Spring 2002

TRADEWINDS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE FITSA ALUMNI NETWORK

Vol. III No. 1

President's Corner

Dave Byers, President

Happy 2002 everyone! Hope everybody is doing fine, in good health (and gainfully employed).

I'd like to take some time right now and share with you some of the highlights of FITSA's year 2001. Personally, I'm glad to see that year gone but there were some good things that happened.

Accomplishments of FITSA during 2001 included:

The migration of our website and list server off-campus to a commercial web-hosting service. - this gives us much more flexibility in making changes and providing additional services not available before like being able to post the Tradewinds and the Gossip Sheet for downloading.

Our Constantine - Olin Endowment program is progressing, including approximately $80,000 raised in October by the "Return to Casablanca", a major social event sponsored by Diane Rhodes and her friends on behalf of the School and for a scholarship fund in her son Chad's name. It was quite a party with the centerpiece being a brand new Piper Arrow parked in front of the new Sports complex on campus! (Remind me to tell the story some time of how we got the plane from the airport to the campus).

Some of the issues we faced in 2001 included:

Membership - continues to lag and experienced marginal growth in spite of a significant mail out.

*See **President's Corner**, Pg. 2*

GEORGE SKURLA
1921 – 2001

portrait by Brain Johnson, Grumman Technical Publications Department, 1984

George Martin Skurla began his 42-year career at Grumman as an apprentice engineer. He worked on many projects, but he will be most remembered for heading up the Florida operations for the *Lunar Module*. He was elected president of Grumman Aerospace Corporation in 1974, and served as President of the Grumman Corporation in 1985. George retired in 1986.

George was a tireless supporter of Florida Tech in general and, as the namesake for the SOA building, he is remembered as a man who drove the SOA to new heights. Please join us on Friday, Feb. 22, as we remember this wonderful man.

SYMPOSIUM 2002 SPECIAL EDITION

Thursday & Friday
Feb. 21 & 22:
Alums in the Classrooms

Thursday, Feb. 21:

FITSA Board Meeting
Alumni Party

Friday, Feb. 22:

Aeronautics Luncheon
FITSA Annual Meeting
Hangar Party

Saturday, Feb. 23:
Aviation Day
Golf Tourney

Careers:

The Air National Guard
James Reeman '92

SOA + ANG = F-16

The School of Aeronautics provides a solid background in aviation suited for a variety of careers. Glancing through alumni literature I recognize the names of classmates that have become airport managers, airline pilots, corporate pilots, aviation lawyers, and a host of other jobs.

One career field not well exposed to collegiate aviation students is military aviation. There are several routes a college student can take to get into the military, but I will share with you why I believe the Air National Guard (ANG) is still the best kept secret in the aviation industry.

*See **Careers**, Pg. 3*

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John Grazioso '82
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Special Insert – Events and locations for Symposium 2002

FLORIDA TECH 2002 REUNION WEEKEND – FEBRUARY 21-24

***President's Corner**, from Pg. 1*

September 11th was as much a personal attack on us as a School and the profession we serve as our enemies had exploited a weakness in our system that turned our industry into a weapon of mass destruction. Massive furloughs affected many of our alumni and some are just now being brought back. It also severely impacted many of our most recent graduates who had just been hired and either had just started training or waiting to start. Most of those never got the chance.

We also lost one of our alumni, John Grazioso '82, who had worked for Cantor-Fitzgerald at the World Trade Center. See the piece on John elsewhere in this edition.

Right before the WTC attack, we lost George Skurla, a long-time friend and patron of the School of Aeronautics. He passed away on September 2, 2001 and will be sorely missed by all who knew him (and those who didn't but enjoy the benefits of his interest in the School) For those of you who don't know George's contribution to aviation, check the HBO series "From the Earth to Moon", the episode regarding the LEM.

Although the flight line was severely hit with the aftermath of 9/11, training continues and appears to be functioning normally.

Speaking of the flight line, the transition of the flight line to FIT Aviation, LLC as a wholly owned subsidiary has been completed. The jury is still out on the immediate effect of the change although some students and alums were put off by the School's logo being taken off the aircraft.

Plans to advance the development of a new Flight Training Center/GA Terminal and FBO combined with a Human Factors Research & Development Center continue to go forward although funding will be a challenge.

For the coming year, I expect that there will be several challenges ("opportunities" if you prefer) to be faced by FITSA.

Finances - we took a hit on last year's symposium and have experienced a net deficit for our budget. I would like to get our funds back to a comfortable level and we need your support for this. Dues would be a good start. If you have paid them, many thanks, if you haven't, please do so ASAP.

Many of you reading this are not officially FITSA members and we need your support as well. Our organization represents all SOA alumni "old school" and new. We are here to protect the value of your investment and if we go away, so does much of that value. It's the NETWORK of alumni, looking out for each other's career interests that make what we are building today of value and of what we will have developed for the future. $35 for old members and new - you can register on-line at www.fitsa.org and pay via PayPal if you'd like.

Well, that's about it. I hope to see many of you at the 17th Annual School of Aeronautics Symposium, which keeps getting bigger and better every year. Last year, we had great attendance by many SOA alumni that had not attended a symposium before and if you haven't been to one (as an alum) you're really missing out on a great opportunity to share with those who are following in your footsteps.

Alumni Happenings

Arrivals

Ben Siwinski ('95) and wife **Stephanie** welcomed their daughter Madeline Ilse on Dec. 12. With the ease of delivery, Stephanie now feels she was "meant to have babies". [siwinski@tampabay.rr.com].

Milo Zonka ('95) and wife **Deb**, celebrated the birth of #5, Robert Ryan, on Oct. 18. Deb feels she's "more meant to have babies." The gauntlet is thrown. [milo@zonka.org].
(Making babies? Let us know! Email to tradewinds@fitsa.org).

Formation Flight

Zachary Grant ('95) and girlfriend, **Amanda**, got hitched on Sept. 15 in a lovely ceremony. Zach and Amanda both work for American Trans Air, he as a L-1011 F/O and she as a structural engineer. [L1011jock@aol.com].
(Engaged? Married? Got that first girlfriend? Let us know!)

Transitions

Dennis Lorenson wrote that he just purchased his first BMW after completing Army training as a Unit Movement Officer. He has recently been flying missions in support of the NATO effort in the Balkans and is looking forward to spring/summer to continue working on his tan. [Dlaviator@yahoo.com].

Susan Lockwood is working on advanced Surface Management Technology for Seagull Technology. Info is available at http://dulles.arc.nasa.gov/newsletter/index.shtml#sms. [slockwood@seagull.com].

Mark Lewin ('01) was featured in an article in the Cleveland Jewish News following 9/11, which included his background at FIT. Mark is an F/O for Continental Express.

Stanko "Stan" Misetich ('95) is now an F/O on the A319/320 for Croatia Airlines. [stanko.misetic@zg.tel.hr].

James Roebuck ('97) writes in that he was hired on in November as a King Air 100 F/O for MidAtlantic Jet Charters. [james.roebuck@excite.com].

Richard Freeman ('89) is out in L.A. shaking things up at LAX. He writes in that he's raking in the dough for the airport by working with film and TV crews on the property. [richardfreeman@earthlink.net].

Cyprian Bunker recently finished up his studies at Metropolitan State College of Denver and now works for a local charter company as a Lear co-pilot. [cyprianbunker@aol.com].

Angela Palladino checks in from New Joisey, where, as a consultant with the Louis Berger group to the Port Authority of NY/NJ, she is working on management transitions at Teterboro and concessions changes in Terminals A & B at Newark Airport. Angela finished her studies at Dowling College in New York after transferring from Florida Tech in 1994. [apalladi@panynj.gov]

Andrew Soleimany ('96) is working at Boeing these days, tinkering on a 737-900 as a Flight Test Engineer in the Nav/Com group. [andrew.soleimany@boeing.com].

Bill Hearne ('96) purchased his first home out in Houston, TX. It's a 3-bedroom house that he isn't planning on filling anytime soon. Bill just finished up his duties as the Be1900 Fleet Manager for Continental Express, where he literally gave all his airplanes away (CEX retired the fleet). He's a check airman these days. [Fit08@aol.com].

There must be more happening out there. Let us know!
tradewinds@fitsa.org.

Special thanks to Mrs. Ann Bergonzoni in the SOA office for contributing many of these reports!

***Careers,** from Pg. 1*

I enrolled at F.I.T. in the late eighties with the goal of achieving an internship with an airline, spending a few years flight instructing and then enjoying the last 35+ years of my working life in the cockpit with a major airline. Fortunately for me personally, all did not go as planned. An aircraft accident in my junior year of college dashed my hopes of an internship and quick airline career. I was forced to look for other options.

I am eternally grateful to my classmate, Jack Wallace, and my flight instructor, the late Bill Morris, for encouraging me to look into the military. I spent my senior year "pledging" Air National Guard fighter units. I was persistent and tireless in my efforts and I secured a pilot training slot in the Texas ANG to fly F-16's. All too quickly after graduation I was a combat ready F-16 fighter pilot serving full-time in the Texas Air National Guard. I literally had to pinch myself.

Today I've got my airline seniority number and a Guard slot in my native Colorado. I live in Denver where I fly F-16's for the Colorado ANG, and am also a 737 pilot and instructor for Delta Air Lines.

ABOUT THE ANG

The ANG is a reserve component of the U.S. Air Force. The Guard differs from the Air Force Reserves by fulfilling a dual commitment to state and federal missions. Because Guard units are partially managed at the state level, there is no national, central hiring board or interview process.

Each Guard unit typically hires about two pilots per year, but this can vary greatly with demand. Many guard units look to hire enlisted troops from within the unit, but many applicants have no previous military experience. Two of the main prerequisites for a Guard pilot job are a four year college degree and less than 30 years of age. Other desirable attributes include some flying experience and a commitment to the Guard unit's local area.

If you are fortunate enough to be hired by a Guard unit, you enter a "pipeline" of full-time training that lasts about three to four years. First you attend the Academy of Military Science in Knoxville, Tennessee, after which you receive your commission as a Lieutenant and attend Air Force pilot training with other young officers from ROTC and the Air Force Academy.

Your first six months at pilot training are spent training in the brand new, high performance T-6 "Texan" and your second six months will find you in a specific track. Those headed to a follow-on fighter assignment fly the T-38 and those headed to a heavy aircraft fly the T-1. Following a year at pilot training, heavy pilots go straight to train on their specific aircraft while fighter pilots make an intermediate stop at Fighter Lead In where you learn basic fighter tactics in an AT-38 before training on your specific fighter aircraft. Aircraft specific training can last from three to nine months, depending on your weapon system. Upon returning to your Guard unit, "baby rabbit" lieutenants are usually given about one to two years of full-time employment to become proficient in their aircraft and familiar with the local area.

Once the full-time training pipeline is complete there are several forks in the road. This is your first opportunity to become a "traditional guardsman"—working part-time. A part-timer fulfills one drill weekend per month and at least one two-week deployment per year, with additional time required to maintain proficiency. Full-time opportunities are also available—almost one-third of the pilots at any Guard unit are full-time military pilots. The last option is a middle ground called "guard-bumming." Guard bums are not full-time Guardsmen, but they volunteer for as much part-time pay as they can while they pursue the beginning stages of another career.

There are some obvious downsides to the Guard. We are arguably busier than your average airline pilot, and must live with the fact that we could be activated to full-time military service at any time. Despite some of these drawbacks, the advantages of a career in the Air National Guard are truly unique. You get comfortable pay to receive the best jet training in the world. You have the opportunity to build valuable experience as a young officer in the military. The short full-time commitment of the Guard allows you to pursue an airline position at a younger age than your active duty counterparts. You are also able to continue your military service after you have an airline career. This is not only very rewarding, but works as a great insurance policy against furloughs.

The opportunity to serve your country and defend our freedoms is truly a unique privilege. I enjoy the benefits afforded to my family today by a career with a major airline, but they don't compare to the things I have experienced as a fighter pilot in an organization of soldiers.

THE ANG AND YOU

If you would like to pursue an interest in the ANG, I recommend starting at: http://www.ang.af.mil. Take a look at the all the units and which aircraft they fly and pick as many units you would be willing to fly for as possible. Contact the Operations Officer or Squadron Commander, and avoid the recruiter or enlisted administration troop—while they can be helpful, they often don't have the information you need. Let the unit know that you are inquiring about upcoming UPT (stands for Undergraduate Pilot Training) selection boards. Let them know that you need all available information on applying to that particular unit.

Once you gather information on applying to your units of choice, build a solid application package and start making copies. Adjust your cover letter and resume objective to tailor to each different unit and pack your bags. You want to visit your top choice Guard units during their drill weekends, as this is when everyone is there. Speak with the youngest pilots as they have the most recent gouge on what they did to get hired and then talk with the flight commanders. They will be the ones sitting on your hiring board interview! I encourage you be confident and persistent!

Hopefully I helped expose the secret of one of the most fantastic aviation jobs available. If you have questions about the ANG please don't hesitate to contact fellow Florida Tech alumni Guardsmen: Mike Rutigliano, Brian Tully, Lou Townes. You can also feel free to contact me at reemanf16@yahoo.com.

TRADEWINDS

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9/11 Hits Home:
John Grazioso ('82)
04/28/60-09/11/01

My name is Carolee Grazioso Azzarello, I am the sister of John M Grazioso, FIT Class 82. I am writing to inform you and FIT that my brother John (as well as my brother Tim) was killed during the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11.

Following his graduation from FIT, John secured employment with Piedmont Airlines, who eventually became US Airways. He worked at US Airways for approximately ten years and with the decline of commercial airline industry, John sought employment as a bond trader with Cantor Fitzgerald, NY (my brother Tim was also employed at Cantor). With the opening of eSpeed, John transferred to this company which is where he was working on September 11 (both Cantor and eSpeed operated out of the WTC).

In losing Tim and John, my parents, Hank Grazioso and Sandra Grazioso, lost two of their three children. I am the only surviving child born to their marriage.

John is survived by his wife of ten years, Tina Grazioso (nee Lyttle) and three children: Kathryn (age 7), Kristen (age 4), and Michael (age 10 months) (the first Grazioso boy born in 41 years). John an affinity for many things in life including golf, fine food, cigars, and spending time with his friends and family. He was a huge Bruce Springs teen fan, even flew to North Carolina overnight to catch a concert! John knew every word to every song.

None greater, however, was the love and affection that John had for his wife and their three beautiful children. Simply put, John was a devoted father and a great husband. He loved the many aspects of fatherhood, from giving them baths, to reading them bedtime stories. John was so proud of his daughters, and he beamed the day his son Michael was born. He brought Michael with him everywhere he went, to the cleaners, the carwash, the gas station, food shopping.

John was a great cook. He loved waking up and making his girls breakfast. John was fun-loving, quick-witted, and loving. On the weekends, John always managed to squeeze in an 18-hole golf game before lunch time, insuring that he could spend the day with his wife and children. Like Tim, John was loyal to his friends and family, he was also kind, sensitive, caring, and protective of those he loved. He wanted his children to be raised in a warm, loving environment with traditional values. John was also a loving son and protective brother.

For those of us who had the good fortune to know John, we will forever miss his warmth and affection. We know that we could never replace what has been lost for his children; the void is just too great to ever fill. Because they are children, they are resilient. In time, their heart will mend, but a piece will be forever missing. The only thing we could do now is to try to give these three children the lives their father would have wanted them to have.

For those of you who personally knew John, would you please send your favorite memories of him. The Grazioso family is compiling a memory/scrap book for the children to have when they get a little older. In addition to the stories the family will tell, your stories will also help them know what kind of man their father was.

Should you wish to contact a family member, Carolee could be reached at (973) 645-2027 (during business hours) or at Caroleeg1@yahoo.com.

Editorial Insights
By Milo Zonka ('95)
Tradewinds Editor

It is amazing how, in the face of tragedy, we find our core strengths and the abilities necessary to survive and prosper when the pressure is the greatest. As the events of September 11, 2001 unfolded, I found myself alternately fixed to the telephone and the television.

One brought me pain and anguish, as I watched those majestic buildings fall. The other brought me comfort and relief as I succeeded in finding—one by one—the people who mean so much to me, spread across the country, located anywhere but New York City and Washington, D.C. in those critical hours.

My friends, many from Florida Tech, were scattered but safe. We told stories of what we saw and knew and speculated on the rest. We shared thanks for the safety of our families. We promised to stay in better contact and, for once, we've done just that.

Airline cutbacks, the crippling of general aviation, and decreases in airport operations and future growth have shaken the aviation industry to its core. Never before has a network of peers been so essential to the professionals of our industry.

This should be FITSA's moment of glory as an organization and, given a proper chance, it may have been. Never in my lifetime have I seen a network of friends and peers work so hard to benefit the whole. Jobs were lost, and with them went homes and livelihoods and dreams. The most regrettable part of the whole effort was in knowing that more could be done.

In calling old contacts to try and place friends in new work, I know that the alums of the School of Aeronautics were out there looking to help. The problem was that I couldn't find them. For whatever reason, many of our people have fallen out of the loop. No method of contact, no centralized method of matching up wants and needs. Great efforts are being made by individuals, but the organization—FITSA—has been more of a bystander than a participant.

Much has changed, and in greater form and fashion than what is needed here, but it is an appropriate moment for a call to action for us all.

Tell us where you are and what you're doing. Share with us the changes in your life and career. Join with FITSA in providing support and services to its members. Don't do it tomorrow—make the choice today. Email us today at tradewinds@fitsa.org or call me at (305) 278-0136. Get involved.

On a final, never more appropriate note, the family of John Graziano has established a trust fund for his children.

Donations can be sent to:

The John Graziano Children's Trust
P.O. Box 1193
Newark, NJ 070101-1193.

I look forward to seeing everyone at Symposium 2002…