



Fist of the Fleet Association

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

NEWSLETTER

Oct 2021

Preserving the Past Providing for Today
Promoting the Future

AUTUMN EDITION

By: Jerry "Ricochet" Fritze

This past Thursday Michelle and I went to get our flu shots. As the nurse is getting ready to stab me she casually remarks "This is the High Density version for those over 65." Whatever. Well, there's nothing I like more in this world than being knocked right back on my ass for 36-48 hours. Some of you didn't know this was waiting for you one day? Two Type A and Two Type B strains and four times the antigens in one neat little package. Yes, Ladies and Gentlemen; through the miracle of modern science we can all live longer lives. We just need to suffer for it for a couple of days each year. I had my Shingles vax the same day which meant that I couldn't use *either* arm very well yesterday. I had Shingles several years ago and have been waiting to get the vax ever since. *You do not want to get Shingles. EVER!* I felt like John Hurt in "Alien" just waiting for that nasty little bastard to break through my chest wall. If you can avoid illnesses and infections that are massively debilitating and in some cases life-threatening by a simple jab in the arm and 24 hours or so of "General Malaise" then go do it.

Facts are cold-hearted and unemotional which, for the most part, is how I tend to look at things. You have to be analytical and try to put things in perspective. In July 1918 there were approximately 103 million people in the U.S. of which 675,000 would succumb to the Spanish Flu; about .6% of the population. "The Census Bureau estimates our current population as 330,153,000 persons. These figures mean the current U.S. epidemic has infected 8.9% of Americans and killed .16% of our population."

URL: <https://www.marshallindependent.com/opinion/local-columns/2021/03/our-1918-pandemic-the-numbers-then-and-now/>
So just remember, no matter how bad it may seem it can *always* be worse.

Autumnal weather has finally made its appearance in southern Wisconsin. One day it's 72 degrees and the next there's a frost warning. It feels more like football weather now than it did just a few days ago with crisp days, cool nights and trees exploding in colors. I'm not from Wisconsin. I grew up in PAC 8 Los Angeles a solid USC fan. Oh, you didn't know it it was just eight schools back in the day? SC-UCLA and Stanford-Cal were big screamin' deals back then. And it was the PAC 8 that starting all this expansion BS when they invited ASU and UA to join their conference. Eventually I believe they will absorb the four remaining Mountain West Division schools and become the PAC 16. SC has kind of been below the radar, no that's wrong, they have really sucked it up for years now. But no matter. Way back about the time I moved to Phoenix in '93 I started to follow this little under performing team out of East Lansing, MI. They were expected to go 6-6 this year but apparently everybody forgot to tell them so. Now they are at 6-0 coming in to their bye week and ranked atop the Big 10 below those other dudes from Ann Arbor. It used to be a maxim that on any given Sunday any team can win and we can still see the relevance of that in NCAA Division I football. The rest of the season should be very exciting.

~Later!~



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,

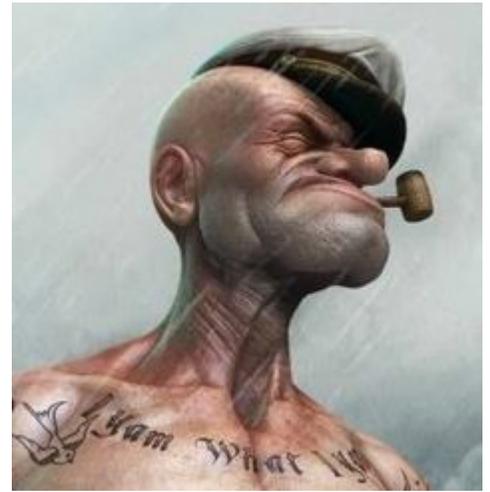
Assist current active squadron members, and

Provide assistance to family members in times of emergency.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's fall and the colors are spectacular in Park City and we've already had early winter snow down to the ski resort base areas. But this year, lift ticket prices are skyrocketing upward, another sign of the inflation that now appears more permanent than transitory. But last month, despite COVID and other challenges, some of us gathered in Sparks, Nevada for what turned out to be a mini reunion when all was said and done. Many had planned to attend but few actually arrived as safety and discretion became the better part of valor for our older and wiser members. Nonetheless, Gary "Dome" Kerans and myself greeted those hearty souls at the Fist check-in table and spent several days catching up and meeting several of the active duty squadron members who flew in from Lemoore. Among the active duty crew were C.O. Cdr Kristen "Dragon" Hansen and our Ltjg Harry Jones Award winners from 2020 and 2021, Lt Wesley "Trash" Perkins and Lt Christopher "Meat" Honeycutt, respectfully. The FOFA banquet on Thursday night was attended by almost 40 members and guests and included past squadron CO's Warner Butler, D.J. Wright, Bob Leone and Greg Peairs.



Tailhook '21 itself was well attended but well below the usual 5,000 wild and crazy guys one would normally expect. Nonetheless, it was a worthwhile trip and a chance to get together after a long gap between reunion events. Your board of directors will huddle up in the near future and discuss a follow on event or reunion that will hopefully occur without the threat of COVID and in a location popular with most of the membership. Until then squadron mates, have a great year end celebrating Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas and the holidays in general.

John "Chalks" Chalker
President



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Blue Angels Tour Dates



Nov 6 NAS Pensacola Homecoming Air Show FL

CAP'NS CORNER

Greetings!

It was so wonderful getting to meet some of you at the Tailhook convention this past September! Thank you for hosting us for dinner, telling your stories, and your constant and continued support of the squadron. Meeting those of you who have built the Fist lineage was an honor and I hope to see you all in the future!

The Fists had a successful detachment to MCAS Miramar at the end of September. In addition to enjoying our time in San Diego, it was nice to be able to help support our Marine friends in their production efforts. While our older jets are not the best for high-end tactics, they are actually very well suited to fight against the Marines with their legacy hornets. Preparations to receive the latest and greatest Super Hornets off the Boeing line continue. We have started to coordinate our initial pilot training briefs, and are looking forward to a trip to Saint Louis to learn as much as we can about the upgraded systems. While we anticipate some challenges in shaking out the new planes, we are very excited to usher "Block III's" onto the Lemoore flight line.

I hope everyone is enjoying the fall weather, and has a wonderful holiday season!

Sincerely,
Dragon



FROM THE COCKPIT ZOMBIE By: LT Kevin "Rooney" Kelm

As the newest pilot in the squadron, I'm honored to join a long legacy and history of combat excellence with VFA-25! As a previous E-2D NFO, I've gained a massive appreciation for the tactical knowledge-base a single seat pilot must have to draw from in order to effectively fight the aircraft.

I was the first class of pilots at VFA-122 to carrier qualify 100% using precision landing mode (PLM) on the USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN. The integrated direct-lift control and automatic throttle management made the process of landing on a carrier day and night significantly easier, but more importantly safer. With PLM (as opposed to flying completely manually with the stick and throttle), the aircraft seeks to maintain a constant rate of descent in feet per minute (controlled solely with the stick), or a desired glide path (e.g. 3.5 degrees). Either mode is selectable by the pilot. This effectively eliminates the pilot's need to manage angle of attack, and gives immediate lift or decent feedback when the pilot moves the stick. All of that said, especially when in bad weather, this significantly reduces the workload on the pilot, so they can focus on small movements of the ball on the lens and lineup control with the landing area.



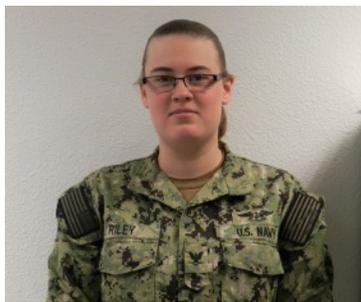
FROM DAVY JONES' LOCKER

Greetings, Fist of the Fleet Association, I am AM3 Kassidy Riley. I am from Manassas, Virginia and I come from an adoring and eccentric family. Stemming from a patriotic family, I am the sixth generation to serve. My mother who was formally a YN1 is now a financial analyst for Boeing. My father who was formally a BM3 is now firefighter for Prince William County. My older brother is currently serving in the Army as a Satellite Communication Systems Operator. Contrary to popular belief that twins are all the same, my sister decided to pursue a college degree in Cinematography. My family's legacy, traveling the world, and many other motives were the driving force behind my desire to join the Navy. After working hours, I enjoy taking on the challenges of piecing together puzzles. In addition to puzzles, I am passionate about the nine years I have dedicated to competing in softball.



I joined the Navy in the summer of 2019 marking August 2021 as my two year anniversary in service. After completing all of my required schooling, I had finally become a part of the world famous squadron "VFA-25 Fist of the Fleet". Onboard less than two years, I have learned and accomplished countless lessons and goals with the Sailors around me so that I can ultimately call VFA-25 my home away from home. Amongst those accomplishments has been achieving the title of Aviation Structural Mechanic Third Class and Blue Jacket of the Quarter for the first quarter of fiscal year 2021. As a member of work center 120, I have been learning more and more each day what it means to be an "Airframer". Working with the wealth of knowledge that is accessible to me and other sailors like myself, I have been pushed and motivated to achieve my Plane Captain and Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialist Designation in the short amount of time I have enjoyed here.

As I move forward in my career with the Navy, I aim to attain retirement from the Navy. In the short term, I am striving to receive my QPJ (AM Journeyman), Low Power Turn Operator, my Collateral Duty Inspector Designation, along with reaching the title of Petty Officer Second Class. Looking towards the future, my ambition is to have the honor of being known as a Chief Petty Officer and eventually the level of Chief Warrant Officer. Until then, I am looking forward to the numerous experiences and lessons that the World's Greatest Navy has yet to offer me.





AM3 King jacking the jet



AM3 Marfo stowing hoses on a hydraulic generator after op-checking the landing gear.



ATAN Reeder performing a daily check during night ops.



HM3 Guadian, AO3 Mills, and LS2 Titsworth were all recently mapped.

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

2021 REUNION - RENO NEVADA



CDR Kristen "Dragon" Hansen and FOFA President John "Chalks" Chalker



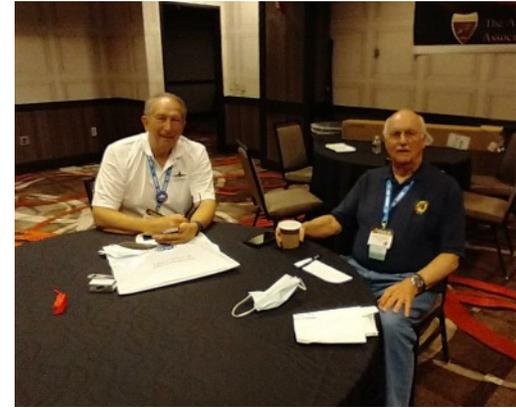
Gary "Dome" Kerans with Al Nichols at Fist check-in table, Al is a former POW and two time VA-25 Pilot late 60's and mid 70's



Al and Chalks



Chuck Thom, SPAD Pilot 65-68



Chalks and Dome



Glenn Fant, Pilot mid-70s



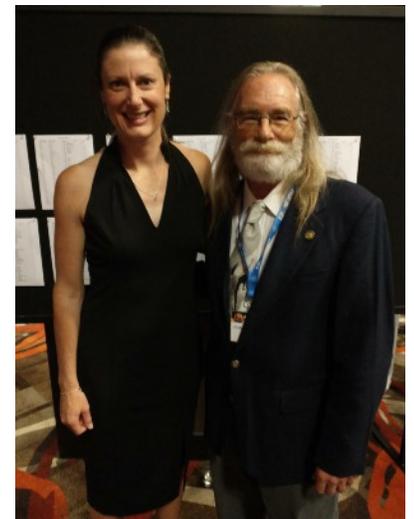
Bob Leone CO 81-83 and DJ Wright CO 79-80



Glenn Fant and Warner Butler, CO 78-79



DJ Wright and Chuck Overby



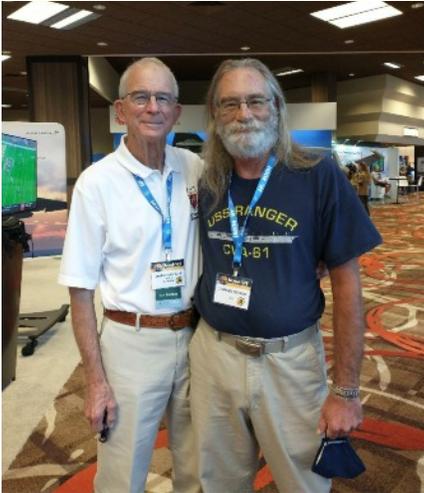
Chuck and Skipper Hansen



Chalks and Lt Chris "Meat" Honeycutt, 2021 Harry Jones Award winner.



Chalks, Meat and Dragon



Warner and Chuck



From Chuck: I thought I'd send this picture to you, maybe you can find out who commissioned the original. I was just in Manitou Springs this past weekend and stopped to ask about it. According to the guy who made it, it had been a special order that somehow got mixed up and two got made instead of one. It's expensive, but it's still available if anyone is interested. They will ship anywhere in the US.



Chuck Overby Circa 1979



LCDR Glenn Fant, 1976 WESTPAC

FISTORY: THE HORNET'S STING: THE NIMITZ-CLASS CARRIER

Design: The *Nimitz*-class aircraft carriers were ordered to supplement the aircraft carriers of the *Kitty Hawk* and *Enterprise* classes, maintaining the strength and capability of the U.S. Navy after the older carriers were decommissioned. The ships were designed to be improvements on previous U.S. aircraft carriers, in particular the *Enterprise* and *Forrestal*-class supercarriers, although the arrangement of the ships is relatively similar to that of the *Kitty Hawk* class. Among other design improvements, the two reactors on *Nimitz*-class carriers take up less space than the eight reactors used on *Enterprise*. Along with a more generally improved design, this means that *Nimitz*-class carriers can carry 90% more aviation fuel and 50% more ordnance when compared to the *Forrestal* class.

The U.S. Navy has stated that the carriers could withstand three times the damage sustained by the *Essex*-class inflicted by Japanese air attacks during World War II. The hangars on the ships are divided into three fire bays by thick steel doors that are designed to restrict the spread of fire. This addition has been present on U.S. aircraft carriers since World War II, after the fires caused by kamikaze attacks.

The first ships were designed around the time of the Vietnam War, and certain aspects of the design were influenced by operations there. To a certain extent, the carrier operations in Vietnam demonstrated the need for increased capabilities of aircraft carriers over their survivability, as they were used to send sorties into the war and were, therefore, less subject to attack. As a result of this experience, *Nimitz*-class carriers were designed with larger stores of aviation fuel and larger magazines in relation to previous carriers, although this was partly as a result of increased space available by the new design of the ships' propulsion systems.

A major purpose of the ships was initially to support the U.S. military during the Cold War, and they were designed with capabilities for that role, including using nuclear power instead of oil for greater endurance when deployed in blue water, and the ability to make adjustments to the carriers' weapons systems on the basis of new intelligence and technological developments. They were initially categorized only as attack carriers, but ships have been constructed with anti-submarine capabilities since USS *Carl Vinson*. As a result, the ships and their aircraft are now able to participate in a wide range of operations, which can include sea and air blockades, mine-laying, and missile strikes on land, air and sea.

Because of a design flaw, ships of this class have inherent lists to starboard when under combat loads that exceed the capability of their list control systems. The problem appears to be especially prevalent on some of the more modern vessels. This problem has been previously rectified by using damage control voids for ballast, but a solution using solid ballast which does not affect the ship's survivability has been proposed.

Construction: All ten *Nimitz*-class carriers were constructed between 1968 and 2006 at Newport News Shipbuilding, in Newport News, VA in the largest dry dock in the western hemisphere, dry dock 12, now 2172 feet long after a recent expansion. USS *Nimitz*, named after World War II United States Pacific Fleet commander Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, who was the last living U.S. Navy officer to hold the rank, the lead ship of the class, was commissioned on 3 May '75, and USS *George H.W. Bush*, the tenth and last of the class, was commissioned on 10 Jan '09. Since the '70s, *Nimitz*-class carriers have participated in many conflicts and operations across the world, including Operation Eagle Claw in Iran, the Gulf War, and more recently in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Beginning with USS *Theodore Roosevelt*, the aircraft carriers were manufactured with modular construction. This means that whole sections could be welded together with plumbing and electrical equipment already fitted, improving efficiency. Using gantry cranes, the modules were lifted into the dry dock and welded. In the case of the bow sections, these can weigh over 1,500,000 lbs. This method was originally developed by Ingalls Shipbuilding and increases the rate of work because much of the fitting out does not have to be carried out within the confines of the already finished hull.



Propulsion: Instead of the gas turbines or diesel-electric systems used for propulsion on many modern warships, all ships of the class are powered by two A4W nuclear reactors, housed in separate compartments. The resulting steam spins four propeller shafts, producing a maximum speed of over 30 kts. and maximum power of 260,000 brake horsepower. The reactors produce heat through nuclear fission which heats water. This is then passed through four turbines which are shared by the two reactors. The turbines power the four bronze propellers, each with a diameter of 25 ft. and a wt. of 66000 lbs. Behind these are the two rudders which are 29 ft. high and 22 ft. long, and each weigh 110000 lbs. The *Nimitz*-class ships constructed since USS *Ronald Reagan* also have bulbous bows in order to improve speed and fuel efficiency by reducing wave-making resistance. As a result of the use of nuclear power, the ships are capable of operating continuously for over 20 years without refueling and are predicted to have a service life of over 50 years.

Armament and protection: In addition to the aircraft carried on board, the ships carry defensive equipment for use against missiles and hostile aircraft. These consist of either three or four NATO RIM-7 Sea Sparrow missile launchers designed for defense against aircraft and anti-ship missiles as well as either three or four



Sea Sparrow



Raytheon AN/SLQ-32(V)

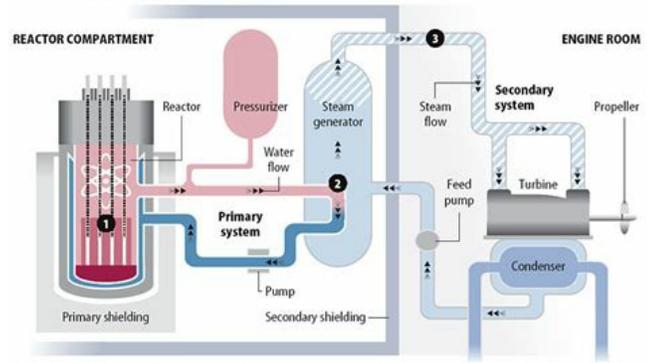
policy is that we do not routinely deploy nuclear weapons on board *Nimitz*."

In May 2013, *George H.W. Bush* conducted the first carrier-borne end-to-end at-sea test of the Surface Ship Torpedo Defense System (SSTDS). The SSTDS combined the passive detection of the Torpedo Warning System (TWS) that finds, classifies, and tracks torpedoes with the hard-kill capability of a Countermeasure Anti-Torpedo (CAT), an encapsulated miniature torpedo designed to locate, home in on, and destroy hostile torpedoes. This was to increase protection against wake-homing torpedoes like the Type 53 that do not respond to acoustic decoys. The pieces of the SSTDS were engineered to locate and destroy incoming torpedoes in a matter of seconds; each system included one TWS and 8 CATs. Initial operational capability (IOC) was planned for 2019 and all aircraft carriers were to be outfitted by 2035. The Navy suspended work on the project in Sept '18 due to poor reliability of the components; and hardware, already installed on five carriers, is to be removed by 2023. The angled flight decks of the carriers use a CATOBAR arrangement to operate aircraft, with steam catapults and arrestor wires for launch and recovery. As well as speeding up flight deck operations, this allows for a much wider variety of aircraft than with the STOVL arrangement used on smaller carriers. An embarked carrier air wing consisting of up to around 90 aircraft is normally deployed on board. After the retirement of the F-14 Tomcat, the air wings' strike fighters are primarily F/A-18E and F/A-18F Super Hornets and F/A-18A+ and F/A-18C Hornets. In addition to their aircraft, the vessels carry short-range defensive weaponry for anti-aircraft warfare and missile defense. The unit cost was about \$8.5 billion in FY 2012 dollars, equal to \$9.36 billion (2018) inflation adjusted.

Source: Wikipedia

Making it go

How a nuclear reactor works on an aircraft carrier:



1. Fission of uranium atoms in the reactor core produces heat. The heat is transferred to the primary system, which circulates water in a closed loop and is kept under pressure to prevent boiling.

Source: U.S. Navy

2. Inside the steam generator, the heat from the primary system is transferred across a water-tight boundary to the water in the secondary system, also a closed loop.

3. In the secondary system, steam flows from the steam generators to drive the main propulsion turbines, which turn the ship's propellers and the turbine generators. The turbine generators supply the ship its electricity.

WAYNE ELFMAN / DAILY PRESS

20 mm Phalanx CIWS missile defense cannon. USS *Ronald Reagan* has none of these, having been built with the RIM-116 Rolling Airframe Missile system, two of which have also been installed on USS *Nimitz* and USS *George Washington*. These will be installed on the other ships as they return for Refueling Complex Overhaul (RCOH). Since USS *Theodore Roosevelt*, the carriers have been constructed with 2.5 in Kevlar armor over vital spaces, and earlier ships have been retrofitted with it: *Nimitz* in 1983–1984, *Dwight D. Eisenhower* from 1985 to 1987 and *Carl Vinson* in 1989. The other countermeasures the ships use are four Sippican SRBOC (super rapid bloom off-board chaff) six-barrel MK36 decoy launchers, which deploy infrared Flare (countermeasure) and chaff to disrupt the sensors of incoming missiles; an SSTDS torpedo defense system; and an AN/SLQ-25 Nixie towed torpedo countermeasures system. The carriers also use Radar jamming and deception systems to detect and disrupt hostile radar signals in addition to the electronic warfare capabilities of some of the aircraft on board.

The presence of nuclear weapons on board U.S. aircraft carriers since the end of the Cold War has neither been confirmed nor denied by the U.S. government. As a result of this, the presence of a U.S. aircraft carrier in a foreign port has occasionally provoked protest from local people, for example, When *Nimitz* visited Chennai, India, in 2007. At that time, the Strike Group commander Rear Admiral John Terence Blake stated that: "The U.S.



Sippican SRBOC-MK36



AN/SLQ-25 Nixie