



# Atkron 12 Newsletter



Volume III, Issue 3

Sept 2004

## Ubangi

### Newsletter

I'd truly like to keep this newsletter going for as long as possible, however I need you readers to become writers. We currently have about 83 paid subscribers. Of that number, only 23 have submitted items for print. Which leaves 60 sailors with nothing to say? I don't think so.....

I've nagged about this before, and I'll say it again. The success of this tome rest upon the contributions of it's members. We appreciate your financial support but that's only half the job. You don't have to be brilliant, you just have to grind out a few lines from your memories. Or if that's too hard, tell us what's going on in your neck of the woods these days. Hell, you can even make something up if you want, I'm sure it wouldn't be any more fictitious than what you think happened all those years ago. Thanks again to all of you that have sent things for us to enjoy.

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## Ubetcha

### One of our own Honored

Thought you all might like to know that one of our VA12 brothers was honored this year.

It's been an amazing three years. I've received four awards from three different Veteran Organizations. All I've done is my job, to the best of my ability. The recognition is very humbling.

In 2002 the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) honored me as the Outstanding Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist of the Year; in 2003 the VFW presented me with their James C. Gates award for distinguished service to the Veterans of Arkansas; this year the DAV presented me with the Disabled Veteran of the Year and the American Legion will present me with their Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) of the Year award.

All of this is really great, but it's a shame that every DVOP and LVER is not honored. They all deserve the awards and recognition, much more than me. I'm the Veterans' Program Manager and I work in the Central Office pushing paperwork and they work in the Local Offices throughout the state providing the direct services to our Veterans. I've worked in the field and that is where I really made a difference in helping the Veterans of this

State. All I can do here is make sure that the DVOPs and LVERs have the most current information available to them to give to their Veterans. It's getting more and more difficult to provide those services with all the cuts in federal funding.

Veterans Serving Veterans

Steve Short (75-78)

## Sea Stories

### Fond Memories

It has been 33 years since I wore the uniform of an enlisted man in the United States Navy. When I was first contacted by Bob Fossum I felt as if my mind and body were taking me back to my youth. After I hung up the phone I went into my basement to dig out my old cruise books. As I page through them my mind wandered back to the time I spent in VA-12. Here were a bunch of people from all walks of life that I did not know. As an 18 year old barely out of high school I really felt intimidated. My first night in the barracks was something else. I was awakened by a guy named Ron Witt asking me who the heck was I...Not exactly in those words if you guys remember Ron. It was not long after that when we left for the Med aboard the FDR or the Rosie boat as some of us called her. I was lucky enough to get a job in the ready room logging in the flight times of the pilots. That's where I met Paul Kennedy. Paul was one of a kind. He was constantly smiling and rarely had a harsh word for anybody. I eventually ended up in the Maintenance office working with Ron Witt. This is where I changed my designation from AT to AZ. The next cruise to the Med in 1969 was aboard

the USS Shangra-La or the Shitty Shang as she was called by some of us. We had lost some familiar faces due to discharges but we also had many new people. This time around was better for me. When we hit liberty ports I was more familiar with the ports. The long days spent working at sea seemed to go on forever but when we hit the liberty ports we definitely took advantage of it. The Maint. Office had some new faces, Vintron Fry was the night shift AZ and if my mind serves me right Claude "Gator" Craig was also there. My last cruise was the 1970 around the world and Westpac cruise. This was also aboard the Shangra-La. We got our shellback cards for crossing the equator. We also received Blue nose cards for being in the area of Antarctica. More people were discharged and more new faces arrived. Now there was J.B. McLain, Chuck Harris and also Claude Craig in the Maint. Office. The ports we stopped at were great. This was the best cruise ever as far as liberty ports went. Even tough we did not spend a lot of time in each port it still is something a person sees only once in a lifetime. The memories of our visits to these ports will stay with us forever. Halfway through the cruise I was called to the personnel office. They told me that orders had come in for me. Well my joy was short lived when I was told I was being transferred next door to VA-172. This is where I finished my tour with the Navy. I wish there was time to really look back on everything that went on during my four year hitch in the Navy. I could probably write a book about it. Now I am just looking forward

to the next VA-12 reunion in hopes of seeing many of you again.

Here are some of the names of guys I remember from my tour. I know there are a lot more but for now just a few; Paul Kennedy, Bob Kaplan, Bill Heck, Dave Dashineau, Craig Berwig, J.B. McClain, Doug Popoloski (Doug was my neighbor when we were in Jacksonville) Frank Giaccone, Bob Fossum, John Ballus, and the list goes on and on. Hope to see a lot of you soon.

Rich Kichline 67-71

## **Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Sentinels of the "Old Guard"**

1. How many steps does the guard take during his walk across the tomb of the Unknowns and why?

21 steps. It alludes to the twenty-one gun salute, which is the highest honor given any military or foreign dignitary.

2. How long does he hesitate after his about face to begin his return walk and why?

21 seconds, for the same reason as answer number 1.

3. Why are his gloves wet?

His gloves are moistened to prevent his losing his grip on the rifle.

4. Does he carry his rifle on the same shoulder all the time, and if not, why not?

No, he carries the rifle on the shoulder away from the tomb. After his march across the path, he executes an about face and moves the rifle to the outside shoulder.

5. How often are the guards changed?

Guards are changed every thirty minutes, twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year.

6. What are the physical traits of the guard limited to? For a person to apply for guard duty at the tomb, he must be between 5' 10" and 6' 2" tall and his waist size cannot exceed 30". Other requirements of the

Guard: They must commit 2 years of life to guard the tomb, live in a barracks under the tomb, After TWO YEARS, the guard is given a wreath pin that is worn on their lapel signifying they served as guard of the tomb. There are only 400 presently worn. The shoes are specially made with very thick soles to keep the heat and cold from their feet. There are metal heel plates that extend to the top of the shoe in order to make the loud click as they come to a halt. There are no wrinkles, folds or lint on the uniform. Guards dress for duty in front of a full-length mirror.

A guard must memorize who they are and where they are interred. Among the notables are: President Taft, Joe E. Lewis {the boxer} and Medal of Honor recipient Audie Murphy, {the most decorated soldier of WWII, and one of Joe Kyle's distant cousins} of Hollywood fame.

The Sentinels Creed:

My dedication to this sacred duty is total and wholehearted. In the responsibility bestowed on me never will I falter. And with dignity and perseverance my standard will remain perfection. Through the years of diligence and praise and the discomfort of the elements, I will walk my tour in humble reverence to the best of my ability. It is he who commands the respect I protect. His bravery that made us so proud. Surrounded by well meaning crowds by day alone in the thoughtful peace of night, this soldier will in honored glory rest under my eternal vigilance. More Interesting facts about the Tomb of the Unknowns itself:

The marble for the Tomb of the Unknowns was furnished by the Vermont Marble Company of Danby, Vt. The marble is the finest and whitest of American marble, quarried from the Yule Marble Quarry located near Marble, Colorado and is called Yule Marble. The Marble for the Lincoln memorial and other famous buildings was also quarried there.

The Tomb consists of seven pieces of rectangular marble:

Four pieces in sub base; weight Â- 15 tons;

One piece in base or plinth; weight - 16 tons  
One piece in die; weight - 36 tons;  
One piece in cap; weight - 12 tons;  
Carved on the East side (the front of the Tomb, which faces Washington, D.C.) is a composite of three figures, commemorative of the spirit of the Allies of World War I. In the center of the panel stands Victory (female). On the right side, a male figure symbolizes Valor. On the left side stands Peace, with her palm branch to reward the devotion and sacrifice that went with courage to make the cause of righteousness triumphant.

The north and south sides are divided into three panels by Doric pilasters. In each panel is an inverted wreath.

On the west, or rear, panel (facing the Amphitheater) is inscribed:

HERE RESTS IN HONORED GLORY AN  
AMERICAN SOLDIER KNOWN BUT TO  
GOD

The first Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was a sub base and a base or plinth. It was slightly smaller than the present base. This was torn away when the present Tomb was started Aug. 27, 1931. The Tomb was completed and the area opened to the public 9:15 a.m. April 9, 1932, without any ceremony.

Cost of the Tomb: \$48,000

Sculptor: Thomas Hudson Jones

Architect: Lorimer Rich Contractors:  
Hagerman & Harris, New York City

Inscription: Author Unknown  
(Interesting Commentary)

The Third Infantry Regiment at Fort Myer has the responsibility for providing ceremonial units and honor guards for state occasions, White House social functions, public celebrations and interments at Arlington National Cemetery and standing a very formal sentry watch at the Tomb of the Unknowns.

The public is familiar with the precision of what is called "walking post" at the Tomb. There are roped off galleries where visitors can form to observe the troopers and their measured step and almost mechanically, silent rifle shoulder changes. They are

relieved every hour in a very formal drill that has to be seen to be believed. Some people think that when the Cemetery is closed to the public in the evening that this show stops. First, to the men who are dedicated to this work, it is no show. It is a "charge of honor." The formality and precision continues uninterrupted all night. During the nighttime, the drill of relief and the measured step of the on-duty sentry remain unchanged from the daylight hours. To these men, these special men, the continuity of this post is the key to the honor and respect shown to these honored dead, symbolic of all unaccounted for American combat dead. The steady rhythmic step in rain, sleet, snow, hail, heat and cold must be uninterrupted.

Uninterrupted is the important part of the honor shown. Recently, while you were sleeping, the teeth of hurricane Isabel came through this area and tore hell out of everything. We had thousands of trees down, power outages, traffic signals out, roads filled with downed limbs and "gear adrift" debris. We had flooding and the place looked like it had been the impact area of an off-shore bombardment. The Regimental Commander of the U.S. Third Infantry sent word to the nighttime Sentry Detail to secure the post and seek shelter from the high winds, to ensure their personal safety.

**THEY DISOBEYED THE ORDER!**

During winds that turned over vehicles and turned debris into projectiles, the measured step continued. One fellow said "I've got buddies getting shot at in Iraq who would kick my butt if word got to them that we let them down. I sure as hell have no intention of spending my Army career being known as the damned idiot who couldn't stand a little light breeze and shirked his duty." Then he said something in response to a female reporters question regarding silly purposeless personal risk... "I wouldn't expect you to understand. It's an enlisted man's thing." God bless the rascal... In a time in our nation's history when spin and total b.s. seem to have become the accepted coin-of-the-realm, there beat hearts - the enlisted hearts we all knew and were so damn proud to be

a part of - that fully understand that devotion to duty is not a part-time occupation. While we slept, we were represented by some damn fine men who fully understood their post orders and proudly went about their assigned responsibilities unseen, unrecognized and in the finest tradition of the American Enlisted Man. Folks, there's hope. The spirit that George S. Patton, Arliegh Burke and Jimmy Doolittle left us ... survives. On the ABC evening news, it was reported recently that, because of the dangers from Hurricane Isabel approaching Washington, DC, the military members assigned the duty of guarding the Tomb of the unknown Soldier were given permission to suspend the assignment. They refused. "No way, Sir!" Soaked to the skin, marching in the pelting rain of a tropical storm, they said that guarding the Tomb was not just an assignment; it was the highest honor that can be afforded to a service person. The tomb has been patrolled continuously, 24/7, since 1930.

## **The Word From The West**

(Continued from Vol.III, Issue 2)

### **Month 5:**

Well, this was to be the month to GO BUST.

Highlights:

**Friday, 20:30:** My big plan is in place, and only requires a few more prat-falls to be complete!

**Saturday, 07:30:** After muster at 07:00, I was in the first company to march over to a warehouse where we got our Cracker-Jack uniform issue (minus the neckerchief).

On the way back to the barracks to stow our new gear, most of us realized we had got no collective idea about how to fold, stow, clean, wear, mark, or label any bit of it. None.

Additionally, we knew we couldn't actually wear it anyway because nobody had any neckerchiefs and we'd be "out of uniform".

And what were we going to do with a neckerchief even if we had them, no one knew how to tie one anyway.

**Saturday, 09:30:** Reported to AIMD Shop 2, found the leading chief, and explained my absence in the morning, due to the uniform

issue. We jointly noted that I was not yet completely "checked-in" and would depart to continue that duty after chow at 12:00.

**Saturday, 10:00, PINBALL WIZARD IN A MIRACLE CURE!!!** An AT1 in the shop walked me around and showed me the test bench that I would start working on. A Marine working there grunted a few times. The AT1 asked the jar-head if there was any gear to work on, who mumbled something about the unit hooked up right then being the shop pig, it was failing but in 2 months, no one had ever figured out why.

The AT1 left and the Marine showed me how to run, and re-run, a simple test at the test bench that exposed the failure. We made a few test runs together and the unit failed each time. I took the front cover off and noticed a small bay filled with slide-in circuit boards. One of the boards showed off a lot of "handling" as though it had been taken out and put back in repeatedly. I asked the Marine about this and he said that the first suspect of the failure we were seeing was that circuit board. But replacing it or re-inserting it had never helped.

I took off the back cover and poked around with the Mark 1 Mod 0 NakedEye and a micro-screwdriver.

I ran a test **and it passed!** All I had done was take the back cover off. I took the board out and put it back in again, and noticed that when secured in place with 2 small captive screws, a little hemorrhoid of wires at the rear of this board was forced out of place.

I ran another test after re-seating the board, with the back cover still off. Passed. This is starting to get the attention of even this jaded Marine corporal.

I put the back cover back on, and the test failed. With the back cover off again, I tried to observe how closely the cover might compress anything underneath.

And this was the answer to the puzzle, because it became apparent that when circuit board 4 was secured in place, a small cluster of 3 wires was pushed out of position. By itself, this was meaningless and the unit would pass tests. But subsequently, when the back cover was attached and screwed down,

one of the 3 wires was squeezed so hard that it shorted out against the metal cover, resulting in a fail.

**SOLUTION:** Someone would have to replace the entire plug holding those 3 wires.

This little drill happened over a period of about 45 minutes, and by then it was lunch-time. This was just the effect of a fresh eye on the game, is all that it was. I was sort of relieved to have solved a little puzzle but no one else seemed to notice, or care, the grunt Marined a few times - I'm sorry, the Marine grunted a few times - and I took my pile of check-in sheets and materials and went to chow.

**Saturday PM:** I got 2 more scores on the Check-In Sheet! 5 of 7 now completed.

**Sunday AM:** I got number 6.

**Sunday, 13:00:** After 5 months of waiting in lines to deal with offices around the base, I got the 7<sup>th</sup> sign-in at 13:30. Finished! Complete! No neckerchiefs available so I can't wear the new cracker-jacks, as much as I'd like to. I never had the time to visit the Navy Exchange to go buy one, or some, because I was always waiting in line at some base office...

And my little plot was about to hatch.

**Sunday, 15:30:** I found the Leading Chief back at the Reserve Unit office and told him that I had just completed the Check-In process. Well, he was a bit taken aback by looking the sheet over. I mentioned that if it was all the same to him, I'd like to make a comment or two. The Chief was a little upset that it seemed to have taken so long to check in and we went into another office where an officer that I believe may have been the XO as sitting. I was asked to explain why it had taken 5 months to check in.

I recounted the sad tail of 5 months worth of wandering around the windy and blustery base with a tattered envelope full of records, spending days waiting in lines at offices all across the base, to talk to someone who was not there then, but would return at 10:00, or 11:30, or 13:00, or 15:30, and who never did. And I could testify to this, because I was there. Each time.

Eating potatoes and toast on my first visit to the chow hall - on Sunday at Whidbey - to calm my EM-Burger syndrome, because nobody had told me I needed a chit to eat in the chow hall, and nobody had volunteered that information either.

A veteran sailor who desperately wanted to rekindle the love for something, anything, even for the Navy, for the love of a challenging job, to join in with a group to share something good and vital. All hopes, dashed on the reefs of "Lt. "A has secured for the day".

I totaled up my service at 4 years of Active Duty, 2 years of Inactive Reserve, and then subsequent 19 months of Reserve Drill at Medford, Oregon and 5 months of drills at NAS Whidbey Island, Washington. As this total of 24 months had thus fulfilled my Reserve obligation incurred upon enlistment into the Reserves, I submitted my resignation effective at the end of the weekend.

**Post-Script, Wednesday PM, Feb. 18, 2004:** OK, Shipmates, I still have the Cracker-Jacks and I am still missing the neckerchief. Where do you get one these days?

John Larch 76-79

## Treasury Report

Our current balance is \$481.91. Total funds collected to date \$5418.20

### Expenses

Stamps	\$520.84	Cartridges	\$252.29
Paper	\$ 47.93	Seals	\$8.23
Envelopes	\$ 27.32	Decals	\$211.98
Hats	\$462.04	Postcards	\$11.25
Shirts	\$500.58	Banquet	\$2282.19
Folders	\$43.20	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4936.29</b>

## Old Sports

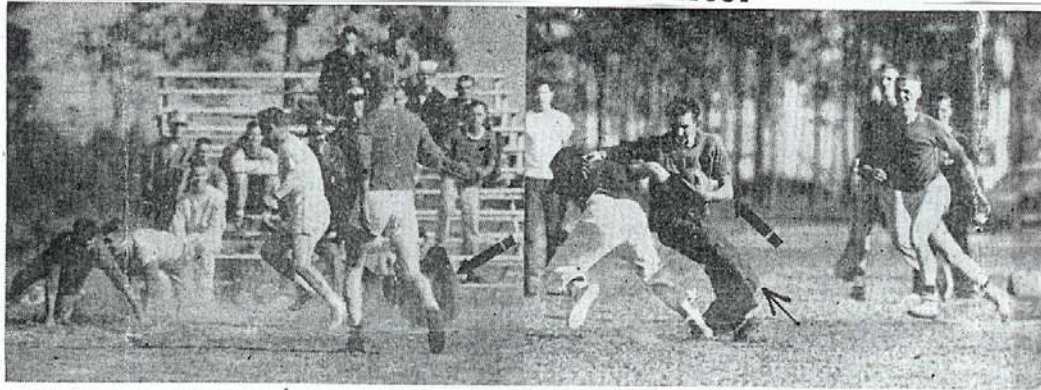
The following page was sent in by George Hinds, it is a sports article from an old afterburner.



# VA-12 Trounces VA-105, 32-7

## All But Clinch Title

### Lack of Depth Causes Defeat For Underdog Six In Contest



VA-12's Stankowich (left photo) goes for a first down against VA-105 before being forced out of bounds on the latter's 33-yard stripe. Other players are: Jackson (105), Draudt (12) on ground, Ludwig, VA-12, blocker and Theil, defen-

sive back for VA-105. Hinds, (right photo) VA-12 end side steps VA-105 halfback Carlin after taking a pass from quarterback Draudt, to set up the third touchdown for VA-12. Theil VA-105's safety an is shown coming up to make the stop.

### Quarterback Draudt Stars For Winners

A powerful VA-12 team trounced once tied VA-105 32 to 7 at the Station football field last week to, theoretically clinch the Cecil Field Intramural title for the 1956 season.

VA-12 was a slight favorite at game time, boasting a 6-0-0 record as compared with a 5-0-1 of the underdog. The favorites won the toss and elected to receive, but were forced to surrender the pigskin after three unsuccessful attempts at a first down and punted on the fourth.

ON THE FIRST passing try by 105, Ruel of VA-12 intercepted and ran the ball back to the opponent's 23. Draudt then threaded the needle with three pass completions to Ludwig. With first and goal to go, he found Stankowich uncovered in the far corner of the end zone and hit him with a paydirt pass. The try for the extra point was no good, and the score stood 6-0 in favor of VA-12.

On the kickoff, Carlin grabbed the boot and took off on a broken field run and squirmed through the entire opponent squad for an 83-yard touchdown jaunt. The attempt for the PAT was good and VA-105 led, 7-6.

AFTER THE KICKOFF, the offensive was checked and forced to punt, the ball then going back to 105. Two plays later, Ruel again intercepted and set up another score. Draudt pitched out to Stankowich, who tossed to Hardisty on the 105 five yard stripe. Another pass was good for a few more yards and the TD was to come. On the next down, Draudt passed to Hinds for six points to take lead 13-7.

A pass for the extra point was no good.

Again VA-12 kicked off and Ruel showed his defensive ability by intercepting his third pass of the day to end a scoring bid by the underdogs. Draudt, the man with the golden arm, demonstrated his talents. Taking over on his own 45, he tossed one to Hardisty who made a terrific catch on the 105 three. Faking a pitchout, the quarterback hit glue-fingered Howell who stole

the ball from two defenders in the end zone for the TD. This time the point attempt was good and VA-12 now had a 13 point margin. VA-105 returned the kickoff to their own 31 but were unable to put the ball into play as time ran out. At the half VA-12 lead 20-7.

VA-105 KICKED off to open the second half and took possession when Draudt's pass was intercepted by McKay on the VA-12 37 yard line. The underdogs lack of depth became apparent and the six starters were worn down by the hard charging VA-12 line. After three pass tries for a score, they were forced to punt. McKay got off a good one and the opponents safety man was hit immediately by Derrah, who played an unusually fine game of defense.

On the second play from the scrimmage, Draudt handed off to Stankowich who galloped to the VA-12 30 but the play was nullified by a penalty. A bad center on the following play moved the pigskin back to the 12's 15 yard line. Draudt punted out of danger and VA-105 put the ball into play on their own 45 but again their scoring bid was frustrated by the leaders defense. After a punt Draudt ran

up several first downs using the keeper play and moved to the VA-105 12. Two plays later he again threw his fifth touchdown pass, this time to team-mate Ludwig for an insurance score.

VA-105 MADE several valiant attempts to score but the lack of replacements hampered them. Although they made a few first downs, the defense cracked down at midfield and, proceeded to register six more points, Draudt moved to the VA-105 30 yard line in five plays. On the first down with the ball on VA-105's 30, he faked a pass to Howell and rifled the ball to his leading scorer Stankowich, who had gone into motion from the halfback slot in the end zone to make it 32-7.

Time ran out with VA-105 in possession, and the game ended 32 to 7, with VA-12 on the winning end of the score.



## VA12 Association Members

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

Terry Nies	67- 69
Joe Taylor	69 - 71
Dennis Masters	72 - 75

## Photos

Here are a couple of photos submitted by Rich Kichline. 5/7/70 at the 1622 Club Olongapo City. Bob Cook on the left.



2004 Rich and youngest Grand daughter Lauren



## Fly your colors

George Hinds has his priorities in order as you can tell from his license plates below.



## INFO

A suggestion was made that I include my home address and phone numbers. So here ya go.

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