



Atkron 12 Newsletter



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Ubangi

Reunion

The 2006 Reunion plans are moving along nicely. We have secured the Best Western Resort at Pensacola Beach. It is advisable to make your reservation as soon as possible.

1-800-934-3301

More importantly if you are planning on flying to Pensacola, you will probably want to book your flight very soon as the Reunion begins the Thursday following Easter of 2006.

April 20 through April 23

We are currently nailing down the details of our Naval Aviation Museum tour and hopefully our banquet at that facility. You can expect a registration form with the December newsletter.

Web Page

If any of you (including your children or grandchildren) have experience or skills in the area of Website design and would like to take a crack at redesigning our va12.com please email or call me.

New Decals

Miami Mike Landers donated funds to have additional decals made. They are now available at \$4.00 each if any of you are interested. They look pretty good on rear windows.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2** Word from the West
- 4** Photos/ New Member/Treasury Report

Ubetcha

The Pledge

"The Pledge of Allegiance" by Senator John McCain

As you may know, I spent five and one half years as a prisoner of war during the Vietnam War. In the early years of our imprisonment, the NVA kept us in solitary confinement or two or three to a cell. In 1971 the NVA moved us from these conditions of isolation into large rooms with as many as 30 to 40 men to a room.

This was, as you can imagine, a wonderful change and was a direct result of the efforts of millions of Americans on behalf of a few hundred POWs 10,000 miles from home.

One of the men who moved into my room was a young man named Mike Christian. Mike came from a small town near Selma, Alabama. He didn't wear a pair of shoes until he was 13 years old. At 17, he enlisted in the US Navy. He later earned a commission by going to Officer Training School. Then he became a Naval Flight Officer and was shot down and captured in 1967.

Mike had a keen and deep appreciation of the opportunities this country and our military provide for people who want to work and want to succeed.

As part of the change in treatment, the Vietnamese allowed some prisoners to receive packages from home. In some of these packages were handkerchiefs, scarves and other items of clothing.

Mike got himself a bamboo needle. Over a period of a couple of months, he created an American flag and sewed on the inside of his shirt. Every afternoon, before we had a bowl of soup, we would hang Mike's shirt on the wall of the cell and say the Pledge of Allegiance. I know the Pledge of Allegiance may not seem the most important part of our day now, but I can assure you that in that stark cell it was indeed the most important and meaningful event. One day the Vietnamese searched our cell, as they did periodically, and discovered Mike's shirt with the flag sewn inside, and removed it.

That evening they returned, opened the door of the cell, and for the benefit of all of us, beat Mike Christian severely for the next couple of hours. Then, they opened the door of the cell and threw him in. We cleaned him up as well as we could.

The cell in which we lived had a concrete slab in the middle

on which we slept. Four naked light bulbs hung in each corner of the room.

As I said, we tried to clean up Mike as well as we could. After the excitement died down, I looked in the corner of the room, and sitting there beneath that dim light bulb with a piece of red cloth, another shirt and his bamboo needle, was my friend, Mike Christian. He was sitting there with his eyes almost shut from the beating he had received, making another American flag. He was not making the flag because it made Mike Christian feel better. He was making that flag because he knew how important it was to us to be able to Pledge our allegiance to our flag and country.

So the next time you say the Pledge of Allegiance, you must never forget the sacrifice and courage that thousands of Americans have made to build our nation and promote freedom around the world.

You must remember our duty, our honor, and our country.

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

The Word From The West

(Continued from Vol.IV, Issue 2)

SOMEBODY PASSES THE BUCK(S)

Buddy did the 5 sit-ups and touched elbow to knee each time.

He laid back down and TOWEL-MAN draped the wet towel over his face. He got the upper corners on the table and held them down.

The noise and carrying-on never let up.

- You can do it!

- No way! Loser!

- It's impossible! He's going to hurt himself or bust a nut or somethin'!

- Be careful! Watch him!

Buddy began to take those 5 painfully-deep breaths, and on the last one he made some kind of weird noise like it hurt him to do that. A lot.

- It ain't gonna happen! I'm making \$20 for \$10!

- Losing \$20!

Don kept the play-by-play going all through this.

Steve was shaking his head and I even heard him say this was total bullshit.

We were now at the end of the drill and it was time for Buddy to sit-up, or shut-up!

- OK, Hercules! Do it!

- You're a loser! It ain't gonna happen!

Wild cheering and carrying on. Guys jumping up and down, pulling each other out of the way to see better! Pushing and shoving and grab-ass. Whistles and cat-calls. You'd have thought we were at a horse race or something.

We could see the muscles in Buddy's stomach and torso ripple and wiggle around but all he could manage

was to raise his head about 1 inch off of the table. His elbows started to raise the towel up farther than his head had done.

- Hey! Watch the elbows! One more sit-up, or it's a bust!

And after about 30 seconds of rippling muscles, Buddy gave up, defeated, busted, unable to move up higher than 1 inch. Crushed. Stunned. Don asked if he was giving up and we saw Buddy nod "Yes" under the towel.

The winners were happy, elated, SKY HIGH! and the losers were dejected and crushed. Nobody could believe that he had lost the challenge. Nobody could fathom that the IMPOSSIBLE SIT-UP was, well, impossible.

THE MOUTH THAT ROARED

Except that the salesmen over there with Steve had been egging him on and elbowing him the entire time, successfully it turned out, to where finally the damn burst and Steve could not keep quiet any longer and started to rant to everyone gathered there.

- This is total bullshit! This is crap!

- Whadda ya mean! Hey Martin, you said it was \$325, right?

- Yeah, you guys are all going to the Brig for a month over \$325, and when they let ya out it's to go to the next room where you all gonna get the chair!

- OK, OK, big deal, so I got \$325 from Buddy Hercules here says it's impossible.

Buddy was sitting up on the edge of the table and rubbing his stomach and muttering.

- I can't believe it. I just can't believe it. I never thought...

- Believe it! It's impossible!

But the mouth would not be quiet.

- It's stupid! Totally stupid! There's nothing to this! This is fake! This is all crap and total cheese.

THE BAIT

Don and Dale are clucking over the \$325 bucks and with a confident and superior air, Don piped up.

- You think so, huh? You think Buddy would give up his reputation and all that money?

- No he wouldn't but that doesn't matter. This is all a truck-load of crap.

- Hey, MOUTH (This was Steve's official nickname) Buddy put a lot on the line to give it a try. You're just a lot of hot air. I don't see you proving anyone wrong or even betting on it! What a chicken!

- Yeah I think it's totally stupid and there's nothing to it. And I can prove it!

Well, this got a huge rise out of everyone, and the excitement and noise started building back up to a fever pitch again. And the two guys working on Steve didn't let up much. One on the left, one on the right.

- You think it's crap and stupid.
- You can prove it huh? How you gonna do that? I bet you don't even weigh 120 pounds. How can yo do that, ya little turd?
- I don't see the color of your money. I don't see you on the table!

HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER

- This IMPOSSIBLE SIT-UP is totally bogus bullshit and I got the balls to prove it! I'll do it and do a hundred sit-ups at the end as a bonus for you losers! Oh Lordy Lordy what that kid set off by saying that! Whistling! Cheers! Yelling and carrying on and commotion! Martin was right, we're all gonna get the chair! Or worse! Sailors in a frenzy to bet money against Steve. A few betting for Steve. Martin the M-A-A was keeping track of the bids and it started to slow down at one point, so he totalled it all up.

- All right you convicts! Time! Let me add this all up! And after a while he came up with \$275 for Steve and \$710 for IMPOSSIBLE.

The salesman didn't skip a beat.

- Geez, Steve, \$710 bucks just for a lousy sit-up! Hell of a deal!
- Yeah, Steve, who woulda believed it? Can you believe it? I don't believe it!

Now these two sweet-talkers were doing nothing except goading Steve on, not that he needed any encouragement for that. I kept wondering what was going on there and started to get the vague idea that I was watching a confidence-game in progress. A caper. A flim-flam. Well, we were all about to get the payoff!

THE PAYOFF

The betting had ended, insults and taunts delivered, and everyone knew that Steve was going to give it a shot.

With great fan-fare, pomp, and ceremony, the entire routine was repeated.

Steve got one of his white towels and TOWEL-MAN got it soaking wet in a sink and brought it back dripping.

Steve climbed up, sat down, and then turned onto the length of the table. FEET-MAN leaned over and held his ankles down.

Steve laced his fingers together.

- Just like this, right?

- Right. Left thumb on the bottom!

He put his hands behind his head and touched the bump with the left thumb, and then slowly laid down.

- Thumb on the bump?
- Thumb on the bump! (from 3 guys looking at Steve's head)

Every part of this ceremony drove the group to a new level of froth and frenzy and lust for money. The winners win! The losers lose!

It's impossible!

It's totally stupid!

Steve knew that he was up to win a hell of a lot of quick and easy money! The adrenaline must have been surging like a truck-load of gasoline on the Freeway. He began the first sit-up slowly, and touched elbows to knees. Perfect form.

He did numbers 2, 3, 4, and 5 the same way, sort of slow but error-free.

After the 5th one, he laid down and TOWEL-MAN unfolded the sopping towel.

But this is where everything changed just ever so slightly.

TOWEL-MAN made a big show of unfolding the dripping towel over Steve so that it dripped on his bare chest and got him wet. After getting it straight, he laid it down onto the mouthy little kid and dragged it up and over his face into the right position.

Don was calling the routine again.

- OK? Are you ready? (He said this all again real loud for some reason.) OK? ARE YOU READY? (Almost as though he was yelling over his shoulder.)

MR. CLEAN

Steve started taking his 5 painful breaths.

With his head under that wet towel, he couldn't see a darn thing, which was the point of it actually, and he was really wet from it too.

He was unable to see, or feel wet water drops (being so wet already), and there was so much rooting, and cheering, and carrying on, that he didn't see one of the guys sneak out from the shower. Naked as a jaybird.

Covered in soapy suds from one end to the other. Wet and slippery.

Shane F very carefully stepped up onto the seat and then stepped over the top of the table. He carefully turned to face FEET-MAN and bent over in a squat position. HE GRABBED HIS CHEEKS AND SPREAD THEM WIDE!

Well, I could not believe what I was seeing with my very own eyes. Shane was squatting over the top of Steve, dripping suds and soap and water onto Steve, who was so pumped with adrenaline and concentrating

on breathing painful deep breaths.
 Weeks of torment from us! Lots of money on the line!
 This whole deal is absolute nonsense and crap! What a bogus rip-off!
 Steve finished the last breath and you could tell he had enough adrenaline going to lift up a car! He could have dragged a locomotive a mile! He shot out from under that wet towel so fast and so hard, that he could not stop in time to avoid driving his face right into the spread-apart soapy cheeks of Shane, could not prevent his nose from slithering around in the anal valley and in milliseconds finding a neat little orifice to slip and slide into. *With driving force*, mind you! Don't underestimate the power of adrenaline!
 I never saw such a loud and noisy group, stop being loud and noisy so fast. Within a second, it was absolutely quiet and you could have heard a pin drop. And there was Steve W, the MOUTH, silent for once, without a word to say, as he steadied himself after the recoil bounce, hand still in position behind his head. The last thing I remember is Steve getting this quizzical look on his face, as he crossed his eyes to try to look at something on the tip of his nose. Somebody made an accusation.

- Hey, are you trying to brown-nose you way outta paying us our \$700 bucks?
 After that, I started laughing so hard I pulled muscles. I may have stopped breathing long enough to lose consciousness.

POST-SCRIPT
 It was San Diego, June 1975.
 John Larch 76-79

Photos

Here are a couple of photos submitted by Pat Walters 85-86



Fly your colors

This is Ken Campitelli's Harley.



VA12 Association Members

Here's a new member since the last newsletter.

Jerry Walden 77- 79

Treasury Report

Previous balance	\$631.65
Dues/Donation since last report	\$262.00
Sub Total	\$853.65
Stamps	\$ 40.80
Envelopes	\$ 4.87
Printing (estimated)	\$150.00
Decals	\$248.04
Current Expenses	-\$443.71
<i>New Balance</i>	<i>\$409.61</i>

INFO

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