



Fist of the Fleet Association

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

NEWSLETTER

Jul 2023

Preserving the Past Providing for Today
Promoting the Future

SUMMER EDITION

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings everyone! I hope you have found your "cool spot" to chill during this hot summer. It's been hotter than a match here in south Florida. Thankfully an afternoon rain shower shows up and cools things down.

Speaking of hot, our reservation total for the reunion continues to climb. We have three new lifetime members who will attend in November (Richard Williams VA-25 80-82, James Cason VFA-25 83-86, and David Thompson VFA-25 85-86 CAG LSO). Reunion info and signups are available on the FOFA website. Please reserve your room and registration fee as soon as possible. Thanks.

Skipper Tedrow wanted me to inform you that the squadron's 80 birthday party will be the 6th and 7th of October. Planning is underway and details will be available in the near future. Skipper is trying to tap MWR support as well as private support for a guest speaker. He would like to have Marcus Luttrell (of "Lone Survivor" fame) as the speaker. The appearance fee is significant and the FOFA board has cautiously agreed to help out if the speaker becomes a reality. Private funds (you and me) will also be welcome at that time. I will keep you informed.

On a closing note, I was able to see the Blues at Corpus Christi in May. Of particular interest was the young lady who was flying left wing (No. 3). As most of you know, my daughter flew Hornets and rushed the team at one time, so I was interested in the performance. Not to worry. No. 3 was solid. See you in the fall.

OFFICERS

President: Nick Johnson

8217 Kiawah Trace
Port Saint Lcie FL 34986
Tel 936-499-8051
Email nrjohn@yahoo.com

Vice President: John Leslie

205 Bluebird Lane
Saint Augustine FL 32080
Tel 904-233-4712
Email leslie_john@bellsouth.net

Secretary: Gary Kerans

2740 Whispering Way Cir
Prescott, AZ 86303
Tel 928-925-5099
Email domeaz@me.com

Treasurer, CFO: Chuck Webster

2441 Lock B Road North
Clarksville TN 37043
Tel 605-380-5827
Email cwebster@nrctv.com

Sergeant at Arms/PR: Bob Schreiber

949 Crystal Park Blvd.
Clifford Township PA 18407
Tel: 570-780-4356
Email robert.a.schreiber@echoes.net

Member at Large: Al Gorthy

8839 W 143rd Terr
Overland Park KS 66221
913-681-9026
Email algorthy@gmail.com

V/R,
Beef



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.

SKIPPERS CORNER

Greetings past and present Fisties!,

Time is flying by! It's hard to believe 2023 is half over. Since the last update, the squadron finished our TSTA detachment, completing our first underway period since 2020! The team did a fantastic job adapting to the shipboard environment. The USS Theodore Roosevelt presented us with some unique challenges.

Late to get underway due to maintenance delays in the shipyard, the old TR provided the basic essentials but had limited combat systems or ship's services available. Overall, I think it was a good introduction to the carrier – it can only get better from here.

As I write this summary, we have nearly half the squadron in Fallon, NV for Airwing Fallon. The rest will transit this weekend to take part in a 4-week detachment where we will receive the best large force training the Navy has to offer. From my perspective this is the most important training we will do prior to deployment and I know the squadron is eager and excited to take part.

In other news, we finalized a date for the 80th Anniversary celebration in Lemoore. Please join us on October 6th to take part in celebrating 80 years of excellence! We're going to have quite the line-up so I hope to see you there. That's all for now.

V/r,

CDR Mark "IROC" Tedrow



Have you paid your 2023 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

FROM THE COCKPIT By: LT Nate "FNG" Largent

A/A SFARP was in the final week, and we were flexing our tactical acumen. The growlers and Hawkeye bubbas departed early but we all enjoyed the joint endeavors of workups and cool downs at Burt's bar. The air wing grew closer together as east and west came together under the shared interest of short cycles on a long street. However, the pressure was on, 3 days left until we jetted off west leaving behind the blue isles and a missing bike. With little to no help from Mr. Holmes and Dr. Watson we turned to our soon to depart Intel-O to dig up some dirt on the missing bikes whereabouts. With Colby's cunning investigative skill along with our very own Teddy "Sweet Steven Janowski" street smarts, we stumbled upon the bike on the far corner of Truman annex. Our lock had been cut and replaced by another, in true fisty fashion, and to not incur a \$1,600 fine, we cut lock and hijacked our bike back. Case closed, bike recovered..."Babs" you're off the hook!

After some relaxation back in beautiful green and cool Lemoore, the Fisties got ready to hit the road once again in search of a little boat in the middle of the ocean. TSTA was in full swing, and we were cutting our teeth operating around the Theodore Roosevelt (CVN-71). Ready 5 would be our new home! We quickly fell "in love" with the new HOTness that ol' Teddy R. brought to the table after nearly 2 years in the yards. Many great lessons were learned but smooth sailing can't last forever. In true new guy fashion Nate "FNG" Largent was conducting a night hop when things started to go downhill. Calm sea, light sea breeze, a scattered layers and Paddles working people down using MOVLAS. Bolter, FNG goes around the first time, bolter, FNG goes around again...but this time things got exciting. Tower calls out he blew a tire was in the process of putting the gear up...no dice, Hyd 2A caution pops and only the nose gear retracts. He tries to put it back down...nope doesn't work either. After a night of troubleshooting and some precious gas he got from "Thorny" of VFA-211 he was heading to North Island to take a field trap. After safely landing, he and the field workers tried for a few hours to move the jet off the runway but were unable. If his night couldn't get any longer, due to security protocol he was forced to stay with and eventually sleep in the jet until it could be moved off the runway the following morning. No cold beer for him as he sit on the runway watching the cool peaceful skyline of San Diego just across the bay. Not to worry he was back on the boat within 48 hrs. thanks to the help and skillful flying of HSC-8 and their pickup crew.

After our return from TSTA the Fisties had to say goodbye to LCDR Brandon "Mr. B" Hempler (Blue Angel #5), LCDR Trevor "Brawny" Pedrick and LTJG Colby "LüB" McLiverty. We took a train ride to the little town of Corcoran for some drinks and reading of the scrolls on the nicest outdoor seating at the bar. They were some of the best people we could have asked for and we wish them well in their future endeavors. We hate to see y'all go but always remember, once a Fistie always a Fistie. A short time later the gang was once again off this time to NAS Fallon for Air Wing Fallon. More good times to come and maybe a callsign for the FNG.



Kern River: Late Morning Low Ridge-line First Pass



Grumman Aircraft Corp.
TBM AVENGER TORPEDO BOMBER
 BuNo. 69375

THE AVENGER
 This aircraft is a TBM-3 Avenger torpedo bomber. Purchased by the Aircraft Carrier Hornet Foundation in 1988, it has been restored by volunteers with funds provided through donations. This Avenger is painted in the squadron markings of VT-17, a squadron that flew from the deck of USS Hornet CV-12 during WWII.

The TBM was designed to be a replacement for the TBO Devastator. Public unveiling of the plane was scheduled for December 7, 1941. The attack on Pearl Harbor led to naming the aircraft Avenger. During WWII the Avenger was regarded as a rugged torpedo plane because of its use against surface vessels and ground targets in the Pacific. In the Atlantic, the Avenger flew primarily as an anti-submarine aircraft.

The aircraft was produced in many variations including versions with two wing-mounted 50 cal. guns, special radio, camera for photo work, searchlights for Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW), EOP and Carrier On Board Delivery models. After WWII, Avengers served with the Royal Navy, Royal New Zealand Air Force, and the French Navy. The last TBMs to be retired from active service in 1952 were flown by the Japanese Self Defense Force.

SPECIFICATIONS

- CREW** Pilot, Gunner, and Radioman/Bombardier/Ventral Gunner
- LENGTH** 40 ft 11.5 in (12.48 m)
- HEIGHT** 15 ft 5 in (4.70 m)
- WINGSPAN** 54 ft 2 in (16.51 m)
- EMPTY WEIGHT** 10,545 lb (4,783 kg)
- MAXIMUM WEIGHT** 17,852 lb (8,115 kg)
- POWERPLANT** Wright R-2600-20 Twin Cyclone radial engine, 1,900 hp (1,420 kW)
- RANGE** 1,150 miles (1,850 km) with torpedoes, 1,850 miles (3,000 km) as scout aircraft
- MAXIMUM SPEED** 275 mph (442 km/h)
- SERVICE CEILING** 23,400 ft (7,132.32 m)
- DEFENSIVE ARMAMENT** Two wing-mounted .50 caliber M2 Browning machine guns with 525 rounds per gun, one tail-mounted .50 caliber Colt machine gun with 400 rounds, and one tail-mounted .30 caliber machine gun with 500 rounds
- OFFENSIVE ARMAMENT** One Mark 13 torpedo or max 2,000 pounds of bombs, depth charges and up to eight under-wing mounted 5-inch Forward Firing Rockets

A HERITAGE OF EXCELLENCE
 VT-17 aboard USS Hornet 1945 - VFA-25 flying the F/A-18E Super Hornet

Torpedo Squadron 17 was established January 1, 1943 as VT-17 flying the TBM Avenger. On April 7, 1945, VT-17 was assigned to USS Hornet CV-12 along with other units from Task Force 58.1 with orders to attack a Japanese naval force comprised of the super-battleship Yamato and her escorts. Facing an onslaught of heavy fire, VT-17 aircraft scored the torpedoes hits on the Yamato and sank one of her destroyer escorts. For their actions in this battle the majority of the squadron personnel were awarded the Navy Cross.

The squadron was redesignated several times over the years. Though it began as VT-17 in 1943, in 1983 the squadron received the F-18 Hornet and was redesignated as Strike Fighter Squadron Twenty Five (VFA-25). The squadron maintains that designation while flying the F/A-18E Super Hornet aircraft.

The squadron was given the nickname "Fist of the Fleet" and her insignia is known around the world. In the insignia, a black fist clutches a red lightning bolt on a field of gold. Each of the four stars on the insignia represent a war in which the squadron has flown: WWII as VT-17 flying TBM Avengers, the Korean War as VA-65, the Vietnam war as VA-25 flying A-1 Skyraiders and A-7 Corsair II, and as VA-25 flying F/A-18E Super Hornets.

VT-17 1943-1945
 as scout aircraft

F/A-18E "Fist of the Fleet" Super Hornet

Above pics courtesy of Greg Peairs who took these at the Hornet Museum in Alameda

