



Atkron 12 Newsletter



Volume III, Issue 4

December 2004

Ubangi

2006 Reunion Survey

Enclosed with this newsletter is a survey form to help us decide where to hold the 2006 Reunion. I would like you to return it with your 2005 VA12 Association dues by the second week in February 05. It takes about a year to complete the planning so I would like to know where you all think we should have the next reunion before I publish the results in the March 05 Newsletter. If you are not expecting to come to the 2006 Reunion you do not have to complete the survey. I will assume that all who return the survey will plan on attending. Based upon the results of the last questionnaire, discussions with a lot of you, and a desire to move the location around the county. I have limited the options to Pensacola, FL, Memphis, TN, Chicago, IL. and a gulf cruise out of Galveston, TX. There is a lot to do and see in each of these cities so I don't think anyone will be disappointed with whatever happens. You will notice on the survey that the month is different with each site, to accommodate weather

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2** Sea Story/Cruise News/Word From The West
- 3** Bio
- 4** Hurricane IVAN
- 7** VA12 History/Dues News/VQ Reunion

Ubetcha

conditions. You will need to list your order of preference. I.e. 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th choices. The location with the lowest total number will be selected as the 2006 site. Only returned surveys completed correctly will be counted. For example if Bob Kaplan checks Nashville as his first choice and does not pick a second and third, then his vote does not count. Sorta like a hangin chad. Or if Ed Thomas puts number 1 next to all of the choices, his vote gets thrown out too. I know you guys are smart enough to figure this out (well, most of you).

Treasury Report

Our current balance is **\$318.95**

Total funds collected to date is \$5520.53

Expenses

Stamps	\$590.43	Cartridges	\$252.29
Paper	\$ 47.93	Seals	\$8.23
Envelopes	\$ 31.06	Decals	\$211.98
Hats	\$462.04	Postcards	\$11.25
Shirts	\$500.58	Banquet	\$2282.19
Printing	\$760.40	Folders	\$43.20
Total			\$5201.58

Beginning with the next issue, I will only list quarterly expenses and income.

VA12 Association Members

Here are names of those that have joined our ranks since the last newsletter.

Dallas Willingham	62, 65
Ron Witt	65, 68

Sea Stories

As most of the '68-'71 group know Steve Carroll, Gary Venema and myself got to the squadron at the same time after "A" school and VA-174. We left Cecil with a 2nd Class that thought he had the gravy job of delivering us to Rota, Spain. Well, things didn't work out exactly as he expected. The train ride was uneventful but for some reason we could not get a drink. When we got to N.J. to catch the Military flight we had extra time. The flight was delayed because they crunched a seal on the cargo door while it was being loaded. Well, I don't know who came up with the idea but we were off to find the EM club, Steve, Bunk and I we were off without the P.O.'s blessings. The flight was to board at 1700 that's 5:00pm civilian time (isn't it) We were slightly confused and thought we needed to be back by 7 PM. The second class was beside himself a couple times over when we got back at about 1900 Hrs. 7:00 with an hour to spare we thought of course in reality 2 hours late. Luckily, the flight was held up again until about 2330 for maintenance to pressure test the plane after replacing the door seal. Now with this unexpected extra time we looked at each other as if to say "back to the club?" We knew that would have been pushing it. We just settled in and waited for the flight. There was one more memorable moment on this trip that I vividly remember. This was my first trip of any length on an aircraft. I don't really remember how long it took us to get from New Jersey to Rota but it was over night. We were tired and pretty well tanked up when we left from Jersey. After we got settled in and had a meal I went to sleep along with just about everyone else. I woke up and had to go to the head. When I stood up and looked around everyone in the cabin was passed out. For a brief moment I thought that I was the only person on the plane that was alive. I had this horrifying thought that the food was bad and probably the pilot and flight crew were dead too. I started forward to check the cockpit and realized when I heard several sailors snoring

that everyone was just asleep. I was very relieved that I would not have to take over command of the aircraft and try to land. These are the facts as I remember them from 36 years ago.

Frank Giaconne 67-71
Steve Carroll 67-71

Cruise News

One of the ideas for the 2006 Reunion is a Cruise. Bill Heck (66-69) is able to do the booking for us and here is some information about that option.

"Carnival has a 4 night cruise that departs from Galveston on April 20, 2006. It has a day at sea, a stop at Cozumel Mexico, a day at sea and then back to Galveston. I thought Galveston was more centrally located than Miami. The pricing looks like this (all rates are per person double occupancy) Inside cabin \$408.75 per person (this includes \$37.00 for insurance, outside cabin \$450.00 per person, this includes \$37.00 for insurance, and balcony cabin \$669.00 per person, this includes 63.00 for insurance. These rates also include all taxes and fees. Airfare and transfers would be in addition to this, I can make the air arrangements with no markup or they can do it themselves and use miles that they have accumulated. Transfers can be added for ABOUT \$40 dollars per person."

The Word From The West A Visit to the Recruiter

Every year up in the big city, there is a pretty big air show and sadly this year I had too much to do, so I could not attend. But I sure wanted to, lots of flying, floating, and hovering things of all manner and description up in the air from small to large with props, turbines, turbo-jets, fan-jets, whirleys, blades, rotors, single wings, double wings, triple wings, stubby wings. But the best part of it was that the Blue Angels would perform at the show this year. Torqued me off **real bad** not to be able to go.

A few weeks later I walked past the office-cube where my friend Dave works. He has got the absolute coolest poster I have ever seen, tacked up to his wall. From a hovering helicopter at sea, you are viewing a fully-loaded aircraft carrier, in a bow-on shot from 200-300 yards in front. It's a modern-era Nimitz Class carrier, there is no hull number to be seen. Out to port, you can see at least 2 destroyers and another vessel that might be a cruiser. The caption on this poster says: LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF ALL WHO THREATEN IT.

So I asked Dave where he got this poster, and he said, there were these Navy types all over at the Air show and they were handing them out to everybody. So I figured, they are free and I am too old to enlist...

Boy, my appetite was whetted by that poster and I decided that I had to find one.

I hunted all over the internet with no success. I finally got smart and called the local Navy Recruiter.

I got this youthful voice on the line and explained to him my predicament about this certain poster I wanted to find, "It's got a bow-on shot of an aircraft carrier, with a caption above it..."

And this guy pipes in right then, "There's a couple destroyers in there and a nice cruiser, and the caption says 'Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of all who threaten it', right?"

"That's the one."

"We got lots of 'em. I'm looking at one right now, you want one? Come on in and we'll set you up."

About a week later, I was off work early for another reason and called my wife, to tell her where I was going and what for. And I piped in, "Oh, yeah, and after that I'm going to go stop over at the Recruiter's Office." Well of course my wife knows I am a 50-something years old, Navy veteran, with high blood pressure, and ... a paunch... but boy I swear I could have heard a pin drop.

That, was fun!

Then at the Recruiter's office, talk about "Deja-Vu" !!! I walked in and met the same

younger guy I'd spoken to on the phone, he shakes my hand firmly, and I can see he doesn't have much of a neck, it's all muscle, and I immediately realize, this kid is *absolutely ripped*, like Ah'nold Schwarzenegger, I was never that fit, what the hell is going on in this mod-ren era Navy? He said so you want that poster, huh, follow me. And I followed him into a large closet full of supplies, literature, pamphlets, and stuff. He grabbed a poster and then one of everything else. I ended up walking out of there with the poster, a large travel coffee mug, a regular Navy coffee cup, an Official Navy pen, some official Navy notepads, and about 4 different Navy bumper stickers. We got to talking about the ships we had served on and speculating which carrier was in the poster may have been, since you could not see any hull number in that photo. He said he was on the Flight Deck of CV-72 Abraham Lincoln when "United States" (George W. Bush) flew aboard in that S-3 Viking.

Well, I finally had to leave and promised to return for more note pads and pens, after I recover from the thumping I was going to get from my wife for visiting the Navy Recruiter.

John Larch 76-79

Bio

- 1.assigned to Va-12 12-1965
- 2.got an early college out 05-1968 - it didn't work out- left VA-12 AZ3
- 3.went into reserves came out AZ2 1 year later
- 4.went to work for Illinois Bell 10-1968
- 5.transferred to Bellsouth Telephone co.as installer-repairman 10-1970
- 6.promoted to Network Mgr 1991
7. retired 09-2002
8. bored to death went back to work selling insurance for a friend of mine who has an Allstate Agency.
9. in that time I was married twice, my last wife passed away in 1996

Ron Witt 65-68

SITREP IVAN.

The following is a message that I received from Chuck Drescher (78-79) He apparently got it from a sailor named Clint Epley. It was dated 10/24/04 and is an update on NAS Pensacola, thought you might find it interesting. Feel free to send along any other Florida Hurricane updates

Today marked my first visit aboard NAS Pensacola since Ivan left three weeks ago. It has been closed to all except essential personnel. I am essential only at 10148 Bittern Drive (and sometimes not essential even there) so could not go aboard NAS until now. But thought you might be interested in my reaction to what I saw.

NAS is a disaster area! No doubt about it. All along the waterfront, the scene looks like urban warfare recently took place there ... or like a movie set for a disaster movie ... or like a Category 3 hurricane had hit it! Buildings are missing roofs, windows, siding and whatever. Complete sides of brick buildings have collapsed. Trash and debris piles are everywhere. Large heaps of sand that washed up in the storm surge have been bulldozed into huge piles in middle of parking lots. The storm surge flooded, and in some cases destroyed, all buildings situated along the waterfront. MacDonald's had several feet of water and sand in it and is still inop. The Coast Guard Station, which the papers said was destroyed, has (from what I could see from the road) a missing a roof and damage to the boathouse. The lighthouse is still up, but don't know about the USCG liaison officer's spaces there. The Mustin Beach O-club (where I felt unwelcome as an ensign!) was serving lunch out of doors under awnings ... the inside of the building currently being unusable. (Ensigns are now welcome and can ... I'm not making this up ... wear flight suits there!)

As in the rest of Pensacola, trees are down everywhere on base including many of those

big, 100-year old live oaks that made the station so picturesque. On those trees still standing, most of the foliage was blown away or has turned brown from windburn. The scene looks more like what one sees in northern states in winter. But if one looks closely, new foliage is trying to break out with that bright green one sees only in springtime. Have the trees been fooled into thinking it is spring? Or is it Nature's way of survival? The good news at NAS is the farther one gets from the waterfront, the less damage.

At Sherman Field, some hangars have heavy damage with roofs missing. Yet, flight training has been back in operation for a week, as has been the case for severely damaged Whiting NAS. The T-39 that serves as a gate guard at Sherman Field was blown off its concrete pad and now sits on its gear, left wing down and in the sand. The three-mile chain link security fence, just put up over the summer, along the west gate access road around Sherman is flattened (steel poles simply bent over at the ground) anywhere the storm surge hit, and that is about 60% of the fence. Same goes for the new fence around the new rec boat storage/parking area.

As for the NMNA, original post-Ivan reports had it that the museum was heavily damaged, especially the A/C stored outside. But happily, that was an exaggeration ... the museum will open on Monday next. Today I saw that the Tomcat, mounted on the pedestal at the entrance, had survived. Since it is displayed with wings in the swept position, the 130 mph winds were obviously not enough to achieve flying speed, so it stayed put. Repair parties were on the museum roof fixing leaks, and no serious exterior damage was evident as I drove around. But my curiosity led me to the rear of NMNA where I could see some of the outside A/C. The line in which the Coast Guard planes are parked appeared intact. And from what I could see of its nose and tail, I am happy to report that HU-16 7236

survived, as did the nose of the HH-3F parked next to it. I feel the parts of those two planes that I couldn't see are probably undamaged as well.

Fortunately for all of us with holes in our roofs, we have had no rain since Ivan. But rain is forecast for tomorrow and the weekend. However, just like the 7th Cavalry riding to the rescue, the Army Corps of Engineers came by my house today to inspect roof damage. His visit was in preparation for project ROOF BLU, a contract issued by FEMA to the COE to put blue tarps on roofs to protect them until repairs can be made. More than 30,000 roofs in Pensacola need blue tarps We will soon be known as the City of Blue Roofs. But as luck would have it, the tarp workers will show up at 10138 Bittern after the rain is over. That's life.

Ptero Carl sends.

From Captain Bill Castro former CO VP-6
National Museum of Naval Aviation For
Immediate Release MUSEUM ENDURES
HURRICANE IVAN'S WRATH

The storm struck with all the might that Mother Nature could muster and for the inhabitants of the Pensacola area, life will never be the same. Many returned to their homes to find them smashed by walls of water or at the very least missing sections of the roof. NAS Pensacola suffered some \$1 billion dollars in damage, its landscape marked by fallen trees and some of its historic nineteenth century buildings damaged beyond repair.

If there was one bright spot in the ordeal, it was the fact that the National Museum of Naval Aviation suffered relatively minor damage. Situated on some of the highest ground on board NAS Pensacola, the Museum was not threatened by the strong storm surge that devastated the waterfront areas of the air station, but the high winds of

Hurricane Ivan took somewhat of a toll on the Museum's main building sending a section of high wall of the Blue Angels Atrium flying. In addition, sections of the skylights in both the West Wing and the Quarterdeck were lost and a window in the Cubi Bar Caf  blew in, allowing some rainwater to drench sections of carpet and some ceiling tiles. Fortunately, not one artifact or aircraft on display within the main Museum building was damaged. This was not the case with respect to other structures on the air station in which the Museum stores aircraft and artifacts and conducts exhibit fabrication. The Collections Department storage facility in Building 3221 located behind the Museum had flying debris break a window, which allowed water to enter a storage room. Luckily, the only item of significance that was destroyed was an early 1900s U. S. Naval Academy Lucky Bag yearbook.

The restoration facility at the opposite end of Building 3221 also suffered water damage and a falling tree damaged the roof on a small artifact/artwork storage building across the street, but caused no damage to items inside. Building 604, located across the street from the bay, suffered the most damage of any building operated by the Museum. Between three and four feet of water entered the structure, whose brick face emerged from the storm with a gigantic hole in it. The result was water damage to the Museum's Exhibit Fabrication Department spaces as well as the loss of ordnance publications and archival supplies. Fortunately, the collection of aviation flight records from the prewar and World War II eras survived without so much as a drop of water on them. However, we still await reports from some of the sites on the air station at which the Museum has materials on loan, though it appears that most artifacts in this category are intact and in excellent condition.

The greatest damage occurred on the flight line behind the Museum, where about 75% of

the vintage aircraft on display sustained some damage. Most of it was minor and, with possibly one exception, repairable. Our NU-1B Otter took the heaviest beating, losing a wing and having its empennage twisted about forty degrees, which will require a major effort to repair. "Que Sera Sera", the first aircraft to land at the South Pole, also took a hit, but it is not as bad as it looks. The venerable C-47 lost its right wing and rudder among other things, but she should be back together before long. We lost a few canopies and a lot of fabric from control surfaces and our PB4Y-2 Privateer left its number 4 engine on the ramp when it broke its tie downs and went for a short trip. Ironically, the EC-121 that is displayed in the markings of the "Hurricane Hunters" squadron lost its dorsal radome. Following is a list of aircraft that suffered damage:

1. F-14 (Damage to port vertical stabilizer)
2. CT-39 (Vertical stabilizer damage)
3. KA-6D (Canopy blown off .destroyed/Damage to starboard wing fold)
- 4.. HU-16 (Port float blown off and wing damaged)
- 5.. P2V "Truculent Turtle" (Cockpit screening starboard hatch out)
- 6.. SP-5B (Vertical stabilizer and rudder damage)
- 7.. P-3 (Vert stabilizer & rudder damage/Port wing access hatch out)
- 8.. P-3 (Rudder blown off and antenna down)
- 9.. AJ-2 (Damage to starboard elevator, port elevator, rudder, ailerons, and port tip tank)
- 10.. EA-1F (Hole in starboard wing and rear canopy blown away)
- 11.. A-4 (Damage to both wing tips/rudder/port aft fuselage,/dent in the nose cone)
- 12.. A-7 (Canopy blown off and damage to starboard aileron)
- 13.. EC-121 (Top radome blown away & damage to starboard wing and elevator)
- 14.. TC-4C (Rudder and elevator damage as well damage to nose strut)
- 15.. EA-3B (Tail damage and dent in aft

- radome)
- 16.. C-118 (Aileron, rudder, and vertical stabilizer damage)
- 17.. RA-5C (Starboard flap, nose section, and horizontal stabilizer damage)
- 18.. R4D "Que Sera Sera" (Aircraft suffered tail wheel damage and an aileron and rudder were blown away, port wing broke away and there is fuselage damage to the aircraft)
- 19.. C-117 (Fuselage holed and damage to tail wheel and elevators)
- 20.. C-131 (Wing scraped and damage to engine nacelle)
- 21.. E-1B (Damage to port wing fold)
- 22.. T-2C (Damage to pitot tube and trim tab)
- 23.. T-38 (Horizontal stabilizers blown off)
- 24.. PBJ (Damage to fabric on flaps and tail)
- 25.. RF-4 (Forward canopy blown off and damage to starboard wing slat and leading edge port wing)
- 26.. JD-1 (Nose section blown off and damage to ailerons)
- 27.. RC-45J (Damage to port aileron)
- 28.. PBY (Damage to elevator fabric, aft section of the fuselage, nose turret, and port wing)
- 29.. NU-1B (Tail section twisted approximately forty degrees, starboard wing off, and damage to tail)
- 30.. PB4Y (Rudder blown off and damage to fuselage, cockpit canopy, tail and wingtip. Top hatch is missing and starboard outboard engine blown off the aircraft)
- 31.. SP-2H (Aft stinger radar off and damage to ventral radome, and port wing and aileron)
- 32.. S-2E (Damage to rudder, port elevator, and trim tab)
- 33.. C-46 (Port and starboard aileron damage and also damage to rudder, trim tab, and elevator. Damage to access door)
- 34.. F/A-18 (Port and starboard landing gear door damage)

The museum will reopen for business on Monday, 11 October, at 0900 hours, after being closed to the visiting public for almost four weeks.

VA12 History (continued from Vol. III No.1)

Aircraft Assignment

Type	Date
F6F	23 May 45
F4U-1/1D and FG-1/1D	23 May 45
F4U-4	30 Sep 45
F8F-1/1B	May 47
F6F-5P	May 47
F2H-1	01 Sep 50
F2H-2	Dec 50
F7U-3	Dec 55
A4D-1	Apr 57
A4D-2	Jan 58
A4D-2N (A-4C)*	Jan 62
A-4E	Mar 65
A-4C	Mar 67
A-7E	Apr 71

* In 1962 the Navy's aircraft designation system was changed and the A4d-2N was redesignated the A-4C Skyhawk

Major Overseas Deployments

Depart	Return	Carrier	Destination
08/28/46	07/15/46	Tarawa	Panama
08/01/46	04/29/47	Tarawa	WestPac
10/01/48	02/21/49	Tarawa	WorldCruise
03/20/51	10/06/51	Coral Sea	Med
03/24/52	10/11/52	Wasp	Med/NorLant
06/11/53	12/03/53	FDR	Med
12/27/54	07/14/55	Midway	World Cruise
09/02/58	03/12/59	Forrestal	Med
09/06/60	10/20/60	Shangri-La	NorLant
11/14/60	11/27/60	Shangri-La	Caribbean
02/15/61	08/28/61	FDR	Med
11/19/61	11/30/61	FDR	Caribbean
09/14/62	04/22/63	FDR	Med
04/28/64	12/22/64	FDR	Med
06/28/65	12/17/65	FDR	Med
06/21/66	02/21/67	FDR	WestPac
08/24/67	05/19/68	FDR	Med
01/07/69	07/29/69	Shangri-La	Med
03/05/70	12/17/70	Shangri-La	WestPac
09/16/71	03/16/72	Independence	NorLant/Med
06/21/73	01/19/74	Independence	Med
07/19/74	01/21/75	Independence	Med
10/15/75	05/05/76	Independence	NorLant/Med
03/31/77	10/21/77	Independence	Med
01/16/79	07/13/79	Eisenhower	Med
04/15/80	12/22/80	Eisenhower	IO
08/20/81	10/07/81	Eisenhower	NorLant
01/05/82	07/13/82	Eisenhower	Med
04/27/83	12/02/83	Eisenhower	Med
05/08/84	06/20/84	Eisenhower	NorLant
10/10/84	05/08/85	Eisenhower	Med

Air Wing Assignments

CVG-4/CVAG-1/CVG-1	05/12/45
CVG-10	01/20/58
CVG-1/CVW-1	12/05/60
CVW-8	08/25/68
CVW-7	1971

Association Dues

Please submit your 2005 dues when you return the Reunion Location Survey. Some of you have paid forward and do not owe for next year. The following is a list of those that are paid up through 2005

Marion Lumby	Ed Thomas
Robert Parker	John Larch
Mike Landers	Frank Osborne
Eddie Annibale	Rich Forristall
James Elias	Thomas J. Micheli
Gary Hall	Dennis Gierahn
Randy Fleming	Dave Smith
Charles Drescher	George Davis
Jack Yezzi	Neal Russo
Jackie Grant	Bob Fossum
Jon Sutherland	Glen Goddard
Cecil Williams	Bill Klipp
Russell Wise	Ted Huzak
	Chuck Dickey

Also, some have paid half of 2005 dues and still owe \$5.00. Here are the names.

Frank Giaccone	Wayne Scarborough
Chuck Graham	Eric Harvie
Frank M. Smith	James Renfroe
Bruce Carawon	J.D. Rogers
Sonny Chapman	Rich Kickline

VQ Association Reunion

My wife and I attended the reunion, as did Rod and Sara Dunlap. There was also another former VA-12 member in attendance...Can't remember his name. He said he was not at the time a member of VA-12 Association. We stayed at the Holiday Inn Sycamore View, which could be reached from exit 12 or 12A off of I-40. One of the small conference rooms was set up as the "Ready Room" where we checked in and met. Several tables were set up with cruise books, squadron books, published articles,

etc. A bar was set up and the drinks were low cost. Left over bottles of liquor were auctioned off late Sunday night. The reunion committee negotiated a rate of \$57.00 a day plus tax. To get the reservations, you had to ask for the "Association" rate. The address is: 6101 Shelby Oaks Dr. , Memphis TN 38134. TEL: 1-900-388-7050. email mhism1@lodgian.com. Holiday Inn toll free number 1-800-465-4329.

There was a golf tourney Saturday morning at the Navy Base. Saturday evening dinner was at the Coors Bell Hospitality Center at the Coors Brewery. The meal was catered by Corky's of Memphis, renowned for their BBQ. That was \$27.00 a person. There were 400 plus in attendance, that included members, spouses, family and guest.

Sunday featured a picnic at the Navy Lake on the Navy Base. It was all American with hamburgers, hot dogs, brats, chili and condiments. Soft drinks, draft beer and wine. All for the price of \$10.00 a person.

I do not know what it cost for the Coors Bell. It was as if you were inside an old paddle wheeler with painting depicting the water front of Memphis in the days of that era. On the other side were the bath rooms and large plate glass windows from which one could see inside the brewery.

Arrangements had been made with Yellow Cab Company for a bus to transport people from the hotel to the brewery for \$5.00 a person, round trip. The bus made three (3) trips. Robert Alexander Photography, P.O. Box 98244, Jackson MS 39298 TEL: 1-601-825-2442. They took group photos (8"x12") of the individuals of different eras. Along the top of the photos were small photos of the different aircraft the squadron flew. On the bottom of the photograph, on the left was the squadron emblem and on the right was the Department of the Navy emblem. Between the emblems are the (ie, VA-12) Association, Memphis Reunion (date). There were also photos of the wives in the same format.

During our free time we went to Graceland, Elvis Presley's home. \$18.50 a person for a tour of the house and grounds. The upstairs is closed to the public. Across the street you can tour his airplanes for another fee.

You can get to the Peabody Hotel, downtown, and in the morning see the ducks come out of the elevator and walk down the red carpet to the fountain in the lobby. And in the evening see the opposite. And there are many other sights to see. There are hook ups for RV's at the Navy Base. For anyone who was ever at the base when it was NATTC, they will find a big change has taken place. The Air Station is now Millington International Airport. The only remaining buildings on the airfield are one original hanger and the original control tower.

There was a bar and a restaurant in the Hotel and Cracker Barrel was located across the grass, up the street. Hope to see everyone again in a couple of years, either in Memphis or where ever it may be.

Charles Drescher (78-79)



The Annibales and The Giaccone's relaxing at the 2004 Reunion, compliments of Norm Cooper (72-76)

Joe Kyle
10421 Barbara
Pinckney, MI 48169
Home Phone 734-878-0556
Work Phone 517-546-1010
Cell Phone 810-923-4426