

ATKRON 12 NEWSLETTER

VA-12

PUBLISHED BY THE
VA-12 REUNION ASSOCIATION

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A-4C, On Board CVA-42 Franklin D. Roosevelt

VA-12 in 1955



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UBANGI?
UBETCHA!

THE 2012 REUNION:
OCTOBER 4-6, AT THE
SHERATON AIRPORT HOTEL,
CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

2012 VA-12 REUNION NEWS

I'm sure that by now most of you know that our next reunion will be held in Charleston, SC. I hope that you all are looking forward to attending and with any luck we will have some nice fall weather at least for Oct 4-6. Our host will be the Sheraton Charleston Airport Hotel. Our room rates will be \$99.00 per night and you should make your own reservations by calling 1-888-747-1900. Be sure to tell them that you are with the **VA12 Reunion Group**. Also, enclosed with this Newsletter is our Registration form. Please fill it out and mail it back to me with your check as soon as possible. The Hotel requires installment deposits of which I was able to pay the first out of our Treasury. More information regarding the Reunion will appear in our April Newsletter. Lets make this one, our biggest and best so far.

Joe Kyle 66-69

TREASURY REPORT

Previous Balance	\$774.47
Dues/Donations	17.00
SUB TOTAL	\$791.47
Stamps	78.84
Envelopes	21.19
Printing *	155.29
Hotel Deposit	200.00
CURRENT EXPENSES	336.15
Memorial Bell Fund	431.00
NEW BALANCE	-94.85

2012 DUES

Dues will continue to be \$12.00, please submit in January, as you can see we need them. Thanks.

NEW MEMBER

Here is the name of our newest member joining our ranks since the last newsletter.

Michael Haberman	82-84
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TOM GIERHART'S STORY – Part 3

I had fun with a few squadron junior pilots that stated that "they could fly anything". That is until they tried old Tcraft with heel brakes. If you were not on top of the rudder control it would swap ends so fast it would throw the fillings out of your teeth. A humbling experience for a young Naval Aviator flying multimillion dollar aircraft, but all in good fun. Spending so much time at sea while actually on shore duty, I thought I might as well go back to sea. Most rates in aviation had rotating three year shore/sea duty tours. At least I could visit ports other than Alameda and San Diego.

During this time at Lemoore, I married a wonderful woman and adopted three great teenagers for a ready made family and settled down in Hanford, California about 15 miles from the Lemoore air station. My wife readily accepted the fact that I was returning contemplating a return to sea duty, even though I was volunteering a year before my shore duty ended. When you enter the Navy you were not issued a wife, only a sea bag and a set of orders. A wife and family is optional. She later would fly to the Philippines with a group of other squadron wives for a visit during mid cruise.

With a goodly amount of A-4 expertise, and feeling the need for more salt water under my feet, I paid a visit to the Commanding Officer of VA-164 "Ghost Riders", now between cruises at NAS Lemoore. He was happy to bring me on board and hastily arranged for my transfer through BUPERS back to sea duty. The ship was the USS Hancock, CVA-19, and another 27 Charley, but that was OK with me. The A4F's and two TA-4F's we deployed with were newer models with a more powerful Pratt and Whitney J-52P8 engine and with a hump back atop the fuselage for avionics equipment. We deployed to the western pacific shortly thereafter steaming west under the Golden Gate bridge from Alameda, Cal.

Arriving in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, Air Wing 21, with the exception of a few selected personnel, was kicked off the ship and would rejoin the Hancock in the Philippines at a later date. Replacing the air wing was 300 men from Heavy Marine Helicopter Squadron 463. This Marine air group was re-designated as "Marine Air Group (MAG-39)". Their helicopters filled the flight and hanger deck with 16 Marine CH-56 "Sea Stallions", 16 CH-46 "Frogs", 4 AH1J "Snakes", and 2 UH-1 "Huey's". This was in preparation to evacuate Americans, loyal Vietnamese, and others foreign government personnel from the Saigon Embassy. The evacuation code name was designated "Frequent Wind".

En-route to the coast of South Vietnam from Hawaii, the "Hanna" changed course and arrived off the coast of Cambodia on 12 April 1975 where the Marines launched part of their aircraft and evacuated ground security forces from Phnom Penh. While waiting for word on the pending evacuation the Hancock entered anchorage for a little R & R in Singapore but remained on alert for immediate steaming to Saigon when given the green light. Most of the Sailors and Marines were on liberty in Singapore when the orders were given to go. Unbelievably all personnel were recovered back aboard within 4 hours and the Hanna headed for the coast of South Vietnam arriving on 20 April.

Shortly after noon on April 29, orders were given to launch aircraft. The USS Hancock, USS Blue Ridge, and the USS Okinawa were the 3 aircraft carrier participants

in the evacuation. In addition, 50 smaller ships in the area made up a sizable armada. That afternoon the airspace around the Hanna was crowded with helicopters, flown by both American and Vietnamese. The South Vietnamese pilots from ashore began landing on the flight deck. Many were flown by their crew chiefs and most being grossly overloaded with humanity sitting or clinging to the skids. Most of the Vietnamese helicopters were carrying relatives and friends aboard in a last ditch effort to survive the communist takeover. A large number of these evacuees surely would have met certain death or imprisonment had they stayed.

On the horizon smoke from Tan Son Nhut air base could be seen billowing skyward. Unbelievably a 2 seat Piper Cub landed on the flight deck and eight Vietnamese piled out. Good thing they are a small people! With helicopters inbound and rapidly piling up on the flight deck, room had to be made for others still in the air as both Marine and Vietnamese were running low on fuel. The Hanna's Aircraft Maintenance Department quickly stripped the aircraft on deck of what usable parts they could, and then simply pushed them over the side with fork lifts. With more and more helicopters arriving they were quickly sacrificed to Davy Jones Locker. Only three helicopters were spared, one belonging to South Vietnamese president Thieu, and the other two belonged to Air America. Over all the Hanna took on 1,815 Vietnamese, 101 American civilians and 83 third country nationals. Altogether, 45,000 refugees were air-lifted out of Saigon during Operation Frequent Wind.

Unfortunately, a Marine CH-46 helicopter flying plane guard close to the ship crashed into the water and sank immediately. Both crew members escaped and were picked up but two gallant marine pilots were killed. These two officers were the last casualties of the Vietnam War.

At 0830, 30 April 1975 operation "Frequent Wind" ended when a CH-46 came aboard carrying the last of the Marines guarding the roof at the downtown Saigon Embassy. So ended the Vietnam War and the country was now communist. Over 10 years and 58,000 American lives tried to prevent this from happening but failed thanks to a government trying to run combat operations instead of the people trained to do it. What a waste. Jane Fonda must have been very elated at this point in time.

Later in Subic Bay, Philippines Air Wing 21 rejoined the Hancock and we completed the rest of our non-combat cruise. Prior to arriving in Alameda, all squadron aircraft were flown off the ship and went home to NAS Lemoore for the final time. It was the last launch of an operational carrier based A-4 aircraft. At Lemoore, VA-164 Ghostriders disbanded and all aircraft were all flown away to various places. Some went to the Naval

Reserves, some to foreign countries, and some to the bone yard. Farewell to a great squadron, and farewell to a great ship. The USS Hancock, CVA 19 was

ON THE COVER DOUGLAS A-4C SKYHAWK

Developments and upgrades to the Skyhawk continued as the plane entered its early years of service with the US Navy. A series of major enhancements to the A4D-2 was packaged into a new model in January 1962, at first labeled A4D-2N (subsequently renamed A-4C in September 1962). This included an APG-53 Radar, an autopilot system, the LABS Low Altitude Bombing System, an angle of attack indicator system, an all-attitude indicating gyro, and an improved Escapac 1A-1 low-level ejector seat. The windshield was provided with a wiper, and the cockpit layout was revised.

	A4D-1	A4D-2N/A-4C
Engine	(1) Pratt & Whitney J52-P8A Turbojet 7,700 Lb/Ft Thrust	(1) Curtis-Wright J65-W-16A 7,700 Lb/Ft Thrust
Max Weight	24,500 Lbs	24,500 Lbs
Max Speed	673 MPH	657 MPH
Max Altitude	42,500 Ft.	44,000 Ft.
Max Range	2,000 Miles	2,000 Miles
Rate of Climb	8,440 Ft/Min	7,100 Ft/Min

Note: Many later A-4C's were fitted with the Wright J65-W-20 engine of 8,400 Lb/Ft thrust.



VA-12's EARLY HISTORY WITH THE A4: The squadron deployed on CVA-42 FDR in September 1962 for a Med Cruise and again in March 1964. Both cruises were while assigned to Airwing CVW-1.

decommissioned in late January 1976. She was sold for scrapping in August of that year. All good things must come to an end.

Having a Navy job code of 8351 for A-4's, I again headed to shore duty and to another A-4 unit in early 1976. The

“Checker tails” of VC5 (fleet composite squadron) stationed at Cubi Point in the good old Philippines. Many memories were made there. It was vastly different when you are stationed there as opposed to anchoring with the fleet for a few days. Two years of great duty in the PI and there I was advanced to Senior Chief. In addition to maintaining and flying in the TA-4F, I was assigned as Maintenance Chief, Division Chief, and Quality Assurance Officer in that order.

Here I earned my FAA airframe and power plant license through Los Angeles Metro College. Fifty five people started the course and two years later I was the only graduate. An instructor was needed for the jet engine phase of the curriculum for the college so I was elected. With the FAA certificate, I was volunteered as the new Maintenance Officer in the Cubi Point Flying Club. At the flying club, I was the go to person whenever a pilot needed. As a pilot, I flew people everywhere in the Philippines and the best of all is that they paid for the aircraft rental. Frequent trips were made to Manila, Baguio, Clark AFB, and outlying islands. Parachute jumpers made many exits from my Cessna 206. As the local air taxi pilot and a Senior Chief to boot, I could afford to donate the time. The Philippine airlines presented me with a set of wings for transporting many of their passengers to Manila. Paying the flying club for a single engine aircraft saved them money instead of flying a twin for only a few people. Here my second son was born and unfortunately here is where my wife was diagnosed with cancer.

My twilight tour was Aircraft Maintenance Chief at NAS Point Mugu, California. Our aircraft provided the launch platform for the Tomahawk and Cruise missile test program. My responsibility was maintaining A-4's, F-14's, 2 FJ's Fury's (Navy F86's), A-6's, and several old A3 Sky Warrior's. Here I used the GI Bill to finish my commercial flight training. I received my Instrument, Multi engine, and Glider certificates. I applied for Warrant Officer and would have stayed for another tour if selected but no dice. Other Chief's with degree's were selected that probably worked out better in the end. With my Navy career ending, I was anxious to get started on the outside. Man, what a great time I had and it was all coming to a close after 22 years. After all, I was at the ripe old age of thirty eight.

I was piped over the side in March 1979 and proudly walked the line flanked by my fellow chiefs rendering hand salutes as I was “piped over”. At least it was not at the end of a sword walking the plank. One of the more valuable lessons learned in the Navy was that if a man takes care of his integrity, then his reputation will take care of itself. I have lived by this code and instilled it in all of my children.

Civilian Life

As a rookie civilian I moved to Montague California, a town close to the Oregon border and immediately went to work for Montague Aviation as Director of Maintenance and pilot. Here I upgraded to a commercial glider rating and started soaring the Siskiyou mountains with paying passengers. As a contract pilot with the Forrest Service, I flew Fire Patrols daily over the Siskiyou mountains during fire seasons. This was mixed with charters, air ambulance, gliders tows, glider rides, and aircraft repairs. Everything I fixed or serviced I flew totaling around 40 different models and multiple types of sailplanes.

My three oldest children were now grown and on their own. My youngest son was five years old. At this time we found that my wife's cancer was terminal. We were all devastated and lost her on Christmas day 1979. My oldest son became a Naval Aviator after two years enlisted and this made my heart soar like a hawk. He flew the last piston powered aircraft in the military during his flight training. My oldest daughter served in the Navy as an aviation storekeeper for two enlistments.

In the Spring of 1984, my young son and I moved to Hemet, Ca., with a small motor home and a Yamaha 650. My intent there was to fly Fire Attack aircraft starting as a rookie co-pilot in the right seat of either a C-119 boxcar or the Navy S-2 with fire retardant tanks built in. Duty times flying Fire Attack would make it impossible to raise a young son. No problem, I simply went across the runway to Sailplane Enterprises and was hired as the new Maintenance Manager and pilot. This was a great job complete with flying aircraft parts and people over much of S. Cal. and Arizona. At a moments notice I would grab a tool box and my son and toss them into a Cessna 182. We would then head where ever a company aircraft needed fixing. Our home was next to the hanger in our motor home.

In addition to flying in support of company maintenance, I towed gliders and give glider rides six days a week . Thirty glider tows was my all time high for one single day. We ate free steaks donated from their BBQ grills of the wonderful glider community people at the airport. We were having a great time but this was no life for an eight year old. He did not mind at all being jerked out of class at any given time to trek all over the country side with me but that would soon change.

Here I met my wonderful new wife. She was a single foster parent with custody of two young boys. One from Guatemala and the other from Korea. We adopted them together and she in turn adopted my son. That made me the fairly rapid father of six. On the USS Hancock flight deck one day during a launch, PriFly called me on my

headset to report to the bridge. On the way I was sweating it fearing bad news about my family. The Air Boss handed me a telegram and said "congratulations, you are the father of a 200 pound bouncing baby boy". This was in reference to my oldest son's adoption papers becoming final.

In the early 1988 we moved to Blanding, UT where I was Director Of Maintenance again and pilot. My maintenance crew and I maintained 10 company aircraft, both single engine and twins. I flew mail two times daily to Moab, UT stopping in several small towns on the way to collect cargo and passengers. In addition, we also flew cargo drops in the Canyon Lands National Park, and scenic flights over Monument Valley, Arches, and Grand Canyon. Flight hours now went over 4,000.

In early 1989 while in Salt Lake City, I interviewed with the FAA and was hired shortly thereafter as an Aviation Safety Inspector. A choice had to be made for either flight operations or maintenance inspector, I chose the latter.

When my family had settled into their new Salt Lake City home I was off for the FAA Academy for three months training. Returning, I was assigned to General Aviation for several years and later became Geographic Programs Manager. Fifteen years were spent inspecting major air carriers, charter companies, and air cargo operators. Jump seats were my home away from home as a mode of travel and performing in-flight inspections. Untold hours were spent like this on more airlines than I can remember making pilots nervous, but usually ended up with great "sea stories" exchanged between us by the end of the flight. A book can be written with these stories alone.

While in the FAA I investigated over 100 general aircraft accidents and many more incidents. Many were joint investigations with the NTSB but most were small general aviation aircraft accidents. One of my more memorable investigations in the FAA was a joint endeavor with the Air Force of an A-4N (Singapore) fatal crashed in the Great Salt Lake. These aircraft are flown by a civilian squadron called ATSI (Advanced Training Systems International) based in Mesa, AZ that act as aggressors aircraft against US and Canadian military. Mostly they were flown by ex Blue Angel and retired pilots with thousands of hours of A-4 experience. This investigation involved under water search and recovery operations and was probably one of the more interesting and challenging investigations I performed.

In December 2006 I retired from the FAA as a GS-14. Presently I am a DAR (Designated Airworthiness Representative) or a Designee for the FAA. I certify aircraft in all categories all over the US. I have made

three trips to Afghanistan working as an Army contractor certifying aircraft into the Research & Development category to find IED's. Ironically, an IED killed my grandson in August of 2006 while on patrol in Anbar Province, Iraq.

Well, there you have it, I have shared many memories from 1970 reaching to present. When I hear an airplane fly overhead I have to look up. I have been cursed, or maybe it is blessed, but I cannot help myself. Observing people around me, if they look up also, I know in my heart they are of my kind.

Keep Looking up and God Bless.
Tom Gierhart 69-70



DOPE DEALS IN 1977 On-board CVA-62 Independence

At the end of the 1976 Med Cruise, someone in the squadron determined that I ought to go work at the AIMD level on the "AQ" gear. Some will errantly assume that the AQ Weapons shop wanted to ship my dumb ass off somewhere else, but I prefer to think that they wanted to show off my brilliant analytical mind to a new working environment. So once we got back to Cecil Field, except for about 2 weeks of time scattered here and there I spent almost every day of the after-cruise time going to schools of one sort or another, all there on the base at Cecil.

Once the 1977 Med Cruise began, I was fully schooled and ready to give AIMD maintenance a go. By then I was full of book knowledge and hands-on training but I had gotten very little actual on-the-job experience. I was enthusiastic and ready to rock-and-roll. I was looking forward with great anticipation to having a job I thought was going to be a lot of fun. Imagine that, in the Navy!

VA-12 and the CVW-7 airwing joined up with CV-62 Independence in early 1977 for work-ups and very early

on I was assigned to work in AIMD Shop 3 where all the AQ gear from the A-7E Corsair was sent for repair. Indy's AIMD had several of their own assigned berthing spaces, they wanted all personnel working for them in AIMD to find a rack in AIMD-controlled berthing spaces, even including all the TAD personnel from the squadrons – like me. So I found out pretty quick that I was supposed to move into a rack in AIMD Shop 3 berthing. This was fine by me. Except that, there were no open racks in AIMD Shop 3 berthing. So I was given a rack someone found in the AIMD Shop 2 spaces. I spent around 3 months of the cruise with that rack as my little home-away-from-home.

There came a day when I was at work in Shop 3 and the phone rang. It was someone from AIMD command, calling the Shop 3 supervisor, and the point of it was that a rack was now available in Shop 3 berthing. I was herewith directed to move from my rack in Shop 2 berthing, to this empty rack in Shop 3 berthing.

Well this was a pretty sorry thing in my book, I had a nice rack over in Shop 2 berthing. A middle rack, not too cramped, and a working air vent that sometimes blew cool air to boot! If I could keep things straight, they ought to be able to do the same, it was no big deal to me that I might be bunking in the wrong berthing spaces. Why should they care about me?

This was all a lot of useless complaining. I was directed to move anyway. The Shop 3 supervisor cut me loose to do just exactly that. So I went to find this new rack, check it out, and clean it up if it needed that, before I moved my own seabag in. I found it, a bottom rack (Rats!), and sort of dusty and dirty (no big surprise...) with no ventilation duct (Double Drat!). And inside the rack was a collection of underwear, bags, socks, towels, plastic boxes, and "stuff". It was miserable and I was completely bummed out. I was disgusted by then and crammed everything loose in there into one of the bags I found. I knew the Compartment Petty Officer (AE2 Brady L, from VA-12, no less) and I found him in his tiny little office space. I dropped the bag of stuff off, caught his attention and told him what it was, and proceeded to physically move into the new rack. This might have taken me about an hour and after that I went back to work.

About 2 hours later, the Shop 3 supervisor got a phone call, Airman Larch is ordered to report to Shop 3 Berthing Office, ***ON THE DOUBLE!*** So I did. Without knowing why. What the hell's the big deal? I found the little Berthing Office compartment but it was now stuffed to the gills with about 8 men, mostly officers, and maybe 10 more people milling around nearby. They couldn't all cram into the small office space. I reported myself as ordered and someone asked me if I had left a bag at the office. I repeated my story about having to move into a new rack and this bag of stuff is

what I found in the rack before I moved my own gear in. Someone standing at the small desk asked me if I could explain this: he used a pencil and lifted the lid of a plastic "tackle box" and showed off 6 or 7 bags of what I took to be pot. Marijuana. Weed. Mary-Jane. Highly illegal in that day!

I had no explanation. I believe that I was able to convince them of my complete ignorance and lack of knowledge about the pot they found. What I did was I looked stupid for a while and they bought it. Didn't actually have to put on an "act".

I had to show them all where the rack was. Which I did. Even though it was now my rack, with my own gear stowed away inside, they had me unlock it and they rifled through MY gear, ending up with all of MY gear strewn about and flung all over everywhere when they were done. I resented having my own gear ransacked like this but I was hoping they were really looking at the rack itself and the surroundings, not necessarily the gear I had moved in only hours before. I was granted leave to restow my gear, which I did after re-folding it all. After a couple hours I was allowed to go back to work at Shop 3.

I found out from AE2 Brady L later that the underwear and towels were all stenciled as per normal Navy regs and the Masters-At-Arms got a name off the stenciled items. But he wouldn't tell me who it was. Nobody else would, either. I never thought to look at the time. I had been so mad when forced to move into that rack I wasn't thinking with total cognition.

About 2 weeks later I was directed to report for an XO's Mast, in Dress Blues. I was directed to recount my story and did so. I still didn't know who the Pot belonged to. Oddly enough, I had never met the sailor living in the middle rack right above me, or found anyone associated with it. I never made the mental leap at that time.

Some time after that, maybe another 3 weeks, I had to appear at a Captain's Mast and at that point I met the sailor who belonged to the stenciled items I had found. It was the guy in the rack above me. He was being charged with "Possession with intent to Distribute" or the Navy/UCMJ equivalent. I once again recounted my side of the tale. This sailor was asked how he would plead to the charge, and to my shock he quietly pleaded guilty.

The Mast was over quickly after that and I lost track of the entire episode. In that day and under the UCMJ, he was in line to spend quite a stretch of time in prison.

This guy might have gotten off scott-free without ever being charged...

...If he had been smarter about hiding his stash of pot somewhere else (I would have never looked for or found it).

...If I had just investigated on my own and read the stenciled name on the towels and underwear. (I would probably have given the whole kit back to him, without even looking into it any further. I still would have never found the pot.)

...If I had ever found it and paused to think about it, I could have hung onto the stuff and given it to him later when I could have read him the riot act. (But on some level, that was equivalent to allowing him to continue on his pot-dealing ways and I would have become a conspirator.)

John Larch 76-79



MEMORIES OF 1970

VA-12 1970 Vietnam Cruise, USS-Shangri-La, CVS-38

We left Mayport on 5 March 1970, headed for a port visit in Rio, then past South Africa across the IO to Cubi Pt. NAS. During our first line period in April, while I was trying my best to ruin Charlie's day with my MK-82 500 lb. bombs, on the other side of the planet, a Navy car pulls up near my wife's front door at Londontowne Apts. In Jacksonville, and she's lookin' out the window and seeing this, and a commander exits the driver's side and a Chaplain exits the passenger side (this is about a month after I was in-theater) and she totally loses it and breaks down.....turns out the poor lady upstairs was the recipient of the bad news.....her husband, a squadron air intelligence officer on another 27-Charlie**, apparently went overboard while sleeping in a net off the flight deck (like a lotta guys did, because WWII carriers were not known for their excellent air conditioning, and because his stateroom on the O-2 level between the cats was averaging 90 degrees). He was never found. The experience shook Mama so much that she moved all our stuff into storage, and then packed up our two boys in diapers and drove to Pensacola and rented a furnished apartment not 100 yards from Papa and Nana's house. I remember being pissed about the storage cost of our unused furniture sitting there in Jax, but she somehow

pulled it off. She moved back to Jax in November. During that cruise, they had a 10% interest savings plan, which I jumped on to the tune of \$100 per mo. Smokes in the ship's store cost \$1.25 per carton.

One thing that really bugged me about being on the other side of the planet from the real world during those NINE long months: the time it took to FREAKIN' COMMUNICATE with the family back home. Long distance phone calls were way too expensive. If one of us had a question for the other, it took about TEN DAYS for the letter to arrive by snail mail. Then another ten days for the Response to the questions to be received back. Assuming the response was sent out the day after the questions was received, that's THREE WEEKS! Remember? I wonder if today's sailors appreciate the internet that allows almost instant comms with the folks back home every single day of the cruise. I remember buying our Noritake fine china and silver place settings at the China Fleet Club in Hong Kong, and walking over Shit River to Olongapos to buy monkey pod square wooden plates. Not to mention many evenings at the East End Club and the Willows...

I remember the equator crossing pollywog – shellback thing.....I still have my shellback card.....which will end up with Capt. Bob Brooks, USN, my oldest son, when I'm gone. I remember during on port visit to Cubi, we had a squadron BBQ and beer bust on Grande Island, a short boat ride from the base, in the summer of 1970. The O's vs the E's in volleyball, football.....no recollection of who won, but it was a good time. I used to go up to Clark AFB during those almost-monthly visits to Cubi... Clark was a huge base, and it was like being in the US of A. While Cubi only had a couple dozen nurses and school teachers, Clark had more than a hundred. I remember the CAG (Carrier Airgroup Commander, basically the boss of the seven squadron CO's) was an F-8 pilot, but he would only fly in the daytime. About halfway through the cruise, Capt Poorman (Ship CO) told him his avoidance of night flights had not gone unnoticed by the entire cadre of airwing pilots, and it had a detrimental effect on morale. Basically, he told CAG to try a night flight. On the very first flight, he hit the ramp, punched out, and was recovered by the SAR helo. This was just three days after he pinned on his O-6 eagles. He left the ship a week later and we got a new CAG the week after that.

For us, there were only two places on this planet, one being SE Asia, and the other being what we called "the world". We didn't have CNN or Fox News. Hell, we didn't even get Stars and Stripes. In the years after that cruise, I vividly recall the times I first learned about things that were happening in 1970 back in "the world". One night in May 1975, watching the evening news at home in Orange Park, they did a segment on the 5-year

anniversary of the Kent State student riots and subsequent killings. I turned to my bride and said "Are you shitting me??? You mean to tell me National Guard soldiers shot and killed American students on their campus??? I can't believe that! How did I miss that??" I don't know about you guys, but I never knew about Apollo 13 until the Tom Hanks movie came out. I said to myself, "Why didn't I remember something that scary? Oh, I know, it must have happened in 1970." Sure enough, it did. Kinda made me want to go to a library microfiche file and check out all the front pages of the New York Times from March – December to see what else I missed, but I never did.

**27-Charlie was the designation for the modification of several WWII Essex-class straight-deck carriers to convert them to angled deck ships. This took place just after the Korean War in the mid-50's and included such ships as Shang, Bon Homme Richard, Intrepid, Lexington, Oriskany, etc.

Bob Brooks 68-71

D'OH!



Does anyone know the story behind this picture?

UBANGIS ON LIBERTY

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VA-12 Plane Captains on Liberty during Christmas in Israel. Standing L-to-R, John Miller, Bradshaw, D.J. Janus, M.L. Hansen. Kneeling is C.G. Norton.

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