As the world stands frozen in place to stop the spread of this devastating virus, Turtles Fly Too was requested to fly an emergency rescue mission the last weekend in March. The goal: to return one loggerhead and 16 cold-stunned Kemp’s Ridley sea turtles back to the oceans after recovery. With the global pandemic occurring, this mission was more than what we would normally ask of a Turtle Flier, however, upon receiving the request for assistance it was quickly determined that we needed to respond.

Turtles Fly Too assisted NOAA Fisheries by transporting these 17 sea turtles from the New England Aquarium (NEAQ) facility in Quincy, MA to a final destination in the south for release. The flight team took off early Saturday morning from Shoreline Aviation at Marshfield Municipal Airport.

During this unprecedented time of social distancing and illness due to COVID-19, the New England Aquarium is closed to the public and has limited staffing. Seventeen of their rehabilitated sea turtles have been cleared for release by their veterinarian, and it is imperative to transport them to a release beach as soon as possible. This release ensures that healthy turtles do not spend time in a rehabilitation setting where they could be susceptible to ailments of other turtles and risk being habituated to a captive environment. In addition, releasing these turtles allows NEAQ to protect their staff by reducing the number of people at the facility and abiding by social distancing requirements.

In a time of social distancing, Turtles Fly Too was asked to deliver 16 Kemp’s Ridleys and one Loggerhead Sea Turtle to Georgia Sea Turtle Center staff for release into the Atlantic Ocean. A successful mission, complete with six-foot of space for everyone.

An abundance of caution was used with both transport vehicles and planes being completely disinfected. Everyone was equipped with special clothing, face masks, and gloves to reduce the risk of spread, and no one was within 6 feet of new individuals during the entire mission to comply with CDC requirements without protective gear. At Turtles Fly Too, our goal is to not only protect our beloved sea life but also protect our pilots.

We are proud to continue to fly this essential mission during a global crisis.

Turtles Fly Too coordinated this flight and we owe considerable thanks to our Turtle Fliers’ flight team Dr. Ed Filangeri and daughter Alyssa from New York state who volunteered for this emergency mission.

Midway Stop for Fuel on Our Compassion Flight!

After a fuel stop in Fayetteville, NC, coordinated by Signature Flight Support so that no personal contact occurred between our Turtle Fliers and their ground support, our plane was in the air again headed to its final

Continued on Page 2
destination. Thanks to Michael Vinay from Signature for handling our refueling needs. Wheels up at 12:45 pm, and they were headed to their final destination.

As we continue to shelter in place, TF2 followed the emergency rescue mission on Facebook, with five posts during the day reaching over 15,000 viewers.

**Turtles Released at 3:30 pm**

Our 16 Kemp’s Ridleys and one Loggerhead bid us farewell as they ventured off safely into our oceans. With each mission, we often think of the old story our mother used to tell of the one starfish and while it can be overwhelming, we are making a difference to those individuals. Our team cannot help but feel a sense of pride when we complete a mission and do our part to give another chance to a few endangered creatures.

Although the public was not invited to join us for this momentous occasion, it is important to realize that the job was done. We used extreme caution and care in executing this mission because we know how important these sea turtles are to our environment. You will see no crowds were gathered, and social distancing was used during the release to protect all concerned.

We would like to extend a sincere thank you to everyone that made the mission a success. The extra work required to disinfect boxes, the vehicles, and the plane, special clothing and safety precautions for distancing, coordination with airstrips, photographers, staff on both ends at the Turtle Centers, and Turtles Fly Too’s Founder Leslie Weinstein who worked tirelessly for over a week planning this release.

To give you an idea of what it takes to put one flight together, we would like to recognize those involved in making the flight successful. Kate Sampson from NOAA; Connie Merigo and her team at New England Aquarium; Dr. Terry Norton at Georgia Sea Turtle Center and his staff awaiting the turtles, and coordinating the release; our Turtle Fliers Dr. Ed Filangeri and Alyssa; airports - Shoreline Aviation at Marshfield Municipal Airport, Signature Flight Support in Fayetteville, and Jekyll Island Airport; FlightAware, who provides the aircraft tracking software; Bose, who provides our Turtle Fliers with headsets; and our incredible videographer Craig Stephens, from Understory Film in Jacksonville, FL, and his family, who traveled to photo document the release for you.

**Photo credits:** Ed & Alyssa Filangeri, Craig Stephens, and NEAq staff
This is actually the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day. It’s a day to reflect on Mother Nature’s beauty and enjoy our natural environment. So, strap on your face mask, walk outside, take a deep breath, and say good morning world! Turtles Fly Too supports Mother Earth every day with our mission to provide general aviation support for the transport of endangered species. We celebrate with you on this special day. I hope that you and your loved ones are healthy and safe and are staying positive during this challenging time.

As many of us continue to stay close to home, I want to provide you some exciting updates on our recent emergency mission flown using “social distancing” and recent fly-in event held in Florida. Please enjoy this, our first newsletter, with the hopes of many more to follow. As we are sheltering in place, we have been investing in updates to our website, increased social media, and now, our first newsletter as we want to share all of our good news.

Take a few moments and enjoy our articles as it was an exciting spring, complete with a recent emergency mission that due to COVID-19, took extra planning, lots of coordination, and extreme caution. In addition, Turtles Fly Too is expanding, not only to the west coast but internationally as well. It’s a great time to be part of Turtles Fly Too, and, on this special day, we want to thank you for your support, as each of you has contributed to the success of our organization.

While working hard to keep our organization intact, we have cut expenses wherever possible. Turtles Fly Too has been fortunate over the past four years to have a dedicated group of volunteers who work tirelessly behind the scenes to keep us going. Although growth can be exciting, it can also be challenging as we are finding ourselves needing to hire staff to handle the functional aspects of our organization. We have just completed a five-year business plan and will be expanding our STEM programs and outreach to communities nationwide.

You are helping to ensure that Turtles Fly Too continues to remain the vital resource it has always been.

Above all, we wish you and your family health and safety, and we look forward to seeing you again soon.

Happy Tailwinds,
Leslie Weinstein

P.S. Our work can’t stop and won’t stop in the face of the coronavirus pandemic. We will keep providing general aviation support—at a safe social distance—for the protection of our endangered species.

A Special Thank You to Our Partners and Sponsors on Earth Day!
TF2 received product donations that were used for drawings for pilots who signed up to fly our missions. Donations ranged from hats, shirts, bags, reusable straws, admissions to aquariums, dolphin and shark encounters. These donations were graciously provided by Washington Aviation Association, SR3, Oregon Coast Aquarium, Seattle Aquarium, our corporate sponsor Bose, Gulf World Marine Institute, and the New England Aquarium. We would like to extend a special thank you to each of them for their support.

With increasing requests for potential TF2 flights on the Pacific coast, our three goals were to meet and bring awareness of our expanding mission to a diverse general aviation community, to meet and recruit pilots and planes located near the Pacific coast for future flights, and to meet and discuss operations with our partners at SR3 and USFWS.

TF2’s unique connection to the general aviation industry gave us a great opportunity to distribute new promotional material and use taxidermized sea turtles for hands-on education. These were invaluable tools that generated attention, questions, and great stories. Visitors universally gave us positive feedback and encouragement. Our pilot recruitment met our goals with 43 new pilots registered! Working with the SR3 group was a great cooperative effort to help get attendees questions answered and better understand what each of our organization's needs and capabilities are and how to assist their operations most effectively in the future.

As we all sit in quarantine and wait for this once in a lifetime pandemic to make its way through our country, many of us are turning to new online delivery services. Did you know you are now able to buy groceries through Whole Foods on Amazon? Amazon not only offers amazing services but also through AmazonSmile they will donate a portion of your purchase to eligible non-profits including Turtles Fly Too. It's very easy to designate Turtles Fly Too as your non-profit of choice: simply log on to smile.amazon.com, log in to your account, and type in your charitable organization. AmazonSmile offers all the same products as Amazon, so next time you’re in need just log on to AmazonSmile.
Before the world went on lockdown, Turtles Fly Too hosted an incredible fly-in event in North Palm Beach, Florida. On February 29th, fifty pilots and guests from around the US flew in for a day focused on the turtles. Unlike the volunteer pilots’ normal days working with Turtles Fly Too on turtle transports, this event was a day to say thank you to our Turtle Fliers and teach the general public about our organization.

To kick the morning off, presentations by our President Leslie Weinstein and Executive Director Bonnie Barnes were held to welcome our guests and introduce Turtles Fly Too. Guest presenters Kelli O’Donnell from NOAA, and Heather Clarchick from Sea Turtle Adventures, highlighting their organizations’ work and partnership with Turtles Fly Too. After a morning of presentations, guests enjoyed a catered lunch prepared by a guest chef Alexis Herrera visiting from Key Largo, Florida. This relaxing time allowed individuals to chat amongst fellow pilots and Turtle Fliers. It also allowed individuals time to place their bid on silent auction items worth more than $2,500 collectively. Once silent auction items were announced, guests were provided transportation to Loggerhead Marine Life Center for a VIP tour of the facilities.

We would like to give a huge thank you to Kelli O’Donnell from NOAA who provided immense support by organizing the event and collecting silent auction items; Sea Turtle adventures who assisted in arranging the day and transportation; Juan Cabrera from Signature Flight Support for providing the hanger and staff support at F45 in North Palm Beach for the fly-in; Bose who provided technical support and $700 worth of silent auction items; Chef Alexis Herrera for preparing the delicious food; and all of our silent auction donors including Kelli from NOAA, Sea World, Mote Marinelab, Loggerhead Marinelife Center, Georgia Sea Turtle Center, Gulf World Marine Institute, Florida Aquarium, and Sherry Schubert for her hand-crocheted turtle.

This was a fun-filled day combining the two worlds we hold dearest to our hearts: aviation and conservation. Check out the video filmed and produced by special guest attendee Steve Nazer (aka Steveo1kenevo) capturing the fun on the day of the event on YouTube (click here to watch) which now has over 235,000 views.

We look forward to our next fly-in where we hope to see you all there. For more information on the Fly-In event or if you would like to host a Turtles Fly Too Fly-In event contact us at info@TurtlesFlyToo.org.
YOU CAN SUPPORT RESCUE MISSIONS AND EDUCATION!

Sea turtles and other endangered species face ever-increasing threats from a staggering array of sources. Our efforts counteract these threats and improve the survival rate of these magnificent creatures.

Turtles Fly Too needs support to facilitate transportation, research, education, and conservation programs.

I CARE!  Please accept my donation of:

☐ $25  ☐ $50  ☐ $100  ☐ $500  ☐ $1000  ☐ Other__________
☐ I'd like to make a recurring monthly donation of $____________

Name __________________________________________ Telephone __________________________
Address _______________________________________________________________________________
City _______________________________ State _______________________ Zip _______________________

☐ Sign me up for e-News.  Email _______________________________________________________
☐ I am paying by check, made payable: Turtles Fly Too

Mail to: Turtles Fly Too, 4911 No. Parkwood St., Boise, ID 83704

☐ Please bill my credit card (you may also donate online):

Card number __________________________________________________________________________
Exp. Date ________________ CVV __________________________________________________________
Signature ______________________________________________________________________________

I would like additional information on:

☐ Volunteering as a “Turtle Flier”
☐ Giving a donation of stock to offset capital gains
☐ Dedicating my donation to someone special

TF2's rapid response shortens travel time and therefore reduces stress on turtles and other endangered species, resulting in higher opportunities for recovery because we are able to transport patients directly to the best facilities and locations based on their needs.

We've invested in and recruited “Turtle Fliers”... dedicated, generous pilots that contribute time, equipment and fuel to fly these missions. As our successful missions have become recognized nationwide, we are experiencing increasing calls for help.

Turtles Fly Too is a 501(c)3 nonprofit. We rely on donations, underwriting from businesses and philanthropic support. We run a lean operation so that we can focus on rescuing endangered species. Our ability to respond to animal rescues is directly related to support from you.

If you value our work, we could use your help now.

Please help us continue to save these endangered species.

With gratitude,
Bonnie E. Barnes
Executive Director

NOAA and other organizations call on Turtles Fly Too to provide air transportation when endangered species are threatened, either through a cold stun event, entanglement, or when an endangered animal is injured. These transports require hours of organization, permitting, and coordination between the origination site and final destination.

WE CAN'T GET THE JOB DONE WITHOUT YOUR HELP.

OUR ABILITY TO RESPOND TO ANIMAL RESCUES IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO SUPPORT FROM YOU.

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