



FLYING TIGERS  
1945 - 1989

# Flying Tigers Club

## January 2026

[www.flyingtigersclub.org](http://www.flyingtigersclub.org)

**Website password: cando89**



It's hard to believe that it's 2026!! Once upon a time, the 2000's were so far into the future, and now we've already spent a quarter century there! It's a little scary seeing how time is zipping by these days. Hoping you all had fantastic Christmas and New Years holidays and spent time with family and friends. Afterall, that is the most important thing!

We are preparing for the **Sunday March 15 Annual Business Lunch** to be held on **Sunday March 15**. Cost is \$35 per person and your reservations must be paid in advance no later than March 6. There is no pay at the door option. We are so excited to tell you that the FTLHS office will be open for an Open House event from 10am-10:45am on March 15 prior to the FTC lunch. The FTLHS office is only 2 miles away, so it's a perfect opportunity to see what is going on in the FTLHS office. More information on **page 7** in this newsletter.



We'd like to thank all our incredible members who have paid their annual dues and made incredible donations to the FTC. It's your can-do spirit that was instilled in us all those years at Flying Tigers that keep this club alive 37 years after our company ceased to exist. We still have a number of members who have not paid dues and are in danger of being dropped. We will send out a couple more reminders about dues payment, but unfortunately, after multiple attempts at reminders, non-paying members will be dropped. It's always so hard for us to do because we feel like we are losing family members. Please click on this link to review the [online roster](#), (password is at the top of this newsletter), type in your name in the search field on the right side of the page and verify your dues expiration date AND your address. If your address needs correcting, please update your contact information on the [Membership Change Form](#). If your membership shows "expired", please fill out a [Renewal Membership Form](#) and pay your dues; you can always pay multiple years in advance or send in an addition donation, even if your dues are current. All membership activity can be done either online at the [Membership Page](#), or print out the appropriate form and send in a check.

Your FTC Board had an opportunity to spend some time together in December for a lovely lunch at our "usual" place in nearby El Segundo. Unfortunately, Doug wasn't able to join us for lunch. We don't get to see each other much anymore since we moved to Zoom meetings....a by-product of the covid era that we'd rather not talk about. We keep talking about having meetings in person again, and maybe 2026 is the magic year that we do it!!

Check out our new merchandise as well. We've had some great feedback so far. Keep your stories coming and email us at [tigerretirementclub@gmail.com](mailto:tigerretirementclub@gmail.com) and we will publish your story and photos in the next newsletter!



*John Burke, Polly Price, Sue Diaz, Hedy Pacheco, Gary & Cindy Molinari, Manuel Paliungas, Charlie & Marie Calleja, Helena Burke*



FTLHS is very excited to announce that we will host an **Open House** on **Sunday, March 15, 2026 from 10am-10:45am** in conjunction with the FTC Business Luncheon! The FTLHS office is only 2 miles away from the Flight Path Museum (venue for the FTC lunch) and it's a perfect opportunity to let FTC members see what we are doing to preserve Flying Tiger Line history. Enclosed in this newsletter are directions and parking instruction for anyone who'd like to come; please select the "yes" box when registering for the lunch, so we can get a headcount of attendees. Just a reminder that the FTLHS office is NOT open to the public and we do not have "regular" office hours.

In the meantime, we have been working with our website designer to construct the archives portion of our website, and he was diligently working on it when he hit a snag with computer coding issues. While he works that out, we wait patiently for progress reports as he makes corrections, and we continue to test the site as progress gets made in baby steps. We report back what works and what doesn't. It takes a great deal of time and patience for all of us as none of this happens overnight. Unfortunately, there is no magic wand, but we are moving in the forward direction, albeit slower than we had hoped.

The part of the project that is most intimidating is the scanning project and how to do it efficiently, keep track of it, and catalog it. We have 18 file cabinets busting at the seams full of photos, documents, brochures, flyers, newspaper clippings and the list goes on. In December we had a very productive meeting with a couple of volunteers who gave some great ideas to help us move forward with the project and it looks like in the next few weeks we will begin the task of scanning!

We are still looking for model airplanes to complete our collection. If anyone out there has these specific models (and scale, approx. 18 inches) in Flying Tiger livery you would like to donate, we'd be delighted to showcase them. Please contact us and we will make arrangements for shipping to us.

Budd RB-1 Conestoga (1/72 scale)  
Douglas C-47 Skytrain (1/72 scale)  
Douglas DC6A (1/72 scale)

Boeing 707 (1/100 scale)  
Boeing 727 (1/100 scale)

### **FTLHS Website**

All of this takes time, and money. Please keep your donations coming as this is our only means of financial support. The FTLHS is a 501c3 organization and all donations are tax deductible as allowed by the IRS. You can even make a QCD (Qualified Charitable Distribution) directly from your IRA. Click here to see all the donate options available.

### ***FTLHS Mission Statement***

*To preserve the history of the Flying Tiger Line and provide a digital research repository for students of aviation and educate youth and aviation enthusiasts about Flying Tiger Line's place in the world of air cargo and charter flights on the world stage of aviation.*

You may contact the officers of FTLHS anytime via email at [contact@ftlhs.org](mailto:contact@ftlhs.org). The USPS mailing address is:



Flying Tiger Line Historical Society  
P.O. BOX 91296  
Los Angeles, CA 90009

*John Dickson - President & Chairman  
Helena Burke - Vice President & Board Member  
Gary Molinari - Treasurer  
Guy Van Herbruggen - Secretary & Board Member  
Marshall Meyers - Asst. Secretary & Board Member  
John Burke - Board Member*

# AVG Still Celebrated in China

Many thanks to **Sal DeLuca** for sending us this article.

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## These American mercenaries are revered in China. Their relatives are among the few US invitees to Xi's WWII military parade

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By Brad Lendon

UPDATED AUG 31, 2025 – REPRINTED FROM CNN.COM



*Flying Tiger pilot Robert T. Smith snapped this photo of his squadron in flight over China on May 28, 1942.*

*Photo by Robert T. Smith/Courtesy Brad Smith*

### Consider this job offer:

A one-year contract to live and work in China, flying, repairing and making airplanes. Pay is as much as \$16,725 a month with 30 days off a year. Housing is included, and you'll get an extra \$700 a month for food. And there's an extra \$11,000 for every Japanese airplane you destroy – no limit.

That's the deal – in inflation-adjusted 2025 dollars – that a few hundred Americans took in 1941 to become the heroes, and some would even say the saviors, of China.

Those American pilots, mechanics and support personnel became members of the American Volunteer Group (AVG), later known as the Flying Tigers.

The group's warplanes featured the gaping, tooth-filled mouth of a shark on their nose, a fearsome symbol still used by some US military aircraft to this day.

The symbolic fierceness was backed up by AVG pilots in combat. The Flying Tigers are credited with destroying as many as 497 Japanese planes while losing only 73.

Today, despite US-China tensions, those American mercenaries are still revered in China.

"China always remembers the contribution and sacrifice made to it by the United States and the American people during the World War II," says an entry on [the Flying Tigers memorial page](#) of China's state-run newspaper People's Daily Online.

The bond is such that the daughter and granddaughter of the Flying Tigers' founder are among the few Americans invited to Wednesday's military parade in Beijing commemorating the end of World War II.

### The formation of the Flying Tigers

In the late 1930s, China had been invaded by the armies of Imperial Japan and was struggling to withstand its better equipped and unified foe. Japan was virtually unopposed in the air, able to bomb Chinese cities at will.

Leader Chiang Kai-shek, who had been able to loosely unite China's warlords under a central government, later hired American Claire Chennault, a retired US Army captain, to form an air force.



*A Chinese soldier guards a line of American P-40 Flying Tiger fighter planes at an airfield somewhere in China. US National Archives*

Chennault first spent a few years putting together an air raid warning network and building airbases across China, [according to the Flying Tigers' official website](#). In 1940, he was dispatched to the United States – still a neutral party – to find pilots and planes that could defend China against Japan.

With good contacts in the administration of US President Franklin Roosevelt and a budget that could pay Americans as much as three times what they could earn in the US military, Chennault was able to get the fliers he needed.

A deal was secured to get 100 Curtiss P-40B fighters built for Britain sent to China instead.

In his memoirs, Chennault wrote that the P-40s he got lacked a modern gun sight. His pilots were “aiming their guns through a crude, homemade, ring-and-post gun sight instead of the more accurate optical sights used by the Air Corps and the Royal Air Force,” he wrote.

What the P-40 lacked in ability, Chennault made up for in tactics, having the AVG pilots dive from a high position and unleash their heavy machine guns on the structurally weaker but more maneuverable Japanese planes. In a low, twisting, turning dogfight, the P-40 would lose.

## A Ragtag Group of Fliers

The pilots Chennault enrolled were far from the cream of the crop.

Ninety-nine fliers, along with support personnel, made the trip to China in the fall of 1941, [according to the US Defense Department history](#).

Some were fresh out of flight school, others flew lumbering flying boats or were ferry pilots for large bombers. They signed up for the Far East adventure to make a lot of money or because they were simply bored.

Perhaps the best known of the Flying Tigers, [US Marine Greg Boyington](#) – around whom the 1970's TV show “Black Sheep Squadron” was based – was in it for the money.



*US World War II veterans, including former Flying Tigers, pose for pictures with a banner as a cheering crowd welcome them at the Chongqing Jiangbei Airport on August 18, 2005. China Photos/Getty Images*

“Having gone through a painful divorce and responsible for an ex-wife and several small children, he had ruined his credit and incurred substantial debt, and the Marine Corps had ordered him to submit a monthly report to his commander on how he accounted for his pay in settling those debts,” according to a US Defense Department history of the group.

Chennault had to teach his disparate group how to be fighter pilots – and to fight as a group – essentially from scratch.

Training was rigorous and deadly. Three pilots were killed early in accidents.

During one training day, which became known as “Circus Day,” eight P-40s were damaged as pilots landed too hard, or the ground crew taxied too fast, causing collisions.

Chennault expressed his disappointment at his group's first combat mission against Japanese bombers attacking the AVG base in Kunming, China, on December 20, 1941. He thought the pilots lost their discipline.

“They tried near-impossible shots and agreed later that only luck had kept them from either colliding with each other or shooting each other down,” the Defense Department history says.

Still, they shot down three Japanese bombers, losing only one fighter that ran out of fuel and crash-landed.

## Establishing a Legend

The pilots quickly conquered their steep learning curve.

A few days after Kunming, they were deployed to Rangoon, the capital of British colonial Burma and a vital port for the supply line that got allied war materiel to Chinese troops facing the Japanese army.

Japanese bombers came at the city in waves over 11 days during the Christmas and New Year's holidays. The Flying Tigers ripped holes through the Japanese formations and cemented their fame.

"The AVG had officially knocked 75 enemy aircraft out of the skies with an undetermined number of probable kills," the group's website says. "The AVG losses were two pilots and six aircraft."

The Flying Tigers spent 10 weeks total in Rangoon, never fielding more than 25 P-40s.



*American Volunteer Group aircraft flying in tight formation during World War II. Three Lions/Hulton Archive/Getty Images*

"This tiny force met a total of a thousand-odd Japanese aircraft over Southern Burma and Thailand. In 31 encounters they destroyed 217 enemy planes and probably destroyed 43. Our losses in combat were four pilots killed in the air, one killed while strafing and one taken prisoner. Sixteen P-40's were destroyed," Chennault wrote in his memoir.

Despite the Flying Tigers' heroics in the air, allied ground forces in Burma could not hold off the Japanese. Rangoon fell in March and the AVG retreated north into Burma's interior.

But they'd bought vital time for the allied war effort, tying down Japanese planes that could have been used in India or elsewhere in China and the Pacific.

## Claim to Fame

Though news didn't travel quickly in 1941-42, the United States – still reeling from the devastating December 7, 1941, Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor – was eager for heroes. The Flying Tigers fit the bill.

Republic Pictures cast John Wayne in the leading role of "Flying Tigers" in 1942. Movie posters showed a shark-toothed P-40 diving in attack mode.

Meanwhile, the AVG's sponsors in Washington asked the Walt Disney company to make a logo.



*A World War II-era P-40 Warhawk, painted in the colors of the American Volunteer Group the "Flying Tigers" is on display in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, in 2007.*

Jonathan Daniel/Getty Images

Disney artists came up with "a winged Bengal Tiger jumping through a stylized 'V for Victory' symbol," the US history says. The logo didn't include the iconic shark mouth featured on the Flying Tigers' aircraft.

Chennault wrote that the shark mouth didn't originate with his group, but was copied from British P-40 fighters in North Africa, which in turn may have copied them from Germany's Luftwaffe.

"How the term Flying Tigers was derived from the shark-nosed P-40's I never will know," he wrote.

## Whose Country to Fight For

When the US entered the war, US military leaders wanted the Flying Tigers assimilated into the US Army Air Corps.

But the pilots themselves either wanted to go back to their original services – many came from the Navy or Marine Corps – or wanted to stay as civilian contractors of the Chinese government, where the pay was much better.



*A US Air Force A-10 attack jet is pictured in Iraq in 2004. The Flying Tigers iconic nose art lives on the A-10 fleet.*

*Master Sgt. Cecilio Ricardo/Digital/US Air Force*

Most told Chennault they'd quit before doing what Washington wanted. When the Army threatened to draft them as privates if they didn't volunteer, those who'd considered signing on opted out.

Chennault was made a brigadier general in the US Army and agreed that the Flying Tigers would become a US military outfit on July 4, 1942.

Though the Flying Tigers continued to wreak havoc on the Japanese in the spring of 1942 – striking ground targets and aircraft from China to Burma to Vietnam – it was clear the force was entering its waning days, according to US military history.

The AVG flew its last mission on the day it would cease to exist, July 4.

Four Flying Tiger P-40s faced off against a dozen Japanese fighters over Hengyang, China. The Americans shot down six of the Japanese with no losses of their own, according to a US history.

## A Contribution Never Forgotten



*A visitor walks past images and old uniforms of the Flying Tigers at the Anti-Japanese War Museum in Dayi county in China's Sichuan province in 2005.*

*Liu Jin/AFP/Getty Images*

Despite frosty relations with Washington in recent years, the bond that American mercenaries made with China 80 years ago remains untarnished.

There are at least half a dozen museums dedicated to or containing exhibits about the Flying Tigers in China, and they've been the subject of contemporary movies and cartoons.

The Flying Tiger Heritage Park is on the site of an old airfield in Guilin where Chennault once had his command post in a cave.

In the US, the website for [the Louisiana museum](#) that bears Chennault's name sums up what he hoped his legacy would be at the top of its mainpage, using the last lines of the general's memoir:

***“It is my fondest hope that the sign of the Flying Tiger will remain aloft just as long as it is needed and that it will always be remembered on both shores of the Pacific as the symbol of two great peoples working toward a common goal in war and peace.”***

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### Comments from the FTC:

*We owe our very existence to the AVG, and our “Can Do” spirit, that is part of each and every one of us. They were tasked with a difficult mission during WWII, didn't exactly have the best equipment, operated on a shoestring, and still managed the impossible. Robert Prescott had a vision with the Flying Tiger Line; we too didn't have the best equipment, operated on a shoestring and still managed the impossible. Robert Prescott and his “rag tag fliers”, along with General Chennault, are part of each and every one of us Tigers and have no doubt that they are smiling upon us.*

## Flying Tigers Club Luncheon

The annual Flying Tigers Club Business Lunch will be held on [Sunday March 15, 2026](#) at the Flight Path Museum at LAX. We've been at this venue for many years now and it suits us very well. All attendees enjoy strolling around the museum, particularly the Flying Tigers Room, even if they've seen it many times. It never gets old!

We have a special treat this year for attendees in that the Flying Tiger Line Historical Society office will be hosting an Open House! We thought this would be a perfect opportunity for our members to see the office that many of you have contributed to financially and continue to support us. We are so proud of what we've accomplished so far; without you, this office and organization would not be possible. The FTLHS is a 501c3 non-profit organization with the goal of preserving the history of the Flying Tiger Line. It has been a labor of love and a passion, and we want to share it with you.

The Open House will be for a short 45-minute window prior to the FTC lunch. It's a quick 2-mile drive and very convenient to get to the Flight Path Museum for the lunch at 11am. If you plan to attend the luncheon, we'd be delighted to show you around the FTLHS office.

As always, you can pay for the luncheon online at our website [here](#), or you can print off the paper form [here](#) and send in a check. We have also included the complete paper form in this newsletter with parking instructions on the back for those of you joining us prior to the FTC lunch. Please make sure you select the "YES" box to let us know you are coming to the FTLHS office for headcount purposes. It's not a very big office, but enough space for you to see what FTLHS all is about.

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## Guy Van Herbruggen is Writing another Book!

By now you all know we are shamelessly promoting Guy Van Herbruggen's books and he's already written FIVE incredible books about Flying Tigers! His next book will be about the B707 and the famous 1965 PoleCat flight. If you have any information or experience with Flying Tigers B707 or specifically the PoleCat flight, please contact Guy at [gvanherbruggen@hotmail.com](mailto:gvanherbruggen@hotmail.com). He would love to hear from you!!

Guy's books are available for purchase at The Airline Boutique (<https://theairlineboutique.co.uk>). You can also find his books on Amazon.



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## FTLPA Reunion – HNL



In 2026, FTLPA is planning to hold the annual reunion in **Honolulu, Hawaii** from May 4-9, followed by a 7-day island cruise! If you are not interested in the cruise, there is an option for an extension to Kona on the Big Island or simply stay in Honolulu on your own. You can't go wrong with any of these options! Plan for Honolulu including a golf tournament along with a trip to Pearl Harbor and a very special luncheon being planned at the Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum with the Robert Prescott P40 (inherited by FedEx) followed by the traditional banquet on the last night.



Check out more details here <https://www.flyingtigerline.org/honolulu-2026-reunion/>

## 500 Club



Thank you to all the wonderful Tigers who have donated to the 500 Club over the years and have helped us maintain our history. Without you, much of what we do would not be possible. Thank You!

A donation of \$500 provides a permanent plaque on the Board of Recognition. The plaque may be requested by a former Tiger in his or her name, or by family or friends in recognition or remembrance of their dedication to Flying Tigers. A donation to the 500 Club includes one year Club membership! There are now over 86 names on the Board that

acknowledge and honor members of our Flying Tigers family.

The Flying Tigers Club Board of Recognition is a centerpiece in the Flying Tigers Room at the Flight Path Museum and Learning Center at LAX. Donations can be made directly on our website. You can either pay with a credit card online or mail in a check. <https://www.flyingtigersclub.org/500-club/>

If you have any questions regarding the 500 Club, please contact us at [tigerretirementclub@gmail.com](mailto:tigerretirementclub@gmail.com)

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## FTL Yearbooks Available Who never got one? Who wants one?

We still have a few of these fabulous 1989 FTL yearbooks available and many of our Club members retired or left FTL before 1989 and likely don't have one of these books. The books themselves are free, but shipping will cost **\$5** for each book.

Please visit our website <https://www.flyingtigersclub.org/yearbook/> to order a book and pay online.



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## From our Facebook Page!



**Tom Irwin** posted these pics on our FB page. FTL Tail number N88940 (C54 Skymaster), which Flying Tigers operated from 1947-1957, presumably a military passenger flight, location and year unknown.

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## Like us on Facebook!

We currently have **680 members** on our official Club Facebook page “**Flying Tigers Club**” (Tiger Retirement Club). Being a member of the Facebook page does NOT make you an active member of the official Flying Tiger Club. Please share our Facebook page with your FTL friends...and while you are at it, send them the website link (listed below) to join the Club if they are not already members! Keep in mind that there are multiple FT Facebook pages out there.....but “**Flying Tigers Club**” (Tiger Retirement Club) is the page run by this club. **As a reminder, we do NOT sell any items on this FB page. Anyone selling anything on our FB page is a scammer and buyer beware.**

<https://www.flyingtigersclub.org/membership/>

[Flying Tigers Club Facebook Page](#)





## Membership Dues

**Your annual dues are due in *December* every year!**



All membership business can be taken care of at this link:

<https://www.flyingtigersclub.org/membership/>

**Whether you are renewing your annual membership or updating your address, phone or email! You can pay directly to us online via PayPal or credit card, or you can print out a membership form and mail it in with a check! **You DO NOT need a PayPal account to pay online.****

You can determine when your dues expire by checking the membership roster on the Club website at [Flying Tiger Member Directory](#) and enter the password (which is found at the top of each newsletter). If you have any questions, please send us an email at [tigerretirementclub@gmail.com](mailto:tigerretirementclub@gmail.com) and we'll help you out.

We would like to remind our members that you can make additional donations online as well as pay dues!

**We hate to lose any of our members, but after three attempts to reach our delinquent members, they will be dropped.**



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## Donations of Memorabilia & Good Ol' Cash Donations!



Anyone who has Flying Tiger memorabilia and would like to donate it to the Flying Tigers Club, please contact us at [tigerretirementclub@gmail.com](mailto:tigerretirementclub@gmail.com) or [contact@FTLHS.org](mailto:contact@FTLHS.org) and we'll let you know where to send your donations. We are always over the moon to get FT memorabilia. Please don't be shy....we'll take anything you send us. We want to preserve our history. We want to remind everyone that any donations made to the Flight Path Museum belongs to them and FTC and/or FTLHS has no right to those items. **Please understand that, although we hold our events at the Flight Path Museum, and we have a section dedicated to Flying Tigers, they are a completely separate entity from us.**

The Club is always grateful for any monetary donations provided. No matter how big or small, they help us to continue keeping the Memory Alive.

This quarter we offer a special thank you to: **Robert Lewis, William McDonough, Lida Emert, Robert Ruggiero, Rick Leary, Skip Dokken, Bill Krabec, Vickie Vega, Ione Hollander-Brown, Ken Iverson, Sal DeLuca, Stan Chandler, Janet West, Robert Baird, Bobbi Dye, Fred Enfield, Ed Thompson, Philippe Platek, Albert Evans**

Especially thankful to **Earl Gillette, Larry Rubinstein, Terry Banker, Frank Cich, Ron, Way, Mary Ann Berthold, Elizabeth Adams-Jarnagin, James Roberds, Cherie Eaton**

Extremely grateful to **Jack Springer, Charles Ferry, Heidi Amling, Mary Jacobson, Bill Dette**

Many thanks for Flying Tiger treasures donated to the FTLHS Archives from **Frank Christian, Don Nash, Ginny Dixon, Helena Burke, Eddie Ruhl.**



The Bi-Annual Lunch events is booked for

Sunday March 15, 2026  
Sunday October 18, 2026

Mark your calendars!

<https://www.flyingtigersclub.org/events/>

## Have You Moved?



Please let us know if you've moved or changed your email address. We want to make sure you keep receiving the newsletter.

<https://www.flyingtigersclub.org/membership-change-form/>

## News from our Members

From **Diana Nichols**



I just got the newsletter with all the luncheon photos. great job. I enjoy hearing and seeing all the tigers I worked with. I left LAX in 1996 for IND and FedEx Maint. control so it has been almost 30

years since I've seen the hangar folks.

I retired to the AL gulf coast in 2004. This photo is one of those "small world" stories.

I was perusing FB one day and saw a photo of Kitti Tobin with a local musician friend who is popular here in Gulf Shores. It turned out that Lisa Christian is Kitti's niece. All these years of being friends with Kitti and she never told me she had a famous niece. So I had to surprise Lisa with an FTL t-shirt. Kitti has yet to visit the beach. I think there are few Tigers who have vacationed or might live in the area. If they know Kitti, I hope they can catch Lisa at one of her gigs.

It would be great to hear from some of the LAX hangar folks and other Tigers I worked with. I'm in the directory and living it up here in "Margaritaville".

From **Kathy Mattern**

Still love traveling with my family. River cruises are my favorite.

From **Rick Leary**

Found secreted away several posters of the venerable DC-8-63CF (N779, 82 and 90FT together at RJOO). N781 night ramp photo; and a framed in-flight photo of N800FT 747-100F. Will be framing and reframing so these will find their proper place on a wall and not in a box!

From **Skip Dokken**

After going from a GMC Sierra to a Jeep Gladiator, my wife now has something without a truck bed. Bright Red Jeep Wrangler. And this is a first try at electric. It's a hybrid. Gets 20-25 miles on a charge. Not great, but it's a start. (Now to go hunting for some rocks to crawl on!)

From **Dee Moore**

Thank you as always for keeping the FTL Club going. I really enjoy seeing the roster and names of old friends. Happy Holidays.

I have been doing pretty good. Keeping busy with my hobbies.

From **Vickie Vega**

Thanks to my employment with Flying Tigers, I caught the travel bug and have been traveling internationally for 45 years now. I took a beautiful vacation to France in October with twenty-one friends, it was marvelous. Enjoying 10 years of retirement.

From **Bobbi Dye**

I just turned 92!!

From **Alice Jones** – NEW MEMBER

First, I want to say that although my employment was short lived, it was the most enjoyable and exciting career I have ever had. In 1987 I was a stay-at-home mom of a 3-year-old and a one-year-old. I had always worked in an office environment previous to having children. I love being able to be home with my children, but I missed the social interaction with adults. So, I only wanted to work part-time so not to be away from my two youngsters for too long. I had a friend whose husband worked for Flying Tigers at the nearby Rickenbacker AFB. My friend knew I was looking for something part-time so when they began hiring part-time employees she called me. I always loved flying so thought why not see what they have. I contacted the employment office, and they told me where to go to fill out an application, however, the only part-time openings available were for part-time dock workers. I thought I didn't have any experience but how hard could it be. They called me in, and I went through the hiring process, they hired me on the spot. I think my friend's husband put in a good word also. So, in 1987 I started working at Flying Tiger as the only woman on the truck dock!! My first day walking out onto the dock I felt a little intimidated with all men, but as the days passed, I fit right in!! I loved learning about how the trucking industry and cargo industry worked together. I went from loading trucks to loading 747's and other cargo aircraft. I worked hard to learn everything I could about transporting cargo on an aircraft. After I was there almost a year the Dangerous Goods Specialist position became available, I applied and was accepted to go to the weeklong training course. I loved it!! I was a DGS until the dreaded news that we were bought by FedEx. I stayed with Flying Tigers until the merger in 1989. I was offered a position with FedEx, but it was in another city, and my husband had his own business in Columbus, so I turned down the offer from FedEx. It was sweet sorrow not working for Flying Tigers. I loved my job, I loved the people I worked with, and I loved the industry. I was able to fly with Flying Tigers for free as an employee and was able to visit England and Puerto Rico. My next adventure I was planning was going to Australia, but it was cut short when my employment ended. When I left Flying Tigers, I stayed in contact with some of my close friends I had made there but through the years our lives took us different directions. I went back to school after Flying Tigers and got a nursing license. I retired in 2019 from a

company that owns nursing homes. I never used my nursing license in a hospital setting but I was a nursing recruiter for 26 years. Our company was on the top floor located near the airport so I would hear the airplanes coming and going and it would always bring back memories of Flying Tigers.

*Welcome Alice! We can all relate to your story. Doesn't matter how short or how long your worked for FTL, it was a lasting impression for all of us!*

From **Judy Farrell**

This is an update on me. I do charity dinners for the Palm Springs Annual Shelter and Wild Life. It's a no-kill shelter with lots of love. I left them in a trust. We just had our lunch at the Surf Club. It's like a beach. What a beautiful place. Hope you can visit it some time.

I left a small gift when I pass for the Flying Tiger Club. They have you on the list for keep up the Club dues.

Take care. My best wishes for all of you.

*Judy, you are too kind and we appreciate it very much!*

From **Sal DeLuca**

Had a grand time at the luncheon and was greatly moved by Leslie Pfeifer's presentation, especially as we were all at a vulnerable age back then. I wish I could be a regular at the event, but we'll see about next year.

Also, I'd like to send along a short note and picture that maybe you could post next newsletter:



I call this pic "Where It All Started". It was taken on a summer road trip this past July, and I guess you could say it's why we're all in this together. Great history lesson.

From **Leslie Pfeifer**

Scheduled to present my Tiger program 5 times this Spring.

From **Mark Taylor**

Volunteering via JustServe.org

From **Jerry Mylin**

I'm still keeping in touch with some of my Tiger buddies. We go to lunch about once a month.

From **Helena Burke**



Achieved a lifelong goal during October 2025 and walked 117 kilometers of the Camino de Santiago in Spain! It was a 6-day walk with seven gal-pals that I have known my entire life. An incredible journey that was grueling, spiritual, challenging, wonderful and everything in between and already pondering my next adventure.

From **Dan Wallace**

Enjoying retired life in Henderson NV. We have a beautiful home, occasional travel and we both keep busy with hobbies and friends.

From lone **Hollander-Brown**

Thank you for continuing the Flying Tigers Retirement Club. Wishing everyone a happy and healthy 2026. Happy New Year!

From **Bruce and Sandy Brandenburg**

Happy Holidays and New Year. May we all be Blessed to work together in 2026.

From **Philippe Platek**

Some photographs of most attractive places in Europe.

From **Bobby Bartling**

We received a lovely Christmas card sending Best wishes to the Club Membership

From Linda and **Brad Terpak**

Christmas greeting from Linda and Brad Terpak. Brad is 86 now and I am 80

From **Charles Marshall**

Living the life in Robin, ID since mid-2009. Life in rural America is the greatest. I know all my neighbors within 2 miles of my house. Working in the city, I didn't know who lived 2 houses from me. In good health; doc tells me to keep doing what I'm doing, wife just shakes her head and rolls her eyes. Fair skies and warm winds to all!

## Welcome to New Members!

**Alice Jones**

**Herman Norambuena**

**Norma Kibby**

**Hillary Pavia**

## Condolences

From Ned Wallace on Dec 28, 2025



I'm sad to inform you that **Peter Hubbard**, who last held the position of Senior Vice President Marketing and Sales at Flying Tigers until 1985, passed away today in Greenville, North Carolina, where he was living with his wife, Judy.

Peter was a good friend of mine for 50 years. He was a true gentleman and will be missed by all who knew him.

From Lisa Miller Jacobs



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of **George Miller**, who died on 27 November 2025, aged 82.

He was a beloved husband, father, grandfather, uncle, and friend, and will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved him.

For those who wish to pay their respects, visitation and funeral services as shown below. All who feel able to attend are very welcome.

### VISITATION

Sunday, 11 January 2026  
1:00 to 5:00 pm

Memorial Park Funeral Home  
5668 Poplar Ave  
Memphis, TN 38119

**FUNERAL SERVICE**

Monday, 12 January 2026  
11:00 am  
Memorial Park Funeral Home  
5668 Poplar Ave  
Memphis, TN 38119

**COMMITTAL SERVICE**

West Tennessee Veterans Cemetery  
4000 Forest Hill Irene Road  
Memphis, TN 38125

Following the funeral service

Thank you for your love, support, and kind messages during this difficult time.

**News – Non-Members**

From our FB Page (Dec 31, 2025)

Former FTL JFK/customer service agent Wayne Lashley passed away in October. Condolences to his wife Joanie, who worked in the SFO customer service department.

From our FB Page (Nov 30, 2025)



Joan Marie Taft  
February 24, 1944 - July 17, 2025  
Joan was born and raised in Hawthorne, California and retired to McMinnville OR after a successful marketing career in Flying Tigers and FedEx Her

kindness and generosity extended to her family, children and friends. Read more here:

<https://www.macyandson.com/obituaries/Joan-Marie-Taft?obld=43654257>

From our FB Page (Nov 5, 2025)

This week we mourn the passing of Harry Bergen and Joe Ferrara both from JFK.

**FTC Club Contacts:**

[tigerretirementclub@gmail.com](mailto:tigerretirementclub@gmail.com)

- President..... John Burke
- Vice President..... Helena Burke
- Secretary..... Manuel Paliungas
- Treasurer ..... Gary Molinari
- Activities Director ..... Hedy Pacheco
- Communications Director ..... Helena Burke
- Membership Director ..... Doug Shaw
- Merchandise Director ..... Charles Calleja  
Email: [flyingtigercharlie@gmail.com](mailto:flyingtigercharlie@gmail.com)
- Chairman Emeritus ..... Polly Price

**Club Address, etc.**

Please send all checks for membership dues and renewals, dinner or luncheon reservations or club donations to:

**Flying Tigers Club  
P.O. BOX 91296  
Los Angeles, CA 90009**

**FedEx Contacts:**

Below is the updated Tiger benefits contact numbers for all FTL employees who retired **prior to T-Day August 7, 1989:**

**PENSION ISSUES:**

AON Hewitt Co. 855-604-6221

**HEALTH BENEFIT & LIFE INSURANCE ISSUES:**

Alfred Applewhite  
901-263-5553  
Email: [alfred.applewhite@fedex.com](mailto:alfred.applewhite@fedex.com)

**RETIREMENT SERVICE CENTER**

855-339-6992

Merchandise is for MEMBERS ONLY

**MERCHANDISE ORDER FORM**



Item Description	Price ea.	Qty.	Sub - Total
16 oz Embossed Mug	\$15.00		
11 oz Mug - Red	\$10.00		
11 oz Mug - White	\$10.00		
Mouse Pad - Navy	\$9.00		
Mouse Pad - Red	\$9.00		
Shopping Tote - Navy	\$3.00		



**Sale Items**

Ball Cap - 747- Red	\$3.00		
Ball Cap - 747- Khaki/Navy	\$3.00		
Golf Cap - 747- Navy	\$3.00		
Golf Cap - 747- Red	\$3.00		
Golf Cap - 747- Khaki/Navy	\$3.00		
Golf Cap - 747- Khaki	\$3.00		
Golf Cap - P40 - Red	\$3.00		
Visor (Circle "T") - Gray	\$3.00		
Visor (Circle "T") - Khaki	\$3.00		



Merchandise Subtotal

S & H

TOTAL

Due to an increase in shipping costs,  
PLEASE CONTACT CHARLIE VIA  
EMAIL AT  
[flyingtigercharlie@gmail.com](mailto:flyingtigercharlie@gmail.com)  
**BEFORE** sending a check to determine  
the proper shipping and handling for  
your specific order. Each order will be  
individually determined.

**MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: " FLYING TIGERS CLUB "**

**SEND ORDER FORM and CHECK TO:**

CHARLES CALLEJA  
317 Lomita Street  
El Segundo, CA 90245

CONTACT - [flyingtigercharlie@gmail.com](mailto:flyingtigercharlie@gmail.com)

**Shipping Name & Address:**


**Email & Phone Number**
