

ATKRON 12 NEWSLETTER

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VA-12 REUNION ASSOCIATION
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VA-12

SQUADRON LINEAGE

1946 VBF-4
1946 VF-2A
1948 VF-12
1955 VA-12

ALL ARE WELCOME TO VISIT

THE WORLD FAMOUS FLYING UBANGIS

AT OUR WEBSITE WWW.VA12.COM



Volume XIII, Issue 3 December 2014

F7U-3 Cutlass

VA-12 IN 1955



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UBANGI? UBETCHA!

2015 REUNION

Reunion Registrations are running a little slow so far. At this point I have only received five. I understand that it is still 5 months away but I hope that those planning on attending will send in their money and forms after the holidays so that we can start firming up the plans.

Here is the expected itinerary as of now. The cut off for registration is March 9, 2015, at that point we will post the finalized itinerary on the website.

Thursday April 9 Arrive at Cocoa Beach, Ice Breaker 5:00 p.m.
Friday April 10 Air Boat Ride, Christmas, FL
Saturday April 11 Valiant Air Museum, Titusville....Day trip
Banquet 7:00 pm
Sunday April 12 Kennedy Space Center (depending upon interest we may switch Friday and Sunday events)

NEWSLETTER NOTES

John Larch and I have decided to reduce the number of Newsletters that we will create each year. We will plan on two, one in March or April and the other in September or October. In addition to emailing about 75% of them this will reduce our expenditures greatly. Therefore our annual dues structure will change. If you are in the minority and want your Newsletter mailed to you, those dues will be reduced to \$10.00 annually, if you receive your Newsletter digitally your dues will be whatever you feel you want to contribute.

TREASURY REPORT

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Previous Balance | \$332.15 |
| Dues/Reunion fees | 560.00 |
| interest | .05 |
| SUB TOTAL | \$892.20 |
| *Stamps | 23.80 |
| *Printing | 24.08 |
| Hotel Deposit | 500.00 |
| CURRENT EXPENSES | 547.88 |
| NEW BALANCE | \$344.32 |

BIO

Well, since we all know what we were doing some 50 years ago (that is those that can still remember those days!), I'll give a little bio on what I've been up to for the last 50. (Damn! Has it really been 50 years!?!?)

So, in April 1967, shortly after we got back from V.N., I mustered out and hung around Jax for about a year. In 1968 I came back home to Southern California (Oxnard/Ventura). I went to work for the

Navy, as a civilian, out at San Nicolas Island, part of the Sea Test Range at Naval Weapons Test Center, Point Mugu, CA. After working there for a year, I decided I would change direction and enrolled in college full time. I earned a Bachelor's Degree in 1974 and went back to work for Point Mugu in a Management Intern Program. Continued to work on my education and earned an MBA from California Lutheran College in 1976 and an MPA degree in 1982, also from CalLu.

I continued to work for the Navy at Point Mugu, and for the SEABEES at Port Hueneme, CA. After 32 years civil service, I decided to retire in 2003. Sue, my wife of 40 years retired about the same time and we moved to a little country town in Northern California - Durham, where we spend most of our time with our son, daughter-in-law and 4 grandkids - that is when we aren't fishing, golfing, or traveling.

Hope this helps to fill the newsletter (lol). I will add that Sue and I are soooooo looking forward to April's reunion.

Art McHard 64-67

MILK DUDS AND BANANAS

Following is an article written by Rick Reilly, of Sports Illustrated. He details his experiences when given the opportunity to fly in a F-14 Tomcat. If you aren't laughing out loud by the time you get to 'Milk Duds,' your sense of humor is seriously broken.

Now this message is for America's most famous athletes:

Someday you may be invited to fly in the back-seat of one of your country's most powerful fighter jets. Many of you already have. John Elway, John Stockton, Tiger Woods to name a few. If you get this opportunity, let me urge you, with the greatest sincerity...move to Guam. Change your name. Whatever you do. Do Not Go!!!

I know. The U.S. Navy invited me to try it. I was thrilled. I was pumped. I was toast! I should have known when they told me my pilot would be Chip (Biff) King of Fighter Squadron 213 at Naval Air Station Oceana in Virginia Beach.

Whatever you're thinking a Top Gun named Chip (Biff) King looks like, triple it. He's about six-foot, tan, ice-blue eyes, wavy surfer hair, finger-crippling handshake -- the kind of man who wrestles dyspeptic alligators in his leisure time. If you see this man, run the other way, fast.

Biff King was born to fly. His father, Jack King, was

for years the voice of NASA missions ('T-minus 15 seconds and counting.' Remember?). Chip would charge neighborhood kids a quarter each to hear his dad. Jack would wake up from naps surrounded by nine-year-olds waiting for him to say, 'We have liftoff'.

Biff was to fly me in an F-14D Tomcat, a ridiculously powerful \$60 million weapon with nearly as much thrust as weight, not unlike Colin Montgomery (British golfer). I was worried about getting airsick so, the night before the flight, I asked Biff if there was something I should eat the next morning.

'Bananas,' he said. 'For the potassium?' I asked. 'No,' Biff said, 'because they taste about the same coming up as they do going down.' The next morning, out on the tarmac, I had on my flight suit with my name sewn over the left breast (no call sign -- like Crash or Sticky or Lead foot -- but, still, very cool). I carried my helmet in the crook of my arm, as Biff had instructed. If ever in my life I had a chance to nail Nicole Kidman, this was it. A fighter pilot named Psycho gave me a safety briefing and then fastened me into my ejection seat, which, when employed, would 'egress' me out of the plane at such a velocity that I would be immediately knocked unconscious.

Just as I was thinking about aborting the flight, the canopy closed over me, and Biff gave the ground crew a thumbs-up. In minutes, we were firing nose up at 600 mph. We leveled out and then canopy-rolled over another F-14. Those 20 minutes were the rush of my life. Unfortunately, the ride lasted 80. It was like being on the roller coaster at Six Flags Over Hell - only without rails. We did barrel rolls, snap rolls, loops, yanks and banks. We dived, rose and dived again, sometimes with a vertical velocity of 10,000 feet per minute. We chased another F-14, and it chased us.

We broke the speed of sound. Sea was sky and sky was sea. Flying at 200 feet we did 90-degree turns at 550 mph, creating a G force of 6.5, which is to say I felt as if 6.5 times my body weight was smashing against me, there by approximating life as Colin Montgomery.

And I egressed the bananas.

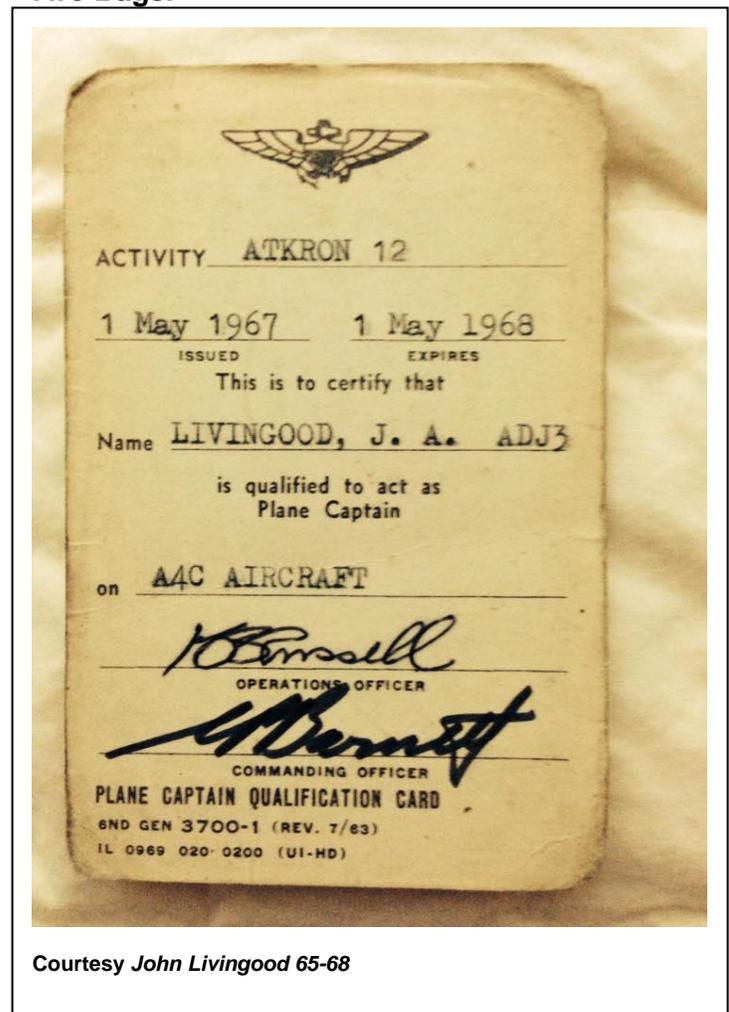
And I egressed the pizza from the night before. And the lunch before that. I egressed a box of Milk Duds from the sixth grade. I made Linda Blair look polite. Because of the G's, I was egressing stuff

that I never thought would be egressed. I went through not one airsick bag, but two. Biff said I passed out. Twice. I was coated in sweat. At one point, as we were coming in upside down in a banked curve on a mock bombing target and the G's were flattening me like a tortilla and I was in and out of consciousness, I realized I was the first person in history to throw down. I used to know 'cool'. Cool was Elway throwing a touchdown pass, or Norman making a five-iron bite. But now I really know 'cool'. Cool is guys like Biff, men with cast-iron stomachs and Freon nerves. I wouldn't go up there again for Derek Jeter's black book, but I'm glad Biff does every day, and for less a year than a rookie reliever makes in a home stand.

A week later, when the spins finally stopped, Biff called. He said he and the fighters had the perfect call sign for me. Said he'd send it on a patch for my flight suit.

What is it? I asked.

'Two Bags.'



Courtesy John Livingood 65-68

JonSutherland 65-67

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ON THE COVER
Vought F7U Cutlass

In June 1945 the Navy developed a specification for an aircraft that could fly 600 nautical miles at 40,000 feet. The Vought entry won the competition.

In 1948/49 a few F7U-1 models were built and flown. The F7U-2 was a flawed attempt at an update and was never built. The F7U-3 did incorporate many improvements over the -1 model, including slightly more powerful engines. This is the model built for and flown by the Navy.

| | F2H-2 Banshee | F7U-3 Cutlass |
|---------------|---|--|
| Engine | Two Westinghouse J34-WE-34 Turbojet 3,250 Lb/Ft Thrust Totaling 6,500 Lb/Ft | Two Westinghouse J46-WE-8A 4,600 Lb/Ft Thrust Totaling 9,200 Lb/Ft |
| Max Weight | 25,200 Lbs | 31,600 Lbs |
| Max Speed | 580 MPH | 680 MPH |
| Max Altitude | 46,600 Ft. | 40,000 Ft. |
| Max Range | 1,716 Miles | 660 Miles |
| Rate of Climb | 6,000 Ft/Min | 13,000 Ft/Min |



The Flying Ubangis of VA-12 flew the F7U-3 from December 1955 until April 1957. They never deployed to a carrier with the model.

THE COVER BIRD: Our cover bird is a restored aircraft on display at the National Museum of Naval Aviation in Pensacola, FL.



CVN-77 George H.W. Bush underway, October 2014