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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 2021 Newsletter

Hello Tigers,

I am extremely excited to announce that an amendment has been signed with the Westin Riverwalk Hotel to hold our next scheduled reunion in San Antonio from May 2-6, 2022. After much negotiation for over two months Sandy White was able to get the venue to agree to keep hotel rates, meals, and amenities the same as originally agreed to in 2018. Outstanding job Sandy!

Within the following pages is news of the release of the long anticipated book *Tiger in the Sea*, by Eric Lindner, which can be pre-ordered and will be available May 14th. The story of FTL 923 enroute from Gandar to Frankfurt on September 23 1962 (our ditching in the Atlantic in 1962) is a must on every Tiger's bookshelf, especially those of us who flew oceanic flights regularly.

Eric is the son-in-law of Capt. John Murray, who was in command of Tiger 923. He first approached FTLPA and the Flying Tigers Club in 2016. Since then members within both groups have rallied to assist the author with his research.

Once I started reading *Tiger in the Sea*, I was unable to put it down. From the first page it put me in the cockpit of an FTL Connie - the smell, the noise, the ever present work stress for the flight and cabin crews, even when the trip is going well. He has really captured the "feel" of what it's like to sit in an old Tiger aircraft, miles above the North Atlantic on a moonless night, far from land, without modern tools but with a multitude of serious problems to deal with all at the same time: mechanical issues, hail, high winds, and the crew's own human error. The vibration and noise, scent of tobacco, and feel of worn out seat cushions mingle in the air with the professional swagger of the crew who possess that essential aura of experience needed to deal with a completely unexpected situation. As the passengers and crew take their plunge into the history books of one of our airline's most significant events, you'll be absolutely captivated!

We hope to have Eric, Carol, and others involved as our special guest speakers for the San Antonio Reunion next May, 2022. Those who listened to Carol's talk during the 2012 business meeting in San Diego will remember how riveting and inspiring her tale was, and how special she is to our group.

I'm asking everyone to please get the word out—via Instagram, Facebook, Goodreads, Linked In, etc. Play tennis with the book reviewer for your local paper? Tell her. Play golf with the anchor of *Good Morning Seattle*? Tell him. Know how to submit a book review or get a book covered in the FedEx newsletter? Go for it! (Mr. Smith's endorsement won't hurt.) I understand Eric's been approached about the film rights by two outfits. If *Tiger in the Sea* is the success that myself and others believe it will be, wouldn't it be something to see on the big screen, or in a Netflix series.

It seems as though life is becoming even shorter and more precious these days and I hope that you will consider this, especially in light of yet another Tiger's passing (Page 4). **Mark your calendars, save up your money, and plan to get together in San Antonio in May 2022.**

John Dickson, President

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Tiger In The Sea – The Ditching of FTL 923

“Tiger in the Sea is one of the most remarkable sagas in the history of commercial aviation. The airmanship, courage, and commitment to duty of Captain Murray and his crew was heroic beyond measure. Their story is well told in this spellbinding book!” - Frederick W. Smith, Chairman, FedEx Corporation

The following taken from the book's dust jacket, which just went to the printer – so we are seeing it first!

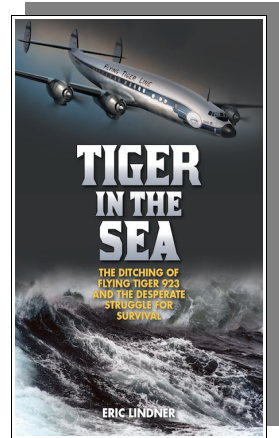
September 1962: On a moonless night over the raging Atlantic Ocean, a thousand miles from land, the engines of Flying Tiger Flight 923 to Germany burst into flames, one by one.

Pilot John Murray didn't have long before the plane crashed headlong into the 20-foot waves at 120 mph.

As the four flight attendants donned life vests, collected sharp objects, and explained how to brace for the ferocious impact, 68 passengers clung to their seats: elementary schoolchildren from Hawaii, a teenage newlywed from Germany, a disabled Normandy vet from Cape Cod, an immigrant from Mexico, and 30 recent graduates of the 82nd Airborne's Jump School. They all expected to die.

Murray radioed out “Mayday” as he attempted to fly down through gale-force winds into the rough water, hoping the plane didn't break apart when it hit the sea.

Only a handful of ships could pick up the distress call so far from land. The closest was a Swiss freighter 13 hours away. Dozens of other ships and planes from 9



Aircraft illustration by Joe Wight, son of Capt. Garrett Wight
Visit

Tiger in the Sea
to pre-order your own copy



Tiger 923 Stewardess
Carol Gould, 1962

countries abruptly changed course or scrambled from Canada, Iceland, Ireland, Scotland, and Cornwall, all racing to the rescue – but they would take hours, or days, to arrive.

From the cockpit, the blackness of the Atlantic grew ever closer. Could Murray do what no pilot had ever done – “land” a commercial airliner at night in a violent sea – without everyone dying? And if he did, would rescuers find any survivors before they drowned or died from hypothermia in the icy water?

The fate of Tiger 923 riveted the world. Bulletins interrupted radio and TV programs. Headlines shouted off newspapers from London to LA. Frantic family members overwhelmed telephone switchboards. President Kennedy took a break from the brewing crises in Cuba and Mississippi to ask for hourly updates.

Tiger in the Sea is a gripping tale of triumph, tragedy, unparalleled airmanship, and incredibly brave people from all walks of life. The author has pieced together the story – long hidden because of murky Cold War politics – through exhaustive research and reconstructed a true and inspiring tribute to the virtues of outside-the-box-thinking, teamwork, and hope.

The book's Acknowledgments include the following:



Author, Eric Lindner

“Thank you, Tigers—of every stripe. This book would not have been possible without your passion, heroism, and dedication. Flying Tiger Line Pilots Association president and Capt. John Dickson beat the bushes on my behalf, which yielded myriad invaluable sources. Capt. Larry LeFever and Association historian Capt. George Gewehr have been unbelievably generous, insightful, and responsive. Thank you also to Cynthia Bowles, Helena Burke, Lydia Rossi, Dawn Seymour-Adams, Guy Van Herbruggen, Doug Shaw, Marshall Meyers, Esq., and Captains Elgen Long, Gary Luccio, Al Silver, and [the late] Starr Thompson”

Pre-order your own copy of *Tiger in the Sea* at <http://www.tigerinthesea.com>

2022 Reunion Update – San Antonio, TX

Our 2020 and 2021 reunion has now been officially postponed to May 2-6, 2022 and will be held at the same hotel, the Westin Riverwalk Hotel. The official agenda and procedures to register and make hotel reservations will be announced as usual on September 1st of this year. Below is a preliminary agenda for now, subject to change:

Monday, May 2nd – Hospitality Room Opens at 3PM
Tuesday, May 3rd – Golf Tournament, Poker Pub Crawl
Wednesday, May 4th – FA Luncheon, Bike the missions, riverboat to The Pearl,
Thursday, May 5th – Business Meeting, Line Dance Instruction, TexMex BBQ Buffet & Dance

More information will be communicated and posted to our website as September approaches.

From the Vice-President

Living in Ohio has it's advantages I've been told. We had not seen hardly any snowflakes practically all winter until about two weeks ago when we received our allotment for the whole winter. Approximately a foot in 2 days. I purposely don't shovel snow because my driveway is about 400 ft of gravel and it keeps solicitors at bay. Unfortunately, that means FedEx, Amazon and UPS drivers too. Their solution is to leave packages by the mailbox. Yesterday, after retrieving the mail and Karen's FedEx, Amazon and UPS packages, I almost made it to the house before disaster struck. I now know what a Medial Collateral Ligament Sprain is. Laying on your back it doesn't hurt so bad. It's when you try to get up that reality bites. It really does hurt.

The good news is San Antonio 2022! John and Sandy worked their magic and have laid the groundwork for an epic reunion. After what we all have endured for the last year the months will fly by. To help get you in the mood, please visit the new mail-order store for all of your FTL souvenirs.

Stay safe!

Wayne Lane, Vice-President

From the Treasurer

Hello Everyone,

As the newest member of this team here at FTLPA, I've been asked to contribute to March's news letter. John said maybe I could introduce myself a little by writing about some interesting place that I've been or fun thing that I've done lately. I immediately thought: Doesn't he know we've been living under the Covid umbrella for the last year? I don't think anyone wants to read about our trips to the grocery store or my occasional spiced up encounter at Home Depot. So I got thinking.

There is one thing I've done recently that this audience might have an interest in. We all have dreams during the course of our lifetime that sustain for a while and then eventually fade for whatever reason. I use to have one that included Jodi Foster, but things got revealed, and that one slipped away. Sorry for digressing. Anyway, the one dream I've always had was to someday own my own airplane. Well, by the time you read this, I should be the proud owner of a 1979 Cessna Skylane RG. It's been in the works for about six months now, and because of Covid, I've been able to devote a lot of time to making it finally happen. The guy I'm buying it from has never been married or had any kids, so basically, he's rich and more important to the story, he's never had to answer to anyone. Consequently, this airplane is equipped like the last airplane I flew—the MD11. It's got a RAT (Ram Air Turbine) and speed brakes and a lot of other extra's. I had never heard of these things on a single engine Cessna. What I've found about this endeavor is that there's so much to learn about the General aviation world. It's changed a lot since I learned it all 40 years ago. (continued next page)

The good thing is that there's this new thing called YouTube that teaches you whatever you need to know. My wife a little while ago said "you go to bed early every night—what are you up there watching porn or something". I of course said "you should come up and check out what I'm watching". She eventually did and she saw how excited I was to be watching an episode of the differences between ADS-B in and ADS-B out. I told her that after this episode, I was going to get caught up on the changes to the airspace system. I asked her if she wanted to hop into bed and watch it with me. She turned around and went back down the stairs. I heard her mumbling something that had the word loser in it. Anyway, I'm loving YouTube. I wish it would have been around when I was going through high school and college. I wouldn't have had to buy all those cliff notes.

Bill Libby, Treasurer

From the Secretary

Thinking about you all and a Happy St. Paddy's Day! Just a quick update on our membership stats. We currently have 531 FTLPA members to date. In this past year we have been pleased to add 12 new members to the roster. There are also three Honorary Member Applications (Non-Tigers) that have attended two reunions in the past and are waiting for the next reunion to make it their qualifying third reunion to join FTLPA. These gentlemen are Bob Schwartz, Andy Honer, and Jeff Spyr - all due to be confirmed at the San Antonio Reunion 2022.

However, good news for anyone applying as an Honorary Member who was previously registered for the 2020 Reunion, the FTLPA Officers are considering granting them one year reunion credit (airline discount!) for the canceled reunion year. That means that when they attend our next reunion in 2022 they will start with 1 year already under their belt. We currently have Capt. Bill Dysart standing by in the wings to join FTLPA. If anyone has a flying buddy from FedEx they most certainly can sponsor them at the next reunion and possibly gain a new membership for the future! All are welcome!

As you raise your glass to drink your Black & Tan on the 17th of March, the luck of the Irish would say...*"May you live as long as you want, and never want as long as you live."* Cheers!!

Leigh-lu Prasse, Secretary, aka Madame Secretary

From the Flight Attendant Representative

Just as we were getting excited for a May 2021 reunion, it appears this darn covid-19 thing is dragging its feet. But with an uptake in the process of vaccinating more people it looks like we are onboard for a definite 2022 reunion. And at the Westin Riverwalk in San Antonio in early May. It will be a welcoming time to get together in person at next years' reunion. Pencil it in on your calendar! My husband and I have gotten our first covid vaccination, and other than a few medical hiccups we have been well. My husband has turned our backyard into a bicycle repair shop, turning broken bicycles into running transportation to those less fortunate at the Crossroads Mission. I've been perfecting my sourdough bread making and giving to those willing to experiment.

With a renewed excitement of the upcoming reunion, we are sadden at those who have flown West during this trying time. Especially one of our renown senior F/A's, Mary Lou Taylor Gaudino on February 15th at the young age of 93. As Robin Pestarino said, *"Although Mary Lou was a stinker; she was professional, serious, and extremely competent. She often had a twinkle in her eyes like she held a secret that she may or may not tell you."* More on Mary Lou can be found in her special [In Memoriam](#) page of our site.

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Mary Lou and Joe Gaudino

We are excited to roll out a mail order system of our Hangar items. For those of you that miss browsing and buying our Tiger themed items, John and Jeanne have created a system to purchase them. More information and a downloadable form are on Page 6 of the newsletter. I do miss getting together with Andee Wright to decide what she will order for us for the Hangar, but we'll do that for the next reunion.

Joyce Danielsen Dalbey, Flight Attendant Representative

From the Historian

Hi Everyone,

To all of our Tiger family who we haven't seen in over a year, we do miss you all. As John has indicated the 2021 reunion has again been postponed until 2022. If it's any consolation I read on the morning of the 26th that the Texas Governor is talking about ending the mask mandate in Texas as well as the lockdown of businesses. If he is true to his word, then hopefully it will come to pass and by next year this nightmare will have passed on.

Julie and I both hope the unfolding year of 2021 will not be too hard on everyone and we can look forward to our 2022 reunion. Let us pray we all stay well so we can have a wonderful 2022 reunion in San Antonio.

It was one year ago this February that Julie and I returned from Israel after a 12 day visit with our youngest son Jason and our youngest granddaughter Robin who were with us as well. We were lucky to have arrived home when we did, as the Pandemic began to grow and lockdowns took hold. After a year of this crisis we feel it is time we should start to see some of our friends. So lets hope that things will start to improve in our lives and we can get back to some sort of normalcy in each and every one of us, for what ever that may be.

Take care of yourselves and know we think of you all and hope to see you in 2022. The memory lives.

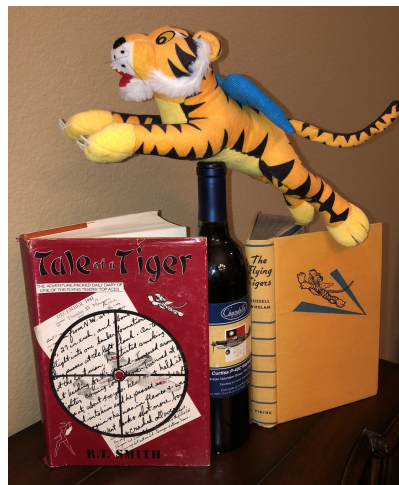
Cheers,
George and Julie Gewehr, Historian

From the AVG Representative

Jerry and I have held up well during this Covid problem, but we are bored! We are really looking forward to getting out and about again, as I'm sure you all are. We have had our two vaccine shots and hope you are able to get yours also.

San Antonio is such a fun town and the Westin Riverwalk is a beautiful hotel which is beautifully located. If you haven't been there you should not miss this next reunion. Even if you have been there you should not miss it! Hope to see you all there!

The Tiger Cub toy was an idea of mine that took a good six months of effort to finally have it produced. I had trouble getting them (China mfg) to make it look like our logo, even though I sent them very good instructions and photos, including exact PMS colors. The first images they send were so bad that I almost gave up.



AVG Tiger Cub designed by Lydia

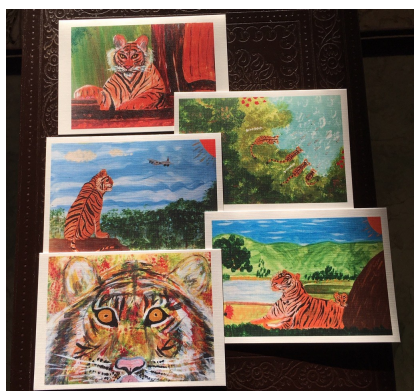
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The AVG Association, like FTLPA, has postponed our 2021 reunion and will probably have it in Las Vegas in the spring of 2022. You are all invited to attend. I'll send out the information when we have it planned.

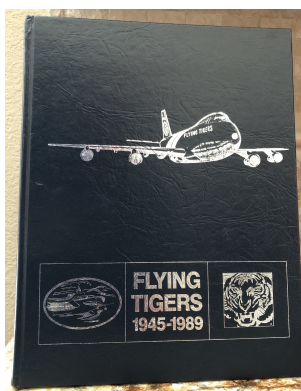
Lydia Rossi, AVG Representative

Hangar Merchandise is Now Available

Because of cancelled reunions, and due to many requests, we have created a system that allows for members to obtain merchandise normally available in The Hangar at our yearly events. Some items were restocked for the 2020 event, but others remain in limited supply. Most exciting is the addition of a couple new items to the list shown below, including one of a kind greeting cards illustrated by Debbie Paul and cute Tiger Cubs designed by Lydia Rossi. The form and procedures to request your merchandise can found on our Home Page or by clicking on the link below.



Greeting Cards, by Deborah Paul



FTL Yearbook



8 Oz HipFlask

MERCHANDISE REQUEST FORM

From The Archives

Here's a unique photo that we came across of Bob Prescott, Pappy Boyington, and our Association's founder, Dick Rossi in 1952 on the wing of FTL's first corporate aircraft, a Cessna 310. Asked about this picture, Lydia Rossi had the following to offer:

I know the photo was taken before I met Dick. Prescott hired Boyington to be the corporate pilot for a while but I don't know how long that lasted. Apparently Prescott and Rossi were the only two AVG members who continued to be friends with Boyington. Dick was a bachelor with a home in the Burbank hills near the Burbank airport. He said when his friends would split with their wives they would move in with him for some duration. Boyington was one of those who availed himself of the free guest room. Just a little history. I only met Boyington one time at an airshow in Texas that we went to and Boyington was there selling his book with a lineup of autograph seekers. The story was that if you didn't buy his book he wouldn't sign anything for you. The AVG was never like that....they always signed autographs freely.



Photo courtesy of the Flying Tigers Club

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Speaking of Cessna 310s, how many of you remember the 1950's TV series Sky King?

"Sky" and his niece Penny (and what young man could forget her) would fly their C-310, *Songbird*, all over the skies of Arizona chasing the bad guys. With the Reno Air Races still back on the schedule in September of this year, settle back and watch the clip below for some very nostalgic moments when life, and flying, were much simpler.

[Sky King](#) (Wikipedia)

[Sky Robbers Episode](#) (You Tube – 25 minutes)

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, if available, 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
Rick Litle – 9/23/2020
* Tom Cooley 10/2020
* Oneio Viera – 10/2020

Joy Turney Belli – 10/3/2020
Ann Royall – 10/6/2020
* Ann Peterson Ludwig – 10/12/2020
George Jacoban – 10/30/2020
Jim Haynes – 11/6/2020
* Dan Briggs – 12/1/2020
* Mike Henrikson – 12/31/2020
*#Ken Dibbell – 2/8/2021
* Jim Hatfield – Date Still Unknown
* Mary Lou Taylor Guadino – 2/15/2021

* Added since last newsletter
Former SWA

Say Again?

"Thousands of volumes have been written about aviation, but we do not automatically have thousands of true and special friends in their authors. That rare writer who comes alive on a page does it by giving of himself, by writing of meanings, and not just of fact or of things that have happened to him. The writers of flight who have done this are usually found together in a special section on private bookshelves." — Richard D. Bach, writer

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