



# Fist of the Fleet Association

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

# NEWSLETTER

Dec 2020

Preserving the Past Providing for Today  
Promoting the Future

## HOLIDAY EDITION

By: Jerry "Ricochet" Fritze

First, let me say that here at the end of this extraordinary year I hope all of you were able to enjoy " a Thanksgiving feast that couldn't be beat, went to sleep and the didn't get up until the next morning." Second, I'm quite sure 95% of you will need to look that reference up. It was just the two of us this year as we are all *still* learning to deal with this mess. As our daughter is working two jobs in retail she can't come down for Christmas so this weekend we ran up to Green Bay and dropped off presents and picked up take-out. We got back early Sunday and had our friend Juan and his wife and two girls over later that day for an early dinner and gift exchange. As the two of them dumped their gift bags on the floor and sorted out the items the oldest, Valerie, who is 9, said "This is the best Christmas I've had." It just slipped out and hit us hard. Juan is a construction contractor so he works everyday, Inna is an accountant working from home and the girls are in school TWO days a week (Olivia just started 1<sup>st</sup> grade). Like us and so many others they observe strict Covid protocols and stay in lock-down as much as possible. But really, what did we do for them? They each got bath bombs, small Lego kits, flavored Chapsticks and hand sanitizers and a tin of candy to share. We ate homemade Kielbasa and fruitcake, had homemade raspberry jam and cookies baked last week, along with other meats and fresh fruits and cheeses all while listening to Christmas Carols and playing with the dogs and our idiot cat. Not much, not much at all; but, more than enough for two little girls whose world has been turned upside down. It is always hardest on children. The word "cope" means nothing to them; but the word "hope" carries all their dreams and wishes and that's what Christmas is all about: the renewal of hope as we celebrate the Nativity of the Christ, or Hanukkah, Rohatsu, Zarathosht Diso, Kwanzaa or the Winter Solstice. Without hope none of us can go. Who would want to?

Everyone is now looking forward to next year as being a better year; but if you're looking for a miraculous halt to the pandemic forget it. The population of Wisconsin is just shy of 6 million, and we only got 15K doses of the vaccine. There are at least 326 million people here in the US, so it will take a long time to one: produce enough, two: distribute enough and three: convince everybody to get it. Until then all we can do is press on and keep up our hopes. So until next month Michelle and I wish each and every one of you the Happiest of Holidays and a Safe and Prosperous New Year!

*~Later!~*

*Ricochet*



### 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

Christmas, 2020

It's been one helluva year with COVID-19, an economic yo-yo, so much uncertainty, and the usual divisive politics. But now we have a holiday season where we can be thankful that we survived the year and nurture hopes for a better and brighter 2021. Some of us have lost dear friends and family, and everyone has experienced a lifestyle change to one degree or another. But our brotherhood, including the women who have joined us over the years as members of the Fist, still lives on and we can be thankful for those memories and friendships.

Looking forward, we'll be surveying the membership in May about a possible reunion later in 2021 assuming that the vaccine fight against COVID-19 appears successful. And we'll be updating our website to include more recent events at the squadron and to better recognize recipients of our education grants and annual awards. Finally, we want to focus on bringing more of the F/A-18 era Fist members into the association as we approach the reunion.

I close by wishing all of you, squadron alumni and current squadron members alike, a Merry Christmas, a Happy Holiday season with family and friends and best wishes for a healthy and prosperous new year.

Chalks



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## Blue Notes

The legacy F/A-18 Hornets that have wowed Blue Angels spectators for more than three decades made their final flight Wednesday Nov 11<sup>th</sup>, Veterans Day during a 30-minute flight over Florida and Alabama. The flight marked the Blue Angels' official transition to F/A-18E/F Super Hornets. The team got its first Super Hornet in July.

"We were incredibly honored to have the opportunity to salute those teams who have flown, maintained and supported this platform for over three decades of service." Cmdr. Brian Kesselring, the Blue Angels' commanding officer and flight leader, said in a statement about the flight. "We deeply appreciate the expertise and operational knowledge Blue Angels past and present have brought to the team, and we look forward to enhancing our operations as we fully transition to flying the Super Hornet."

Fans were able to spot the team between 4 pm and 430 pm at multiple spots after they took off. The Blue Angels will kick off the 2021 season, which will be the team's 75th anniversary, in their new Super Hornets. They're scheduled to start their winter training syllabus in Pensacola on Nov 16, with plans to head to their winter training site in El Centro, CA, in January. Gina Hawkins, [military.com](http://military.com)

## THE SKIPPER'S CORNER

Merry Christmas and happy holidays from the FIST OF THE FLEET! Hope this finds everyone healthy and safe as we approach the end of this unforgettable year. As we prepare to shut the squadron down ('cold iron') for two weeks in order to provide time for well-deserved leave, we do so on a high note. Our very own SEL, Senior Chief Moncier was just awarded the prestigious Donald E. Barber leadership award – recognizing him as the premier khaki leader on the NASL flight line. An incredible and well deserved acknowledgement. Congrats Senior!

The Commodore presented this award at quarters just prior to announcing our 'of the years'. Congrats to the following Fist Sailors who continue to set the standard:

Plane Captain of the Year: AO3 Ricketts

Blue Jacket of the Year: AE3 Boswell

Fist of the Year: MA2 Stark

Sailor of the Year: YN1 Avila

Although we could not break bread together as a squadron in a traditional holiday party setting due to COVID, we were able to bring in some delicious food from a local restaurant and serve up a warm meal in the hangar. With full bellies we kicked off the gift raffle. Lots of great prizes to include a 65" flat screen TV!



Upon return from holiday leave, the squadron is scheduled to head north to NAS Fallon for a two week detachment, mid-January. The training department has created an outstanding plan that will facilitate a number of mission sets aimed at preparing for the high-end fight. Nothing beats flying on the Fallon ranges!

Keep healthy and safe during this holiday season. We look forward to an exciting and productive 2021. Talk to you soon!  
Cheers!

V/R,

CDR Jake "SMiR" Rose

## FROM THE COCKPIT

 By: LT Chris "Meat" Honeycutt

"Merging with Zero!"

Approaching the merge during a DCA always gets the adrenaline flowing as we try to prevent strikers crossing the mission fail line and thus, launching an anti-ship cruise missile at mom. The stakes are high - no midrats or a place to land... Not good! Prior to making it to the merge, there is a litany of steps and checks that must be accomplished prior to getting our eyes outside in order to gain tally, save the day, and collect some air medals. This task saturating environment warrants a call from the RTO, "Showtime 11, merging with one." Your last cue and safety check to look outside and make a safe pass happen. However, it is now becoming common for us to hear, "Showtime 11, merging with ZERO!" Admittedly, the first time I heard this I was still frantically looking outside trying to gain a tally but to no avail. This is due to awesome technology called Inject to Live (ITL) where we can now fight synthetic red air being controlled from a ground station.

The benefits of this technology are twofold. First, the cost savings for the F/A-18 fleet will be massive via a reduction of in-house red air sorties - saving money spent on flight hours as well as preserving the life of our jets. Second, we can now dedicate more time focused on blue fighter tactics and execution. This technology is improving rapidly and a very exciting look towards the future for how we will continue to train for the high end fight.





Greetings, Fist of the Fleet Association. I am AZ2 Luis Rosado. I am from Atlanta, Georgia and proudly encourage anyone to take a visit to experience the beautiful city I call home. I have been in the Navy for a little over three years, the first two were an exhilarating roller coaster. Just like any experience, there are frustrations, but also great accomplishments, and that's exactly how my time in the Navy has been.

In 2017 I reported to my first command, the USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN-71), where I completed my first deployment as an undesignated airman working the catapults launching and recovering aircraft. Being undesignated without a rating can cause frustrations due to working your heart out while knowing you cannot take an advancement exam for promotion. However, I turned my frustration into inspiration and decided to stand out in other ways to set myself up for whenever I did get selected for a rating. I distinguished myself among my peers by becoming the only airman on the aircraft carrier to earn three enlisted warfare designation pins (EAWS/ESWS/EIDWS) within a year.

After a year and a half of being undesignated, I was selected to the Aviation Administrationman (AZ) rating while also being promoted to Third Class Petty Officer. My next assignment was a transfer to VFA-25. My experience in the Fist has been challenging. Transferring to VFA-25 was what I needed to grow and become the dedicated, driven, and

knowledgeable leader I am today. From completing my second deployment to being back on land, I have been taught that leadership is a huge part of the mission and allows everyone from the lowest to highest ranking person to become a better Sailor as well as a more efficient maintainer. Taking care of one another is the main characteristic that comes with being a Fist and I will always carry that knowledge with me to my future commands.

**Have you paid your 2021 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 have access to the Directory**

Become a Voting Member!

Visit the Base Exchange at

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

## FIST OF THE FLEET 2020 RECOGNITION AWARDS



PC of the Year: AO3 Meagan Ricketts



Bluejacket of the Year: AE3 Rovaughn Boswell



Fist of the Year: MA2 Nicholas Stark



Sailor of the Year: YN1 Clarissa Avila





## Port: The Versatile and Ultimate After-Dinner Wine.

Port wine (also known as vinho do Porto and Porto) is a Portuguese fortified wine produced with distilled grape spirits exclusively in the Douro Valley in the northern provinces of Portugal. Over a hundred varieties of grapes are sanctioned for port production, although only five (Tinta Barroca, Tinto Cão, Tinta Roriz (Tempranillo), Touriga Francesa, and Touriga Nacional) are widely cultivated and used. It is typically a sweet, red wine, often served as a dessert wine, although it also comes in dry, semi-dry, and white varieties.

After centuries of port wine's success, other port-style fortified wines started to be produced outside Portugal. However, under the European Union Protected Designation of Origin guidelines, only products from Portugal are allowed to be labeled "port" or Porto". There are no rules to grant the authenticity of selling port wines in the United States, and so the ports sold in American stores can be from anywhere in the world. To solve this problem in North America and other countries, Porto's authentic producers started exporting port with an authenticity stamp on their bottles.



*Ruby port* is the least expensive and most extensively produced type of port. After fermentation, it is stored in tanks of concrete or stainless steel to prevent oxidative aging and preserve its bright red color and full-bodied fruitiness. The wine is usually blended to match the style of the brand to which it is to be sold. The wine is fined and cold filtered before bottling and does not generally improve with age, although premium rubies are aged in wood from four to six years. Pare it with chocolate, especially dark chocolate truffles. The soft rich texture, and earthy flavor of chocolate truffles goes well with the deep, fruity, slightly sweet flavor of a ruby port. In addition to chocolate, ruby ports go well with apple crisp, cheesecake and flan.

*Tawny ports* are wines usually made from red grapes that are aged in wooden barrels exposing them to gradual oxidation and evaporation. As a result of this oxidation, they mellow to a golden-brown color. The exposure to oxygen imparts "nutty" flavors to the wine, which is blended to match the house style. They are sweet or medium dry and typically consumed as a dessert wine, but can also pair with a main course. When a port is described as tawny, without an indication of age, it is a basic blend of wood-aged port that has spent time in wooden barrels, typically at least three years. Tawny ports go well with traditional desserts such as almond, apple or cream tarts, or creme brûlée. They also go well with slices of fresh melon. When serving this port with chocolate, it can be paired with some exotic flavors such as Fran's chocolate caramels with sea salt, Vosges white chocolate and dried olive bar or any roasted almond chocolate bar. One very tasty combination is pairing a tawny port with vanilla or coffee ice cream.



*Reserve tawny port* (produced by Borges, Calem, Croft, Cruz, Graham, Kopke and other houses) has been aged about seven years. Above this are tawnies with an indication of age, which represent a blend of several vintages. The target age profile, in years in wood, is stated on the label, usually 10, 20, 30 or 40 years. These ports are produced by most houses.

There are also *White Ports* with some shippers now marketing aged white ports.



Note: in some places, such as Canada, tawny may also be used to describe any port-style wine that is not produced in Portugal as per agreement with EU.

Port, like any wine, pairs well with cheese. *Tawny port* goes exceptionally well with Stilton, the king of English cheeses. This type of port also goes well with white cheddar and jalapeños, Manchego cheese and dried cherries or any hard sheep's milk cheese with apricots. *Ruby ports* tend to lend themselves well to mature cheddar cheeses served alone or with dates. In general, the softer cheeses such as brie or Camembert do not pair well with port, as they are too mild and sweet. Pairing port with foods has become somewhat of an art form, but generally speaking, one cannot go wrong pairing any port with either desserts or strong hard cheeses.

The world of port wine is vast and fairly complicated. In the end, like anything else, your own tastes will determine how you choose to enjoy port. Ruby and Tawny Port are the most widely consumed but you should, if chance allows, sample other varieties of this versatile after-dinner wine. As noted above Port is now produced all over the world so if your concerned at all about the quality of Port simple look for the authenticity stamp. And, if you wish don't worry about paring the wine with anything, just pour a glass and relax.



## Christmas at Sea

[A haunting *quodlibet*\* of excerpts from Robert Louis Stevenson's poem, "Christmas at Sea", and an early Renaissance Gaelic work song sung by women, perhaps while waiting for their men to return, as they fulled tweed, a process of hammering at tweed cloth to scour and thicken it.]

All day we fought the tides between the North Head and the South  
All day we hauled the frozen sheets, to 'scape the storm's wet mouth  
All day as cold as charity, in bitter pain and dread  
For very life and nature we tacked from head to head

We gave the South a wider berth, for there the tide-race roared  
But every tack we made we brought the North Head close aboard  
We saw the cliffs and houses, and the breakers running high,  
And the coastguard in his garden, his glass against his eye



The frost was on the village roofs as white as ocean foam  
The good red fires were burning bright in every 'longshore home  
The windows sparkled clear, and the chimneys volleyed out  
And I vow we sniffed the victuals as the vessel went about



The bells upon the church were rung with a mighty jovial cheer  
For it's just that I should tell you how (of all days in the year)  
This day of our adversity was blessed Christmas morn,  
And the house above the coastguard's was the house where I was born

And well I knew the talk they had, the talk that was of me  
Of the shadow on the household and the son that went to sea  
And O the wicked fool I seemed, in every kind of way  
To be here and hauling frozen ropes on blessed Christmas Day

