



Atkron 12 Newsletter



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Ubangi

2008 Reunion

Enclosed with this newsletter is the 2008 VA12 Reunion Site Ballot. Please read the information about each proposed location before marking your ballot. I would like these back by mid February 2007. The instructions for voting are on the ballots. I believe we have some pretty great proposals and it will be difficult, for me at least, to decide which gets my first place vote. The last time we voted, Pensacola won by a narrow margin over Memphis. It turned out to be a great site and we had a very nice turn out. Unfortunately 17 people that selected that site did not show up for the reunion. If you are pretty sure that you will not come, please do not vote. If you are pretty sure that you will not attend if it is held at a particular location then make that choice N/A. I would like the most attendees as possible but it is not fair to stuff the ballot box with false ballots. I hope everyone sees my point. I realize Florida has problems with voting so I'm trying to make it as easy as possible..... Just kidding.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2 Toilet Bomb
- 3 Association Dues/Colors
- 4 Memorial
- 6 2008 Reunion Locations
- 7 Twas The Season

Ubetcha

Treasury Report

Please note the Sept. report was in error. This one is correct.

Previous balance	\$839.34
Dues/Donation since last report	\$ 53.94
Sub Total	\$893.28
Stamps	\$ 63.00
Envelopes	\$ 15.89
Printing	\$327.93
Current Expenses	-\$406.82
New Balance	\$486.46

VA12 Association Members

Here is our newest member since the last newsletter.

James Guillaume

62- 64

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY HOLIDAYS.

Here's hoping that you all have a wonderful Holiday season and that 2007 brings peace and happiness to you and your families.
The Newsletter staff.

In case you didn't know, that is John Larch and Joe Kyle, we are alternating editing every other issue. John did the last one and did a great job in my humble opinion.

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USS Midway VA-25's Toilet Bomb

For those too young to remember, during the Viet Nam conflict, carriers were so woefully short of ordinance that missions were often launched with only a half load just to keep the sortie rate up so that the REMF's in DC would not send out blistering messages about failure to support the war effort, etc. Given that the loss rate approached, and sometime exceeded, one aircraft a day, all will understand that there was a degree of reticence to launch with less than a full load -- if I must dance with the elephant at least let's make it worth while. Nevertheless, the indomitable spirit of the carrier aviators, and their squadron-mates, prevailed in some rather perverse ways (see below). I have every hope that today's successors to the mantel left at the Cubi"O" Club bar persevere as well. Kick the tires, light the fires, bolt for the blue and brief on guard -- last one up is lead.

Back in Nam, I know you weren't on the USS MIDWAY in Oct 1965, but thought you'd get a kick out of one squadron's ingenuity.

Yes, this really happened

Once again history is stranger then fiction, and a lot funnier:

USS Midway VA-25's Toilet Bomb.

In October 1965, CDR Clarence J. Stoddard, Executive Officer of VA-25 "Fist of the Fleet", flying an A-1H Skyraider, NE/572 "Paper Tiger II" from Carrier Air Wing Two aboard USS Midway carried a special bomb to the North Vietnamese in commemoration of the 6-millionth pound of ordinance dropped. This bomb was unique because of the type... it was a toilet!

The following is an account of this event, courtesy of Clint Johnson, Captain, USNR Ret. Captain Johnson was one of the two VA-25 A-1 Skyraider pilots credited with shooting down a MiG-17 on June 20, 1965.

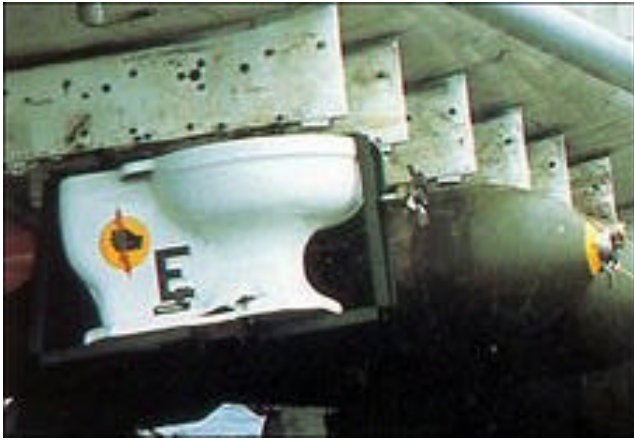
"I was a pilot in VA-25 on the 1965 Vietnam cruise. 572 was flown by CDR C. W. "Bill" Stoddard. His wingman in 577 (which was my assigned airplane) was LCDR Robin Bacon, who had a wing station mounted movie camera (the only one remaining in the fleet from WWII).

The flight was a Dixie Station strike (South Vietnam) going to the Delta. When they arrived in the target area and CDR Stoddard was reading the ordnance list to the FAC, he ended with "and one code name Sani-flush". The FAC couldn't believe it and joined up to see it. It was dropped in a dive with LCDR Bacon flying tight wing position to film the drop. When it came off, it turned hole to the wind and almost struck his airplane. It made a great ready room movie. The FAC said that it whistled all the way down.

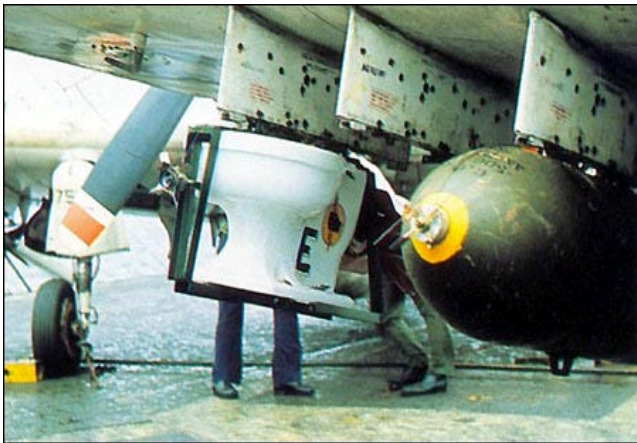
The toilet was a damaged toilet, which was going to be thrown overboard.



One of our plane captains rescued it and the ordnance crew made a rack, tailfins and nose fuse for it. Our checkers maintained a position to block the view of the air boss and the Captain while the aircraft was taxiing forward. Just as it was being shot off we got a 1MC message from the bridge, "What the hell was on 572's right wing?"



There were a lot of jokes with air intelligence about germ warfare. I wish that we had saved the movie film."



Association Dues

Please submit your 2007 dues (\$12.00) as soon as you are able. 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 2007

Dennis Arnold	George Davis
Chuck Dickey	Bob Forton
Jim Guillaume	Eric Harvie
Gerald Hoover	Ted Huzak
Rich Kickline	Tom Lannom
John Larch	Jack Leach
Mick Lumby	John McLane
Thomas J. Micheli	J.D. Rogers
Neal Russo Jr.	Steve Short
Carl Stoffer	Ed Thomas
Jerry Thomas	Jack Yezzi

Also, some have paid part of 2007 dues and still owe some. Here are the names. Email me and I'll let you know what you owe.

Bruce Carawon	Rod Dunlap
Rich Forristall	Bob Fossum
Glen Goddard	Jackie Grant
Gary Hall	Bill Manly
Frank Osborne	Robert Parker
Jerry Schwartz	Frank M. Smith

The rest of you swabbies owe the 12 clams.

Show your Colors

Here are a couple of photos from Bob Fossum, he proudly displays the evidence of his Ubangi Brotherhood on his vehicle.



In Memoriam

Creech Creech Creech, where have you gone Buddy Boy. One of my life's great characters has moved on to that pain free eternity. How easy it was to remember him when I receive this photo (opposite page) from Barbara Creaturo. I was pleased to see that same wild-eyed grin and unmistakable expression. For those of us that were lucky enough to have known him, he will surely be missed. He wouldn't fail to make us smile, just being around him was a daily adventure because you never knew what he'd do next. He was goofy, childlike and almost always in a good mood. There were a number of special people that fostered my interest in creating our Reunion Association; John was certainly high on my list. I would've loved to have seen him one more time in this life, and hopefully I can behave myself enough to see him in the next.

Joe Kyle 66-68

I have a photo of John in Greece with him on the wall. If I remember that shot was taken as he was taking a picture of some thing else and then Mojack or me asked for the camera and he just threw the camera straight up in the air and Mojack and I had to run to catch it. The camera was a new Kodak Retinette or some thing like that. Mojack and I almost shit ourselves when he threw the camera but Mojack caught it. Creature was always doing some crazy thing. I wish Mojack was still around to tell the story of the girls he and Creature met in France. Not hookers but regular girls.

They had a love fest. I believe they actually took leave for awhile to be with them.

Traveled a bit and met the ship at the next port which I believe was Genoa.

Mojack, Creature and I went out one night to a house in Jacksonville. Mojack had met this girl somewhere, he eventually married her, and she had invited Mojack to her home. There was going to be two other girls there, Of course there are always sisters, so Creature and I went along. We got to the

house and there was two other girls there and Mojacks date. The drinking started and the next thing I remember was waking up in the barracks in my rack. I jumped to the floor and decided that that was not a good idea for my head exploded, my eyes hurt and the rest of me was just numb. The hang over was a bad one but the worse was yet to come. I looked at my fingernails and low and behold I had on finger nail polish and after further inspection my toes nails had on the same bright pink. As I headed for the shower the cold cream that was in my navel gave me a certain greased feeling. I showered and headed for muster hiding my fingers as best I could but of course Creature was there to ask why my hands were in my pockets and of course he was doing this in full view of the entire line crew. After everyone had a a good laugh I took out my trusty TL-29 and scraped off the polish. I believe they called me pinky for about a week. That was creature. Any thing for a laugh even at his own or some one else's expense. I just wish we could have seen him one more time.

Ed Thomas 66-69



I remember playing poker with him in the lounge of the compartment on the FDR. It was me, Creature, Workman and there was a

fourth but I can't remember. But, I drew four kings and bet everything I had. Creature gave that shit eatin grin he would do with his hat cocked to the side and laid down four aces. To this day I don't play cards anymore.
Bill Heck 66-69

John as we knew him in 66, the center of the crowd. Compliments of Dennie Arnold



John A. Creaturo, 59
EAST LIVERPOOL — John A. Creaturo, 59, of Pennsylvania Avenue died at 10:20 a.m. Thursday, Aug. 31, 2006, at his residence following a lengthy illness.

Born in East Liverpool, June 28, 1947, son of the late Phillip "Moe" Creaturo and Maria Stockmans Kolb, he was a 1965 graduate of East Liverpool High School. 

A lifelong resident of the area, he was Catholic by faith.

Following graduation, he served with the U.S. Navy in Vietnam from 1965 to 1968 and received a National Defense Service Medal and Ribbon, a Vietnam Service Medal and Ribbon with a Bronze Star and a Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal.

Manager of production control at Hall China Co., he last worked in June 2002 after 37 years of service.

A life member of Veterans of Foreign War Post 66, he also held membership in American Legion Post 374.

A daughter, Kelly Creaturo Hicks and her husband, Jason, of East Liverpool and a son, Craig A. Creaturo and his wife, Rachel, of Butler, Pa., survive along with Barb Creaturo of East Liverpool.

There are two grandchildren, Jackie Creaturo and Ryan Creaturo of Butler.

Three sisters, Mary Golden and her husband, Ed, of East Liverpool, Gloria Nuss and her husband, Jason, of Chesapeake, Va., and Patty Pait and her husband, Andy, of North Carolina, and a stepbrother, Frank Mikeals and his wife, Gwen of Virginia Beach, also survive.

His stepmother, Kathryn Creaturo, of East Liverpool, survives as well as several nieces and nephews.

Friends may call Sunday at the Dawson Funeral Home, where the family will be present from 2-4 and 6-8 p.m.

Fr. George Balasko of St. Ann's Catholic Church will conduct services at 10 a.m. Monday at the funeral home, where the Tri-State Veterans Burial Group will provide military honors.

Burial will be in Columbiana County Memorial Park.

View this obituary and send condolences online at www.dawsonfuneralhome.com.

And as an "Adult" if you can imagine.



2008 Location Considerations

1. At first I could not think of **Connecticut** as a Reunion site – then it hit me – **Mystic!** Just some of the activities/sites in the area include Foxwoods or Mohegan Sun Casinos, Westbrook Mall (shopping), Golfing, Mystic Seaport, Old Mystick Village. Mystic Aquarium, Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, USS Nautilus Museum, and plenty of New England Clam Chowda. Close airports (within a 45 minute run) are Bradley (north of Hartford) and T.F.Green (in RI) or LaGuardia or JFK in NY (both about 2 hours). So far, initial room rates have been \$110 - \$160 per night, estimates for the Banquet would be about \$50 pp and the Friday Night "Clam Bake" (New England for BBQ, most Clam Bakes have chowder/soup, clams, lobster, chicken, steak, corn on the cob, potatoes, etc.) would be about \$40 pp.

With over a year and a half to go, and a lot of you just chomping at the bit to visit New England in the late Spring /early Summer – our VA-12 Reunion could be a great start. Driving less than 4 hours would get you to Boston, MA, LLBean in Freeport, ME, the White Mountains of NH, the Green Mountains of VT, the Berkshires of MA, and Cape Cod, MA. Oh, and only about 45 minutes by car you will find Newport, RI with its' Mansions, Ocean Drive, yachting history, and restaurants galore... Give it a thought – all of New England is awaiting you.

Bob Fossum 67-70

2. Ubangis! Come see for yourself why **Oregon** adopted that motto. Visit the "City of Roses" and stay in downtown **Portland** near all the attractions and excitement of a major city in the Pacific Northwest. Sitting at the confluence of the Willamette and the Columbia rivers, recreation and entertainment opportunities abound around the city and the region. For the outdoors type, we have golf, hiking, sightseeing, and Portland's Forest Park, the largest natural urban forest reserve in the U.S. For the tourist, we have river and

harbor cruises, sightseeing tours up the Columbia River Gorge and Multnomah Falls (2nd highest year-round waterfall in the US).

There's also the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, including the museum display of the USS Blueback, the last non-nuclear fast-attack submarine. City entertainment includes all the usual, including fine dining, movies, and theater. And we aren't going to forget to celebrate the city's role as the nation's mecca for beer microbreweries. November 2006 round trip coach airline fares from distant points range from \$225+ to \$360. And the room rates in downtown hotels range from \$100 to \$200. Depending on which hotel we select, some Ubangis may not even need to rent a car but rather ride the Light Rail line from the Airport into downtown and the Hotel.

John Larch 76-79



Wouldn't you want to be here!!!

3. Where should I begin? **Chicago** unfortunately does not have any military bases or naval sites to see but your visit to Chicago would be unforgettable. There is so much to see and do you will need more than a couple days to see it all.

We have everything!!

Chicago

- The breath taking view from the top of the tallest building in the US. (Our Sears Tower)
- 2 of the BEST zoos in the Country (Brookfield and Lincoln Park)
- Beautiful Shorelines

- Many Many shops down the Magnificent Mile in the heart of Downtown
- Navy Pier
 - Beautiful ships
 - Shoreline Cruises to watch the sunset and many awesome sites
 - Dinner and Dancing Cruises
 - Wonderful Restaurants
 - Shows
 - Expos
- 5 of the Top Museums in the Country
 - Museum of Science and Industry
 - Shedd Aquarium
 - The Field Museum
 - The Art Museum
 - Adler Planetarium
- Wonderful Sports Arenas for our Chicago Bears, Cubs, White Sox , Bulls and Blackhawks
- Arlington International Racecourse
- The Unforgettable Theatre Districts. Here are some of the shows currently running in Chicago. Amazing
 - Wicked
 - The Pirate Queen
- Mamma Mia!AND MANY MORE
- Hotel costs are \$80 per night and up, depending upon how close to downtown we stay.

Jon Sutherland 66-68

‘Twas the Season

With Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years parties, upon us and as we begin to gather with our families, I reflect on the years spent with another family, when we were at sea. The stress of your first holiday away from home. Waiting for a letter or a package from home is still a fresh memory after all these years.

Think about that Christmas at sea, New Years in Alongapo or Thanksgiving in Naples. Who was sitting next to you at chow, helping you clean your plane, or sharing your thoughts about home.

I remember my first Thanksgiving at sea. There were 6 or 8 of us sitting at the picnic tables. The turkey was good. The dressing was OK (not like Moms), the potatoes were instant, the bug juice was yellow (I liked the red stuff better) and the apple pie was cold. But the faces of my other shipmates are still etched in my mind. I can't remember a single word of what was said, but I didn't feel lonely or home sick. Those feelings only surfaced when I went up to the flight deck and peered into that blue green vast expanse where the sky melted into the ocean. Looking at all that nothing gave me an uneasy longing for home. When I went back down to the ready room to watch a movie, comfort settled over me as I sat with extended family and watched the entertainment of the day.

The Christmas I remember most was in Canes, France. I was working in the AIMD electric shop. The shop Chief Depaw knew of an orphanage nearby. He asked for volunteers to help do some painting and cleaning. There were 5 of us who got off the shop at 0800, got in a truck and arrived at the orphanage at about 0900. We started cleaning and painting right away in the main hallway. I saw a group of kids going from a classroom to a chapel to hear mass. The teacher and the children were hurried past us. A nun standing at the Chapel door spoke in a stern voice, and the children stopped skylarking and proceeded into church.

At lunch we spoke to one of the teachers who's English was very good. We found out they needed some help decorating for Christmas. We got the OK to help from the Chief. They only had paper decorations to put on each pillar of the hall, and candles for each windowsill in the hallway and chapel. On the truck ride back to fleet landing, we passed a street stand that sold Christmas trees, wreaths and big red bows. Our conversation quickly began and we asked the Chief if we could get a tree, a couple of wreaths and some bows to put on the candles. The Chief called and got the OK for us to go back the next day. We all gave up

liberty that day and worked in the electric shop till almost midnight to get all the work done so we could go back to the orphanage. The next morning again we started at 0800 stopping to pick up the decorations. It was two days till Christmas. We arrived at the orphanage and some of us finished painting the rest started decorating. The teacher who spoke English brought us tea and coffee and thanked us for the decorations. Then she told us that 11 children lived there and they each got one or two items of clothing for Christmas. After the teacher had gone we all talked about how kids need to get a toy for Christmas. We all agreed to buy two presents and we would deliver them Christmas Eve. We bought a couple of toys and wrapped them in the electric shop, and then the Chief came in and told us that only two guys could go over early to deliver the presents. We picked the two Santa helpers and they went on the delivery. I wished I had gone just to see the faces of the kids as they opened the gifts. When the guys came back we listened as they told us all the details. AE3 Wolf had taken his camera. He knew someone in the photo shop and had the pictures in the electric shop on Christmas morning. Two weeks later at sea Chief Depaw got a large envelope. When he opened it, each of us had gotten thank you letters in crayon. Each letter had a small note attached that translated the letter to English. In my heart it felt like Christmas all over again. I kept that letter in my sea bag at my Mom's house for many years. I remember when my Mom called me one day and said that had water in the basement. When I went down stairs to help clean up I saw my sea bag in the corner saturated with water. I found the letter all soggy and unable to be unfolded, it was destroyed. But regardless of the physical evidence, I still have the memories. Let us reflect on those past memories during this Holiday Season. Let us remember what we once did for our sea mates and country. Let us not forget about our troops that are in harms way.

God bless all service men all over the world and bring them home soon.

Eric Harvie 66-69

A BIT OF HISTORY

Cecil Field was named in honor of Commander Henry Barton Cecil. Shortly before World War II, a 2,600 acre tract of land was purchased in Duval County and construction began on the "U.S. Naval Auxiliary Air Station, Cecil Field." The base got its start in June 1941, and operations were jump-started just 11 days after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. Cecil Field was commissioned as a Naval Auxiliary Air Station (NAAS) in February 1943. VF and VSB units of Advanced Carrier Group, Atlantic arrived at Cecil Field in late 1942 to commence replacement pilot combat training. In March 1943, the fighter training unit moved to nearby Lee Field, in Green Cove Springs, and NAS Cecil Field became the principal war-at-sea and dive-bombing training center for the Navy. From 1943 until the war ended, Cecil Field was a pilot's last stop before assignment to combat in either the Atlantic or Pacific fleet.

It operated at full capacity during the war years and after the war. Disestablished at the end of World War II, it was then re-established and disestablished until finally designated as a Naval Air Station on June 30, 1952. The station was rejuvenated as an operating base for fleet aircraft units which ushered in the "jet age" for the Jacksonville area.

Squadrons from NAS Cecil Field were aboard every Atlantic Fleet aircraft carrier deployed to Southeast Asia during the Vietnam conflict. During this period, 13 Cecil Field pilots were listed as POW or MIA. The POW/MIA memorial located behind the base chapel has become the chosen site for retiring AGs and METOC officers to hold their retirement ceremonies.