



Zygmunt "Ziggy" Szuber

June 27, 1952 - May 14, 2025

Zygmunt Szuber, 72, of Tequesta, FL passed away unexpectedly on May 14, 2025.

Zygmunt was born on June 27, 1952 in the town of Ropienka, Poland. In 1965, at age 12, he relocated to the United States with his father and stepmother, not knowing any English. Ziggy attended grade school, as well as mechanics school before enlisting in the United States Air Force.

A true patriot, dedicated to serving his adopted country, Ziggy enjoyed a distinguished career in the United States Air Force and the Michigan National Guard. He maintained and flew four different aircraft in his career.

On May 5th, 1972, Zig enlisted in the United States Air Force. He attended boot camp at Lackland AFB, in Texas. Following boot camp, he attended Aircraft Maintenance Tech School. Zig started his military career at K.I Sawyer, in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. And, in 1973, he would Palace Chase to the Michigan National Guard, where he would finish his decorated career.

Ziggy remained enlisted until 1978 when he finished his degree and became a commissioned officer. Becoming a pilot was always Zig's dream. And, in 1981, nine years after joining the Air Force, that dream came true when he

graduated from flight school and became a pilot.

Ziggy was a true Selfridge legend- a figure whose name resonated with everyone who stepped foot on base. His presence was unforgettable, and his impact touched all who knew him. He started his officer journey as an Alert Pilot with the 191st Fighter Interceptor Group and quickly obtained a Commander spot in 1987 with the 171st Fighter Squadron. He traveled to air shows, delivering captivating performances that left visitors in awe, ensuring they experienced everything they came for! Numerous thank-you letters from commanders across the country celebrated his dedicated support and extraordinary contributions.

In 1996, Zig retired from his 24-year military career as a Major with the Air National Guard. But he continued to fly, embarking on a second career as an American Airlines pilot. And, once Zig established his American Airlines career, he and Barb moved to Florida to begin their lives in paradise. Zig spent the next 30 years flying for American Airlines and retired in 2017. He was a trainer, a leader and most of all a mentor and a friend to hundreds of airmen and patrons.

Ziggy and Barb built and enjoyed a beautiful life throughout their 30 years together. In addition to being a real-world traveler, Ziggy's favorite retirement hobbies were taking the boat to the sandbar and taking his toy cars to car shows.

Zig is survived by his loving wife, Barbara; his step-children, Andrea (Ryan) Anderson and Ryan (Kaitlyn) Kean; his grandchildren, Brayden Anderson, Cameron Anderson, Easton Anderson and Lucille Kean; his nieces, Asia (Roberto) Waligora and Magdalena (Marek) Zasacka; and, his nephew, Piotrek (Paulina) Szuber; along with his seven great-nieces and great-nephews.

Visitation will be held at Taylor & Modeen Funeral Home, in Jupiter, FL, on Saturday, June 7th from 12:45pm -3:00pm and the Memorial Service will begin promptly at 1:00pm. The Memorial Service will be available to livestream- Please use the entire link below to view the livestream:

<https://view.oneroomstreaming.com/index.php?data=MTc0ODcyMzE2NjM2NDk4MiZvbmVyb29tLWFkbWluJmNvcHlfbGluaw==>

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made In Ziggy's Memory to the Parkinson's Foundation (<https://www.parkinson.org/?form=19983&tribute>).

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN 7. 12:45 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Taylor & Modeen Funeral Home
250 Center Street
Jupiter, FL 33458
(561) 744-2030
<https://www.taylorandmodeenflorida.com>

Memorial Service

JUN 7. 1:00 PM (ET)

Taylor & Modeen Funeral Home
250 Center Street
Jupiter, FL 33458
(561) 744-2030
<https://www.taylorandmodeenflorida.com>

Tribute Wall

MK

“ Hello, my name is Mark Kurzeja. So sorry to hear about your loss. Ziggy was my godfather. He sent me pics of his Air Force days as well as his love for corvettes when I was younger. I still have them. I use to think he was in Top Gun. When I was around him he was always so full of joy, great smile, and Proud to be Polish. He will be greatly missed.

Mark Kurzeja - June 30, 2025 at 07:03 PM

BK

Thank you Mark ❤️

Barbara Kean - July 02, 2025 at 06:51 PM



“ My guy who welcome me to the aviation side of the Air National Guard, coming from 191st Engine Shop to Flight Engineer. Having opportunity to share a seat with Ziggy made my job more easier, He would always say Kenny Ray relax you go this! Ziggy would fly 5hrs road trip and wanted fly the pattern doing touch and go's! Being around friends and Airplanes will be considered his legacy! Very personal was when we returned from a road trip and Barb was waiting for us to land at the Mole hole, First thing first open beer, second thing talk about Airplanes, that's the Zuber way! So Ziggy introduce me to he's neighbor Barb, I laugh at him and you mean your wife, he had a smile on his face bigger the moon! I can hear him say what did you just say Kenny Ray? I replied your wife, man did he blush and giggled with laughter! Barb with her sweet self just sat there listening. Kenny Ray how do you know that? Because I see it in both of you eyes when you look at each other, she loves you Ziggy and you love her. Ziggy there is no one in the world you trust most! She will never leave you and always be by your side! The rest is history! Love you Ziggy and Barb, Kenny Ray!

Kenny Lenton - June 09, 2025 at 11:00 AM

BK

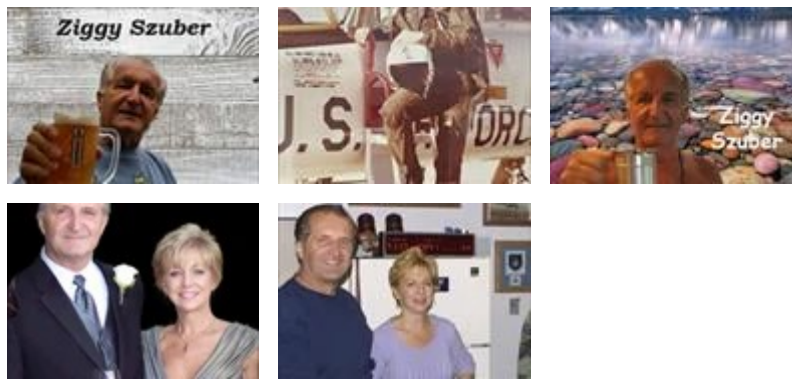
Love you Kenny. Thank you for your kind words this brought tears and happy memories. Thank you ❤️

Barbara Kean - July 02, 2025 at 06:53 PM

GM

“ I first remembered Ziggy when he was a crew chief on the F-106s at Selfridge. I remember visiting Ziggy as he went through pilot training in the Air Force as I was the aircrew training officer and visited pilot trainees as they went through T-37's, T-38's and then attend their graduation. Ziggy made the transition from enlisted to officer very smoothly which isn't always true. Flew with him a lot and he was always prepared, excellent pilot, and did his job. He was a great example to the troops as well as a great flight leader. Will miss him. Got to visit Ziggy and Barb in the summer of 2023 at their home. First time I had met Barb in person. Barb was great for Ziggy. Will miss you, Ziggy. My fellow Polish pilot buddy. I'm sure you are having a beer with Eddie Svetlik, Larry Vihtelic, Roy Keyt, and many other 171st/191st pilots and WSOs. You were the best.

Greg Maciolek, Former DCO and Commander, 191st FIG.



Greg Maciolek - June 07, 2025 at 02:50 PM

BK

Thank you Greg. We've since spoken and I so appreciate your kind words and all the memorable cards. You're the best ❤️

Barbara Kean - July 02, 2025 at 06:55 PM

MM

“ Yo Szube!

As we used to call him in Life Support at Selfridge. He was such a great guy, I always enjoyed speaking a little Polish slang with him. Always felt welcome & comfortable around him enjoyed his company & jalapeño popcorn in the Tumbleweed.

Had some card party's at Ziggys with all my nephews from Hamtramck. Ziggy had all the good stuff, Polish brandy (Jezynowka) & Plum. I spent the night on his bathroom floor he got me so pijany. Never made it to visit Ziggy & Barb in Florida but I know I would have been welcome.

dać wieczne odpoczywanie my friend

Michael Majestic - June 07, 2025 at 01:45 PM

RR

“ *I met Ziggy in 1985 shortly after joining the 191st. I received a temporary technician position and needed some place to live that was closer to the base. A few full timers suggested that I talk to him as they had lived with him at one time. So, after talking with him and becoming his roommate, this started a long friendship with him. I was the go between him and any company that would be doing business with him. We went through a lot together; fire, rebuild, and flood. He was a down to earth person and pilot who never forgot where he came from; and that was maintenance. We went through F-4's, F-16's, and C-130's before he retired. He will always be remembered and truly missed by a lot of people. Ziggy, your watch is over and we have your six. Miss you my dear friend.*

Rick Ross

Richard Ross - June 07, 2025 at 11:54 AM

BK

Thank you Mike. He loved you guys ❤️

Barbara Kean - July 02, 2025 at 06:56 PM

BK

Sorry I meant you Rick!

Barbara Kean - July 02, 2025 at 07:03 PM

AB

“ I meant Ziggy back in the F4 days. When it was time to launch him out or riding around with him in the truck we always had some heavy interesting conversations which I've never shared with anyone. Since I was an Amateur Astronomer and a UFO enthusiast and I worked with Pilots every day I definitely got some very interesting stories on UFO from Ziggy other Pilots and WSO (Weapon Systems Officer) and yes Ziggy lay down a few. Also we talked about some crazy flying Maneuvers that happen in the F4 and some of you know what I'm talking about. We did a lot of storytelling and laughing, but always keep our stories to ourselves. Ziggy would ask over and over if I would come over to the Tumbleweed to have a beer with him but since I was a non-drinker non-smoker it wasn't for me. I still remember his stories to this day and it makes me think, "what if"..lol. It was always an interesting day when Ziggy was around. It was a pleasure knowing Ziggy. R.I.P my Friend. 🇺🇸🇺🇸🇺🇸

Al Bates - June 07, 2025 at 09:21 AM

“ A Tribute to Ziggy

Ziggy was a great man, pilot, and friend. I will never forget those times when he was sitting in Chicago prior to a trip, and I'd call him on the phone. Without fail, he'd tell me to head over to his house and drink some beer. He was always bringing back new beers from Europe and was more than willing to let me come try them at his place, even when he wasn't there himself.

But one of my fondest memories is when we flew together. Ziggy knew I was disgruntled after getting hired to fly the F-16 ADF but ended up coming home to fly the C-130—or "the flying watermelon," as he called it—due to BRAC. On one specific night that I remember so well, we were beating up the pattern when I said to him:

"Ziggy, on this approach, I'm going to call a go-around early, prior to the threshold, and call for gear up and flaps up—but continue to descend so we'll be really low over the runway. Then I'm going to build up as much speed as I can and pull the nose up at the other end at 250 knots (max speed for the C-130), bank it over at 60 degrees, and do a closed pattern."

As anyone who knew Ziggy can imagine what he said: "Okay, just don't frighten me"—as I watched him push his seat back and lean it further than it already was. I was pumped. He was going to let me max-perform the aircraft: low and fast over the runway, get that speed rush, and then yank and bank (as much as you could in a watermelon).

I called for the go-around, cleaned up the aircraft, and glanced over at Ziggy. There he sat, arms crossed, like he didn't have a care in the world, as I executed the maneuver exactly as planned. When I finished and made a comment about him just sitting way back in his seat the whole time, his response was simple: "Well, you didn't scare me."

Ziggy was a great friend who was willing to help and support everyone who knew him. He gave generously with his heart to his family and friends, not to mention financially, supporting poor lieutenants like me who could only afford cheap beer.

As I sit here writing this, having a drink and thinking of Ziggy, I know that while he might be gone, he will never die.

Ziggy, this one's for you.

Love Mike

Mike Leski - June 06, 2025 at 07:03 PM

CB

“*I am truly sorry to learn of Ziggy passing. I can only hope our remembrances of him offer some bit of condolence to his family. Ziggy was a great guy and wonderful personality. And so fun to fly with as I did many times in the back seat of his F-4. One of the best. Even though those years are a way off, I still remember very vividly one such with our all-out yanking and banking against the Air Force Aggressors at one of our Alpena “summer camps”. It’s etched in so, I’m fortunately one of the many where Ziggy has a permanent place in our fond memories.*

Clint Bigelow

Clint Bigelow - May 28, 2025 at 03:23 PM

TB

“ I’m deeply saddened to hear of Ziggy’s passing, and I extend my heartfelt condolences to his family and friends. I have only fond memories of working and flying with him while stationed at Selfridge ANGB. He had a way of making every day brighter with his presence and energy. We were both fortunate to fly with the airlines and the Guard.

Transitioning from the F-16 to the C-130 couldn’t slow him down. I remember one flight in particular, we were running late, pushing the limits of the Herc, and I remarked on how fast we were flying. I figured he’d ease up, but his response was classic Ziggy: “I know, I can’t get this pig to fly any faster!” He was fast, fearless, and an excellent pilot.

Ziggy’s attention to cleanliness was unmatched, not in a negative or overbearing way, but in a way that made it a pleasure to follow him after a shift. Whether it was a jet or the squadron itself, you always knew he’d left his mark in the form of spotless order.

And the memories from the Tumbleweed will always bring a smile. Ziggy brought life and excitement to the post-flight cooldown, he always had the jalapeño popcorn ready.

Blue skies forever!



Tom Berrodin - May 27, 2025 at 06:14 PM

AD

That's how I will always remember you both!

Aaron Doty - June 02, 2025 at 10:40 PM

GW

So sad to learn of Ziggy's passing. Glad I had the opportunity to work with him. RIP

Gerald Winiacki - June 07, 2025 at 11:34 AM

BK

Thank you both ❤️

Barbara Kean - July 02, 2025 at 07:04 PM

KM

“ I came over to the 191st (171st Airlift Squadron) when they converted from F-16's to C-130's. I was a Trash Hauler and about half the guys in the squadron were former fighter guys and half were C-130's pilots. You would think that this would damage the dynamics of the squadron but it certainly did not. The 171st was a great squadron with fantastic personalities one of whom was the memorable Ziggy. Ziggy was a great pilot for sure but that's not why we remember people. Honestly the 171st is hands down the best squadron I ever served in. Morale was so high. So many great memories. I know Ziggy won't be the first to pass, unfortunately, it's basic math as we all age. One memory that sticks out was after a local training mission at the squadron and we would usually debrief at the Tumbleweed over a beer or two (Yes, we had a bar on the upper floor of our squadron—don't see those anymore!). Then we weren't in such a rush to finish the debrief. I said to Ziggy as I'm sure I said to others. Isn't the C-130 the greatest? With our tactical mission, it seriously has to be the best mission in the whole damm Air Force. Don't you agree? Then Ziggy looks at me and says “You're not serious! I again convey my enthusiasm for the C-130 pointing out all the fun tactical stuff we do in this dump truck of an aircraft. He looks at me and laughs and says No Psycho (my callsign) it's not! With heartfelt condolences to Ziggy's friends and family he will never be forgotten! Rest in Peace Ziggy!

Lt Col (Ret) Ken "Psycho" Morris, "Proud Trash Hauler"

Kenneth Morris - May 25, 2025 at 09:00 PM

CJ

“ I am saddened to learn of the death of Ziggy. I extend my sympathies to his family and friends. I will keep them in my thoughts and prayers. Ziggy was a very unique person. On a personal level, he was a friend to those he met. If you knew Ziggy you had a friend for life. On a professional level, Ziggy was a skilled and accomplished maintenance officer and pilot. He was well respected in both MX and OPS. I had the distinct pleasure of flying with Ziggy many times. As a maintenance officer he knew the jet. As a pilot he had excellent hands. I will never forget Ziggy. I love you Brother!

Col. (Ret.) Leonard Olson, Jr. - May 20, 2025 at 11:45 AM

TG

“ Our condolences to Barb & Ziggy's family. I was a crew chief in the 191st from 1972 - 2004 and worked shoulder to shoulder with Ziggy, went on many deployments with him and got to know him like a brother. You see, the members of the 191st and 171st are like one big family. we learn to rely on each other and trust each other with our lives. what happens to one of us, happens to all of us. The passing of our "brother " saddens the entire family. Ziggy always had a smile on his face and a story to tell. He loved aviation and it was not a surprise when he earned his commission and went to flight school. Now the ops side of the unit would get to Ziggy as we knew him. He went on to become one heck of a good pilot in the F-16. While deployed to Alpena CRTC he experienced an engine flame-out with an unsuccessful re-light. With his wingman monitoring his situation and helping with airspeed and glide angle and calling out his altitude, Ziggy radioed his wingman that it doesn't look good to make the runway. Ziggy jettisoned his external wing tanks to improve his chances to make the runway. Still losing altitude, over the radio came his wingman saying "Ziggy, you make the call if you have to eject" God was with him that day as he lowered the landing gear moments before touching down on the end of the runway! All this was captured on the gun camera and viewed by unit members. Ziggy, God was with you then, and now YOU are with God. It has been an Honor Serving with you my friend. Rest in Peace, but stretch your new wings every now and then.

Tom and Kathy Goodwin - May 17, 2025 at 09:58 PM

RW

“ My heartfelt condolences to Barb & Ziggy's family, along with all at Selfridge who knew this unique guy. - I did paintings of F-4s, C-130's and F-16s from the 191st, and I could ask Ziggy questions about details. - He kept me from making an error with the taxi light, on the nose gear door of the F-4C. He advised how it should look when illuminated. That picture was the initial one I did for the air force art program, so it meant a lot to me. - Ziggy was also the first person to buy one of my paintings. - Any time I visited the 191st, Ziggy would treat me as family (maybe it was our Polish heritage). Stories about his flying exploits, were always enlightening. - I will sure miss you, buddy.

Ralph Weilant - May 17, 2025 at 06:58 PM

BD

“ I met Ziggy when the 191st converted from fighters to Hercs, and I came in as a new guy to the unit at the time. Ziggy was one of the first guys I met. He was one of the nicest guys ever, and had a continuous smile and upbeat attitude about life. It was always fun when he was around and made our day nicer. Condolences to Barb and his family.

Brian Dawson - May 17, 2025 at 06:42 PM

MW

“ Oh man, this is so sad, our deepest condolences to you and the family. Ziggy always treated us young WSOs in the 191st so patiently - great to fly with and such a good guy. I did an airshow at Hanscom ANGB with him one weekend - the arrival show was legendary and I was just hanging on. Rest in peace, Ziggy, light the burners and do a few rolls.

Mark A. Werkema - May 17, 2025 at 06:06 PM

RI

“ When I first met Ziggy I was a new partimer with the 191st MX. The first time I helped him strap into the F4 that I had preflight on my own. I remember when I said the jet is good to go Sir. He looked at me and said call me Ziggy. I told him in my SAC days Officers were always adressed by thier rank or Sir. He smiled and nodded and said ok. When I marsheld him out of the parking spot just before he turned out I came too attention and saluted him. He returned my salute and continued on. When I got too the Maint. Shack the full time Crew Chiefs said why I saluted and did Ziggy give me the finger. I said nope he returned my salute with one of his own. I was new to the Guard and I guess the full timers would give a thumbs up or wave bye bye. He should me that he was good with it and understood why I saluted. I also have great memories flying with him when we transitioned too C-130s later on and I was the Flight Engineer. He always had a smile and always greeted people by thier first name but I always greeted him by his rank or Sir. He would smile and say Rich I understand. He will be missed by all at Selfridge ANG Base he was a legend and loved by all! Rest in Peace Sir!

Richard.Ceja - May 17, 2025 at 09:54 AM



Knew Ziggy as a maintainer. Knew Ziggy when he went off to UPT . Knew him when he came back and as he progressed. When someone shows exceptional talent as a pilot, we say, "He has good hands." Ziggy had "Good Hands. Now that he has flown west, we know Ziggy's "Good Hands" are in God's Good Hands.

Lynn Forrest - May 18, 2025 at 09:06 PM

BH

Ziggy was always happy go lucky until it was time to strap on the jet! An excellent pilot and better human being. I will miss him dearly.

Bill Holmes

Bill Holmes - May 20, 2025 at 10:24 PM

ES

I write this with tears in my eyes. Must be PTSD or feeling sorrow for missing a good friend and a good fellow pilot. There are no words that would lessen the sorrow that Barb feels. Please know that everyone liked Ziggy! Everything that has been expressed by those who knew him are true and then some! We knew Ziggy would succeed at UPT because of his character, personality and love of airplanes. Ziggy and I shared flying the F-4, F-16 and the C-130; as well as flying for the same airline. We also shared similar histories: we were/are both immigrants, Ziggy from Poland and I from Ukraine. We shared being D.P.'s (I say delayed pilgrims) rather than the pejorative "displaced people". Ziggy was truly a unique and a very special and NICE man. He is missed by those who have come in contact with him.

Gene "Cossack" Salaniuk

EUGENE SALANIUK - May 28, 2025 at 12:53 PM