alive and, according to their site, *to never let the light go out*. Two events are normally planned at the Flight Path Museum - LAX each year, a lunch and a dinner. Our two groups have developed a very good relationship over five years. FTLPA membership consists largely of former flight crewmembers, while FTC has attracted former employees from all departments including maintenance, management, field operations and other support personnel from LAX headquarters and all over the world. John Dickson presently serves as Museum Director for the club, overseeing a large collection of photos, memorabilia, and records in a locked room that FedEx has gratefully allowed the FTC to retain after all of these years. The more valuable artifacts and treasured items are on display at the Flight Path Museum and Learning Center. The Flying Tigers Club Board of Recognition (better known as *The 500 Club*) is a center piece in the museum's Flying Tigers room and your name can be a part of it for a donation to the club.

Please check out their website and consider joining. Dues are only \$15 per year and they list a fantastic collection of Tiger merchandise on their site, offered only to club members (hint-hint).

For more information and to join the Flying Tigers Club click [HERE](#).

Congratulations to Dave Stratton

On behalf of FTLPA we want to thank and recognize Dave for his loyal dedication and for his reliable professional service to our group. His efforts have been greatly appreciated by many.

Thank you Dave!

Dave Stratton, crew control scheduler in Memphis, retires November 24. With 46 years in the industry, Dave is one of the few remaining Flying Tiger Line employees at FedEx. He started with FedEx in August 1989 after the Flying Tiger acquisition. Read on for Dave's poignant farewell message to Flight Ops and FedEx.

Someone once said a job is kind of like an interim between college and getting into your life's work. So, after 46 years with three companies as a flight crew scheduler (four at Golden West; 11 with Flying Tiger Line; and 31 at FedEx), I'm about to find out what my life's work will be like on November 30.

I've had the privilege of working with the greatest co-workers, managers, and team members from around the world. I've enjoyed serving thousands of flight crewmembers through a variety of challenging and changing times. I thank them all, past, and present, including some no longer with us. I've been known to say the only way to get seniority is to grow old. That may be true but I'd like to think hard work and perseverance still pays off in time. I thank FedEx and Mr. Smith for the opportunity to finish my career.

Specifically, to the flight line: I wish you all well in taking the company forward, as the professionals you all are. I've been fortunate to enjoy a career from fueling Otters for Golden West Airlines at Hangar One-LAX to working with crews during challenging times and COVID-19 today. It was not always easy but listening to crews' concerns, and ensuring they were safe and that we complied with all legal requirements was my priority one goal. Being the last Flying Tiger in Crew Scheduling to depart only means it's time for a new generation to carry the ball. I wish you all the smoothest of tailwinds. I have a lifetime of memories to take with me and have enjoyed working with people and solving problems while meeting daily demands safely and efficiently.

Finally, to my Team 4 in Crew Scheduling – and after 29 straight years with you guys – best always and goodbye. I'll miss our time together more than I can say.



Dave Stratton over the years.

Help Needed to Save the Reno Air Races

The following is from Frank Maguire, the main organizer for many in our group to gather together at the races each year. Please give his FTLPA endorsed request for donations your strongest consideration.

Since 1972 a number of Tigers and assorted aviation buffs have used the Reno Air Races as an excuse to get together once a year to relive the good old days and pretend that we are all still in our 20's. During those nearly 50 years a good portion of the Tiger seniority list has had a drink at the bar, and we are now well into our third generation of Air Race aficionados.

(continued on next page)

Covid -19, which caused the cancellation of the 2020 event, is now threatening to put an end to all of this and the Air Races need all of our help. They are planning a full blown production for 2021, including the USAF Thunderbirds, but getting from here to there is going to take some serious money.

They have laid off all but two of the professional staff and cut expenses wherever they can, but they have calculated that they need \$500,000 in additional revenue to make it from here to September 2021. To get there they have set a goal of raising \$500,000 in contributions by year end. Almost all of our group has contributed, with multiple \$1,000 plus donations, but with 30 days left to go they still need to raise nearly \$300,000 to reach their goal. That is \$10,000 a day!

The Reno Air Races have become an aviation institution that has brought joy to the hearts of those like us who are afflicted with this aviation madness, and it has been the seminal event in many young people's lives that set them on the road to careers in aviation. Just seeing the gleam in the eyes of six year old who sees the Rare Bear for the first time tells us all that this is a worthwhile event that needs to be supported by those of us lucky enough to have made our careers in aviation.

Online donations can be made by going to <https://airrace.org> and clicking on the "Donate" tab. Alternatively, checks can be mailed to the Reno Air Racing Association, 14501 Mt. Anderson St., Reno, NV 89506. Contributions are 100% tax deductible.

Thanks in advance,

Frank Maguire



HELP ENSURE THE FUTURE OF THE RENO AIR RACES

After the heartache of canceling the 2020 National Championship Air Races due to COVID-19 the Reno Air Racing Association is determined to bring the world's fastest motorsport back to the high desert of Northern Nevada in 2021, but it won't be possible without additional support. RARA, a charitable 501(c)3, is asking for help by launching a fundraising campaign to "Save The Races" with the goal of raising \$500,000 by the end of the year. Please click the link below to learn more.

[CLICK AND HELP BY DONATING TODAY](#)

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 cancelled 2020 in May. More information about each member can be found in the **Flown West Memoriam** section of our website.

Bob Gilbert – 5/6/2020
Hank Germain – 5/7/2020
Dennis Ferrero – 5/11/2020
Anna Lou Spino – 5/20/2020
Ed Acree – 5/31/2020
Dizzy Dziubala – 6/9/2020
Kathy Cass – 7/20/2020

Paul Phillips – 8/5/2020
*Patti Keown Deluna – 9/18/2020
*Joy Turney Belli – 10/3/2020
*Ann Royall – 10/6/2020
*# George Jacoban – 10/30/2020
*# Jim Haynes – 11/6/2020

*Added since last newsletter # Former SWA

Suggested Winter Reading

Flying Tiger Trilogy Iris Yang



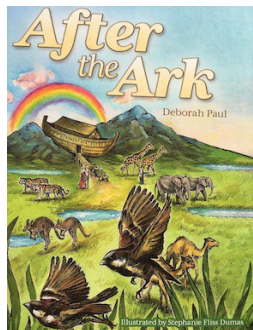
"Like the other two books in this trilogy, Legacy of the Tigers delivers history, love, family sagas, incredible achievements, and lots of other things that kept me from putting the book down."

C. E. Barrett

Born and raised in China, Iris Yang was a guest speaker at the AVGFT Association's last annual reunion in San Diego and is a delightful lady. She has written a wonderful trilogy which starts in WWII and extends forty years in China's political chaos, telling the tale of a heroic rescue of a wounded American pilot and the extraordinary love and friendship between this AVG Flying Tiger and three Chinese cousins who saved him.

To purchase the book and learn more about Ms. Yang

[Click Here](#)



"After the Ark" was inspired by the biblical story of Noah's Ark and shows where many of the animals spread out over the earth after the great flood. The book's illustrations are vividly detailed and the poetry is geared toward learning vocabulary and telling a sweet story. It is written by our friend and former flight attendant, Deborah Paul, who has authored a delightful series of children's books.

Deborah (McCoy) Paul started with Flying Tiger Lines in 1974. She worked in various capacities for the company and eventually began her flight attendant career in 1980. Deb's colorful imagination later blossomed into employment as a newspaper reporter for a community section in the Los Angeles Times and subsequent Charitable Events editor for Orange Coast Magazine.

She accredits her 22-year FTL career and the folks she met along the way as the main inspiration behind columns and feature stories she regularly contributes to local newspapers and magazines around the Palos Verdes Peninsula, where she resides with her husband, Jim. To date, she has written and published five children's books. Contact Deb at deborahpaul16@cox.net or call her at 310-547-9697 to get your copy (\$15)

Say Again?

I have come to accept the feeling of not knowing where I am going. And I have trained myself to love it. Because it is only when we are suspended in mid-air with no landing in sight, that we force our wings to unravel and alas begin our flight. And as we fly, we still may not know where we are going to. But the miracle is in the unfolding of the wings. You may not know where you're going, but you know that so long as you spread your wings, the winds will carry you.

- C. JoyBell C., Author

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