



THE TIGER RAG

FALLBROOK, CALIFORNIA

APRIL, 1982



1981 AVG-CNAC REUNION

OJAI, CALIFORNIA

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 29, 1981

It is an honor and a pleasure for me to extend my best wishes to the Flying Tigers on the occasion of your 40th Anniversary reunion.

The history of the Flying Tigers requires no elaboration or embellishment. It is sufficient to say that the very name "Flying Tigers" is synonymous with daring, skill and patriotism. Your exploits and accomplishments reflect proud pages in our history, telling what brave men united in their commitment to freedom can accomplish against the most overwhelming odds.

Each of you can take great pride in having been a member of the Flying Tigers, for you exemplify the courage and spirit which are America.

On behalf of our nation, I send warm wishes and the heartfelt gratitude of our citizens for your remarkable contribution to the Allied victory.

Congratulations.

Sincerely,

Ronald Reagan

OJAI REPORT

When it comes time to get out the Ojai report we sure miss Len Kimball. His passing has left a void in our reunions. We are missing him.

Seems hard to believe that this reunion celebrated the fortieth year since we all went to Burma and China. It was a good time to recall many of those old memories.

One of the highlights of the reunion was the beautifully restored P-40, in AVG dress, brought up by Wayne Hoffman of the Flying Tiger Line. This surely did help to revive our aging recollections and give the adrenalin an extra boost. Too bad Don Berlin had to miss it.

The reunion program generally followed our customary format. The main exception was that the AVG Pilot trophy was awarded to Bob Hoover on Thursday night at the steak fry. This was due to the fact that Bob had a previous commitment to perform at an air show in St. Louis on Saturday. Bob is such a worthy recipient that we were glad to alter the program to suit his schedule. And it did add a lot to our steak fry, as did our very charming Miss Flying Tiger, Catherine Bach, of the Dukes of Hazzard TV show. Now Tony watches the show with me!

On Thursday night we had the same Western combo that played for our first reunion at Ojai in 1957 when the Old Man was with us. Our friends from Boeing hosted the cocktail party, with Ken and Beth Schneider doing the honors. And "Doc Rich" was there with his cannon. It was a great evening.

Sandwiched in between the various functions, there was a bridge tournament, a tennis tournament, and a golf shoot-out. Seems like the masters of sleight-of-hand and prevarication were the winners. At least that is what the losers said.

The CNAC banquet on Friday night was preceded by a cocktail party sponsored by Pratt & Whitney, and hosted

by Bill and Audrey Raabe and Bob and Pat Nowak. This was a gala event. Entertainment was provided, after Christy Hanks could be silenced, by Bob Stevens. His old aviation skits really went over well with this bunch of old aviation types.

The Flying Tiger Line sponsored the Saturday night cocktail party, and Wayne and Laura Hoffman were our host and hostess. Mr. Hoffman also gave a short address at the banquet and told us some of the problems associated with finding and restoring a P-40 today. It might be noted that the results were outstanding. We were also joined by our friend from Taiwan, General Y. T. Loh.

The guest speaker was Admiral Robert M. Garrick, Deputy Counsellor to President Reagan. The Admiral gave a very inspiring talk, and was very well received. His speech and message from the President highlighted the AVG banquet.

As at past meetings, the bar did a brisk business. Many stories were told, and a few believed. Some of them made one wonder if we were all at the same war. If all goes as usual, they will be better at the next meeting. After 40 years it is good to see them all in there still pitching.

One of the sad aspects of our meeting was to see so many names listed in the program of those members who had passed away since the previous reunion.

We had an excellent turn-out at the reunion and we hope that those able to do so continue to attend. No one wanted to be identified as the oldest in attendance, but the honor of being the youngest goes to Carl Brown's grandson, John Carl Vallejo, a mere few weeks old.

At their respective business meetings, both the AVG and CNAC Associations re-elected the incumbents for another term. The lazy way to go.

LINK LOOKS BACK

Enclosed; my point-of-view on how this AVG caper got started back in August of '41. As you might recall, all of us fledgling birdmen didn't know much about what was going on in the world 'cept for the local media getting diverted once in a while from the daily routine of listing stolen cars, divorces and some caper about the cattle rustlers. That was the Pensacola Journal. When they diverted to the international problem it generally was about two months late.

Forty years ago we are 23 - 30 year old junior grade officers and enlisted. We belong to one of the burgeoning military organizations, and "are in for the duration." We are pilots and mechanics, technicians and staff personnel; the components of a peacetime war machine drilling just in case. The flight instructor puts in four flying hours per day riding herd on a group of nervous novices. The maintenance department is up to its neck in spare parts and rumors. The picky technicians are reforming the rumors into credible and understandable English bereft of obscenities.

Outside the military bases the country is making a big comeback from the depression years of the '30s. Our Commander-in-Chief, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, is well into his third term in office. Industry is going full blast. Jobs are snowballing. Excitement and adventure are sparking the country like a spring tonic.

Tin Pan Alley is turning out classics like 'Tuxedo Junction', 'Frenesi', 'Green Eyes' and 'June Is Bustin' Out All Over'. The big bands of Glenn Miller, Benny Goodman, Duke Ellington, and Tommy Dorsey are blasting in brass and wood. Clyde McCoy is leading the 'Top Ten' with his original interpretation of Saxie Dowell's 'Itty Bitty Poo' (Three Little Fishies).

Heavyweight champ, Joe Louis, is refinancing Madison Square Garden up on 50th Street. Babe Ruth has paid off the mortgage on Yankee Stadium and the Chry-

sler Corporation has paid its second dividend. The country is experiencing an all out Mardi Gras. It is big America coming alive; the year we all get together and holler, "AMERICA!!! THE BEST GODDAMNED COUNTRY IN THE WORLD!!!"

We're aware that WWII is right around the corner. When? We aren't certain, maybe a couple years off. Maybe more. Our optimism is shaded by events on the other side of the barrier oceans. The squabble in Europe is expanding like a grass fire in August. And on the other side of the globe Japan is dissecting China and snarling at it's nervous neighbors. Diplomats are scurrying around the world with urgent messages and hollering about negotiations.

And it is the summer of '41 that we're confronted with a unique challenge. A hint of high adventure. A sniff of the exotic Orient. Navy Commander Rutledge Irvine comes to Pensacola with an innovative proposition. Other recruiters introduce this plan to eligible prospects at military bases in San Diego, Norfolk, McDill, San Antonio and New York. The grapevine burns hot. A terse note appears on the squadron bulletin board. It suggests that military personnel interested in an assignment in the Far East contact Commander Irvine at suite 277 in the San Carlos Hotel.

It is rumored that the San Carlos Hotel switchboard shorted out within 45 minutes after the memo was posted. Two switchboard operators abandoned the room in tears. One threatened a court action. The other threatened to tell her husband, a local heavyweight title contender. USMC Captain Joe Adams, the commander of Station Field, was vitriolic. He presaged the loss of his flight instructors would leave the Naval Air Station a barren desert. He called meetings and lectured. He was petulant. He kicked his office furniture. "...and any goddam jackass volunteering for this China deal is blowing a fine future in the Navy or Marines.." The next morning he called Commander

Irvine for an appointment. He was rejected. Irvine wanted junior pilots. And Joe Adams was an invaluable squadron commander.

Commander Irvine, as did all the other recruiters in San Diego, New York, et al, laid it on the line. "The job involves P-40 flying (Navy pilots: what's a P-40?). We anticipate three squadrons initially to be based in Burma and China. The primary mission will be a Burma Road patrol. Inasmuch as the United States is not at war the pilots and ground personnel recruited for this job will be under contract to the Central Aircraft Manufacturing Company (CAMCO). A one year contract. Those recruited will resign from the service, but will be reinstated without loss of rank or seniority on completion of the contract. Now, I'm going to pledge you to keep this interview confidential. Do not discuss it with anyone. Any questions?"

We have a gut feeling that our recruiter is skipping some very important details. No sales pitch, for one. He never mentioned an all-expense-tour of the exotic Orient. The oldest civilization. Far away places with strange sounding names. The Shwe Dagon pagoda in Rangoon roofed with a quarter inch plate of 18 carat gold. So far, the assignment sounds like a security patrol checking speeders on the Burma Road. Let's get down to brass tacks. What happens if the Japs decide they want a piece of Burma?

Our recruiter grins. An affable grin with a personality like FDR and Bob Hope combined. "Well," he says, "since you're acting for the Chinese Air Force I guess you'll just have to object."

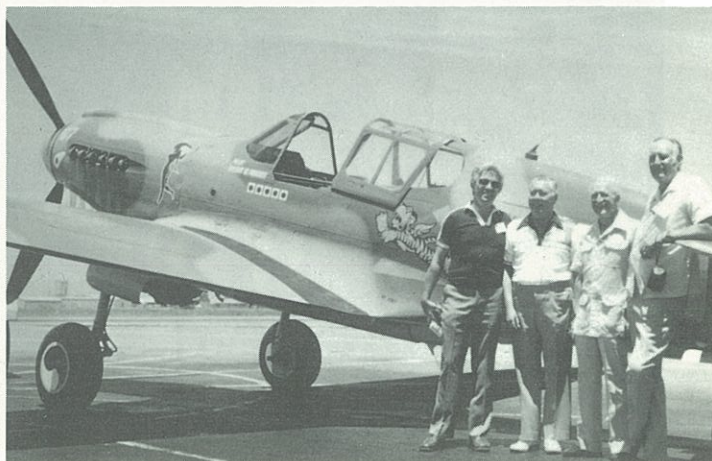
The grin disappears. The Commander leans forward in his chair, deadly serious. "And that's not all," he says, "If hostilities break out your efforts in behalf of the Government of China will be recognized and rewarded. Your pay is substantial. In addition you will receive certain bonuses for any action you participate in. This venture has been approved by our President as

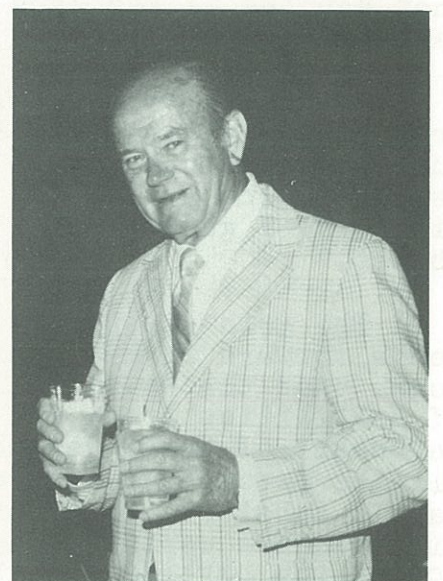
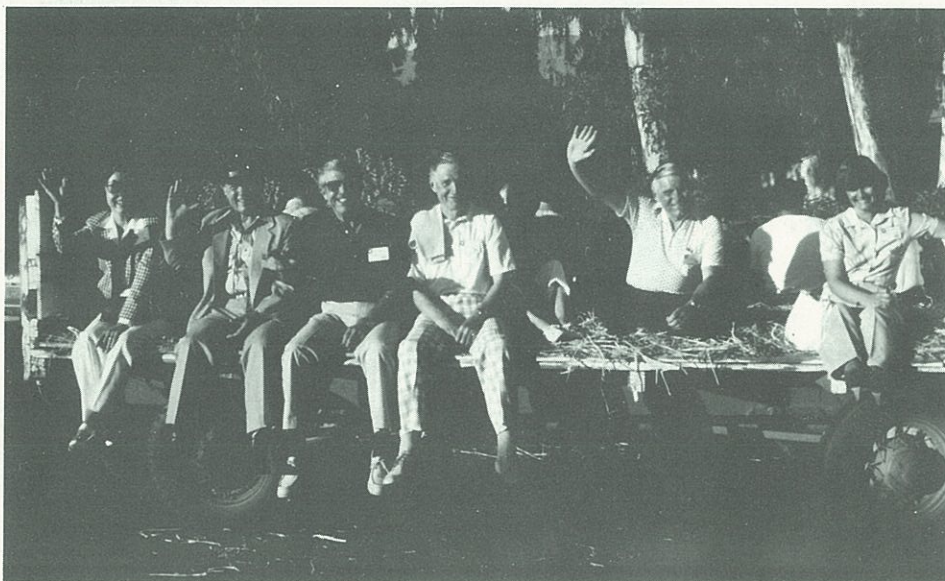
another method to help an ally in need. Our formal entry into the war is always possible, but at this time, unlikely. We're preparing for the eventuality."

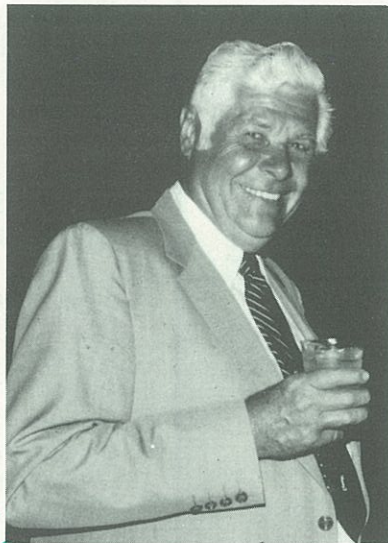
We are advised that the active participation by the military of a neutral nation in a warlike action represents a violation of certain international conventions. We are technically and legally civilian employees of a commercial enterprise, and, "...nobody, but nobody..." will say or speculate otherwise. Any violation of confidentiality, any rumor-mongering or gossip could embarrass the United States government and imperil the entire mission. We are, "DAMMIT", contracted to work in an aircraft factory.

The rest is history.

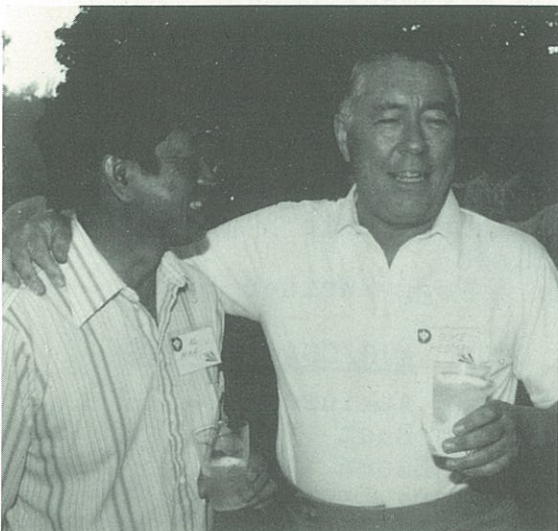
C. H. Laughlin







Fathidanlety



OJAI ATTENDANCE LIST
Members-Families-Guests

AVG/CNAC

Frank Adkins
Dr. Carl & Anne Brown, with Julia &
Tom Vallejo & John Carl (grandson)
Duke and Mary Ann Hedman
Link & Farrell Laughlin
Jean Loane & son David
Robert "Moose" Moss
Ann Marie Prescott, French Prescott
Reill & Dominique, Kirsten Prescott
Smith
Dr. Lewis J. Richards
Dick & Lydia Rossi & Tony
Robt. "Catfish" & Shirley Raine
Eric & Ilse Shilling

AVG

Twisty & Roz Bent
Georgiana Sykes Bolden
Lee & Tina Burgard
Ray & Gayle Burgard
Tim Burgard
Keith & Marjory Christensen
Paul & Dorothy Clouthier
Jesse & Bernadine Crookshanks
Jim & Betty Cross
Walt & Phyllis Dolan
Charles & Cleo Engle & two daughters
P. J. Greene
"Red" Petach Hanks
J. J. Harrington
Betty Haywood
"Tex" & Maizie Hill
Ed Janski
Ken & Gen Jernstedt
Bus & Metha Keeton
Mel Kempf
Loma Kenner
Steve & Ann Kustay
Bob & Marian Layher, with Bob & Kim
Layher
Bob & Peggy Chennault Lee, with Pat
& Terry Lee, Alexandria, Denise, &
Teddy
Bob & Gwynn Locke
W. L. & Julia Musgrove
Bob & Jo Neal
Chuck & Kitty Older
Jean Peret
Alys Hoffman Phreaner
Joe & Mary Poshefko
Doreen Reynolds
R. L. & Dorothy Richardson
Don Rodewald

Bill Schaper
Mike & Cathy Shields
Bob M. Smith
R. T. (Tadpole) Smith
Ed & Edith Stiles
Irv & Jean Stolet
John & Pam Uebele
Morgan Vaux
Don & Pearle Whelpley
John Williams

CNAC

Carey & Cynthia Bowles
Jack Burke
Glen & Shirley Carroll
Bob & Martha Conrath
Jim & Peggy Dalby
Vince DeSalvatore
Roy & Marge Farrell
Christy Hanks
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Hardin
Al George
Al Mah & daughter Hilary
Oliver & Rosemary Glenn
Bill & Mary Lee Maher
Joe & Isabel Michiels
Ralph & Lisa Mitchell & sons
Mark & Robert
Jim Moore & daughter *good times*
Joe O'Dwyer
Al Oldenberg
Fred & Louise Pittenger
Potty & Mary Margaret Pottschmidt
Gene Powers
Bob & Marjorie Rengo, with Phillip
Rengo, M/M Bob Rengo, Mike & Mea-
gan Sennett, Al & Linda Fisher &
& Todd, M/M Chancey Dorn & 2 sons
Robbie & Lucille Roberts
Rocky & Esther Roncaglione
Charles Roundtree
Bob & Audrene Sherwood
Gerry & Angela Shrawder
Felix Smith
Oakley Smith
Jules & Peggy Watson, son Mark &
daughter Janie & granddaughter
Alison
Jeff & Peggy Weiner

AVG/CNAC GUESTS

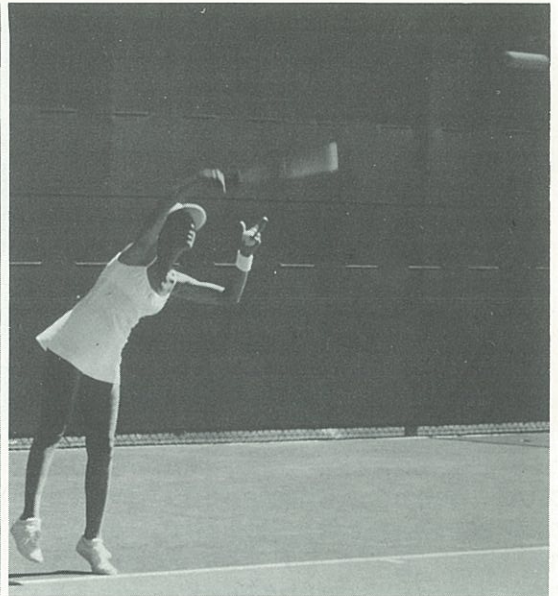
Alphonsus Atkinson
Catherine Bach
Nissen & Susan Davis
Bob & Laura Drouillard, Scott & Tim
Mary Lynn Elliott & son Brett
Colleen Ferguson

Adm. Bob & Billie Garrick
 Mr. & Mrs. Gauss
 Ellen Gentry
 Edward & Bette Harder
 Wayne & Laura Hoffman
 Bob Hoover
 Christine Irwin & son
 Mr. & Mrs. Lewis Jordon
 Victor & Tassia Joukoff
 Mike Kan
 General Y. T. Loh
 Dolly Luce
 Tom & Virginia McVay
 Bob & Pat Nowak
 Larry Pistole
 Bill & Audrey Raabe
 Natalyn Sampson
 Ken & Beth Schneider
 Sue Shrewsbury
 Mary Smith
 Bob & Barb Stevens
 Starr & Magee Thompson
 Rafe Tomsett
 Opal Williams

SAN DIEGO AERO SPACE MUSEUM
 Joe O'Dwyer (CNAC) brought one of the old original Disney Flying Tiger decals, which was mounted on a sheet of masonite, to the reunion. It was brought out of Chungking by an American university professor. How it ended up in Joe's possession is a long story, but anyway, Joe donated it to the Museum for the AVG exhibit, for which we thank him.

John Williams reports that he has all the makings for the new AVG exhibit pretty well lined up. At the present time they are completing some WWI exhibits, and will be getting to the WWII items next.

We have been advised that the picture of Wyatt in the program is NOT Wyatt. Does ANYONE have a picture of Wyatt? If so, PLEASE send a copy to Rossi or Williams.



GREETINGS

(The following message received from Tokyo);

Mr. Dick Rossi (Flying Tigers)
 Ojai Valley Inn, Ojai, Calif. 93023

Congratulations on great success of A.V.G. reunion from Tokyo. I wish all members of your reunion the best of health and good luck. Old Japanese Airforces 25th Fighter Group.
 Masaaki Inoue

MINI-REUNION AT OJAI

Due to the planned trip to China in October, there will be no arrangements made for a mini-reunion at Ojai this summer. However, there are some local members who are still planning to go to Ojai on the 1st to the 4th of July. So, if you are interested, make your reservations directly with the Inn, and there will be some of the gang there. Ojai Valley Inn, Ojai, CA 93023.

VETERANS DAY CELEBRATION

At their annual Veterans Day Celebration the Lynn County Veterans Council of Albany, Oregon honored the Flying Tigers. They sponsor a very impressive program, with a big parade, banquet, breakfast and lunch. There were eleven Flying Tigers in attendance; Cross, Greene, Hedman, Hennessey, Hill, Jernstedt, Keeton, Laughlin, Neale, Raine, and Rossi. The locals did an excellent job of entertaining and making their guests welcome. The hospitality was exceptional.

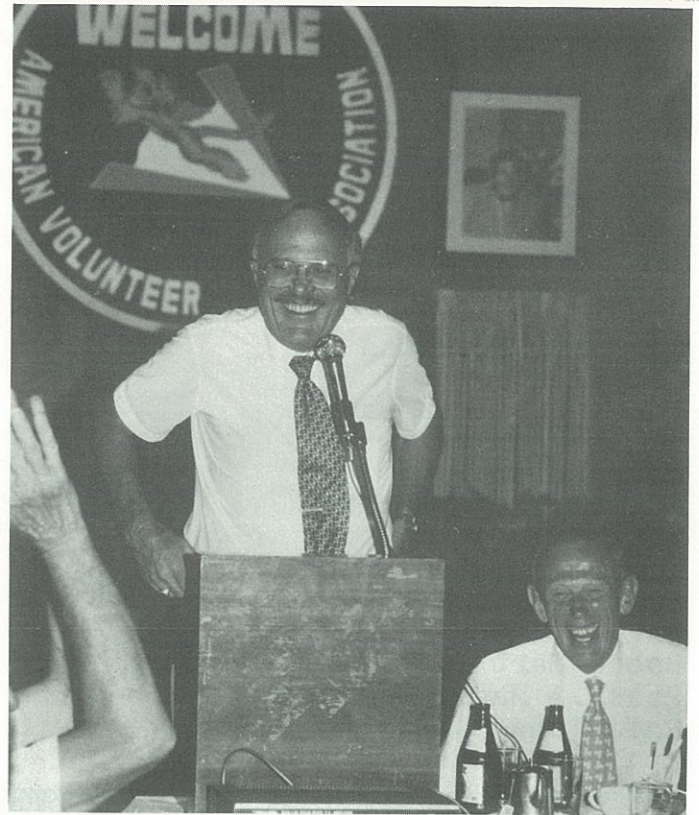
The Governor, Victor Atiyeh, gave a special cocktail party for the AVG men and their ladies, and there were gifts of Oregon products for all. Oregon makes a lot of things and there were lots of gifts.



To top it off, the Oregon National Guard, Commanded by Major General Richard A. Miller, dedicated the main gate of the Portland Air Base to Ken Jernstedt. It is now called the "JERNSTEDT GATE". This was all a surprise to Ken, altho the rest were keyed-in ahead of time. Ken was really surprised, but not speechless! After all, he's a politician.

FOUNDFOUND**FOUND**

One pair of ladies tinted prescription bifocal glasses at Ojai. If the owner is out there, please write to Dick Rossi for same.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The AVG and CNAC Associations want to repeat their thanks to those who contributed to the success of our reunion. We appreciate the generous support of the Boeing Commercial Airplane Company, Pratt & Whitney Aircraft Company, and all the help from the Flying Tiger Line and the numerous personnel who helped.

We also thank our friend Milton Caniff for his art work and especially for the portrait of Chennault, done especially for our program.

The outside cover was prepared by Bob Stevens. This is the third cover that Bob has done for our programs.

LATE NEWS

Rode has been hospitalized since mid-February in the VA Hospital in Long Beach. After many tests and a couple operations, he seems to be on the road to recovery.

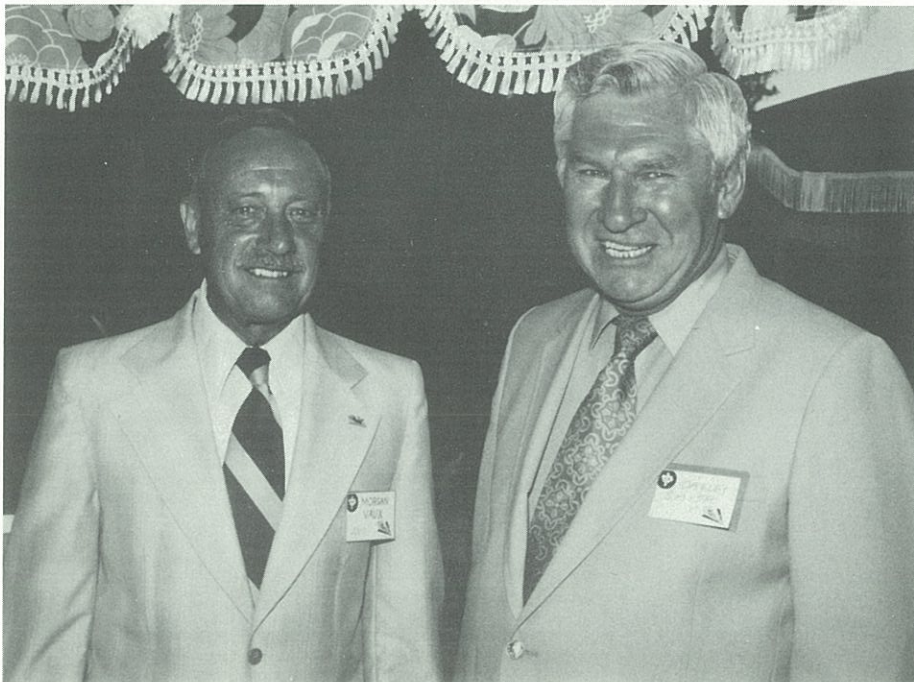
Rocky Roncaglione is in Sedona, Arizona, recovering from a couple of very serious heart problems.

Get well, you guys!!!!!!

* * * * * IN MEMORIAM * * * * *

We are sorry to report that we have lost more members since our reunion. Bob Neal (AVG), Red Probst (AVG), Red Knight (CNAC) and Hank Lambert (CNAC) passed away. Our deepest sympathy to Jo Neal, Millie Probst, Alice Knight and Mary Lambert. Also, our friend Thomas G. Corcoran passed away. We extend our sincere sympathy to his family.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 13, 1981

Dear Dick:

Please accept this as a belated note of appreciation for all the fine treatment Billie and I received at the 40th Reunion of the Flying Tigers. It was a great event and one that I will long remember.

It was so very nice for Billie to see some of her old friends and for me to make some new friends among a group that I have long admired.

The enclosed clipping from the Washington Post will be of interest to you. Even after 40 years the Flying Tigers still make good news.

My warm regards to you and yours, and I hope we have another opportunity to meet person-to-person before too much time passes.

Most cordially,



Robert M. Garrick
Rear Admiral, USNR (Ret.)
Deputy Counsellor to the
President

Mr. John R. Rossi
Chairman of Board of Directors
Flying Tigers
American Volunteer Group-
Chinese Air Force
3038 E. Mission Road
Fallbrook, California 92028