



# Fist of the Fleet Association

a non profit 501 (c) (19) military organization

## NEWSLETTER

July 2018

Preserving the Past Providing for Today  
Promoting the Future

### SUMMER EDITION

By: Jerry "Ricochet" Fritze

I want to expand a little bit on Chalk's comment last issue about the Commemorative Air Force. I was a CAF member for the AZ wing in Mesa for about 5 years. When I told them I had been a Navy AE they took me to a junk pile and asked if I could put this all back together. It was the Bendix twin .50 upper turret. I asked if they had a manual and sure enough.....

Most of us know what working in a hanger in summer is like. I could put in maybe 4 or 5 hours on a Saturday morning before I was wasted. And the turret was a mess. I took some parts home to clean and repair them, and replaced every wire, terminal strip and block in it. Something like 120 man-hours later it was time to lift it in to the B-25J "Maid in the Shade." And that's when I got pissed. Someone Bozo mounted a shark fin antenna so it would sit in between the guns. The bubble top didn't have the elevation slots cut out so the guns were locked in forward firing position at 0/0 degrees. Probably just as well. The gunners' control yoke was a rotted piece of garbage and no replacement could be found so applying power could have sparked a short and then a fire. When I left the turret was still in need of a gun sight, suit heater and mechanical linkage for the foot chargers. You know the scene where gunners pull back the bolt levers and charge the guns? In a cramped turret those are pulled back by stomping on foot pedals.

Organizations like CAF, St. Vincent de Paul, Goodwill and Habitats for Humanity depend on volunteers to achieve their missions. I helped to build over 50 homes in 10 years in AZ for Habitats, mostly with crews from my employers. Life isn't about what you get, it's about what you do, and I enjoy doing things that have real meaning, both to give to those in need and to grow as a person. Don't wait around for inspiration, the need is there and you don't have to have any skills, just a willingness to help. Speaking of which.....

Michelle and I have taken early retirement from the work force. So, we have started the house remodel project we've been planning. I've been taking down wallpaper in the bath, and what do you know, it's original to the 1973 build. The drywall beneath is a mess but I can fix that. I also started to pull the paneling from the den, and guess what, it's original to the build which means it was *glued to the damn drywall*. That will take a pro to remove as I'd rather not have to replace all the drywall in the den. There's a lot I can do, and there is stuff I won't mess with, like plumbing, gas lines, windows and cabinets. It goes back to doing volunteer work: *know your limits*.

I will see everybody next year in San Diego and I will be getting out there a week early as Matt Long and I have some *serious* fishing to do around Monterrey.....~Later!~



B-25J "Maid in the Shade". The turret is now reversed, and the fuselage sponson guns were not original for a B-25 in the 1943 Italian Campaign where she served.



The final house I worked on with my church in 2002.

[www.fistofthefleet.org](http://www.fistofthefleet.org)

#### Mission Statement

**Perpetuate the history of Naval Aviation Squadrons  
VT-17, VA-6B, VA-65, VA-25 and VFA-25,  
Remember deceased veterans and comfort their survivors,  
Conduct charitable and educational programs,  
Foster and participate in activities of patriotic nature,  
Assist current active squadron members, and  
Provide assistance to family members in times of  
emergency.**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's summer and golf balls and fly rods are in the air as many of us vacation or take some time off from work. As I write this, early arrivals to the Experimental Aircraft Association's AirVenture fly-in at Oshkosh, WI are lining up at the campground gate to select a choice spot for the upcoming events, scheduled for July 22-29, 2018. If anyone is headed to Oshkosh, please send us some photos and a report about your visit.

A few months ago I recited the incredible story of an F/A-18 completing a carrier landing without its nugget pilot who ejected at the last second. I'm still thinking, fact or fiction? But here's a true story that we can relate to given today's issues with the F/A-18 oxygen system. And if you ever cranked up the A-7 air conditioning system in winter, you know it could generate a snow flurry in the cockpit.

An F/A-18 Growler was cruising at 25,000 feet about 60 miles north of Seattle, WA earlier this year when the Growler's environmental control system issued an icing warning and the oxygen and climate control systems suffered a catastrophic failure. A sheet of ice began to cover the cockpit and canopy as the cockpit temperature dropped to minus 30 degrees Fahrenheit. All the avionics either failed or were unreadable and visibility was completely blocked by the ice coating on the canopy and windscreen. With the use of a Garmin watch to track heading and altitude and the excellent assistance of ground controllers at NAS Whidbey Island, the crew was able to guide the aircraft to a safe, blind landing. Bravo Zulu to Lt. Sean Noronha, USN and Lt. Jason Hirzel, USN, both of whom battled frostbite as they persevered through a very unusual emergency.

Speaking of golf, I'll sign off with a cute story about golf and sex after death.

A couple made a deal that whoever died first would come back and inform the other if there is sex after death. Their biggest fear was that there was no afterlife at all.

After a long life together, the husband was the first to die. True to his word, he made the first contact.

"Nancy, Nancy?", called the departed husband.

"Is that you, Ray?", responded Nancy.

"Yes, I've come back like we agreed.", answered Ray.

"That's wonderful! What's it like?", inquired Nancy.

"Well, I get up in the morning, I have sex. I have breakfast and then it's off to the golf course. I have sex again, bathe in the warm sun and then have sex a couple of more times. Then I have lunch, you'd be proud -- I eat lots of greens. Another romp around the golf course, then pretty much have sex the rest of the afternoon. After supper, it's back to the golf course. Then it's more sex until late at night. I catch some much-needed sleep and then the next day it starts all over again."

"Oh, Ray!", responded Nancy, "Are you in Heaven?"

"No, I'm a rabbit somewhere in Arizona."

And with that, I'm off to swing a 9 iron.

Chalks



### Blue Angels Tour Dates

Aug 4/5 Boeing Seafair Air Show Seattle WA  
Aug 11/12 Abbotsford International Air Show BC  
Aug 18/19 Terre Haute Air Show IN  
Aug 25-26 Sound of Speed Air Show St Joseph MO

Sep 1/3 Cleveland National Air Show OH  
Sep 15/16 Owensboro Air Show KY  
Sep 22/23 NAS Oceana Airshow VA  
Sep 29/30 MCAS Miramar CA

Oct 6/7 San Francisco Fleet Week CA  
Oct 13/14 Aviation Round Up Minden-Tahoe NV  
Oct 20/21 Wings Over Houston Air Show TX  
Oct 27/28 NAS Jacksonville Airshow FL

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## SKIPPER'S CORNER

Greetings FOFA. Last time we spoke, the squadron was finishing up air-to-surface strike fighter advanced readiness program (A/S SFARP) in Fallon, Nevada. Since then, the squadron returned to Lemoore, prepared for air-to-air (A/A) SFARP, enjoyed two weeks in the beautiful Florida Keys, and are now back preparing for our upcoming detachment aboard the USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN next month. Being SFARP complete, we can now shift our focus to integrating with the airwing and the ship making our combat organization even more lethal.

Even as we continue to crush workups as we get closer to our deployment next spring, challenges remain. The squadron still does not have our full complement of aircraft due to planned maintenance inspection (PMI) and most likely won't have all ten jets until the end of the summer. But the mission and operational requirements remain steady. Next up is tailored ships training availability or TSTA. It will test this squadron further as we have not been to sea in over 18 months. While a challenge for sure, it is also an opportunity for the Fist of the Fleet to demonstrate our true mettle. I have no doubt our Sailors will excel in this most demanding environment aboard an aircraft carrier. As always...

Damn proud to be a Fist!  
Skipper



## FROM THE COCKPIT

By: LT Gerald "Soul Patch" Anderson

As soon as summer began in Lemoore, VFA-25 started gearing up for Air-to-Air (A/A) SFARP (strike fighter advanced readiness program). This portion of our training continues to focus on tactics and employment at the squadron level, this time in the arena of aerial combat. In the strike fighter community, there may come a time that aircrew are called upon to engage the enemy in the skies above, and it is imperative that aircrew are tactically sound in all aspects of air combat. In order for aircrew to hone their skills in the air to air arena, every strike fighter squadron must go through A/A SFARP prior to deploying.

### Workups

Starting mid-May, VFA-25 started lectures for A/A SFARP sitting through 30 hours of classes over the course of a week, covering topics from air-to-air employment basics to more advanced tactics used against a robust aerial threat. We then shifted to pre-loads, which consisted of engaged maneuvering flights in two-plane sections to get us prepared for the advanced four-plane division flights in Key West. During the week of May 28<sup>th</sup>, VFA-25 continued to work through maintenance issues as we pushed our aircraft to the limit, flying consistently and often. The Fist of the Fleet maintenance department did an outstanding job as the squadron went from having just one flyable jet in beginning of April to flying eight aircraft in an "up" status by June. This paid dividends during A/A training in Key West, as pilots were able to ramp up tactical proficiency throughout SFARP. As we finished SFARP at the end of the detachment in Key West, the squadron will now face new challenges preparing to return to carrier operations in July for the first time in 18 months. This year will continue to have challenges as VFA-25 progresses through workups, but with our outstanding maintenance department and elite ready room we will be ready for deployment.



Adversary F/A-18s and F-5s line the ramp as NAS Key West as the sun rises on day one of A/A SFARP.



Thunderstorms build in the distance as plane captains await the afternoon event recovery



Fist 404 and 405 over Albuquerque during the RTB from a successful detachment to Key West.

## FROM THE HANGAR DECK

Hello, Fist of the Fleet Association, I am PR3 Natalie Garcia. I was born and raised in San Diego, CA and joined the United States Navy in June of 2013 at the age of 24. My decision to enlist was quite simple -- I wanted more out of life and felt that the Navy could be a great stepping stone. Little did I know that the first steps would involve chopping off my hair and being sent to Japan, where I met my amazing, supportive wife and beautiful daughter who is the light of my life.



VFA-25 is the second command in my Navy career. As soon as I checked in to the command in February of 2017, I was sent straight in to our PR shop. Although the PR shop is small, we are always able to get the job done and keep the pilot gear well maintained. I have been able to achieve all of my shop qualifications and maintain shop collateral duties, as well as command collateral duties (ACFL and MWR Treasurer). VFA-25 has been a great first O-level command so far. The environment here at the command makes it a great place to work -- not only amongst my peers, but also with the pilots. I enjoy being able to always chat with them as they get ready to go on their missions. With our many detachments from Portland, Alaska, Klamath Falls, and Hawaii last year to now work ups, I feel that I've gained more knowledge as a PR here at this command. The tempo has changed to prepare for deployment, but I love that there is always something to be done to make the command greater. As we are always told, once a FIST always a FIST and I am damn proud to be a FIST!

## FIST OF THE FLEET MILESTONES



Former Fist Commanding Officer CDR Dave Snowden reported to the USS Truman, CVN 75 as Executive Office. Aboard Truman is Carrier Air Wing 7 which includes the Fist of the Fleet.



AT3 Villarreal reenlisted today for another five years in the Navy. Congrats AT3!



### Have you paid your 2018 Dues?

Annual Dues: \$25/YR

Life Time Dues \$200

Mail dues to Financial Officer:

Chuck Webster 2441 Lock B Road North Clarksville TN 37043

### Only Voting Members receive a copy of the Directory

Become a Voting Member!

Visit the Base Exchange at

[www.fistofthefleet.org](http://www.fistofthefleet.org)

## *DEPARTURE NOTIFICATIONS*

Commander Robin Leigh Bacon: 10/25/35 - 3/09/18

Robin was a pilot assigned to VA-25 during '65-'66 Vietnam cruises. He was a TAR officer assigned to VA-25 to gain more fleet experience. As Robin used to say, "I got more experience than I really wanted." He was LCDR department head for his whole tour.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Julia Priour Bacon; three children April Beck, Sheryl VanEarden and La'Marr Bacon; nine grandchildren and ten great grandchildren.

His life was characterized by his love for God, family, church and country. Commander Bacon was a faithful member and deacon of New Life Assembly of God 8595 US Highway 98N Lakeland, Florida, 33810. He served our nation as a Navy pilot for twenty-two years. After his retirement from the Navy, he worked for Boeing on the computer system of the Space Station. He took great joy and pride in all of his grandchildren and great grandchildren who knew him as Popo.

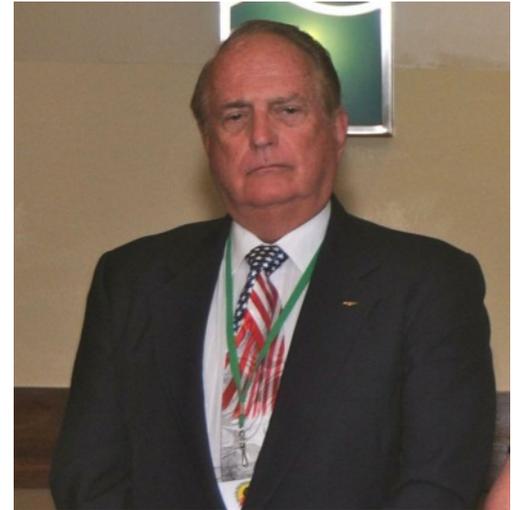


Dale R. Pellot: 12/24/41 - 7/6/18

Dr. Dale R. Pellot, 76, a Ft. Myers resident since 1978, formerly of Wyandotte, MI passed away Friday, July 6, 2018 at Hope Hospice in Ft. Myers, FL. He was born December 24, 1941 in Wyandotte, MI to Don and Helen Pellot, now deceased.

Dr. Pellot was a Lieutenant in the United States Navy and served in Vietnam as a Naval Aviator. He was the recipient of the National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign and Service Medals, 9 Air Medals, Navy Unit Commendation and Navy Achievement Medals and the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal. Following his military career, he attended Dental School and practiced both in Michigan and Cape Coral, FL.

He is survived by his loving wife of 49 years, Joyce Pellot of Ft. Myers; his sister Candace Pellot of Alexandria, VA; nephew, Christopher Pellot also of Alexandria, as well as several extended family members and friends.



Randall D Hainsey VA-25 1965-1966  
3/9/45-5/17/18  
Cushing, Oklahoma

Survived by son Scott.



## \$\$\$\$ FIST OF THE FLEET ASSOCIATION FINANCIAL REPORT \$\$\$\$

The financial health of the Association is still on solid ground. As of 30 June 2018, the Association has a balance of \$12,284.75 in savings and \$11,202.85 in checking with the Navy Federal Credit Union.

One of the main indicators of the Association's financial health and stability is the continued growth of its dues paying annual members and new life members. This number increased during the early months of 2018 with annual members Gunner Mills, Laurence Woodbury, Craig Bechtel, Hershel Pryor, and Troy Brown paying their annual dues. During the early months of 2018 the educational committee received several requests for an Educational Grant from the squadron.

The Association paid four education grant request for a total of \$670.46. During the squadron's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary I met with several working on their under grad degrees, the squadron Master Chief of the Command, squadron training LPO, Skipper and XO to discuss educational grants that are available to see if there is a way to increase these funds back to the Sailors in the squadron. There was a request to see if we could help dependents with their education expenses, but in the past the Board has not approved dependents request for grants and that is not part of the program. There was also a request to see if we could help with the mileage expense and that will be reviewed by the Board.

Chuck "Pooh" Webster

### THE A-7E



The VA-25 KA-7 with Buddy Store



VA-27 on Cat 3, bound for North Vietnam



The safest way to get aboard



Coming back with hung wing ordnance



Rolling In

# **FISTORY: GREEN TAILS OVER 'NAM: THE CORSAIR II**

## **Specifications A-7E**

Contractor Ling-Temco-Vought (Prime, now Northrop Grumman Corp.)

Power Plant Single Allison/Rolls Royce TF41-A-400 non-afterburning turbofan engine with a static thrust rating of 15,000 pounds

Performance Maximum speed at 20,000 feet Mach .94 Range greater than 1,900 nautical miles

External Dimensions: Wing Span 38.73 ft

Wing span over missiles: Wing chord: at root 4.72m Wing chord: at tip 1.18m Wing aspect ratio 4

Width, wings folded 23.77 ft Aspect ratio 4 Sweep 1/4 chord 35°

Length overall 46.13 ft Height overall 16.06 ft

Wheel track 2.90m Maximum tread 9.49 ft

Gross Wing area: 375 sq ft

Weight (with TF41-A-2 engine):

Empty 18,546 lbs Basic 19,576 lbs Design 29,575 lbs Combat (Clean A/P) 25,834 lbs

Maximum takeoff (Overload) 42,000 lbs Maximum takeoff (Normal) 37,279 lbs Maximum landing (Carrier) 25,300 lbs

Performance (At Maximum Takeoff Weight):

Max level speed @ S.L. 600 knots

Combat endurance, CAP 150 nm from aircraft carrier

Ferry range, unrefueled w/max internal & external fuel 2,485nm

Avionics & Countermeasures

APQ-126 multi-mode nav/attack radar [Texas Instruments] AVQ-7 raster HUD

ASN-91 INS, ASN-190 Doppler navigation system ASU-99 projected map display

ALR-45 RWR ALR-50 SAM warning system [Magnavox]

ALQ-126 ECM [Sanders] APR-43 tactical radar warning system [Loral]

ALQ-119 ECM [Westinghouse] ALQ-131 ECM [Westinghouse]

ALQ-123 IR countermeasures [Xerox] ALQ-126 DECM [Sanders]

ALQ-162 tactical communications jammer [Eaton AIL] ALQ-162 radar jammer Northrup

Armament: One internally mounted M61A1 20 mm six barrel cannon

Six wing pylons Two fuselage launch stations

Pylons can carry a large single weapon, multiple racks capable of six weapons per rack, or triple racks with three weapons per rack.

Can carry 15,000 pounds of payload

Compatible with practically all first line ordnance used by the U.S./USAF/NATO.

Mission and Capabilities Modern, sophisticated, integrated, highly versatile airborne weapon system platform

Capable of performing a variety of search, surveillance, and attack missions

Can carry four externally wing-mounted 300 gallon fuel tanks, coupled with a variety of ordnance on remaining stations.

Can conduct in-flight refueling operations

Capable of transferring more than 12,000 pounds of fuel

Fully integrated digital navigation/weapon delivery system is common to all current USN/USAF attack aircraft.

Avionics system—which is based on state-of-the-art electronics, digital computing techniques, and an automation philosophy—provides unparalleled mission effectiveness and flexibility.

The Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) capability means the A-7's night attack accuracy is equivalent to day attack accuracy.

Consistently capable of delivering bombs with an accuracy of less than 10 mils Circular Error Probable (CEP) and guns at less than 5 mils CEP.

During Desert Storm, demonstrated more than 95% operational readiness and did not miss a single combat sortie.

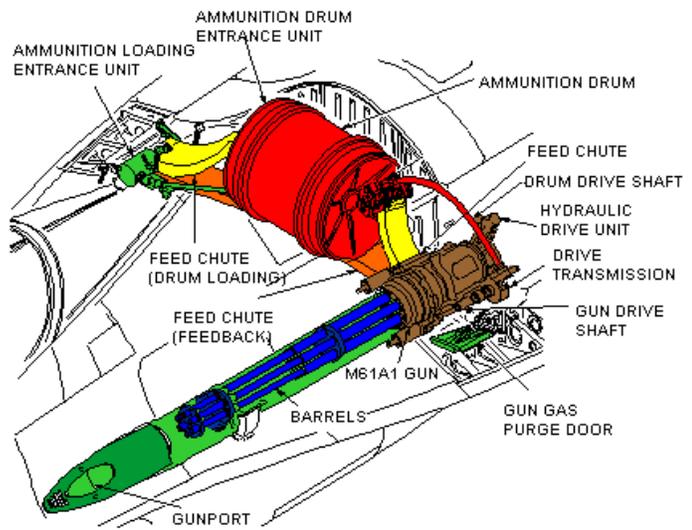
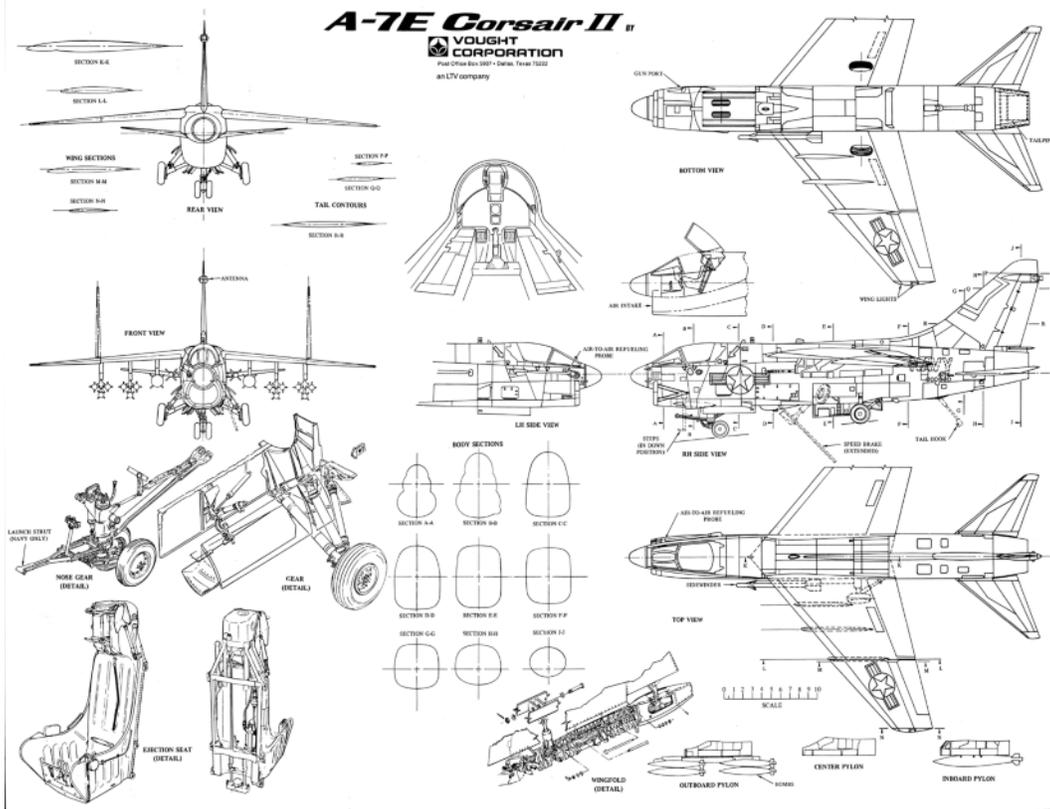
Has flown more than 120,000 combat sorties and provided unprecedented response in Vietnam, Libya, Grenada, Panama, and Desert Storm.

Survivability is enhanced via armor plating in critical areas and a state-of-the art DECM.

Modernized with a new solid-state rate gyro assembly in the Automatic Flight Control System and a wing enhancement program that virtually eliminates flight hours as a constraint for measuring aircraft service life.

Average scheduled/unscheduled direct maintenance man hours per flight hour is 11.





**NEXT TIME IN FISTORY: CVA-61**

VT-17

VA-6B

VA-65

VA-25

VFA-25

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