



Atkron 12 Newsletter



Volume 1, Issue 2

November 2002

Ubangi

Newsletter

Ok, so you are getting the second newsletter. Some of you want it and have sent \$ to support it's continuation. Some of you don't want it, and that's ok, this will be the last edition with which you will be bothered. The rest of you are like me, you have come to that point in your life when you can not remember why you have walked into a room. Unless it's the bathroom and I hope you are not that far gone. To you folks, let me suggest that you stop reading this right now, grab your check book or wallet and send me the \$5.00 that you forgot to send 3 months ago. I guess there may be a few others that have a different excuse, if so, let me know, I'd be happy to print it in the next edition.

Do You Remember Your First Date With "ROSIE"?

The first time I saw the FDR was in January 1957. It was Pier side, Mayport, FL. I was loading aboard for a cruise to the North Atlantic called Operation Snowball. Can you imagine anybody in their right mind going to the North Atlantic in January and February?

After loading the crew and our equipment I returned to NAS Jacksonville so I could fly out to the ship the next day. From overhead, "Rosie" looked like the biggest thing ever to float on water. At that time, Forrestal, Saratoga and their hulls wet. I had been on a long cruise Independence were brand new and hardly had aboard Randolph, an Essex Class CVA. Compared to her, FDR was gigantic.

Ubetcha

Can you remember the hassle of Loading Out for a cruise? Weeks before the event all the planning got underway. Pack up the cruise boxes, stow the stay-behind gear. Check out the squadron spaces. Clean out the hanger. Pack sea bags. Load the vans and then the bus rides to the Pier.

I used to hate that. It was always a mess. Mass confusion. Somehow or other, everyone seemed to know what had to be done, how to do it, where everything went. Who to ask for assistance, phone numbers, berthing compartments, chow hours.

I always marveled at how, in spite of all the chaos and grumbling, everything came up roses. Well, almost roses. There were always some raw nerves after we loaded aboard. Ship's company and Air Wings were never the closest of friends for the first few days of "togetherness".

I was convinced, for the first 10 years of Navy Life, that the ships company always had the best compartments, best heads, and best passageways. Air Wings got leftovers. After awhile I mellowed. Life aboard ship was tough on everyone. Once we all recognized that, we harmonized.

My second big date with "Rosie" was in the summer of 1962. We loaded out for a shake down and REFTRA at Gitmo. Nothing changed. Still a hectic event. By now though, the Navy had big semi trailer rigs to haul all the squadron gear. I think it was two rigs per squadron. By now there was all sorts of "extras", like "buddy stores". Six of them for every A-4 squadron. Plus the cradles, and the

spare reels. Then there were the Gatling guns. Three to six for all the squadrons. Plus the cradles, and the linkages. Gee-zus! The list was never ending.

Remember the flail at the Pier? Squadrons were assigned time periods to arrive, to prevent congestion at the docks. That whole bloody day was a mass of congestion.

Somehow or other everything found it's way to the right spaces. Everyone settled in and away we sailed. Hollywood should do a documentary film on how the Navy goes about loading out for a cruise. It needs to be seen, to believe it.

One thing for sure, it promotes a lot of harmony within a crew. Every sailor always knew that, the sooner you were loaded, the sooner you could rest. And if there's one thing sailors learn in a hurry, it's how to rest. Get all you can, whenever you can...right guys?

I saw "Rosie" a lot after that. With over 300 carrier landings on the back end you can bet I could recognize her anywhere.

Dating that old broad became a lifetime love affair with me. I made 3 Med cruise on her, plus 5 or 6 trips to the Gitmo-Rosie Roads area. And joined her in West Pac. That ugly rusty bucket and I were real pals.

I can still remember LCPO Joe Malicoat and I touring the squadron spaces. We were all over the ship. I'll bet every one of you can still remember your berthing compartment numbers, and shop space location and where we mustered on the Flight and Hanger Decks.

There are a few of you that can remember the telephone numbers of key spaces. Don't tell me you forgot all that stuff. Hell, you've probably been bragging about it for 35 years to all your buddies...especially the ones who never went to sea.

Joe and I pretty well knew where everyone hung out. Sometimes in the middle of the night...after securing from flight ops, he and I would meet in the ships bakery. The Baker was attached to our squadron. He would be pulling the fresh bread out of the oven at about 0200 and we would have a loaf of fresh bread,

a pound of butter and a cup of coffee together. Mid-rats. Remember those? Best meals on the ship. Sometimes.

Think back to all those wonderful times aboard the ugliest broad in the fleet. She was lovely, especially when it rained, and waves caressed her bow...and it all leaked to the hanger deck. She could be cold, too. Winter in the Med was no thrill. And she could be hot...very hot. Especially in Gitmo, in July. You all remember those times, right?

But she was home. Home for over 4,000 sailors, for months on end.

I still think fondly of the old broad.

Smooth sailing, always, sailors,

OBie 66-68

The Word From The West

"OLD HABITS DIE HARD"

The other day I overheard someone repeat the time-honored old saw, "Old habits die hard."

And I got to thinking about several ways in which this applies to me.

Here's a short list of a few old habits that I picked up *courtesy of this Uncle of mine*, who paid for my attendance at "camp" for 11 weeks, and then sent me off onto an adventure for the remainder of a 4-year hitch.

Well, **Shaving** is in the list for starters, this has always been apparent to me. I don't recall from my youth exactly how I shaved before, except that it must have worked OK. I shaved with a razor and blade, and never nicked myself much, I did OK. But that wasn't good enough for my Uncle, oh no! I learned to shave down, then up, then forward, then back. All the way down the throat to the bottom of the neck!

Now all of these years later I still do the same exact thing, except I go "backward shaving" only on one particular spot. I felt sort of foolish and idiotic (not unusual for me) one day, I couldn't understand why I felt like my pants were on the wrong way. Later on, it hit me that I had threaded my **Belt** into the belt loops the wrong way! The right way being the

Navy Way that we were taught in boot camp all those years ago.

More recently, I watched a Discovery Channel show about life on an aircraft carrier, and I reminisced out loud to the wife about the proverbial "Navy Shower"; 90 seconds of water, maggot!, in which we wet down for 30 seconds, and then shut off the water. Do the business with the soap and the washcloth. Rinse off, 60 seconds worth of water. And this is when there is no rationing or restriction! To this day I am still unconsciously doing my own modern-era version of a NAVY shower, with a couple of minor alterations to the time restrictions.

And another one is about **Haircuts**: I decided that I didn't like the way this new kid at the barber shop I had frequented, was always goobering up the sideburn on my left cheek. How can this f***in' moron screw up just one sideburn? Every time.

It started to piss me off so bad that I decided to try a new barber, in my neighborhood. About a month before our June Reunion I called from the yellow pages to set up an appointment. It says in the ad, they can trim and cut to all the latest popular styles. "Military cuts, too!" Hummm? Later on I'm walking in and noticed the same thing about military cuts lettered on their door.

So what the heck, I asked for one regulation Navy haircut. And what I got was the exact same haircut I have been asking for since enlisting and then for all these years afterwards. Plus, he does the sideburns perfect. And he uses a razor!

NAVAL AIR MUSEUMS

The guy who bought the **SPRUCE GOOSE** (It might go without saying, a multimillionaire with his own airline and airport) had it shipped up in pieces from California, built a museum around the plane, and filled it with lots of other planes. So last year on vacation, my wife and I decided to go there, and also to this other museum we knew little of on the

Oregon Coast in a little town called Tillamook.

Well, for right now let's just forget all about the SPRUCE GOOSE and the multimillionaire, and get right to the business of this other unknown museum in Tillamook.

Turns out that this is a NAVAL AIR MUSEUM, and it has been in business for some years now, and actually trades planes on occasion with other museums around the country. Who knew?

We drove up (it's housed in the world's largest blimp hangar) and saw all manner of strange and unusual flying machinery, outside. I'm already wondering, if this stuff is sitting around *outside*, what is *inside*? What an education we got! A mind-blowing array of *restored* and *operational* naval aircraft. I could have spent DAYS in there. This particular museum seems to concentrate on the era from the late '30s, through WW II and a bit into the early 50's. But they had a little bit of everything there, including an F-14A Tomcat, and an A4 Skyhawk amongst other things. Being that my Navy service was in the late 70's with the A7-E Corsair, and they had one right there in front of my eyes, I was able to walk right up and show my wife panels, doors, and compartments that I had been into a hundred times while working as an AQ.

Here is the most amazing, illuminating, stunning part to me: This facility is just 75 miles away from my home in Salem, and I had no idea whatsoever that this museum, so full of Naval Aviation History and Tradition, was just sitting there undiscover-ed. So! With a little bit of searching on the Internet, I have a brief list of other Naval Air Museums from around the county to pass on.. Maybe the bug will bite you, to go visit one!

John Larch 76-78

Looking Back

It was November of 1965 when I made the decision to join the U.S. Navy. Ten days later I stood in Camp Dewey, Great Lakes Naval training Center, the wind howling between the buildings, me freezing my ass off, standing guard duty on the dumpster with a rifle not fired since world war one. It was then I started to wonder if that good decision I made ten days ago was all that good or did the foolishness and stupidity of youth punish me again. Some how I survived the 10 or so weeks of boot camp and received orders to report to Attack Squadron 12 NAS Cecil Field Fla.

I reported to VA-12 in Feb. of 1966 and proceeded to have three of the best years of my life. I drank more booze, met more women, got in and out of more trouble, worked harder than I ever had and made friendships that have lasted the test of time. No filmmaker could ever make a movie of those years. First no one would believe half the stuff we did and second where could he ever find such a cast of characters to play the roles. Bob, I am never serious always joking Kaplan. Bill "Pig Pen" Heck. The only sailor we ever knew who could put on a freshly starched uniform and ten minutes later it looked liked he slept in it. Neal Russo who could and would imitate any one. It did not matter if you were enlisted or officer. No one was safe from Neal.

Mojack, Creature, Killer, The Dawg, Snapper, FM, The White Rabbit, Carp, Ozzie, God Damn Gary Hall, Mike Landers, Drip, Bunky, Pop. All of us unique but all the same. Kids passing through teenager on the way to men. I once asked the skipper how he felt about a night cat shot after a pimple faced teenager with just six months in the navy had preflighted the aircraft. He replied he used to be one of those pimple faced kids and not to sweat the small sh--. We were given more responsibility then , as teenagers, than most adults have today. We never really talked about it but we all knew the consequences and the pride in what we did always showed through in the work we did. I left Ubangi country in Jan. of 69

just before the Shang went to the Med. I spent my last year attached to VQ-4 operating from NAS Paxs River, MD.

The life lessons learned while I grew up in VA-12 have stayed with me. I learned how to take an order and realize that 95% of the time it was not a personal thing. The man giving the order needed the job done and usually went to someone who could do it. The other 5% of the time I spent chipping the floor tiles off the deck between the ready room and line shack because I pissed someone off. Lesson learned! I learned how to give an order. For the same reasons I stated above. Discipline and self discipline was learned but most of all teamwork. Whether working or getting in trouble in 12 we could accomplish it as a team. Faith, Family, and Friends three important parts of life.

Faith and trust in my God, my country and the men who watched my back on the flight deck or flight line. The fact that none of us got chopped up by a prop, run over by a jet, huffer or tow tractor, sucked down an intake, blown overboard or cooked by exhaust is because of all those eyes watching our backs as we did our jobs. If I did not say it then I say it now Thank you guys.

Family. I never knew anyone in 12 to get in a trouble and the rest of us not respond. I don't care if we were working , in the chow line waiting for mystery meat and bug juice, at the Normandy Lounge, on shore leave in Olongapo or Naples or the Beacon Club. If the call went out, family came to help. I seem to remember a night at the Beacon Club when a fight started over some girls we brought back from town. I remember J.P.'s blonde headed coming through the crowd and then the whole barracks showed up. About five minutes later so did the whole base security squad but hey it was fun while it lasted.

Friends. Some view their time in the service as something they had to do. They wanted it done and over with and do not care to remember it. Others view it as a band of brothers experience. I belong to the latter

group. We may not have humped the boonies or survived the 68 Tet offensive but we did survive the most dangerous acre of real estate on earth. We worked, ate, slept, played, lived and some of us died so close together on board ship we could hear each other sweat and we still found common ground on which to base friendships that have lasted over 30 years.

Looking back I am proud to have served with each and every one of you. I would not trade the good times or bad for love nor money and I would do it again in a heart beat if asked
TO. Ed Thomas 66-68

In Memorial

To Honor the passing of current alumni and their spouses I will list their names as I become aware of them. Let it be said, "You have fought the good fight, you have finished the race, you have kept the faith." **Katherine Susanne Landers** beloved wife of Miami Mike, passed away August 23rd.

VA12 History

What follows is a brief history of the Squadron as listed in the Dictionary of American Naval Aviation Squadrons-Volume 1

Lineage

Established as Bomber-Fighter Squadron FOUR (VBF-4) on 12 May 1945. Redesignated Fighter Squadron TWO A (VF-2A) on 15 November 1946. Redesignated Fighter Squadron TWELVE (VF12) on 2 August 1948. Redesignated Attack Squadron Twelve (VA12) on 1 August 1955, the first squadron to be assigned the VA-12 designation. Disestablished on 1 October 1986.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

The squadron's first insignia was approved by CNO on 19 December 1945. Insignia colors were as follows: crimson circular background; four of spades on white background with black markings: black bomb with white eyes, mouth

and arms and other white markings; brown gloves; gold wings; and pink fire on the bomb fuse. There are no records indicating VF-2A changed the VBF-4 insignia following redesignation. In 1949, almost a year after VF-2A was redesignated VF-12, the squadron requested approval for a new insignia. CNO approved VF-12's new insignia on 29 September 1949. The theme of the new insignia, "Kiss of Death," was well illustrated: Black background; white skull and letters; red lips; and the inner circle and squadron designation was outlined in red. When VF-12 was redesignated VA-12, the squadron continued to use the "Kiss of Death" insignia. It became a well-known insignia and was used by the squadron until its disestablishment in 1986. Nickname: Ubangis, Date unknown-1982, Clinchers, 1982-1986. (to be continued in the next edition)

Bios

Joel "JR" Parrish

Since leaving the navy I have done a lot of interesting things. I became a licensed master electrician, Reserve Deputy Sheriff (commander of that group for ten years), ambulance tech, (delivered a baby on a kitchen floor), Chief of police and security for the second largest school district here in Utah, now retired.

I am married to Jeannine Parrish and we have five sons, who have given us 18 grandchildren (that we know of). My hobbies are photography, gold prospecting, bonsai trees, woodworking, HO elec. train layout, fishing and a 40 year old Chris Craft speed boat ("THE LEGACY"). I don't have time for much more!
RJ Parrish 56-58

Neal Nelson

I served with VA12 from Sept 1962 to May 1964. I separated from the Navy at the beginning of the Med cruise at Rota, Spain. I was with the Squadron during the Cuban Missile Crises while we were in the Med. 62-23

cruise. It was during that cruise that we lost CAG Exo. During night ops

Neal Nelson 62-64

Frank M. Smith

A Johnathan Winters line comes to mind "He lived, He rode his Harley hard, He died." Maybe too short. After a heart to heart talk with Leading Chief Malicoat about extending my enlistment or getting an early out for college, I left VA-12 after two and a half years. The Chief told me that my chances of getting a bachelors degree after an enlistment were slim. Not being a "really big brain", remember I was an ABH, five years later I proved Joe wrong. Armed with my new degree in psychology I went right out and got a job putting up traffic lights. A good job, back outdoors, had a good time except when the rain and ice starts. After two plus years the county contract ran out and my boss said, why don't you go stay busy at my brother in laws boat yard on Canandaigua Lake until another contract comes up. I stayed seven years. As Geno says "I still love the greasy stuff." During this time I met my later to be wife, Diane and her two kids Jeff and Kate. Both of us wanting the children to go to school in the Rochester suburbs we move back and I took a wrench job at a Buick dealership. Getting ready to buy our third house together, at the ripe age of 38, we said what the hell let's get married. You know us bosuns like to be sure of our footing before we jump. In 1986 I saw an add for a Art School Technician, Toolroom Supervisor at the Rochester Institute of Technology. I don't know if it was the BS or ABH3 but here I am. I oversee a wood and metal shop for freshmen art students. Approx 200 each year. I don't have much hair left. I see stranger tattoos here than I did on the Rosy Boat. The machine shop has floor to ceiling glass that faces the north south runway of the Roch airport a mile away. My neck hairs still stand up when i hear something hot take off. In dealing with the student here, I sometimes mumble, "thats skid marks in the sky" or "take that up with the base chaplin" Some of VA-12

never leaves you. Life is good here and I hope to make the next reunion. FM Smith 66-68

Neal Russo

Got out of the Navy in '68. Went to Ohio with Larry Hobbs and worked in an airplane factory for a couple months. Then I returned to Maryland where I met my wife. We've been married for 31 years and have two beautiful children, Neal 28 and Dina 21. We are expecting our first grandson in January. I have been working in Bio-medical Engineering for the last 25 years, maintaining patient care equipment in hospitals(the same hospital for the last 22 years). I retired in June. We are planning on moving south to a warmer climate sometime soon. On December 7, 2001 I was diagnosed as having Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis. A little while later a miracle occurred. My son and I were on line and came across "Killers" web site. You do not know what that did for me, and to find out I was going to see my buddies after 34 years!!!!!!! It's a high I cannot explain..... I could not wait for June.... That reunion was a dream come true, and I cannot wait for the next.... And I will be there. Miss all you guys. God Bless you all...Neal Russo 66-68

Frank Giaccone

When I returned home I wanted to go back working for the aircraft industry but that industry had taken a big down turn, so I went to work in mold repair and machine set up for a fly by night injection molding plant. OH YEA, I forgot about Robbi ,we had gone out a couple of times while I was in the service before the West Pac cruise. I contacted her when I got out but she was going out with someone but said she would give me a call if that situation changed. And low and behold on St.Patty's Day I received a call and we were on . My sister got involved and 4 months later we were hitched. We settled in Hialeah and began raising a family, a daughter Pier in '73 and son Tony in '75. During that time I was fortunate to be hired

by Florida Power and Light, working for them for over 28 years most of that time at the nuclear plant in St. Lucie County. Most of my spare time over the years has been spent on CARS.

Along with several restorations, Tony and I built a drag racing car that we took to the local track to run (a 11.3 second 1/4 mile gas racing machine). Tony also had the fastest street car in high school (well you have to be known for something). So now that the kids are grown and out of the house (forever we hope) and I'm retired, I'm continuing a 15+ year project of restoring a 1969 corvette. Robbi and I also enjoy traveling in our retirement. We have a 5th wheel and hook up and go often..Geno 68-71

Bob Fossum

I served with VA-12 from November of 1968 to May 1971 – making both the '69 Med Cruise on the Shang, as well as the infamous CASREP 70 WestPac Cruise – an interesting and memorable experience. During that period I advanced from PNSN to PN2, and had the privilege of working TAD in the Shang's Galley on the Med Cruise and being leading PN during most of the WestPac cruise – kind of like going from the frying pan into the fire!. Great times, with great guys on one Hell of an Olde Ship – May we never forget. After thirty months sea duty, made the worst mistake of my four year Naval Career – you Airedales should have clued me in... In order to be close to home in Connecticut, I opted FORDUSHOR at NAVSUBASE, New London.... What ever was I thinking? For thirty minutes more I could have picked Quonset Naval Air Station!!. Oh well, at least it was shore duty – but boy are those submariners a different breed – must be the low altitude or something. Last real contact with guys from VA-12 was after WestPac and my transfer to New London - flew down to Atlanta for PR3 Barry Wheeler's wedding and, if it isn't a small enough world, processed the discharge in 1972 for Bruce McLeod, who had

been a PNSN on the '69 Med Cruise (have just recently heard from Bruce - email is ssbn609@comcast.net (he finished his service onboard the USS Sam Houston as a Yeoman). I was discharged in July of '72 and returned to the job I had left at IBM – for the next twenty-five years worked in the Human Resources – Personnel Systems area(s), primarily in Armonk and White Plains, NY and Norwalk and Southbury, CT. Retired from Big Blue in 1995. During those twenty-five years, had time to serve in my home town of Greenwich as the co-President of a PTA, Scoutmaster and Council Commissioner for the Boy Scouts of America (including Scoutmaster at the '85 Jamboree) and put in fourteen years with the Cos Cob Volunteer Fire Company (rising to the rank of Ass't. Chief). Now, realizing retirement is not yet something I want (nor can totally afford!!), I work as a real estate sales associate for a local independent firm and, as usual, have gotten into it whole hog - attaining both my Accredited Buyer Representative (ABR) and Graduate Realtor Institute (GRI) designations. Within the Connecticut Association of Realtors® I am currently serving as Communications/ Technology Division Vice President which also includes being a member of the state's Executive Committee, Finance Committee and the Board of Directors.

Personally, I was born and raised in Greenwich, married my childhood sweetheart Sharyn, and have raised three wonderful children (Bob Jr. 34, Kim 28 and Kris 24). Sold the house about six years ago and are enjoying our condo in Stamford.

Truly sorry I could not attend the 2002 reunion, but will put the 2004 date down as soon as it is determined – Sounds like it was really a great time. Best to all.... Bob Fossum 69-72

William Hill Sigmon, Jr. (Bill)

V.P. Branch Sales & Operations
bills@kennedyofficesupply.com
www.kennedyofficesupply.com

Education: High School: N.B. Broughton -
Class of 1972 College: N. C. State University -
1981

Military: 1973-1977 U.S. Navy, Naval Training
Center (Boot Camp), Recruit Chief Petty
Officer Company 059- 1973 NAS Jacksonville
"AOA School" - 1973 NAS Cecil Field "AOB
School" VA -172 -

Attack Squadron Twelve (VA-12), November
1973, flew to Rota, Spain then to Naples, Italy
and then flew out to the "INDY" in the Med.
Homeport Athens, Greece. AOAN. At 19 Yrs.
old, that was a huge transition. Spent two
months in ships company in CVW-7 Chief's
compartment. VA-12, made two more Med.
cruises, homeport Naples, Italy. Served in
AIMD-Weapons onboard the "INDY" and
Cecil Field. Nuclear Weapons Crew Chief.
Ltjg. Rusty Petrea came to VA-12 from my
home town. He went to all the schools that I
went to, except he was a UNC-Tarheel. His
father was a math professor at NCSU and Capt.
Petrea was home not to long ago for his father's
funeral. He was in Hawaii and had married a
Naval Officer. I took flying lessons at JAX
Navy Flying Club - Herlong Field just down
the road from Cecil. Flew alot with Rick Brents
/ VA-12 / AQ. After getting out of the Navy, I
joined the North Carolina Air National Guard /
28th. Aviation Battalion @ the Raleigh-
Durham Airport as a Huey Crew Member for 4
yrs. during college. After college I then
transferred to VR-1 Naval Reserve Squadron
out of NAS Oceana. I was with them for about
3yrs. and resigned due to my civilian career.
NATO Cruise 197(?), Artic Circle, I dropped a
note in 20MM ammo can over the side of
"INDY" and close to year later I receive a letter
from a lady in the Grand Cayman Islands. She
indicated that her father was fishing one

morning and found it laying on the beach. I
have the letter, but couldn't get them to ship me
the ammo can. Quite a surprise. I had really
forgotten about it until the letter arrived.

Occupation(s): Welding Supply Business for 8
yrs. HVAC Contracting Business for 8 yrs.
HVAC Wholesale Business for 3 yrs.
Independent Office Supply/Office Furniture
Business past 9 yrs. Family: Married, two
boy's and a dog Love to hunt, fish and play
golf. Has anyone had any contact with: Rick
Barth AO2 Steve Walton AGO, John Petit AA,
Mike Wes AMAH, Daniel Quick OAK, CDR.
Mau, Glenn Brown. **Bill Sigmon 73-77**

VA12 Alumni Members

Here is the list of the current paid
members, if your name isn't here,
send me your dues.

| | |
|-----------------|-------|
| Joel Parrish | 56 58 |
| Chuck Graham | 60 62 |
| Glen Smith | 62 65 |
| Jerry P. Thomas | 63 68 |
| Frank Osborne | 65 68 |
| Joe Kyle | 66 68 |
| Austin O'Brien | 66 68 |
| Sonny Chapman | 66 68 |
| Dennis Gierahn | 66 68 |
| Ed Thomas | 66 68 |
| Frank M. Smith | 66 68 |
| John Livingood | 66 68 |
| Neal Russo | 66 68 |
| John Gynan | 66 68 |
| Rich Forristall | 66 69 |
| Dave Bartels | 67 68 |
| Steve Owings | 67 69 |
| Bob Fossum | 68 70 |
| Tom Lannom | 68 70 |
| Lynn Turner | 68 70 |
| Frank Giaccone | 68 71 |
| George Davis | 68 72 |
| Dave Smith | 70 72 |

| | |
|-----------------|-------|
| Glen Goddard | 71 74 |
| Rodney Dunlap | 72 76 |
| Bill Klipp | 74 77 |
| Bruce Carawon | 75 78 |
| John Larch | 76 79 |
| Joe D'Albert | 76 80 |
| Thomas Micheli | 78 79 |
| Patrick Walters | 85 86 |

Sea Stories

This will be a regular item for the newsletter. Please share your memories of funny or important events that you remember from you VA12 days. This first story came to me by way of Skipper Austin O'Brien, told at the last reunion. When Reggie Workman found the website recently, I emailed him about it. What follows is his Sea Story.

Been trying to figure where the Skipper's story came from; since I don't really know how it goes I can only hazard a guess. My dad is indeed a retired Captain and though I wasn't crazy about the time at sea, I certainly would never have considered going AWOL; for Chrisakes I was a reservist! I woulda' been in the brig longer than my tour of duty which was roughly from Aug. '66 to the end of the Med cruise. I have however, come up with a couple of possible scenarios to explain this enduring myth, both of which involve myself and Jack McBain. The first of these is particularly unsavory and I don't exactly swell with pride in repeating it....but here goes. The evening before departure for the Med, McBain and I not only got extraordinarily drunk, but also swilled a bunch of codeine cough syrup which I guess you could still get over the counter back then. Anyway, we were shitfaced and bitched & moaned to each other for hours about how neither of us wanted to endure another cruise. At some point during this whacked out blathering it made perfect sense to us that if we simply requested a meeting with the Skipper

and told him that we didn't want to go, he'd understand and transfer us to some kind of shore duty. I think it was Lt. Gammons who called the Skipper & told him we wanted to talk to him; I wish that instead, he had just told us to shape up and go sleep it off; well, he didn't but Skipper O'brien did! The only result of this stupidity was that I felt pretty embarrassed and sensed a diminished respect from the Skipper and Lt. Gammons. The other occurrence which may have played into this was "the infamous bicycle trip". McBain and I took leave when the ship set back to sea from Valencia and intended to meet it again in Genoa. We went to Madrid, bought two ten- speed bikes with the intention of pedaling to Paris. Having a dad who's a Captain doesn't mean you've got any brains 'cause if we'd bothered to check, wed've realized there's a mountain range in the way. We did get to Paris.....with the bikes in the baggage car of the train! At any rate, though I don't really recall, we may've been a day or so late meeting the ship and after the original episode they may have thought McBain & Workman were capable of anything and bolted. Quite frankly, I've done so much stupid shit that I don't know if this accounts for the Captains tale or if it was something else.

Reggie Workman 66-67

Old Ubangi Still At It

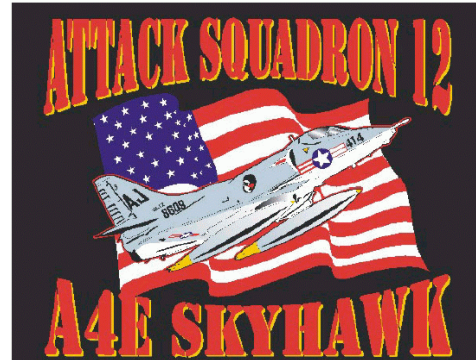
Some of you know Captain Shawn "Vandal" Tallant. He has recently taken command of the USS Nashville LPD13, below is a letter short letter from him.

Good Mornin'. Just wanted you to know that when I started typing this email this morning (Sunday morning), that it was about 0700, skies were clear, it was about 72 degrees with a beautiful light breeze (obviously a sea breeze!), and to cap it off, we were heading east directly into a gorgeous sun rise.. So, from my vantage point, life isn't too bad! I'm currently sitting in my CO's chair watching the crew prepare for another busy day at sea. We're about ready to

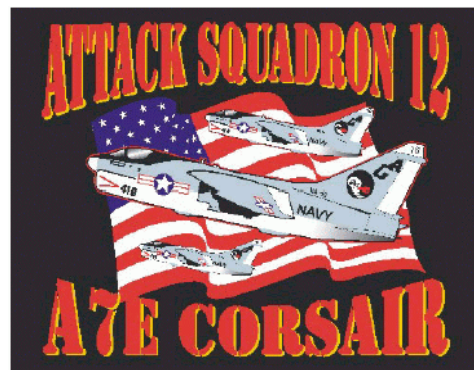
lift over an EOD boat (& crew) for independent operations, followed by opening the aft well deck to send out the large utility boat (LCU) loaded . After that we'll set sea & anchor detail and proceed up the channel for a trip into Moorhead City NC. There we'll enter port & take aboard ~ 500 of the USMC's finest and most of their rolling stock.. (And, it'll only be about mid day!). Later, we'll depart Moorhead, transit the channel, pick up both boats (crane & well deck ops, again!), then just for fun, we're heading over to a beach area, to conduct (night) amphib ops with some more (additional) Marines, bringing aboard about 25 smaller boats.. After that, just to remind everyone that we aviators are still around, we'll open the flight deck for some night helo operations.. All of this, just so our many family and friends can sleep in comfortably on Sunday mornings! And, I hope all of you truly! did! I'm sure you wouldn't be surprised when I tell you how impressed I am with the young warriors here on Nashville. They are young, strong & energetic. So, if anyone is thinking that there might be a lost generation out there, I'll tell you to not be worried.. If you could see the gleam of pride I see daily in their eyes, it would probably make your heart skip a beat. Anyway, I just wanted to send a note off to you, to say good mornin'. Cause, from what I've seen - IT IS! Blue Skies, Shawn Tallant 84-86

Squadron Shirts

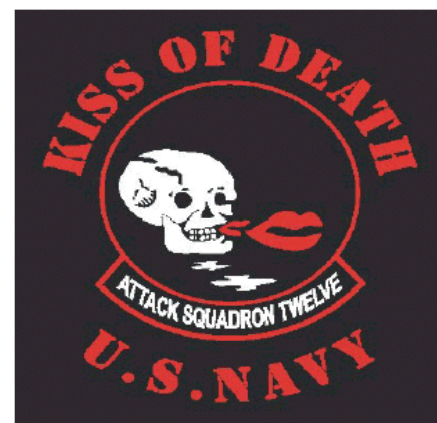
Joe D'Albert has designed some tee shirts that he is selling for cost. There are two different backs. One representing the A4 Skyhawk era,



and the other representing the A7 Corsair era.



The front pocket has our squadron logo.



If you are interested in purchasing a tee shirt contact

Joe D'Albert.
619 N. 21 Ave.
Hollywood, FL
33020 (954)922-4457

Several of us are looking into ordering quantities of pins, decals, hats & etc. We will keep you posted when they become available.

Treasury Report

We currently have a positive balance of \$53.08. Dues collected amounted to \$235.00 so far and the expenses were as follows.

| | | | |
|--------|---------|------------|---------|
| Paper | \$17.47 | Seals | \$6.35 |
| Stamps | \$89.22 | Cartridges | \$68.88 |